



**ST. ROBERT**  
SCHOOL

Educating and inspiring  
saints and leaders

# FAMILY MATTERS

ISSUE 18

FEBRUARY 2, 2012

**Friday, 2/3**

**11:15 am**

**DISMISSAL**

#### UPCOMING EVENTS

2/3 8:00 am  
All School Mass, 6th-Mathews

2/3 11:15 am  
DISMISSAL

2/7 Morning  
Battle of the Books, 4th-6th Gr  
(see Home & School News for  
details)

2/7 Morning  
Mary Tooley, 2nd Gr

2/7 Afternoon  
Mary Tooley, 3rd Gr

2/8 6:30 pm  
School Advisory Board Mtg.

2/10 8:00 am  
All School Mass, 4th-Stefaniak

2/11 6:00 pm  
Father Daughter Dance

## Principal's Pen

I had the opportunity to attend a local showing of the documentary film "Race to Nowhere" this week. The film is a powerful commentary on the current state of American childhood. It is also a rallying cry for a fundamental shift in the education system that is viewed to have contributed substantially to its demise. The message is damning for both educators and parents. At least for children of privilege, the film paints a picture of days consumed by school, scheduled activity, tutoring, practice, and homework seemingly without end.

From fourth or fifth grade, we see typical "advantaged" children enjoying precious little down time and dangerously low levels of sleep. They experience intense pressure to compete – and to win. And this focus on winning the prize of a seat in "the right" college is at the expense of authentic college and career-ready skills. More disturbing is that it leads inevitably to overwhelming emotional stress, and, eventually, to failure by design. The film's producers illuminate the frightening reality of an educational system in which the bright light of childhood and the hope of *real* fulfillment are at risk of being extinguished forever. An education system designed almost exclusively as a path to higher education has led to an out-of-whack value on quantitative measures of a kind of learning that has little staying power and relevance. Ironically, consumers of this educational race are shockingly likely to drop out of college and suffer debilitating emotional trauma in striking contrast to their peers in countries whose education systems are oriented toward creative and critical thinking who not only get there, but thrive without an early start; without an intrusion into family time; even without any homework at all in their early years.

An education that defines and measures only one kind of success and is narrowly focused on getting into the "right" college has led to standardized test frenzy, a tutoring industry run amok, and a frantic, never-ending reach for the next level of educational accomplishment at the expense of actualizing *this* moment of childhood.



I suppose I should've felt affirmed. Our curriculum designed around problem-based collaborative learning reaches precisely for the creative critical thinking that is aligned with successful outcomes and healthy children. Our very mission is oriented toward helping children discover and nurture the full range of their unique gifts. But still, I cried. Still, so much is broken all around us. The truth is that until we are able to say out loud that college is *not* the only way to a successful, fulfilling adulthood; until we open our minds to valuing a true diversity of gifts and career paths; until we stop judging a man's worth by the size of his bank account – until then, we will be only a tiny bucket in an ocean of broken dreams.

Despite that I have been a student of child development since my undergraduate years, it was my own children who taught me the most and inspired me to transform education for yours. After years of obedient reaching and hopeful waiting, my own high-achieving daughter learned on her first day of high school that she was just embarking on a breathless race to college. Finally, hopelessly disheartened and disillusioned, she asked, "When do we get to be the age that we are?" When, indeed?

We have so much more to learn and to change. We must not only make our own magical school, but create a wave of movement that will ripple far beyond the east side of Milwaukee. Please see this film and join the conversation. The next local showing will be at Marquette High School on February 17<sup>th</sup>. Register at <http://www.racetonowhere.com/>

For a more complete listing of upcoming events, see the on-line calendar (control + click to follow the link):

[http://www.strobert.org/school/Current\\_Parents\\_0092/Calendar0114.html](http://www.strobert.org/school/Current_Parents_0092/Calendar0114.html)

## Notes from the Office



### REPORTING ABSENCES, LATE ARRIVALS

Call the **SCHOOL OFFICE attendance line each day your student will be absent or late (332-1164 ext. 3434)**. Provide student's name and teacher or room number, your name, and reason for the absence (**be specific as to symptoms if ill**—e.g., fever over 100 degrees, cough, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea) or late arrival. *If hot lunch is needed, please also indicate which entrée is preferred.*



## Coffee with the Principal

### Topic: Inclusion

Join Lauren and your fellow parents on Tuesday, February 7, from 8-9 a.m., in Room 207 (the Gathering Room) for the second in a series of discussions on topics of interest to school families. The subject this month will be inclusion; come discuss our school's efforts to open its doors to a diversity of students, meet their various educational needs, and foster a social environment that promotes learning. Coffee and light refreshments will be served. RSVP to Susan Callanan, [susan.callanan@sbcglobal.net](mailto:susan.callanan@sbcglobal.net), 414-962-6569, if you plan to attend. Of note, mark your calendars for the first Tuesday mornings of March and May for the remaining Principal's Coffees for this school year. Based on parental input, topics those mornings will be the school's literacy program and sex education.



