

Note from Administration

As we continue to try and build on our ability to communicate with the families and community represented here at St. Benedict, we would like to ask for your help. If you are reading this, you are probably already a subscriber to BENN. I would like to ask you to find a friend or neighbor who has not signed up and have them register. We hope to build on our distribution base so more voices can speak to the good news that is St. Benedict.

The BENN newsletter is one of the various commitments we have made this year to improve our communication with school and home. Others include the daily announcements in PowerPoint form posted on the school website, grade 9 parent evening, academic awards night, early interview dates, Graduation, our automated dialer with periodic messages of school wide events, post secondary information Facebook page, and a renewed commitment to keep our manually operated school sign up to date.

Please pass on the good word and help us build the BENN distribution network and information that supports the working relationships between home, community and school.

Advent blessings to all.

- Mr. J. McKinnon, Principal

Administrative

WHO IS YOUR ADMINISTRATOR? The administrative contact for your son or daughter is based on your last name; for A to F your contact is [Mrs. Daly](#), for G through O your administrator is [Mr. Bellini](#), and for P through Z your administrator is [Mrs. Leusink](#). As always, feel free to contact our principal, [Mr. McKinnon](#) if you need to.

If your son or daughter is absent from school on a particular day, please try to call the school by noon that day. **The direct phone line for the attendance office is (519) 621-4001.**

As the weather starts to get cooler, students will start wearing coats and sweaters for warmth. We take this opportunity to remind you that non-uniform clothing is not permitted in the classrooms. Students who want to wear a sweater in class must wear a Benny's sweater with the **B** logo. These can be purchased at Mark's Work Warehouse.

PEDESTRIAN CROSSING SIGNALS

BY MR. L. BELLINI, VICE-PRINCIPAL

Recently, the Region of Waterloo's Traffic Department installed new pedestrian crossing signals at the corner of Franklin Blvd. and Saginaw Pkwy. The newly installed crossing signals have a numeric display which counts down. The crossing signal indicates to the pedestrian how much time they have left to safely cross the roadway.

We have also contacted the Traffic Department to increase the crossing time at this intersection. The Region conducted a brief study of the pedestrian traffic at the intersection during the school's two lunch periods. They agreed to extend the crossing times at the intersection between the hours of 11 AM and 1 PM. An announcement has been made to the student body regarding the new crossing signals and extended crossing time. We hope with the installation of the new pedestrian crossing signals and extended crossing times this will help in keeping your child safe.

Academic

BENNY'S STUDENTS EXCEL AT DECA

BY MISS B. BESTER

On Thursday November 20th, 51 of our students ventured to Bingeman's Conference centre to participate in the regional DECA competition. The students each completed a multiple-choice examination and a case presentation in various business categories ranging from accounting to marketing services to business ethics. All of our students worked very hard preparing and studying for their categories and achieved a measure of success. The following students qualified to participate in the provincial competitions in Toronto February 6th and 7th.

Roxana Amaya
Krystle Amog
Daniel Avery
Richelle Batuigas
Tonya Botting
Harpreet Brar
Steven Chadwick
Janine Chaves
Tara Chen
Yelim Choi
Phillip Dasilva
Jeff Dow

Meagan Fenske
Sarah Ferland
Rishi Gupta
Suset Iglesias
Leana Keosavanh
Michael Krzywicki
James Kyeong
Rachel Lee
Brittany Lorde
Michelle Macintyre
Dominique Malinowski
Tracey Mendonca

Vanessa Novak
Marina Pinato
Alex Reed
Afra Rehman
Victoria Roias
Kevin Shea
Tong Shi
Harjot Singh
Riccardo Spatone
Rachel Turner
Ronnie Vong
Catherine Wiska

Congratulations goes to the bolded students' for achieving a top 10 finish in part, or all, of their category. Also, two of our students achieved tremendous success, congratulations goes out to Janine Chaves for finishing 3rd overall in Food Marketing Services and to Tong Shi for finishing 1st overall in the Business Services Marketing category.

SAINTS LEADING BY EXAMPLE

By Mr. A. Milardovic, with files from Miss C. Stockie

SBCSS Staff have embarked on a new initiative to celebrate student accomplishments. Recently, they received several business cards with which they could nominate a student--in any grade--for demonstrating excellence in one or more of the following categories: academic excellence, dependability, accuracy, working relationships, and respect.

The purpose of this school-wide, year-long initiative is to celebrate the accomplishments of those students in our community who are truly exceptional, but who may get "missed" at an academic awards night, or an athletic banquet, or even an arts banquet. They may have perfect attendance, or be strong academically (but not #1), or be a very responsible young adult, or be able to create wonderful and respectful relationships with students and staff alike, or be dependable--always!

