



SANCTA MARIA COLLEGE

A dhaoine uaisle,
Pauline Moran (Principal) and staff wish to send season's greetings to all parents, students and friends of Sancta Maria College. May 2009 bring you and yours health and happiness.

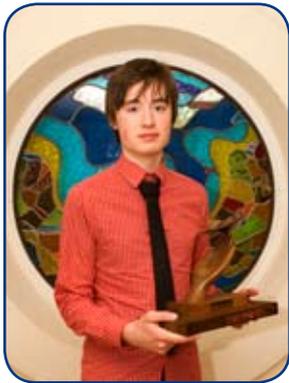
In this newsletter the myriad of activities and various aspects of secondary school life in Sancta Maria College are highlighted and recorded. It is wonderful to report that our students are taking part in such an array of extra-curricular activities. Participation in such activities builds team work, confidence and promotes a positive attitude toward school and education. I congratulate you all agus tá suil agam gur bhain cuile dhuine tairbhe agus taitneamh as a bheith páirteach in imeachtaí e eagsuila na scoile.

Our dedicated and experienced staff is committed to playing an important role in the holistic development and quality education of all our students. Sincere thanks to the Transition Year students who have compiled this newsletter. Congratulations to the Parents association on their 30th Anniversary, during which time they have made a valuable contribution to the school community.

"Ni neart go cur le cheile"

Pauline Moran
Principal

EXAM RESULTS



Well done to our Junior and Leaving Certificate students on their brilliant results in the State Examinations. Congratulations in particular to Shane Kelly, our highest scoring Leaving Certificate student.

CURRICULUM

Agricultural science was introduced this year. The subject has proven to be very popular among students. Out of a total of 66 5th year students 63 have taken a science subject for their Leaving Certificate. Sancta Maria College has a very high success rate of students continuing to pursue a Third Level Qualifications with up to 80% of students pursuing a Third Level Course. We hope this number will increase in coming years and wish all students the very best in the future.

STUDENT OF THE MONTH

Sancta Maria College has introduced a Student of the Month for this school year. Each month a student is awarded for their improvements, achievements and enthusiasm. The Student of the Month was introduced to motivate students and encourage involvement in the school community. It has proved to be a great success. Winners to date have been Grace Hynes (Fifth Year), Molly O Toole (Transition Year) and Sean O Reilly (Second Year).

ADULT EDUCATION

Sancta Maria College now offers a varied adult education programme for Post Leaving Cert/mature students. Courses/modules are currently offered in the area of Childcare.

This course is designed primarily for adults who wish to work in the area of childcare.

Participants will select a range of subjects such as;

- Child Development
- Occupational First Aid
- Working in Childcare
- Information Technology Skills
- Special Needs Assistant

Business Administration and I.T skills is another course/module that is currently offered.

The course is designed for adults who wish to acquire/update computer skills in modern office technology.

Participants will select a range of subjects such as;

- Computer Applications
- Customer Service
- Business Administration
- Word Processing
- Information Technology Skills

All modules are certified by the FETA (Further Education and Training Awards Council). Maintenance grants are available for eligible students.



THE HOMEWORK CLUB

The Homework Club is newly introduced to the school. It is an organised homework and study time for some First Year students. The homework club is supervised by a member of staff and Transition Year students working voluntarily as part of their Gaisce awards. The club takes place every Tuesday and Thursday and is proving to be a great success.

SEWING MACHINES

Earlier this year the school purchased a state of the art set of sewing machines and special tables for the more practical side of the Home Economics course. The kitchen is now solely used for theory and cooking based classes. The sewing and craft making takes place in our new conference room as it is more spacious and convenient.



CRAFT PROJECT

Sancta Maria College has a very high standard of textile craft. The students have been working hard to complete their textile craft for the Junior Certificate. Now equipped with the new facilities, the students have easier access to the required needs.



SPORT

VOLLEYBALL

Volleyball is a newly introduced sport at Sancta Maria College. The sport was introduced by Ms. Mc.Dermott this year. It has proved very popular among the students and it looks like volleyball has a bright future within the school. Volleyball is available for First and Second Year classes. The sport was introduced to create more sporting opportunities for the girls in the school. The appropriate equipment is available to the students such as nets, balls and kneepads. The team is entered in a league and we wish them the very best of luck.