## Scrip Corner

Welcome Sciortino's and Salvatore's Pizza—just in time for Valentine's Day! Sweets and treats for your sweeties can be purchased with cards from our SCRIP program. Or the cards themselves make fantastic gifts—Amazon, iTunes, Panera, Noodles, Kohl's, Target, Best Buy, or Barnes & Noble to name a few! Come browse our cards, and we think you will be surprised at how much gift shopping you can get done just buying SCRIP! And we've sweetened the pot! Purchase \$100 in gift cards, and you will be entered in our drawing for a \$25 SCRIP gift card of your choice! Scrip is being sold every Wednesday (that school is in session) from 1:45 - 2:15 on the rectory sun porch. Look for the signs.



## Candid Photos Needed for the Yearbook

Do you have fun pictures from the school year—sporting events, boo bash, classroom activities, maybe the playground? Please send your digital images on a flash drive or CD, or send a hard copy for us to scan, to the school office by **February 24, 2012**, for consideration in the yearbook collage pages. Please mark your items so they can be returned to you.



## Community News

### Lenten Experience with CRS

You are invited to a Lenten Experience with Catholic Relief Services on Wednesday, February 29 at 6:30 pm at the Cousins Center (3501 S. Lake Dr., Milwaukee). The event includes Stations of the Cross with Archbishop Listecky presiding; a meal featuring recipes from Madagascar, El Salvador, and India; and an educational session by CRS: "Saving Lives—Strengthening Communities in Madagascar." Registrations preferred by February 16. Contact Kathy Shine at [shinek@archmil.org](mailto:shinek@archmil.org) or 758-2285.

# Home & School News

## Downer Ave Wine & Spirits Fundraiser

When you shop at Downer Avenue Wine & Spirits now through February 11, they will donate 10% of each sale to the Emerald Auction. Flyers were sent home in last week's home folder and are available on the school website.



## Miss the Book Fair?

You can still support the book fair with two ways to buy books until Feb. 5th!!

**Buy Online:** order books online to pick up at the store or ship anywhere in U.S.—tell all your friends and family!!



<http://boswell.indiebound.com/> Remember to add "St. Robert Book Fair" in the comments field. **Buy in Person** at Boswell Book Company (2559 N. Downer): All books are eligible! Also, teacher wish lists are available at the store. Be sure to mention "St. Robert Book Fair" at checkout! Questions? Contact Karen Hunt: [amphitr1te@wi.rr.com](mailto:amphitr1te@wi.rr.com) or Kate Almond: [kate\\_almond@mac.com](mailto:kate_almond@mac.com)

## Battle of the Books

Tuesday, Feb. 7 will be the first battle. 6th grade will battle at 9:30. 4th grade at 10:00. 5th grade at 10:30. A schedule will be available in the office the day of battles.



## Variety Show 2012

Calling All Performers! If you missed tryouts last week, you can still audition on Monday, February 6 from 3:05 to 4:30 pm. Sign up for a time slot on the sheets posted outside the office. Email Joe O'Neill with questions: [znewone@yahoo.com](mailto:znewone@yahoo.com)



## Notes from the President Thank You!

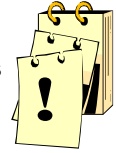
Last week, 4<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade students got a glimpse into the **World of Work**. Thank you to parents Gretchen Keating and Bill Bonifas for organizing this career day and giving our students some information and ideas to think about as they consider the possibilities for themselves.

What a fun day we had at our school on Sunday! Thank you to Lisa & Todd Lewein and Donna & Bob Stelter and all of the other volunteers for putting on another great **Pancake Breakfast**. The pancakes were abundant and delicious, and it was a great FUNdraiser for our school. Thank you also to Laura Pfaff for organizing our **Uniform Resale**. We had a great Open House, and certainly the many prospective families and other guests visiting on Sunday could feel the energy and vitality of our special community.