Teachers are asked to take a moment to consider nominating their "best kid" (not top 10), fill out a card, give it to the student, and they can drop it off in the container in the main office. It is the intention of the committee to have bi-weekly draws for student winners. Prizes will include gift certificates, spirit wear, or other merchandise from businesses in our community.

If you have a business and would like to make a contribution to the prizes for our students, please contact [Miss Stockie](#) or [Mr. McKinnon](#).

CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE

Congratulations to the following students who are being recognized for being Saints Leading by Example...

Grade 9 - Justin Boyd (Building Relationships and Respect) and Jamie Francis (Academic Excellence and Responsibility)

Grade 10 - Curtis Jansen (Dependability and Academic Excellence)

Grade 11 - Brandon Findlay (Academic Excellence and Showing Respect)

Grade 12 - Matthew Wollzeifer (Building Relationships and Responsibility) and Steven Lane (Academic Excellence and Dependability)

Thanks as well to Shoeless Joe's for their generosity in providing our school with 1700 lunch vouchers for our excellent students! Your dedication to recognizing the accomplishments of our students is truly appreciated!

 Clicking on the blackboard on the Benny's website will take you to ClassNet

WHAT DO YOU HAVE FOR HOMEWORK? NOTHING?

Ah, that timeless answer students give to parents... Many of our teachers are now posting homework assignments on the board's homework repository, ClassNet. In order to get to ClassNet to check for homework, assignments, or other information for classes your son or daughter has, go to <http://classnet.wcdsb.ca>.

On the Benny's website, simply click on the blackboard in the bottom left corner of the screen and it will take you there.

HOMWORK CLUB Homework Club is a Volunteer Tutoring Centre run by St. Benedict Teachers. It takes place Monday to Thursday every week from 2:30 to 3:30 in Rm 224. The room is staffed with a minimum of two teachers at a time and these teachers have expertise in math, science and the arts. Students can come to utilize the many computers in the room, seek assistance from teachers, work with friends or just have a quiet place to go each day to complete homework. It is a great program that many students are using but more are always welcome.

LITERACY CORNER In preparation for the OSSLT (literacy test) we will be running literacy tips in each newsletter courtesy of the Literacy Committee. These tips will help prepare your son/daughter for the test and will enhance literacy skills if your son/daughter has already passed the OSSLT.

LITERACY TEST Attention all Grade 10 parents! The literacy test will be written on April 2, 2009. Stay tuned for information on a parent night as well as handy tips to help your son or daughter prepare for this test.

WCDSB STUDENT SUCCESS SITE

<http://bss.wcdsb.ca>

Resources to help you help your son or daughter succeed.

LITERACY TIP #4

Elements of Literacy

There are 4 elements of literacy:

- reading
- writing
- listening
- speaking

Have your son/daughter rank order what element is their strength. Discuss what the weaker element(s) is and how they may get stronger in that area. You may further discuss why they may not want to pursue the area that is weak as well.

MATH CREDIT RESCUE The math department is running Math Credit Rescue after school Mondays and Thursdays. Students from **any grade** can receive tutoring, support, or be given the time to "rescue" summative assessments (test, quizzes, assignments) that students have had difficulties with. To participate, a student must get a letter from their math teacher, and must return it signed by a parent or guardian.

Clubs & Athletics

WINTER SPORTS coaches and contact emails have been posted in the athletics section of the school website.

CURLERS READY TO ROCK THE HOUSE

BY MR. J. FAGE

Our curlers have hit the sheets for another year! This year, St. Benedict has two rinks of both experienced and novice curlers that play at the Galt Country Club each Wednesday afternoon. The November sessions have focused on training and skill development while the remainder of the season will see competitive play against other Cambridge high schools. New curlers are always welcome; curling is a great way to get active and to meet new friends!

For more details, contact coaches Mr. Fage or Mrs. Vopni.

BENNIES INTRAMURAL HOCKEY A HIT!

BY MR. M. HUEMILLER

Bennies Intramural Hockey has been successfully rolling along in its inaugural year! Led by Mr. Jankura and Ms. Ducker, this group of hockey players has been gathering weekly to play the great game of hockey, thoroughly enjoying the experience and keeping fit! Thanks to those who are continuing to come out this year. Next season we will be looking for renewed interest, possibly even to expand our numbers, so to all hockey fans out there: Stay Tuned! Also, the Staff vs. Students game for this year will occur on our last weekly game which is before the Christmas Break on December 17th, 2008!

