

MERCY MATTERS

Our Lady of Mercy School Alumni Association Newsletter

SECOND EDITION

MARCH 2011

Welcome to the second edition of the Mercy Matters e-mail newsletter. This newsletter is brought to you by the Alumni Association of the Our Lady of Mercy School. If there are any OLM Alumni that you know would be interested in being on our e-mail list to receive notifications, and newsletters please let us know at olmalumni@olmschool.com.

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FITTING TRIBUTE

As we pack up all the lights and decorations and write all the thank you notes..... it really does not seem possible that yet another Christmas Boutique is all over. Each year this event seems to grow and become a greater success. This is not magic, but yet due to the efforts of so many generous people right within our OLMS family as well as within the local community. A sincere thank you to each and every one of you who contributed in any way!!!!

In summary, I always say that I continue to be a part of the planning of this event because of the wonderful people whom I get to work with and meet along the way. I now want to share with you a story of one of those people whom I was able to meet:

The winner of the hand-made quilt was a very special lady, Sr Suzanne Duzen from New Rochelle, New York. In contacting Sr. Suzanne to notify her of her winning, I uncovered a very neat story. Sr. Suzanne was a teacher and then principal in Catholic Schools for several years which admittedly took a lot out of her and resulted in her choosing to take a sabbatical in 2005 at the Mercy Center in Madison. While on sabbatical, Sr. Suzanne remembers fondly, walking the grounds of OLM and watching all the excitement and activity of this "vibrant " school. She recounts "I always knew that this little school had something special"

She recently returned to Madison to re-visit the Mercy Center and to do some Christmas Shopping at our event. She shared her observations while at the Boutique; "the school has such

pizzazz, even though everything was re-arranged and moved aside, you could tell that what goes on here is something unique and there is such obvious pride in and love for the school". Her parting words for us were, " promise to continue with your efforts and never stop believing in the special gift that you have in that school".

Hope you all can agree, there could not be a better way to wrap-up!!!

Sincerely,
Liz Connelly

We would like to thank Krista May, Hank Baum, Charles and all the Mercy Center volunteers who helped to merge their own event, The Mercy Center Fair Earth Bazaar, with ours. The increased publicity and support greatly assisted us in making this event even better for our customers and vendors alike!!!

And The Winner IS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

The Christmas Boutique Raffle was a huge success generating over \$3982.00 dollars in revenue for the school. With over 64 prizes on display throughout the event, there was something for everyone. A special thank you to Father Shanley for providing us with a new way to distribute raffle tickets this year, making it much easier for everyone to simply buy their envelope and go.... no more writing your name on countless amounts of tickets!!!! Many thanks to our team of elves; Eileen O'Brien, Mary Ellen Noone, Elaine Lynders, Maria Lynders, Tess Noone and Jackie O'Brien, who helped to create more than 6000 raffle tickets to be sold!!!!

The Christmas Boutique Cafe was booming throughout the whole two-day event. Our team of volunteers kept the food flying!!! A special thank you to Antonella Bacchiocchi and her team who managed to sell out of EVERYTHING by the end of the day on Saturday!!!! Not a bad problem to have..... The kitchen raised \$3187.50 dollars!!! The battle was on between the two home made soups Butternut Squash (made by Betsy Conroy) and Chicken Noodle (made by Andrea Dante). Hard to tell which was the favorite as there was none left of either for us to try!!!!

Winter Wonderland

Hope everyone was able to admire and appreciate the transformation of our school into a "winter wonderland" A very special thank you to Lori Dziuba who coordinated all the decorating for the Boutique this year. Lori will be counting strings of white lights in her sleep for months to come..... Emily Duenkel and Mrs. Carta also worked very hard at re-creating the "Twelve Days of Christmas" onto the walls our hallways...!!! Hard to believe that, thanks to the team of very hard working volunteers, the school was transformed and then put back to normal again within hours.....!!!

How about the Parking Lot!!!!

Did you ever see such a sight as you pulled into the parking lot..... stadium lighting, tractor rides and cars as far as you could see!!!! Thanks to our very organized team of "parking attendants" (Rich Connelly, Hank Baum, Brian Campbell and Frank Merola) everything ran as smooth as possible considering the amount of cars that came through over the course of the two days!!!!

Final Thanks.....to those behind the scenes!!!

