



ST. SEBASTIAN PARISH SCHOOL'S

BRICK LOT *Bulletin*

November 2022

From the Principal's Office



As we head into the second quarter, I would like to thank everyone who helped get this school year off to a great start. Our school is truly blessed with a community of teachers, staff, parents, and students

who constantly go above and beyond. During the first quarter, the school was thankful for the efforts of HASA (Open House, Monster Mash, fabulous staff lunches); the Welcoming Committee (Welcome Back Coffee, New Family Picnic, Pre-K and Kindergarten Dinner); Socials Committee (8th-grade pool party, Celebrity Night, Trunk or Treat); the Athletic Booster Club/coaches (fall sports); Sally Weakland, Maggie Blischak, Jennifer Smee (Power of the Pen); Robert Dedinsky, Debra Landis, and Megan Sanford (MathCOUNTS); Scott Mason (school band); and Jeff Beshore (choir).

Preschool Wins Beacon's Best Award

Many congratulations to our teachers and aides at the St. Sebastian Center for Early Learning for winning the title of "Best Preschool" in the Akron Beacon Journal's Best of the Best Awards for 2022! St. Sebastian Parish has an

Our fabulous teaching team at the award-winning St. Sebastian Center for Early Learning: Giana D'Andrea, Mary Weitzel, Lesley Starcher, and Kathy Cardarelli.



incredible preschool program, and I hope you will join the parish and the school community in celebrating the great work they do. Thank you to every teacher and aide, past and present, who has worked with our youngest learners – you have all contributed to the great success of this program, which deserves the excellent reputation it has built over the years.

School Year Theme: Rooted in Faith, Growing God's Kingdom

The theme for this school year is "Rooted in Faith, Growing God's Kingdom." Thank you to the teachers who brainstormed ideas and then crafted this theme during our teacher in-service days before the start of school. Our faculty and staff will use this theme as a touchstone throughout the year. Keeping the theme in mind, the school has changed the Terrier Spotlight from a quarterly award to a monthly award that highlights how our students are growing God's kingdom through their faithful actions. Guided by the theme and our school mission statement, we chose nine characteristics that St. Sebastian Parish School students should exemplify. We will highlight one characteristic in the Terrier Spotlight awards each month. The first month, the Terrier Spotlight awards recognized students who are helpful. These students provide assistance or service to fellow students and adults without being asked. The remaining characteristics are: respectful, teamwork, responsible, studious, attentive, considerate, kind, and Christ-like.

Welcome to Our New Faculty/Staff

Welcome to our new teachers and staff, including our four new classroom aides: Preschool: Rachel O'Neill, 1st Grade: Jacqueline Amos and Alexis Saltis, 2nd Grade: Mary Anne Kim. Also new this year are our school psychologist, Carrie Willett, and speech therapist, Jeanne Schmidt. Welcome also to our three new classroom teachers, who are featured on

Questions or Suggestions?

Please email Anne Dennee, newsletter editor, at Anne@DenneeFamily.com

page 3: Maria Alvarado, Giana D'Andrea, and Karen Swartz.

Damascus Retreats

Our students in grades 6-8 recently went to Camp Damascus for three different overnight retreats. Each year's retreat has a different theme: Faith and Science (6th grade), Leadership and Community (7th grade), and Confirmation (8th grade). These Camp Damascus retreats are designed to grow in content with the student each year, with every retreat integrating "high adventure activities and high adventure faith." No matter the retreat, the Camp Damascus experience is about our students learning to have an encounter with Christ and living a life of adventure in Christ.

Weller Update

Weller has been happy to visit students, teachers, and staff several times this year. He is well on his way to completing the AKC Canine Good Citizen class that is an important requirement in the process of becoming a therapy dog. The students and staff have been very helpful in practicing some of the essential skills that he will need to pass his test. Weller seems to have fully recovered from his surgery over the summer. He will need to observe a special diet and take medicine for the rest of his life, but his doctor expects him to live an otherwise normal life. Well, normal for Weller, which includes having his picture taken for the yearbook by the photography studio, just like the students!