**Catholic Schools Week** has been a lot of fun this week. Thank you to chairs Laura Nikolich and Carolynne Forlenza-Corrao for organizing all of the events for this celebration of our school. We will wrap it up Friday with a Home and School sponsored **Teacher/Staff Appreciation Lunch** – but don't forget to pass on your special thanks to everyone who works so hard to make our Catholic School great! Thank you Molly Gallagher and Allie Pierson for organizing the lunch.

We had a great **Book Fair** on Sunday – but it is not over! There is still time to get your order in with our partner Boswell Books. When you mention the St. Robert Book Fair in store and online (for any available books), anytime through 2/5/2012– your purchase helps support our school. See the flier on the school website for more details, and don't miss this opportunity to support St. Robert and our partner – the locally owned Boswell Books on Downer.

Much more fun on the calendar for February! You will have opportunities to attend some special parent-child events this month – **The Father Daughter Dance on February 11<sup>th</sup>** and **Mother Son Bowling on February 19<sup>th</sup>**. Don't miss the fun! More information online.



- **Variety Show – February 16<sup>th</sup>** – A showcase of the many and diverse talents of our students. Evening performance in the Gym.
- **Rice Bowl – February 22<sup>nd</sup>** – Our Rice Bowl tradition for students will take place again this year at the start of Lent on Ash Wednesday.
- **Effortless Fundraising** – Please remember to check out our website under "Help by Shopping" to see all of the effortless ways you can help support our school. Boxtops, Labels, & Milk Caps for Education; Target, Land's End, & Office Depot Rebates; Magazines & More! Thank you for your support!

## Emerald Auction Update

\*\*\*\*\*Deadline Approaching\*\*\*\*\*

Our very own Emerald Auction is coming soon! Our deadline for **Acquisitions, Underwriting, and Advertising** will be coming up fast as we will need time to produce and distribute our catalog. All donations are *greatly* appreciated – and if you can get them in this week, that is *greatly* appreciated too. Please visit the special Emerald Auction page of our website for more information, and make sure you have March 10<sup>th</sup> on your calendar. Thank you to all of the parent volunteers that are working so hard putting this all together!



Wendy Wallace  
414-704-8428  
[Wendy.m.wallace@gmail.com](mailto:Wendy.m.wallace@gmail.com)

# Open House Update—Thank You!



From Lisa Lesjak, Director of School Advancement

Thank you all for helping make what is a special place EVERY day an extra special place for Open House. On Sunday during the event and in emails, phone calls and casual conversation since, I continue to hear wonderful comments about the Mass, Open House, academic program, building AND this community. While I am GRATEFUL for the support I receive from my colleagues and parent volunteers, I was especially PROUD of our student volunteers this year. They represented their classmates beyond my expectations.

As visiting families signed in they were asked for some general information. I have compared the results to those of our January Open House last year. The number of prospective families and prospective students is the highest in several years. I was also encouraged by the number of families who had younger than school-age children with them. They are our future beyond next year!

Please keep the referrals of prospective families coming and remind them that they can make arrangements for a personal tour with me almost any day and any time.

	January 2011	January 2012
# Prospective Families	21	23
# Prospective Children for Next Year	21	23
	K4 = 12	K4 = 15
	K5 = 6	K5 = 2
	1 <sup>st</sup> = 1	1 <sup>st</sup> = 3
	2 <sup>nd</sup> =	2 <sup>nd</sup> =
	3 <sup>rd</sup> =	3 <sup>rd</sup> = 1
	4 <sup>th</sup> =	4 <sup>th</sup> =
	5 <sup>th</sup> =	5 <sup>th</sup> =
	6 <sup>th</sup> =	6 <sup>th</sup> = 1
	7 <sup>th</sup> =	7 <sup>th</sup> = 1
	8 <sup>th</sup> = 2	8 <sup>th</sup> =
# Prospective Children for Year After Next	3 (3 year olds)	2 (3 year olds)
# Prospective Children for Years Beyond	5 (newborn-2 year old)	5+ (newborn-2 year old)
# Parish Families	8 St. Robert 1 St. Martin de Porres	5 St. Robert
How heard about Open House?	Referred by = Dulmes, Capati, Bianchini, Gridley, Osborn, Almond, Corbett, Balthasar, Blommel, Kloehn, Frediani	Referred by = Connell, Dulmes, Roloff, Lisa, Corbett, McGartland, Desing, Reilly, Ognar, Kathy Hendricks, multiple families
	Church bulletin = 1	Church bulletin = 2
	Postcard = 3	Postcard = 4
	Poster = 0	Poster = 0
	Letter from principal = 0	Letter from principal = 0
	Newspaper = 0	Newspaper = 0
	Website = 5	Website = 3
	Other = friends attend, neighborhood, word of mouth	Other = live nearby, mother is SRS alum, called