GET FIT! The **Fitness center** is up and running! Muscles have grown in the fitness centre since the last newsletter! Come in to see for yourself. Better yet, come grow some of your own! We are open to all seedlings, students or staff, Monday through Thursday, 2:30 to 3:30.

THE GAMES CLUB is hosted by Mr. Riso in room 227 every Thursday after school. Students will have the chance to learn and play new strategy games and compete in various tournaments.

Other News

STUDENT ACTIVITIES' FALL FAIR

BY TONG SHI

This year's Fall Fair was a resounding success! Music, free games, and deliciously quasi-healthy snacks marked the celebration of fall and the coming winter. Candy apples, cotton candy (more than one flavour!), and lollipops satisfied sugar cravings. Free games, like BENN-O to Ring Toss carried on the spirit of fun and celebration. Live music from the talented cast of Shane Mackenzie, Mel Henriques, Lisa Lourenco and Michael Davison blasted, keeping the whole cafeteria in high spirits during both lunches.

What is better than free candy? How about a \$50 gift card? The chance to play was free and entered contestants into a draw for a \$50 Future Shop and a \$50 Cambridge Centre gift card. Congratulations to our BENN-O winners: Philip Domingos and Jessica Dion! Still, lollipops and candy necklaces were pretty good runner-up prizes.

Both candy apples and cotton candy sold out by the end of the day thanks to the student body (and a few sweet-toothed teachers). Thanks to all who contributed and participated - look forward to our next event at the Christmas Assembly!

BENNY'S BREAKFAST CLUB

BY MR. J. FAGE

Benny's Breakfast Club has recently reached the one-year milestone. Hospitality teacher Mr. Calhoun recognized the need for all students to have access to a healthy, nutritious breakfast in order to be better learners. He secured funding from the Kitchener-based "Nutrition for Learning" program and has assembled a team of dedicated staff that has made the Breakfast Club a reality.

Benny's Breakfast Club welcomes all students regardless of need. A continental-style breakfast is served from Monday to Thursday and a hot breakfast is served on Fridays. The only requirement to attend Breakfast Club is a desire to have a healthy, nutritious breakfast before the school day begins. (And to be in proper uniform, of course!). Breakfast is served daily from 7:40 am until 8:05 am in room 107.

Read the January 10 article in the Cambridge Times [here](#).

NOMINATE A SPECIAL TEACHER

Parents, students, teachers and individuals in the community can offer a well deserved pat on the back to teachers who make a difference in developing young minds by nominating them for an Ontario premier's annual awards for teaching excellence.

Nominations are being accepted until Jan. 31 for the prestigious award that recognizes outstanding educators, as well as school support staff.

There are six nomination categories, including teacher of the year; new teacher of the year; excellent support staff; excellence in leadership; lifetime achievement and team of the year.

In the last two years, more than 2,000 nominations have been received and more than 30 educators and support staff have been recognized. Information kits will be sent to every publicly funded school in Ontario.

For information on how to nominate someone and download a nomination package, visit the Ontario Ministry of Education's website at www.edu.gov.on.ca.

SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING Parents are invited to get involved in the St. Benedict community by joining our school council. Our next meeting will be Thursday, November 27 at 7:00 pm in room 103. New members are always welcome.

If you are interested in helping with school council activities, but cannot commit to the monthly meetings, we still want to hear from you! Send an email to our principal, [Mr. McKinnon](#), or to one of the school council co-chairs, [Belinda Lutes](#) or [Andrew Bagley](#).

SAVE THOSE ZEHRS TAPES! All period 1 homerooms recently received a shoe box for their Zehrs tapes. The homeroom with the highest total receipts will win a class-wide prize before Christmas holidays! Money raised goes towards the Math Department's purchase of Ti-Nspire CAS graphing calculators!

Dates to Remember

November 27: School Council meeting, 7:00pm
December 1 to 4: Grade 8 visits
December 5: Professional Activity Day
December 8 to 12: Christmas Around the World
December 12: Wintersong
December 12: Christmas Basket Assembly

Miscellaneous

NEWSLETTER FEEDBACK

Another great newsletter! Thanks for all your hard work.

Well done, I think these newsletters are terrific!!!!

Thanks for the feedback! We want to know what you think and how we can improve communication with you. Please email the Newsletter editor from the link below.

Check out our website at <http://stbenedict.wcdsb.ca> for news and information updates.

Pass it on! Encourage other parents to join our emailing list! We've now put an image right on the Benny's homepage--click on the icon, and fill in the form, and voila! There are currently **186** people on the list.

This newsletter is also available on the school website if you [click here](#). You may want to send this link to other parents rather than forward your email--doing so may alter the layout and generate the page incorrectly.

Any comments? [Send us an email!](#)