Yours in Christ,

Anthony Rohr
Principal

From the STEM Coordinators

Grades K-3, by Susan Vernon

Welcome to Karen Swartz, our new 1st-grade teacher! We are happy to have her as part of our primary school team. Ms. Swartz visited the Innovation Lab with her students to conduct leaf investigations. The students collected leaves, measured them, described them with adjectives, and finally, did experiments to see if different leaves would sink or float! The class also did paintings of their spelling words with watercolors. Mrs. Burns' 1st-grade students investigated their five senses using apples: They liked their sense of TASTE the best! The students also love using challenge cards to direct their engineering creations! The 2nd-graders visited our school garden in September to harvest vegetables. They helped Ben at the Good Samaritan Hunger Center, which uses the produce for its food distribution programs. The 3rd-graders made informational pamphlets for Protecting Our Parks, an argumentative article they have studied. They shared their responses with each other and then chose which side of the argument they would support. They created signs to endorse their choices. Should national parks allow all access, OR should there be limits to the



number of people permitted to avoid overcrowding? Rounding out the STEM activities for our youngest learners, Mrs. Kidder's kindergarten class always loves the challenge to make the tallest freestanding tower from toothpicks and marshmallows. The future engineers of America are in our kindergarten classes!

Grades 4-6, by Jennifer Slegus

It has been a great start to the 2022-23 school year! The 4th-grade class participated in a football-themed STEM activity. The students worked in small groups to construct a paper football, field, and goal posts. They constructed trials for making field goals from various points. Finally, they calculated fractions and percentages and graphed their results. These students have also been learning about different animal and plant adaptations. They completed a simulation lab in which they discovered the differences and similarities of birds' beaks. They used different tools (ex: a toothpick for spearing and a clothespin for pinching) and imaginary food (ex: marbles for snails and beans for grubs) to show how well birds' beaks are adapted to eat their specific food. The students then created an animal that had to live in a new biome and give it three new adaptations to help it



survive in the new environment. They drew the new animal in its new environment and wrote a story. The 5th-grade class has been busy



learning the steps to the scientific method and the engineering design process. They completed the "Penny Boat Challenge Lab," in which they designed a boat using only foil and tested its buoyancy by adding pennies to their design. They were able to improve their design and retest the buoyancy. The 5th-graders also set up and conducted their own experiment. They had to create a hypothesis, write the steps of the procedure, complete a data table, create a graph of the results in Google Sheets, and write a conclusion. The 6th-grade students completed a PBL (project-based learning) project to help those in need. This project tasked students with creating a solution to a



real-world problem, identifying the costs of the project, coming up with fundraising ideas, and creating a mini model of the project based on student-created designs. This project was inspired by our summer reading book, "A Long Walk to Water," in which the main character, Salva, solves the water shortage in a village in Sudan.

Grades 7-8, by Megan Sanford

In 7th grade, students studied the engineering design process, empirical evidence, and the scientific method, especially how it will apply to their science fair project coming up. We have been busy doing scientific investigations and STEM activities to explore concepts learned in class. One of their favorites was a Water Drop Lab in which they learned about cohesion, adhesion, and surface tension. All students in 7th and 8th grade are preparing science fair projects using a topic of their choice. Science fair is an opportunity for students to apply the scientific method to independently research an idea and design an experiment. Science fair projects give our students an opportunity to explore science outside of the standard curriculum. It teaches life skills of inquiry, design, time management, and communication. Exceptional projects may advance to compete in the regional or district fair. Our junior high students recently created logic/suspense stories. Many of them contributed school-related mysteries and deductive logic projects using video, print, and picture clues/puzzles, which are intended for classroom use for grades K-7. In 8th-grade science classes, students studied experimental design and data analysis. Students have conducted several classroom experiments to practice their skills of writing procedures, testing hypotheses, measurement, and data collection. In their recent data project, students took on the role of CDC medical researchers to look for trends causing a zombie outbreak. Students discussed important statistical topics like trends, variation, correlation, and causation.