KICK BOXING

Seana Fitzgerald, a Transition Year student at Sancta Maria College recently travelled to Orlando, Florida as part of the White Tiger Kickboxing team to participate in the W.K.A. Championships. The W.K.A. is the highest standard of kickboxing in the world. The school community are very proud of Seana's achievement and wish her well in the future.



FOOTBALL

Both Soccer and Gaelic Football are available for all boys and girls attending Sancta Maria College. The sports are available in the following categories; Under 14's, Under 16's and Under 18's. Both Under 18 boys and girls hold respective Connacht Soccer titles. All the football teams at Sancta Maria College are currently participating in competitions and we are looking forward to more success for the school in the future.



SOCCER

Daniel Fallon, a Leaving Certificate student was selected to represent Ireland in the Under 18 Schools International Soccer Tournament. The team played Greece in Dublin on the 12th December. Daniel was the only Mayo representative on the team.



CYCLING

Charles Prendergast, (Leaving Certificate) and his brother Jason, (First Year) at Sancta Maria College are well known members of the Mayo Wheelers Cycling Club. They have been involved in the sport for three years and have had many great achievements to date. Charles has claimed an All-Ireland title and represented Ireland at International level. They have a promising future in the sporting world.



TRANSITION YEAR ENTERPRISE



The Transition Year students are currently working on their enterprise projects which will be presented before the school community at our Annual Enterprise Trade Fair which will take place in the New Year. In preparation for their projects the Transition Years attended an enterprise workshop in Knockranny House Hotel. They participated in different enterprise activities and competitions. Members of the winning team from Sancta Maria College each received a digital camera.

TRANSITION YEARS ON RADIO NA GAELTACHTA

The Transition Year students travelled to the RTE Radio na Gaeltachta studios in Casla Co. Galway where they participated in the iClub show for teenagers. The school Traditional Band performed and some students were interviewed. The show went out on air on the 28th of November. The podcast of the show is available to download off iTunes or visit www.rte.ie/rnag/



CRAOBH DIOSPOIREACHTA AN OIREACHTAIS



Fiachra Reaney, Louis Scott and Mary Kelly, all Leaving Certificate students from Sancta Maria College won the Oireachtas All-Ireland debating finals in Co. Cork on Wednesday the 29th of October 2008. The debate took place in City Hall, Co. Cork. The motion of the debate was "Young people in Ireland no longer have an interest in Irish culture." The entire debate was conducted through the medium of Irish. The adjudicators were most complimentary of the high standard of debating and after some deliberation they awarded first prize to the students of Sancta Maria College.

CHRISTMAS AT SANCTA MARIA

In preparation for Christmas this year Sancta Maria College took the eco-friendly route to decorating the school for the season. A tree was made from recyclable materials by the students. Also all students made a personal decoration to hang from the tree. The reason behind the green Christmas at Sancta Maria is that the student body feel very strongly about preserving the environment for the future and making Sancta Maria a green School. Wishing you all a green Christmas!!!!



CHRISTMAS CAKES

All students participating in the Transition Year programme make a Traditional Christmas cake over the course of two weeks.

SANCTA MARIA COLLEGE CHANGING LIVES THROUGH OXFAM IRELAND

First Year (A2), Fifth Year (E2) and Leaving Certificate (F1) students through their Religion Class raised much needed funds for Oxfam's charity overseas. The money raised has helped Oxfam purchase farm animals which will be of great benefit to poor families in these developing communities.

GREEN SCHOOLS

In April 2008, Sancta Maria College registered with An Taisce, to become a member of Green Schools. Green Schools is an international environmental education programme promoting responsible behaviour amongst students and the wider community towards the environment. We have all been working extremely hard to achieve a Green Flag for our school. The Transition Year students have hand-crafted bird tables while First and Second Years are dealing with compost bins. Transition Years and Fifth Years are currently on a litter picking rota, Third Years are in charge of keeping the school grounds clean. The school campaigns for students to re-use their bottles and to bring a lunch in re-useable plastic lunch-boxes. The use of the categorised bins is highly encouraged. Energy awareness is important within the school. We hope to apply for our first Green Flag in the New Year.



