



# SAINT GREGORY'S UP-TO-DATE SECOND TRIMESTER (MAR 2010)

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## LETTER FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

As you know, the Board of Trustees recently removed the "interim" from my title and made me the fifth Head of School at Saint Gregory's. I am indebted to the Board for its trust. I am so appreciative of the many positive comments that have been sent my way. It is a privilege and a pleasure to be in this office, and I look forward to the future of the School with great optimism!

I was reading an article recently by William Durden, the president of Dickenson College in Pennsylvania. He was arguing that the American educational system had lost its sense of purpose. He went on to say that education had become an acquisition of knowledge simply for the sake of passing examinations and demonstrating the fact that knowledge could be retained. President Durden believes that knowledge is a toolbox that allows students to function in the American democracy. Knowledge is a path to civic participation. One of the signature elements of a good education is that it creates empathy for your fellow citizen.

The second trimester saw many disasters throughout the world. There were earthquakes, floods and plane crashes, all enhanced by the current economic climate. I read many articles and listened to many stories on the radio about people who suggested the United States not be generous because of the world climate today. You are also certainly aware of many wonderful acts of kindness. I also heard that many schools were fund-raising to assist in these tragedies. Saint Gregory's also participated in these acts of kindness. However, I think there was a distinguishing characteristic about our School's participation. At no time did an adult have to suggest, initiate or organize these events. It seems that every time someone needs assistance, Saint Gregory's students simply react. So many students approached me after the earthquake in Haiti to help. We did many things including a basketball game between the fourth and fifth grades. At least three families agreed to match the proceeds. Another student wanted to celebrate his birthday by having a book drive for a local shelter. Still others have asked permission to visit local nursing homes and spend quality time with our elderly citizens. The power, energy, and enthusiasm of our students never cease to energize me.

Lady Bird Johnson the former first lady said, "Children are apt to live up to what you believe of them." As a community, we believe in only the highest standards for our children and have only the highest expectations. If President Durden is correct, and I believe he is, Saint Gregory's can be proud of its education. We are preparing our students to be the next generation of this American democracy. As the weather turns and we move towards the end of the school year, we will continue to keep the standards and expectations high. I thank you for all of your support and wish you the best for a most enjoyable spring season.

*Jeffrey P. Loomis*

## UNIFORM CHANGES FOR 2010-2011

*by Mr. Loomis*

I have made two relatively minor changes to the uniform code for the 2010-2011 school year. First, the maroon PE t-shirt will no longer be manufactured. Students who have this t-shirt or get them from the Mothers' closet may still wear them. There simply will not be any new ones being made. The second change relates to the Upper School students only. The School sweater is now an option for the Upper School students. Starting in September, students may only wear the blazer or the sweater during the School day. This policy will be strictly enforced.

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## FROM THE HEALTH OFFICE

by Nurse Connolly

As required by the State of New York, all new students and students who will be entering grades K, 2, 4, and 7 in the fall of 2010, are required to submit a completed health exam form and proof of current, up-to-date vaccinations. If your child will have an appointment with your physician during the summer, please pick up the health forms in the office, or you may download a copy from the School website.

Also, for all current 5<sup>th</sup> students.... Please note that New York state requires a Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis) vaccine for all students who are 11 years of age or older, before entering the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. A letter of reminder will be sent to all 5<sup>th</sup> grade parents in May.

As winter recedes and warmer weather approaches, your children will be outside more often. Please encourage the use of sunscreen and the wearing of helmets and other protective equipment while playing outdoors.....Happy Spring!

## KNIGHTS' NEWS

by Mr. Loomis

On March 15, the Knights' Society held its second trimester promotion ceremony. Leland Ben and Jonathan Brennan were promoted to Squire and received certificates. A student must receive four additional service credits to be made a Squire. Zachary Hollander was promoted to Nobleman and received a certificate and lapel pin. A student must receive an additional twelve service credits after being made a Squire to be promoted to Nobleman. Cameron Walker was promoted to Knight. Cameron was knighted in a special ceremony and received a certificate and a lapel pin. A student must receive twenty additional service credits after being made a Nobleman in order to become a Knight. Congratulations to all the boys who continue to do a wonderful job in providing service to the School and the community.