St. Sebastian Wins 4th STEM Education Award

For the fourth year in a row, St. Sebastian Parish School earned the Governor's Thomas Edison Award for Excellence in STEM Education and Student Research! Congratulations and thank you to our students and the following educators, who also earned individual awards: Michelle Antochow, Maggi Blischak, Jennifer Bradley, Robert Dedinsky, Christina Friedl, Debra Landis, Cassie Laube, Anne Riede, Allyn Rose, Megan Sanford, Jennifer Slegus, Jennifer Smee, and Sally Weakland. Our 13 educators were among 544 people to earn individual awards, and St. Sebastian Parish School was one of only 45 schools in the state of Ohio to earn the Award for Excellence, which is awarded annually by the Ohio Academy of Science.



#WeGiveCatholic 2022

This year's #weGiveCatholic effort is raising money to purchase **new activity tables and chairs for our kindergarten and preschool classrooms!** Please consider making a donation to benefit our youngest learners. We will be holding a school-wide "change bandit" contest Nov. 7-21 to support this #weGiveCatholic project. The winning grade will be treated to doughnuts and cider! In addition to this contest, online donations to benefit this project may be made on Giving Tuesday, Nov. 29, at www.wegivecatholic.org. More details to come!

Falls Sports Wrap-Up

Cross Country

Congratulations to the coaches and runners of the St. Sebastian Parish School boys and girls cross country teams, which both won CYO championships! This was the first-ever CYO girls championship win and a back-to-back championship win for the boys, who won for the first time last year, when they became the only CYO school in Summit County to ever win a championship! Individually, the CYO season included 17 first-place finishes, and a staggering 78 top-10 finishes. To top off a fantastic season, both teams also won third-place trophies for Division III at



Students in the News

Student Council

Congratulations to the following student council members who were elected by their classmates for the 2022-23 school year: Nick Paxton (president); Louisa Dennée (vice president); Benjamin Hagenbush (secretary); Nathan Paxton (treasurer); and Grant Bradshaw, Nicole Krohn, Julia Rea, and Jonathan Schnurr (room representatives).



Student Ambassadors

Our school's Student Ambassadors program welcomed 25 new members this fall: Sadie Borges, Sophia Brdarski, Helena Buehner, Abigail Coleman, Ben Hagenbush, Grant Bradshaw, Ashlin Holvey, Bailey Huckabee, Drew Johnson, Claire Jopperi, Grace Keso, Noelle Keso, Daphne Kindbom, Frances Knauer, Jordan Large, Ben McDonald, Alyvia Severns, Alexis Skovira, James Stallings, Christine Sturm-Poth, June Taray, Henry Thomas, Christian Trenor, Cece Walker, and Sammy Walker. These 7th-graders will join current 8th-grade student ambassadors in representing our school at various events such as Open House and Grandparents Day.

the Ohio middle school cross country championship meet in Columbus on Oct. 23. Way to go, Terriers!

Soccer

In soccer, there were four CYO teams: girls grades 3-4 and 6-7, and boys grades 4 and 5-6, with the 4th-grade boys team notching an impressive five regular-season wins. Both our boys grades 5-6 and girls grades 6-7 teams had strong seasons playing against older competition, with both teams making it to the CYO semifinals. The DD Soccer (grades 1-2) program had five teams with 61 players, and Soccer Stars (Pre-K and K) had six teams with 83 players.

Football and Volleyball

This year we had two flag football teams in grades K-1 and 2-3. Both teams were very young for their divisions, but held their own, showing a lot of promise for the future. Our students also played on two CYO tackle football teams for grades 6 and 8, gaining experience while playing stiff competition. This fall, we fielded three girls volleyball teams in grades 3-4, 5, and 6-7, with all three teams having a fun season and showing great improvement.