MUSICAL HELLO DOLLY

After a month of auditioning and some serious decision making by our drama director, Miss Marina Rice and our musical director Miss Michelle Hogan, our school's production of the musical "Hello Dolly" has finally been cast. "Hello Dolly" is a musical set in the 1850s about the vivacious matchmaker Mrs. Dolly Levi (Heather Billington) who has a knack of meddling in the lives of all those around her. Determined to wed Horace Vandergelder (Austin O'Malley) herself, whom she has previously promised to a Mrs. Irene Molloy (Jillian O'Malley), she comes up with various ploys to ensnare him, whilst pairing other happy couples along the way. This will be the school's 14th musical production and will hopefully be just as successful as its predecessors. A full list of the cast can be found on the school website www.sanctamaria.ie



NEW COMPUTER FACILITIES

The IT room was recently equipped with new state of the art computers this year. All students can now benefit from the most modern and up to date technology.



INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

We welcome all the new students to Sancta Maria College from other countries and cultures who have joined us this year. We hope they enjoy their stay here and find it a worthwhile cultural experience.

TEXT ALERTS

Sancta Maria has introduced a text alert system to communicate as needed with the parents of students.



SANCTA MARIA VISIT GAELSCOIL NA CRUAICHE

Past pupils of Gaelscoil na Cruaiche and their Slovakian friends who are now attending Sancta Maria College visited the school on Monday December 15th. They joined the school band and choir and hosted a memorable day of music to mark the Christmas season. The students thoroughly enjoyed the day and are grateful to Gaelscoil na Cruaiche for the opportunity to visit the school.

FRENCH THEATRE FOR SANCTA MARIA

Students in Sancta Maria will take part in a French theatre production in the New Year. Acting will be "en francais" and promises to be a worthwhile and enjoyable experience for all.

PAST PUPIL OF SANCTA MARIA

Fergal Smith a past pupil of Sancta Maria College is a well known surfer worldwide. This picture captures Fergal bravely surfing alongside a shark.



STUDY SKILLS

Mr. Michael Bond conducted a study skills workshop with the students in the school to prepare them for future state examinations. It proved to be very successful.

TY PUBLIC SPEAKING TEAM

Our Transition Year Public Speaking Team won the Mayo final of the Forum on Europe Public Speaking competition. Team members include Molly O Toole, Jillian O Malley and Oisin Mc Donagh. David O Malley is substitute. They defeated Ballinrobe Community School, St. Gerald's College Castlebar and St. Marys Secondary School Ballina to win the Mayo final.

MENTOR SYSTEM

There is a mentor system in place in Sancta Maria College to help First Year students adapt to their new school environment. Leaving Certificate students act as mentors to the First Years to guide them and look out for them during their first year in the school. Our current mentors are as follows: James Durkan, Benn Forsythe, Megan Noone, Fiachra Reaney, Shane Kilcoyne, Niall Mc Garrigle, Mary Kelly, Eve O'Reilly, Louise Scott, Liam O'Malley, Jane Concannon, Niamh Cox.

TRANSITION YEAR TRIP TO THE FOUR COURTS AND THE DÁIL.

On the 26th of November the Transition Year Class visited the Four Courts and The Dáil in Dublin. In the Four Courts a barrister informed them about the Irish court system, the types of court and the jurisdiction of each one. The students got the opportunity to sit in on a real murder trial. Afterwards they travelled to the Dáil where local TD Michael Ring met them. They were then given a tour of Leinster House. They finished the day shopping in Liffey Valley Shopping Centre. It was both an interesting and enjoyable day.

STUDENT COUNCIL

Sancta Maria College Students' Council acts as a voice for the students in the school. The council operates under a constitution and elects its own committee. The overall aim of the council is to help in the communication process at all levels between staff, students and parents. It represents the views of students on matters of concern to them. The council may assist management with certain duties. It may assist in the organisation of school events.