## NURSERY SCHOOL NEWS

by Mrs. Clark & Mrs. Marohn

In Nursery School, 2010 began on January 4. The children made crowns and new placemats to use at snack time. Activities were focused on winter: snow, penguins, polar bears and cold weather. In celebration of the Winter Olympics, each child created a Miga, one of the mascots. The Migas were mounted on the Lower School bulletin board, along with Olympic memorabilia contributed by other classes. On January 26, the children joined the Pre-K class for a presentation by the Scotia-Glenville Museum entitled "Puppet Personalities."

Punxatawney Phil, the famous groundhog from Pennsylvania, made his prediction for six more weeks of winter when he saw his shadow on February 2. Mrs. Gulyas taught a great song and dance to honor the groundhog. Valentine's Day was celebrated with macaroni and cheese for snack. Following winter vacation, the last week of the month was spent learning traditional nursery rhymes and Mother Goose stories and the countdown to spring was begun.

March tiptoed in with mild weather, but the children made lions anyway! They have replaced the Migas on the bulletin board, which now features a science/ weather theme. Sean the Leprechaun appeared in the classroom. The children are learning his song and the song of the Unicorn in preparation for St. Patrick's Day. The days until **official** spring are counted every day on the calendar. The children can't wait to play outside again!

## LIBRARY-MEDIA CENTER LIFE

by Mrs. Braaten

Spring has sprung --- look what's happening:

The Lake George Opera presented *The Three Little Pigs* on Wednesday, March 3 for Pre-K-4. They did a wonderful job, as always.

Also, Traveling Lantern Theatre Company will be presenting *Dorothy in the Land of Oz* on Tuesday, April 13 at 9:00 a.m. to Pre-K-4.

Thank you to all the families who participated in the birthday book program this year! We had about 25 families add books to our library through the program. There are still books available to help add to our collection. If you would like to honor a summer birthday, graduation, or any type of occasion, please feel free to stop in or have your child pick up a donation sheet from me in the library.

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## ART NEWS

*by Mrs. Shepard*

This trimester, there has been a flurry of activity in the art room at each level. Saint Gregory's young artists created their work using new art skills and understanding new concepts. Students sketched ideas, built forms, and gained an appreciation for art. Each project starts with a basic plan, but where the process takes the students and how the results differ from one student to the next is extraordinary. Creativity, individuality, and imagination flourish, just in time for spring.

Here is a cross-section of the art projects the students have been involved in:

- Eighth-grade yearbook page designs
- Seventh-grade sculptures of "Screamers"
- Sixth-grade plaster figures in action
- Fifth-grade King Tut masks
- Fourth-grade "Opposite" figures
- Third-grade robots on gridded paper
- Second-grade clay coil pots
- First-grade oil pastel striped landscapes
- Kindergarten underwater fish collages
- Pre-K "Starry Night" scenes

Each and every child in the school from Nursery - Grade 8 created a wonderful piece of art for the Square One Art fundraiser.

## GRADE 8 RELIGION

*by Mr. Loomis*

On Tuesday, February 23, the eighth-grade had a visitor to its religion class. Fr. Patrick Butler, pastor of St. Edward's Church in Clifton Park, spoke to the boys as they concluded their unit on Christianity. The boys were very inquisitive of Fr. Butler. They wanted to know why he became a priest and the process involved from making the decision through ordination.

Creation of the world, the concept of God, and many other Biblical stories were discussed. The class came to a conclusion with many of the students wanting to extend the conversation. The School is grateful to Fr. Butler for his time and speaking on such a personal level with the students. Fr. Butler also invited the School to his parish for a recruiting visit. The eighth-grade has studied Judaism and Christianity so far. In the final trimester they will study Islam and Buddhism.