News and Notes

Trunk or Treat

This year's Trunk or Treat Social was held Oct. 14 with 40 decorated trunks providing treats and showing off their creativity and school spirit for the 165 families who attended. The award-winning trunk displayed a Western theme inspired by the TV series "Yellowstone," featuring two live horses from the Paxton family's farm, which was a huge hit with the kids and parents alike! A fun new addition this year was a chili contest, complete with tasting samples and voting for the best of the bunch. Taking home the "Best Chili" prize out of 16 entries was



the Clark family. Thank you to all the families who participated to make this the most successful Trunk or Treat Social yet! The event, hosted by the Knauer and Buehner families, raised \$3,300, all of which goes to the Teacher Appreciation and Wellness Fund. This fund provides Christmas bonuses, gifts, catered lunches, and so much more to our wonderful teachers and school staff.

Ohio EPA Grant

Betty Indriolo, retired St. Sebastian Parish School science teacher, helped our school write a grant request to Ohio EPA. Thanks to her help, we were awarded almost \$5,000, which was the maximum allowed, to install four water fountain units that are newer and more energy efficient than the old units.

Acme Community Cash Back

HASA is collecting Acme receipts dated Aug. 4-Dec. 24, 2022, as part of the Acme Community Cash Back program. Please keep saving your Acme receipts and sending them into the office!

Angel Scholarship Fund

Scholarship Donors: Ohioans can now receive a 100% Ohio tax credit of up to \$750 (\$1,500 if married filing jointly) 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 100% tax credit on your 2022 Ohio taxes by including your contribution receipt from the Angel Scholarship Fund. Visit 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 to learn more.

Monster Mash

A scary good time was had by the more than 80 families who came out for HASA's annual Mother/Son Monster Mash! Congratulations to our costume contest winners: Best Boy – Old Man (Robert Brunton), Best Mom – Medusa (Bianca Raidley), Best Mother/Son – Star Wars (Justine, David, and Levi Dunn). Thank you to organizers Katie Pirie, Mary Jo Kormushoff, and the 3rd-grade moms! Thanks also to Mr. G's Pizza, In The Roses Photography, and Beach Boyz DJs for their help in making the event a success.



Join Us For "A Spectacular Evening in Paris" February 11

Calling all parents! Please join us for "A Spectacular Evening in Paris" on Saturday, Feb. 11 in Zwisler Hall. The St. Sebastian Spectacular, our school's largest annual fundraiser, is marking its 19th year of raising money for our parish school and its students. This year's co-chairs, Erica Gerstenmaier and Colleen Tate, and their committee have been at work planning a fun and fabulous, Paris-inspired evening. The event will feature exciting live and silent auction items, delicious appetizers, an open bar, a signature drink, and a sit-down dinner, along with live music and a few fun surprises. There are also exciting sponsorship opportunities, including a VIP pre-party for our event sponsors. Invitations will be mailed to all families in early January.



As in past years, proceeds from the St. Sebastian Spectacular will be used for tuition reduction for all our students along with investments in technology and our school's endowment. This year's paddle raise will focus on renovations to the school library. The role of the library has expanded over the years to become a special setting for all sorts of school events, activities, and meetings. The renovations will include an updated layout, new tables and seating, and a presentation screen, all of which will increase the flexibility and functionality of the space. The plan is for our library and computer lab to be an innovative media center where our students can explore, learn, and collaborate.



Amazon.com

There are many ways you can support this event, whether it be attending the event, volunteering your time, becoming a sponsor, placing an ad in the program, or donating to the live and silent auctions. New this year, you can scan our QR code to donate from our Amazon wish list. Visit www.stsebastian.org/school/st-sebastian-spectacular to learn more. If you have any questions, please contact Erica at egerstenmaier@gmail.com or Colleen at crate4512@gmail.com. Your support is truly appreciated!