This year's representatives are:

A1-Colin O'Malley
B1-Kirsty Walsh
C1-Maureen Corrigan
TY1-Jack Gillivan
E1-Eimear O'Reilly
F1-Alan Durkan

A2-James Gibbons
B2-Louise O'Toole
C2-Kate Geraghty
TY2-Annette Gibbons
E2-Helen Burke
F2-Corey O'Toole



DEFIBRILLATOR

Last year the Parents Association of Sancta Maria College purchased a school defibrillator. After many fundraising events organized by the Parents Association and the student body the adequate funds were raised. Jimmy Corrigan presented the defibrillator to Mrs. Moran at an official presentation in the school. A number of staff members are now fully qualified to use the equipment.



HOME SCHOOL

Sancta Maria College took up the Home School Liaison scheme in 1999. The scheme improves co-operation and communication between the school, the home and the local community and is an important link between all the partners in education.

In Sancta Maria College the HSCL person is involved as follows:

- Home visits
- Invites and welcomes parents to the school to discuss issues with her or with a member of staff as may be necessary
- Liaise with other groups in the community to provide useful talks or courses for adults and inform parents of same
- Network with organisations that impinge on the broad education of the pupils
- Visit the feeder Primary schools after enrolment to talk to the 6th class teacher and pupils who enrol in Sancta Maria College.

The following workshops have been organised for the different year groups so far this year:

Anti Bullying – Oct 2nd for 1st years

Friendship and Self-Esteem – Oct 16th for 2nd years

Anger Management – Oct 16th for TY's

Think Positive, Be Positive – Dec 4th for LC's

3rd years can look forward to a workshop on Diversity in Feb/Mar. In this workshop we discuss discrimination and stereotypes and discover what types of discrimination our pupils may be subjected to in school.

SANCTA MARIA PARENTS ASSOCIATION CELEBRATES 30 YEAR MILESTONE

Last week saw a very special occasion marked in Sancta Maria College when the 30th anniversary of the founding of this school's Parents Association was celebrated. Three decades, three principals, and thousands of students later, the 22 member Parents Association continues to play an integral role in the life of Sancta Maria College. And with one eye on their contribution so far and another on the future, their success was celebrated on Wednesday, December 3rd. Following a tree planting ceremony in the school garden as dusk approached members of the Parents Association joined staff of the school and other members of the community for a mass inside.

The Mass was concelebrated by Fr. Leo Morahan and Fr. Mattie Long, PP Louisburgh. Fr. Long told the congregation that the Eucharist is about Thanks Giving and "today we give thanks for the work of the Parents Association in Sancta Maria College over the last 30 years." He added that the work of the parents association is linked to the work of parents in handing down what is dear and important to the next generation and that the love God has for everybody is best reflected in the love parents have for their children. Chairperson of the current Parents Association, Mr. Dara Kelly, told the congregation prior to the mass that the tree he had planted was an alder tree, which in old times represented education and intellectual achievement, but also mediation and harmony. He said it was an appropriate choice to mark the 30th anniversary of the Parents Association. Mrs. Pauline Moran, Principal of Sancta Maria College, thanked the Parents Association for their tireless efforts down through the years, and their support on so many important initiatives including the installing of a defibrillator and training people to use it.

The Parents Association at Sancta Maria College was first formed in February 1978 with a method of finance of a £1 levy per household. One of the first decisions they made was that all future meetings would start with a prayer, but over the years they have become one of the main lobby and fundraising entities in the school and have organised an annual sale of work, an annual deb's ball, raffles and church gate collections. They have welcomed many new members of staff and three Principals in Sr. Ann Feighney, Mr. Vincent O'Loughlin and Mrs. Pauline Moran, and sought assistance in many issues that have arisen over the years such as problems with school transport, the teacher-pupil ratio, the need for a full-time commerce and P.E. teacher and the school extension.

They have also liaised with T.D.'s and senators on school related matters over the decades, and organized seminars on study skills, drug and mental health issues. We would like to thank all the parents that attended the ceremony and special thanks is awarded to Mrs. Nonie Gill who was elected treasurer on the first committee in 1978. The picture below shows Mrs. Gill cutting a cake to mark the 30th anniversary.



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SYMPATHY

We extend our condolences to families in our school community who have been recently bereaved and are experiencing sadness at this time.
"Go raibh síochain na Nollag ina gcoithe."