## PRE-K HIGHLIGHTS

*by Ms. Hilts and Mrs. Thomas*

Throughout this trimester, we have continued with the Letter of the Week and Star of the Week. During center time, we focus on reading and math readiness activities as well as art projects that help improve small motor control. We are really looking forward to warmer weather when we can spend time outside at the end of the morning. Pre-K is full of learning and fun!

### *December 2009*

- We made The Gingerbread Man! He ran away and we found him in Mr. Loomis' office!
- We wrote letters to Santa with our 6<sup>th</sup> grade Writing Buddies.
- Mrs. Arrao delivered letters from the North Pole from Santa's elves (3<sup>rd</sup> grade Reading Buddies)
- Max the Mouse (Ginny Kopp and puppet!) came to see us and so did Mrs. Claus
- We hosted a Christmas party for parents complete with ornament making and cookie decorating.

### *January 2010*

- We celebrated the New Year with homemade 2010 headbands.
- We welcomed three new classmates!
- Two stuffed bears, Felipe and Jose, visited from Spain. They spent a night at each student's home.
- Our Reading Buddies read us stories about bear and helped us make bird feeders.
- We celebrated the end of our bear unit with a teddy bear tea party.
- The Scotia-Glenville Traveling Museum presented "Puppet Personalities."

### *February 2010*

- We staged the Pre-K Olympics (sans snow!) in the gym. Everyone took home a gold medal!
- Our Reading Buddies presented a play for us and helped us make Tic-Tac-Toe boards.
- Finally, we had our sledding party. Our 4<sup>th</sup> grade friends were great helpers!
- We studied the five senses.

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- We devoured an “edible rainbow” made of fruit.

## **Saint Gregory’s School Website**

*by Mrs. Nicol*

The Saint Gregory’s School website is currently undergoing a redesign. With the help of Rich Pagano of the Print Connection and with financial support from a generous donor, we are reviewing, updating, and refreshing the material and photos on the website. Some of the changes you can anticipate include: online access to teacher websites, a photo gallery featuring our students, updated information on our academic programs, and a new category for athletics. Also included in this effort is simpler navigation throughout the site. This should improve the usability for both current parents and prospective families. Of course, we will keep the ever-popular *News* category where feature articles about the achievements of our students will be updated regularly. Our thanks are extended to the dedicated group of parents, faculty, and staff who have worked on this project. Look for our new site later this spring.

## **KINDERGARTEN**

*by Mrs. Loftus*

January in Kindergarten was a month of much academic growth. The students began the Book Borrowing program with Ms. Michelle Hilts, our primary literary specialist. Each day previewed leveled readers are assigned to the students, which they bring home to read. They are thrilled to be reading to their families and at the same time honing their newly acquired decoding skills. Sledding down the front hill after lunch and making snow forts was also a big part of our learning to take turns with the various sleds (I want that one it goes faster!), work as a group (taking turns pulling the sleds up the hill), as well as learning to dress independently (boots, snow pants, hats, gloves, coats, and zippers) in a timely manner. We celebrated Chinese New Year by making lanterns and by making red envelopes, and read many books both fiction and non-fiction explaining the holiday. The culmination event was a visit by Dr. Teddy Pan, Michael’s dad. He read the boys a story about The Year of the Tiger and brought in a lion costume, Chinese dumplings and candy. We watched a video about authentic Lion Dancers before the boys did their own version of the dance complete with pots, pans, tambourine and cymbals to accompany the dancers. We also learned about the Olympics by reading books and discussing the various events as well as the athletes from the US who were participating. We contributed to the Lower School’s Olympic exhibit with both Canadian flags and American flags that the boys colored. On Friday before February Vacation the boys joined the Lower School in events devised by the Lower School faculty as part of the multi-age teams competing in fun activities for the afternoon. We squeezed our Valentine’s Day celebration into this action-packed day as well, with special thanks to Ian Shannon’s mom, Diane, and the grandmothers of both Frank Carnevale and Richie Cavoli, who provided us with a festive party. Lastly, the boys authored a class book and individual stories loosely based on Star Wars and Harry Potter that they read to the first-grade. We finally reached our Day 100 milestone last week. We enjoyed a number of activities based on 10 groups of 10 making 100; paper chains in color coded groups of 10, a Lego ship made of 100 pieces, a wooden block structure of 100 blocks, homemade collections of 100 items; seeds, M&M’s, colored paper squares, 100 calorie bags of cookies. We also had snow cones made of 100 ice cubes! We made it, 100 days of school!