# Athletics

The 8th grade girls Notre Dame league team started slowly in the first half against St. Mary of Elm Grove, but a strong second half resulted in a 35-19 Bobcat win. To add to the excitement, the Bobcats received their invitation to the Padre Serra Tournament immediately after the game. Needless to say, it was a very excited group of Bobcats in the post-game huddle. Congratulations, Bobcats!!

The 8th grade girls played a great game against Salaam School, winning 36.

The 8th grade boys had a bye this week. They get back on the court next Sunday @ 4:00pm vs. Bruce Guadalupe.

The 7th grade girls played really well as a team today against St. Eugene. They passed the ball well and played tough defense. Many players scored! We are now 6-1 in our league, continuing to be in first place.

The 7th Grade Boys A team was missing two of its big men Sunday but still managed to beat a scrappy Salaam

team. Thanks to Mitchell and Max for filling in during the game. The boys remain undefeated in league play. 6th grade girls blue team beat St. Monica 36-6 to go 4-2 in the league.



The home court was a bit hard on the 5th grade boys this weekend. Playing in front of capacity crowds, both teams lost their early morning contests, Blue 21-18 and White 22-10. Both teams continue to improve!

The 5th grade girls white team won their league game on Saturday and improved their record to 6-1. The team continues to improve each week. The girls play their next game at 10:00 am at St. Robert on Saturday; come watch and cheer them on.

***GO BOBCATS!!***

## ***Student Leadership Council News Flash!***

We are collecting valentines and personal care items for low-income veterans served by The Milwaukee Homeless Veterans Initiative. We're looking for items such as:

- soap
- lotion
- toothbrush
- combs
- lotions
- shampoo and conditioner
- razors

The personal care drive will take place Monday, February 6<sup>th</sup> through Friday, February 10<sup>th</sup>. Please help us show our support for these veterans in need!

The Milwaukee Homeless Veterans Initiative is a veterans helping veterans organization since 2007. Programs include outreach to veterans living on the streets of Milwaukee, assistance and advocacy for veterans seeking their VA benefits, a transportation and furniture program, and the only veterans food pantry in Wisconsin open every Tuesday morning. The pantry is located at St. John's church on 55<sup>th</sup> & Greenfield Ave. Your donation goes a long way in improving the lives of those who served. To learn more about the Milwaukee Homeless Veterans Initiative or make a donation please visit their website at [www.neverhomeless.org](http://www.neverhomeless.org).



MARCH 10<sup>th</sup>, 2012

## Sign Up Parties: Get there early to sign up for these!

- Rockin' Around the World Progressive Dinner Party
- Pedal Tavern party for 32 including Summerfest Admission
- Beer Tasting Party
- Scotch Tasting Party

## Other great items donated so far...

- 4 tickets to the SOLD OUT Coldplay concert in Chicago!
- Spa package for two at the Grand Geneva Resort and Spa
- Behind the Scenes Tour of the Milwaukee County Zoo
- Teacher for a Day

## Wish List...

- Any unused "points" from credit cards, hotels or airlines? We can put those to use towards a fabulous getaway!
- Tickets to concerts, sporting events and shows
- Vacation rentals-near and far!!

Please contact our acquisitions team: Bob Osborn: 808-5477, [bobo73@msn.com](mailto:bobo73@msn.com) or Kevin Kloehn: 801-1424, [kckloehn@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kckloehn@sbcglobal.net) with ideas or questions!

Donation forms can be found online. See the website:

[strobert.org/school/Current\\_Parents\\_0092/Emerald\\_Auction0212.html](http://strobert.org/school/Current_Parents_0092/Emerald_Auction0212.html)

***Donation Deadline: February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2012!***

Ads in the catalog are available from \$100 to \$300! Same low rates as last year!

Contact Rhiana Vella: 202-5756, [rhilea79@yahoo.com](mailto:rhilea79@yahoo.com).

Please underwrite! Donations of any amount are always welcome!

Contact Jane Bolland: 520-6354, [cbulljbol@ameritech.net](mailto:cbulljbol@ameritech.net).

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