Hope you all have enjoyed reading our weekly e-newsletters. This format was created and donated to us on behalf of Brain Campbell and his staff persons Deb Villavicencio-Eschinger and John Russo at Pexagon Technologies in Guilford, CT. Through their tireless efforts and generous donations of time and resources, this event was able to step up to the next level in terms of presentation and marketing. Many Thanks Brain, Deb and John!!!!!!

OLM STUDENTS HONOR LOCAL VETERANS

Friday, November 12th, in Honor of Veterans Day OLM students honored local Vets and Service men and women. Patriotic songs were sung and family and friends who have served or are serving were named and not only thanked but prayed for. Several Vets came and told stories about their time in the Korean War as well as WWII and Vietnam. A young 19 year old man who recently finished his basic training came to tell the kids he felt it was his time to give back and to thank the men who have served before him. OLM is doing a school collection of school supplies to be sent to Afghanistan in honor of a father of two students who has recently come home from his tour in Afghanistan. Around the world this day is celebrated whether it is called Veterans Day, Remembrance Day, or Armistice Day. The idea is to renew our commitment to world peace. The children of our school are taught and reminded that world peace is a goal worth achieving. In addition, our children need to take time to connect with adults, learn to listen, and appreciate what the people who have served our country have to teach all of us. Please remember to pray for all our service men and women each day.

GIVING BACK

OLM Students Participate in St. Margaret's Family to Family Project

Giving back to others is one of the easiest ways you can contribute to society. So why, then, doesn't everyone? For some, the idea of giving away hard-earned money especially in this economic environment is preposterous. For others, there are just not enough hours in the day to give back to those in need. Each year the students of OLM learn the importance of giving back when they participate in **St. Margaret's Family to Family project.**

This is how it works in some of the classes: Students (in all grades) receive one family member to shop for with their families. Three or four children shop for one family member, so some OLM families shop together to coordinate the gifts. This can be quite a challenge for many families who have more than one or two children at the school. The classes pray daily for the individual family members. More often than not, they become attached to someone they really don't even know yet gain an understanding of their need. An OLM teacher said "the students realize how lucky they are to have all

they have, and they do thank God daily for everything.”

One mother said “My children are very comfortable giving back in a "Pay it Forward" concept - we discuss how they can give without expectations of something in return. As for the family to family sharing they understand they have "wants" but these families they are providing gifts for have "needs" they simply get the difference.”

In giving, the greatest lesson often learned is that you have more than you'll ever need. In this respect, giving of yourself teaches you to be more thankful for what you do have, rather than focus on all the things you don't have. OLM students get this!

Our Lady of Mercy School

Educating Children to be Christ in the World

OLM EDUCATIONAL HAPPENINGS

OLM on the World Map-- Again and Again

Submitted by Mary Merlini (OLM Parent)

Ahead of the curve, as always, the teachers at OLM already have a "Spring" in their step as OLM creates yet more exceptional learning experiences for our students.

OLM continues to perform in an outstanding way through Mrs. Addorisio's 8th Grade Mock Trial Program success. This extraordinary program, creates an opportunity for participating students to stretch their analytical and reasoning skills, to balance hunches with research and facts, and to communicate in a most thoughtful and professional manner in an environment (the courtroom) where emotions run deep. This program pulls many academic skills together into practice and puts OLM on the map again and again for its success in offering unusual and valuable learning experiences that will serve our students for a lifetime.

Meanwhile, Madame Papantonio (World Language Teacher) will be leading a representative group of students from OLM to participate in the CT Council of Language Teachers (COLT) Elementary Rhyme Celebration. COLT is a non-profit organization that promotes language proficiency and the knowledge of world cultures. This event reinforces the value of learning languages as our students prepare to become adults in a multilingual world and will be an exciting acknowledgement for all who participate. OLM is proud to have earned participation in this distinguished event.

Meanwhile, with appreciation for what our good earth provides, teachers of Grades 1-5 brought their classes to the Bushy Hill Nature Center for the purpose of understanding the science and business behind the New England tradition of maple syrup production. The students learned directly from Erik Becker, Director, who holds a degree from UMass in

"Earth Living Education and Therapy". This experience underlined what so many of us are mindful of at this time: the importance of appreciating nature, sustainability, local food sources, and positive thoughts for the future of our world and all its people.

These programs are just a few of the many ways that the teachers at OLM creatively bring their work of the classroom into the real world so that the learning that takes place is translated into practical knowledge. At the same time, we are so proud of how well our teachers and students represent OLM and all the parishes that support their efforts, in the true sense of community in motion.