## **GOOD EATS!**

*by Mr. Fryer*

On Tuesday, March 30, we will have a nutritionist come to Saint Gregory’s to speak about healthy foods and foods to avoid. Grades K-8 are invited. If you cannot make it, do not worry. Parents are invited to come and learn about healthy lunches and snacks their kids should be eating. A flyer will be sent home with final details.

## **MRS. CONNELL’S ROOM**

*First Grade* - After reading various stories about changes in nature, the boys created with felt butterfly gardens and rows of flowers and vegetables that they’d like to grow. Sentences were written to accompany each art project. Some of their artwork is on display on the bulletin board outside of Mrs. Arrao’s office.

*Second Grade* - Each student wrote a descriptive piece about something in nature that changes. The focus was on the use of interesting adjectives and step-by-step changes. An illustration accompanies each one and can be seen on the Lower School’s “Science is Everywhere” bulletin board.

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*Third Grade* - One group read "The Tale of Despereaux" by Kate DiCamillo and watched the movie. The boys commented on the similarities and differences between each. The other group read Star Jumper by Frank Asch. Like the main character, they created unique inventions out of cardboard, duct tape, paper clips, and other assorted "junk". Each was presented and explained to the class. We're now onto Snow Treasure by Marie McSwigan and The Year of Miss Agnes by Kirkpatrick Hill.

### **“HOW DO YOU GET TO CARNEGIE HALL?”**

*by Mrs. Gulyas*

Great news! Our band continues to grow. Last year, at Grandparents Day, we had a rather “swingin” quintet. At last week’s band rehearsal I counted twelve members with a few more on the way! My goal, one day, is to have the majority of the upper schoolboys participating in the school band. With that in mind, I want to write a few thoughts on practice, what constitutes quality practice time and good practice habits.

First and foremost, students need a good practice space including a chair and music stand. The space should be relatively quiet and out of the flow of family traffic. I do not recommend students sit on their bed as it does not allow for good posture and breathe support. The space should have good light and a receptacle of some sort for brass players to empty spit. Students should clean their instrument and put it back in the case after each playing. Leaving an instrument lying around begs for trouble, especially if you have very young children or pets.

Unfortunately, the days where students can practice hours and hours a day are long gone. Yes, they need to put time aside, but students now are very involved in sports and other activities. We need to be realistic about what is possible. Quantity does not always lead to quality. I would rather a student do twenty minutes of good concentrated practice, working on rough spots in their music than fiddling around for an hour because Mom and Dad have set the oven timer. If they are coming weekly to their lessons... they ARE making progress. Finally, and most importantly, please do not allow instrumental lessons to become a source of unhappiness in the household.

If playing an instrument becomes a power struggle everybody loses and the world can lose many budding young musicians. Music making should involve hard work, yes, but in the end it should be a positive, rewarding and joyous experience for all.

For Grandparents Day this year, the Lower School will be doing selections from *Lion King*. Students are asked to wear an animal costume. If you choose an African jungle animal, that’s great, but whatever you choose is fine. I only ask that if students wear a mask, it should not obstruct their eyes, nose, and mouth. We need to hear their singing! It should definitely be a wild and wonderful day!