Flight 93 Memorial Field Trip

The 8th-grade class visited the Flight 93 National Memorial on Sept. 9, just two days before the 21st anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. On the early-morning bus ride to Shanksville, Pa., students were able to watch the "Flight 93" movie that tells the story of how the passengers and crew of Flight 93 banded together to prevent an even larger tragedy from unfolding. Before visiting the crash site, students stopped to see the Tower of Voices, a 93-foot-tall monument intended to honor the 40 passengers and crew both visibly and audibly. The tower includes 40 chimes, which are activated by wind to play slightly different sounds, representing the unique voices of the 40 passengers and crew. On their way to view the crash site, our students had the special experience of hearing a talk from park ranger Gregory Zaborowski, who has deep knowledge and passion for the subject. Our 8th-grade teacher Allyn Rose says Zaborowski was one of the best speakers he has heard at the memorial in his five years of visiting with the 8th-grade class. The final stop was the visitor's center, which has exhibits featuring personal items from the 40 heroes, maps showing the timeline and locations of the terrorist attacks, news broadcasts from that day, and a bank of phones that play the actual messages left by passengers and crew for their loved ones. Later, students are asked to reflect on what they learned. Here are some excerpts:



"It was important for the passengers to work together because when they all came together they were able to stop the terrorists from hitting their next target and hurting more people." – Allison Raita

"The Tower of Voices stood out to me as a great memorial. The passengers sacrificed themselves to save others kind of like Jesus on the cross." – Marcus Chuba

"In the Bible, it states that the greatest love is to lay down one's life for others. The 40 (+ 1) passengers on Flight 93 gave this greatest kind of love by sacrificing their own lives to save our country ... Listening to the recorded messages from the passengers to their families that were kept in the museum, it once again made me think about their selfless sacrifice for the country." – Julia Rea

"What I can religiously or spiritually take away from the Flight 93 visit is how in every way the world is divided in religion, race, beliefs, etc., but for one day we were equal and we were following a key verse, 'Love one another as I have loved you.'" – Lydia Chivers

Welcome New Teachers!



Maria Alvarado, Spanish Teacher
Education/Experience: Universidad Santo Tomás, Chile; 10 years' teaching experience.
Why I Like Teaching: I love teaching because I think every kid has different abilities to learn, and I like to help them find those abilities, especially with languages. I like to think about the idea that I can help them to build self-esteem through learning too.



Giana D'Andrea, Preschool Teacher
Education/Experience: B.S. Early Childhood Education, Kent State University; first-year teacher.
Why I Like Teaching: "I love being able to communicate with the students each day and build a relationship that is meaningful. I love being a consistent person in their lives who is there for them and never stops caring."



Karen Swartz, 1st-Grade Teacher
Education/Experience: B.S. Elementary Education, Kent State University; M.A. Education, Walsh University; 24 years teaching experience.

Why I Like Teaching: "Ever since I was a young girl, I knew I wanted to be a teacher. I enjoy teaching and learning with my students every day. Being a teacher means I can make a difference in the lives of

children by helping them learn necessary skills that will last throughout their lives. I want to share my love of learning, and I am committed to the profession by keeping up on the latest trends and research in education. The field is ever changing and at times challenging, but yet very rewarding knowing you are helping to make children's lives better with a well-rounded education."

2023-24 Scholarships

Thanks to the generosity of our school and parish community, there are many opportunities for St. Sebastian Parish School students to earn scholarships for next year. Scholarships for the 2023-24 school year, listed here, are available for students currently in grades pre-K-7 (to be applied to next year's tuition at St. Sebastian) as well as 8th-grade students (to be applied to high school tuition).

The St. Sebastian Parish Foundation, which acts as a clearinghouse of information for all these scholarships, has posted applications and additional information on the school's website at www.stsebastian.org/school/scholarships. The application deadline is Jan. 25, 2023. If you have questions, please contact Anne Dennée at scholarships@stsebastian.org or 330-836-2233, ext. 119. Last year our students earned \$23,000 in scholarship awards!