Here's to Spring!

FROM DR. ALFONE

Dear Our Lady of Mercy Alumni,

I hope this note finds you well and not still buried in snow! It has been a tough winter for us! I hope you had a blessed Christmas season as well.

We have just finished our month long celebration of Catholic Schools Month. As you may remember, we used to celebrate this special time during the last week of January. However, there is so much to celebrate, that our superintendent has extended it to the entire month. We have had many successful open houses for new students, informational sessions for our current families and many activities celebrating the uniqueness of not just Our Lady of Mercy but of all Catholic schools across the country. I am sure you are proud of the education you received at OLM during your years with us.

We have a new pastor serving as one of our priest directors. Father James Shanley is the newly appointed pastor at St George Church. He has brought a new level of energy and support to our school. We welcome Father to our family.

Our newly formed Advancement Committee is running full force in many areas. One of the areas is our Alumni Relations. If you know the email of any of your classmates, please forward them to us as we try to build our capacity to keep in touch with you! You can send those emails to alumni@olmschool.com or visit our new website at www.olmschool.com. We would love to hear from you and your classmates!

I would like to extend a personal invitation to you to come back and see us! I am sure a lot has changed since you've visited us. We would love to have you join us for our First Friday Masses at 9:30 or our weekly prayer services on Fridays at 8:15. Be sure to let us know you are one of our alums and we would love to show you what makes OLM still the best!

I hope to meet you soon.
Dr. John R. Alfone
Principal



OLM SPRING AUCTION 2011

To Benefit Our Lady of Mercy School

April 2, 2011 at 6:30pm

(dinner, dessert, wine, beer & soft drinks will be served)

By far, the largest and most fun event at our school!!! In years past, we have been able to raise our full assessment in just one night! Please consider donating an item, asking a friend or vendor to donate an item (we have tax deductible gift forms for them), place an ad in the brochure, but most importantly, come to the event! Highlights this year will include a silent & live auction (hosted by Eric Hummel), class gift baskets and class art projects, an estate Rolex watch as the jewelry raffle item and new this year, the "Wall of Wine"!!

You can participate by:

- Attending the auction – \$45.00 per person or sponsor a table of 10 for \$400.00.
- Donating an Item or Service ~ Here are a few ideas: sporting event tickets, golf outings, time share or vacation homes, theatre tickets, financial or legal services, artwork, yard services, bikes, autographed items, restaurant certificates, spa services, retail certificates, babysitting... the possibilities are endless!
- Raffles ~ there are three raffles during this evening; the Rolex watch (tickets can be bought beforehand), the Wall of Wine (see attached flyer) and assorted gift baskets.
- Advertising in the Auction booklet ~ see attachment for advertising information & costs.
- Sponsoring the Auction ~ see attachment for more information

**All donations to Our Lady of Mercy School are Tax-deductable*

**THANKS TO ALL MERCHANT, ORGANIZATIONS AND PEOPLE IN
OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY**

Weekly Happenings

THANK YOU !!!!!

On Behalf of the Our Lady of Mercy School community, we would like to extend a sincere thank you to all the following merchants, organizations and people within our local community who each donated services, merchandise and/or resources to allow the 10th Annual OLM Christmas Boutique to be a success.

Pexagon Technologies, Guilford

Brian Campbell, Owner

Deb Villavicencio-Eschinger

John Russo

Mercy Center, Madison

Charles Frey

April Shuman

Krista May

Andrea Dante

Hank Baum

St. George Catholic Church, Guilford

Father Shanley, Pastor

Gloria Nemczuk

Susanna Smith

Dee Dee Collins

St. Margaret Catholic Church, Madison

Monsignor Conte, Pastor

Maureen Wysmuler

Bill Elder

Marie Pohlman
The women from "Early Morning Mass"

Santoro Family of Madison Flower Shop, Madison
Kingsley Goddard of Barberry Farms, Madison
Van Wilgen Garden Center, Branford
Fairways Driving Range, Branford
Stop and Shop, Madison
Starbucks, Madison
Cohens Bagels, Madison
School House Deli, Madison
Guilford Food Center, Guilford
Bradley & Wall, Madison
Pepperidge Farms Corporation
Christmas Tree Shops
Home Goods
Home Depot
BJ's Wholesale
Big Y Supermarkets
Hummels

THANK YOU!!!!!!