### **FIRST GRADE**

*by: Mrs. Dollard*

The first-grade continues to reach new milestones daily. Our goal remains to learn something new each and every day! Focusing on our “Four R’s” – reading, writing, arithmetic, religion – here are some of the eye-popping things that we have accomplished this trimester:

1. Who knew that reading Frog & Toad would lead to exciting new discoveries? By sending friendly letters to our classmates, learning about amphibians and classifying buttons according to their unique properties, we certainly went beyond the story!
2. Did you know that the basic principles of measuring could be accomplished through Olympic events where medals are earned? Techniques in the straw javelin, paper plate discus and cotton ball shot put helped us to master measurement and earn medals for our personal best efforts!
3. Who knew that studying simple machines would lead to building cars that contained an egg “driver,” who then raced the car down an inclined plane? There were some spectacular crashes but the math and science that we learned was even more meaningful.
4. Who would have thought that the three basic principles of Lent – alms-giving, fasting, prayer – would allow us to help families in other countries through the donation of chickens, ducks and bunnies? That certainly made us feel great!

### **NOTES FROM THIRD GRADE**

*by Miss Thayer*

Biography Day brought many important people to the classroom. After reading a biography about the individual they had selected the boys prepared an oral presentation and dressed as their

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person. The class was visited by Benjamin Franklin, Kareem Abdul Jabbar, Vincent Van Gogh, Leonardo DaVinci, Jackie Robinson, Marco Polo, Michael Jordan, John Paul Jones, Davey Crockett, Louis Bleriot, Martin Luther King, Jr., Bill Clinton, Henry Ford, and Joe Montana who gave information about their contributions to our world. It was a very inspiring morning.

On February 10, Mary Kay Sawyer of The Traveling Museum program of The Scotia-Glenville Museum visited the third grade. Ms. Sawyer presented information on the geography, economy, and culture of Alaska. Her presentation included many artifacts. The boys were able to see how different tribes of Native Americans dress according to their lifestyle and the climate of the area. The boys then constructed Inuit hunting hats as the culminating activity.

The third-grades boys also presented the play PUSHING UP THE SKY. This play tells the Indian fable of how the sky was created. A sky was hung from the ceiling and props were gathered from nature. The boys dressed as Native Americans and presented the play to the Pre-K class.

## **NEWS FROM THE GYMNASIUM**

*by Mr. Fryer*

The sports banquet will be held on Thursday, June 3 at 6:30 p.m. in the main gymnasium. All student-athletes from 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade that represented Saint Gregory's in soccer (7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup>), basketball (4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>), cross-country (5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>) and track & field (5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>) will be invited to attend this banquet. The intramural athletes from basketball and soccer will receive certificates during Monday morning assembly on May 24. The banquet will provide food, trophies and raffle prizes for each student-athlete who played a sport at Saint Gregory's and competed against other schools (one per student). We will have a guest speaker, who will be announced at a later date. We encourage all the boys and their families to dress casually for this event.

We will have a meeting about Track & Field during morning recess on Friday, March 26 in the Kopp Wing. The first two practices will be held on Monday, March 29 and Tuesday, March 30 from 3:30-5:00 p.m. All 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students are welcome to join. There will be five Track & Field events held mostly on Wednesdays. We will need parents to drive to the events. We do not provide bus transportation. All the boys must be picked up from the away site; we do not come back to Saint Gregory's. More information will be given out next week. We will be receiving new Track & Field uniforms for this season.

Our basketball programs have been very successful this season and we would like to thank the coaches for taking the time from their busy schedules to instruct and teach the students about commitment and working towards a goal. Currently our 6<sup>th</sup> grade boys' team is playing for a league championship on Saturday, March 13 vs. Troy CYO at Cohoes middle school. The 7/8 Knights are played a semi-finals game vs. Troy CYO at Arongen elementary school in Clifton Park on Sunday, March 14. The 5<sup>th</sup> grade team had 5 wins and 5 losses in league. The 7/8 Dragons finished the season with 5 wins. The 4<sup>th</sup> grade team played a non-league schedule and had 8 wins on the season. 3<sup>rd</sup> grade intramurals was successful and they will move up next school year to represent the School. Mrs. Dollard started the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade intramural program and gave them an opportunity to work on their skills and communicate with their teammates.