Scholarships Funded Through the St. Sebastian Parish Foundation

- Mary Ley Burke Scholarship – (grades K-7) up to 4 available, merit based
- Christopher James Consilio Scholarship – (grade 8) 1 or more available, essay based
- Dayspring Opportunity Scholarship – (pre-K to 7), up to 2 available, need based
- Elms Family Scholarship – (grade 8), 2 or more available, need based
- Denise Maroon Finley Scholarship – (grade 8), up to 2 available, need based
- Lynn Frey-Steward Scholarship – (grades K-7), 1 available, merit based
- Gerstenmaier Family Scholarship – (grade 8), 2 or more available, merit based
- GOAL Scholarship – (grades 2-7), 3 or more available, merit based
- Hanlon Family Scholarship – (pre-K to 7), 1 or more available, need based
- NEW!** Karg Family Scholarship (grades K-2), 1 available, essay based
- NEW!** William and Mildred Loftus Memorial Scholarship (grade 8), 1 available, need based
- Frances L. Sharp Music Scholarship – (grades 4-7), up to 2 available, need based
- John A. Trecaso Scholarship – (grade 8), 1 available, merit based

Scholarships Funded Through Parish School/Parish-Related Groups

- HASA Youth Christian Service Scholarship – (grade 8), 2 available, merit based
- Knights of Columbus Deacon Terry Peacock Memorial Scholarship – (grade 8), 2 available, merit based
- Sanctuary Society Service Scholarship – (grades 5-8), 1 available, merit based
- St. Irene Scholarship – (grades 1-7, grade 8), 2 available, merit based

SCHOOL CALENDAR AND IMPORTANT DATES

SAVE THE DATE

- End of Second Quarter ~ Jan. 12
- No School ~ Jan. 13
- Night at the Races ~ Jan. 14
- No School ~ Jan. 16
- Open House ~ Jan. 29
- Catholic Schools Week ~ Jan. 29-Feb. 4
- International Festival ~ Feb. 4
- 1 p.m. Dismissal ~ Feb. 9
- St. Sebastian Spectacular ~ Feb. 11
- Parent/Teacher Conferences ~ Feb. 14, 16
- No School ~ Feb. 17, Feb. 20
- Confirmation ~ March 3
- Spring Music Program ~ March 9
- No School ~ March 10
- End of 3rd Quarter ~ March 23
- No School ~ March 24
- Scholarship Mass ~ March 30

NOVEMBER

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Parent/Teacher Conferences | November 1, 3, 4 (Mon., Thurs., Fri.) |
| Jr. High Parent Social @ HiHo Brewing | November 3 (Thursday), 5-9 p.m. |
| No School | November 4 (Friday) |
| Read-A-Thon Kick-off | November 7 (Monday) |
| Ladies Luncheon & Christmas Boutique | November 13 (Sunday), Portage Country Club, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. |
| Explorer Day | November 18 (Friday) |
| Confirmation Meeting (8th grade) | November 21 (Monday), 7 p.m. |
| Thanksgiving Break | November 23-28 (Weds.-Mon.) |

DECEMBER

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Christmas Music Program (grades 1, 3, 5, 7) | December 1 (Thursday), 7 p.m. |
| Christmas Social, Grades 1-3 | December 3 (Saturday) |
| HASA Meeting, Byrider Hall | December 8 (Thursday), 3 p.m. |
| Sanctuary Society Christmas Tea, Zwisler Hall | December 13 (Tuesday), 6:30-8:30 p.m. |
| Choir and Band Concert | December 15 (Thursday), 7 p.m. |
| Christmas Break | December 21-January 3 |



St. Sebastian Parish School will hold an Explorer Days session on Friday, **Nov. 18** from 8:15-10 a.m. Parents and prospective students will enjoy an interactive open house during which they will tour the school, meet our principal, and see our students at work. Future kindergarten students will also have the opportunity to explore the kindergarten classrooms. Families may register by calling 330-836-9107.