Coach Fryer's basketball camp will be held from Tuesday, June 15-Friday, June 18 from 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. and Monday, June 21-Friday June 25 from 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. The camp will be co-ed and any 1<sup>st</sup> -5<sup>th</sup> grade (grades going into next school year) student is welcome to attend. Basketball camp brochures will be handed out after the Easter vacation.

Saint Gregory's will be raising money for the 22<sup>nd</sup> Freihofer's Community Walk. The event is held at the Empire State Plaza at 12:30 p.m. on Saturday, June 5. The course is a 3k (1.86 miles). All donations made for this event will go directly to Saint Gregory's School. There will be more information to come. We encourage all grade level kids and their families to join us. Price Chopper will provide lunch after the walk.

## **FOURTH GRADE**

*by Mrs. Murphy*

The fourth graders have had another busy trimester. The boys learned to multiply and divide large numbers during math classes and wrote adventure stories, legends, and folk tales during creative writing classes. The boys learned about early European explorers and their impact on Native American cultures. In conjunction with their social studies curriculum, the class visited the Albany Visitors' Center and Henry Hudson Planetarium in downtown Albany for a presentation on Henry Hudson's voyage and the early Dutch settlers. As part of the program, the boys handled artifacts from archaeological digs conducted in the area, which displayed evidence

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of Albany's Dutch heritage. They also reenacted a scene depicting what trade might have been like between the Native Americans and Europeans.

## **SPANISH**

*by Señora Mastromarchi*

Can you believe that the third trimester is starting already? It seems like the school year just began! In January Maria Zemantauski, a noted flamenco guitarist, visited the school. She serenaded the students and taught them about "cante hondo," deep, slow, sad songs and "cante chico," fast, upbeat, happy songs. The students even preformed "palmas" with Maria, clapping out rhythms while she played her guitar. It was exciting to see Spanish culture come to life in front of the students' eyes!

Third graders are learning the numbers 1-100 and fourth graders are learning the numbers 1-1,000. They have been using whiteboards and tens blocks in order to make the learning more hands-on. Right now is an exciting time for second grade because they are working on the play, "La Gallinita Roja" (The Little Red Hen). They boys are doing a fantastic job practicing! The seventh graders are creating projects about a vacation. They will write a one-page paper, all in Spanish and make a poster board to show pictures from their vacations! I can't wait to see the finished projects!

## **BASKETBALL TRIP TO SYRACUSE**

*by Mr. Loomis*

On Saturday, January 23 a packed bus of students and parents departed the School's parking lot bound for the Carrier Dome in Syracuse. The weather cooperated and it was a wonderful ride west on the Thruway. We arrived to watch the Marquette basketball team take on the fifth-ranked Syracuse Orangemen. The Carrier Dome was packed to capacity. Marquette led most of the way through the first half, but a late surge by Syracuse tied the game at 34 as the half ended. Syracuse came out to start the second half the way they had ended the first and soon built a lead of 19 points. Marquette did not give up and cut into the lead several times. In the end, Syracuse was able to fend off a late rally by Marquette and hold on for a 6-point victory. The group boarded the bus and headed back home arriving just before 7:00 p.m. All had a good time and the School is grateful to Mr. Pappas for organizing this event.



## **2010-2011 BUS TRANSPORTATION FORMS**

Your school district should have mailed you the annual transportation request forms.

Parents are required to mail the completed form back to their school district

**NO LATER THAN APRIL 1, 2010.**



**This year, Saint Gregory's Summer Camp will run from:  
June 28 – August 6**

To receive a brochure, please see Mrs. Arrao, call the camp line @ 782-1363, e-mail us at [summercamp@saintgregoryschool.org](mailto:summercamp@saintgregoryschool.org), or contact Mrs. Mastromarchi or Mrs. Repicky if you have any questions!