

Note from Administration

On behalf of Custodians, E.A's, Youth Care Workers, Office staff, Teachers and Administrators, we would like to wish the students and families that make up the community of St. Benedict Catholic Secondary School a Merry and Peace Filled Christmas season. Our school motto, "A Celebration of People" is particularly alive at this time of year, when we live in hope and anticipation of the celebration of the arrival of Christ, alive in our world. A chance to give of ourselves, to celebrate others, as we hope to do everyday. Merry Christmas, we look forward to seeing you all back healthy and rested in the New Year. Enjoy your break. Go Saints!

- Mr. J. McKinnon, Principal

Administrative

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

UNIFORMS During the winter season, we remind students that non-uniform clothing is not permitted in the classrooms, and should be left in your locker. This includes hats and scarves. 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 Wearhouse.

CHAPLAIN NEWS AND NOTES

By MR. B. REMPEL, CHAPLAIN

Bennies is an exciting place as we strive to put our faith into action.

1. Our school community is once again partnering with the Cambridge firefighters to provide Christmas baskets to families experiencing financial difficulties. Over 35 classrooms, groups of classrooms, or staff groupings are filling Christmas baskets with gifts.
2. Bennies is also partnering with St. Mary of the Visitation parish to provide school supplies for African students. Partnering with Canadian Food for Children, the parish provides school supplies in order that school staff can buy food for the students.
3. On December 12 we will celebrate the generosity of our community with our annual Advent/Christmas Basket Assembly. We will remind ourselves that while we wait for Christ to come, God calls us to a life of care and justice.
4. December 10 is human rights day. Students will observe a minute of "silence" while articles from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are read. Some of the articles are:
 - All humans are born free and equal in dignity and rights.
 - Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.
 - No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment.
 - Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression.
 - Everyone has the right to work.
 - Everyone has the right to education.
5. On December 1 our community observed AIDS awareness day. The previous four days consisted of activities that raised awareness through bead pins, face painting, a participatory poster and a provocative power point during Friday lunch.

WHO IS YOUR ADMINISTRATOR?

The administrative contact for your son or daughter is based on your last name:

A to F - [Mrs. Daly](#)

G to O - [Mr. Bellini](#)

P to Z - [Mrs. Leusink](#)

As always, feel free to contact our principal, [Mr. McKinnon](#).

6. November 25 was the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. Supported by the Social Justice Club, Rebecca White, with the technical assistance of Mike Davison, created a powerful power point presentation describing the reality of violence against women and what can be done to eliminate it.

SEASON'S GREETINGS FROM THE YOUTH CARE WORKERS

By Mrs. W. Schuster and Mr. J. Kent, Youth Care Workers

We have been invited by the newsletter editors to contribute to the St. Benedict newsletter. We are very appreciative and excited about this opportunity. The youth care workers provide behavioural, social and emotional support to our students here at Bennies. We have students within our school community who face the daily challenges of coping with grief, loss, illness, mental health issues, family issues, financial issues, addiction and academic struggles. We are available to provide direct support to students, group support, and classroom support. We also collaborate with administration, guidance, special education and SST.

Each month, we will provide parenting tips and information relevant to the turbulent, fast-paced teen age years.

December Tip: Holiday Stress and Teens

We are all well aware of the increased number of demands on our time and pocket book during this very busy, hectic season. We are also becoming more increasingly aware that today's teenagers need to be able to manage and cope with higher levels of stress. The following are some common causes of increased teen stress during the holiday season:

- Hectic schedules (work and school)
- Deadlines
- Increased family conflict or misunderstandings
- Crowds
- Changes in routine, diet
- Pressure to buy gifts
- Unmet expectations (family, friends)
- Increased grief about divorce, death, family changes
- Struggling financially (personal, family)
- Health concerns (personal or family)
- Shortened amount of daylight (Seasonal Affective Disorder)

Helping Your Teen Manage the Holiday Blues/Stress

- Check-in with your child. Ask specific questions about work and school. Set aside time to talk away from distraction.
- Take a break. Plan a family day together. Keep it simple. Even a movie and popcorn can be a welcome break from the routine
- Exercise! Encourage your child to get up and get out. (walk, ski, sledding etc)
- Encourage and model healthy eating
- Plan ahead. Ask your child to share their schedule with you. Be realistic and prioritize. Don't try and jam too much into too little time.
- Allow your child some time alone or with their peers

Next month, we will take a closer look at how to tell if your teen is over stressed, symptoms and signs. We would like to extend our Christmas blessings to you and your family. See you in 2009!



Academic

MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE

By Mrs. D. Lowe

Students of Mrs. Lowe's grade 12 Religion course (12UC) period 5, are working in cooperation with the grade 7's of Mother Teresa School on an important environmental initiative. In alignment with the course curriculum, students know that it is their responsibility, as stewards of the Earth, to take care of the wonderful planet that God has created. It is their hope to drastically decrease the use of plastic water bottles by bringing awareness to both school communities, as well as to members of the city of Cambridge. This project will connect the elementary students with the secondary students in a positive and pro-active way. Look and listen in the coming months for our campaign and, if you would like to become involved, contact [Mrs. Lowe](#) at St. Benedict.

SUCCESS IS OUR MIDDLE NAME

STUDENTS TRIUMPH IN ENTREPRENEURIAL STUDIES

By Stefania Milivojevic

From T-shirts to brownies, students have found and learned new ways to run a business in the Junior Achievement program. These Gr. 11 students were able to manage and maintain a small company within their local school community, raising spirit and Cancer/AIDS awareness. During period 3 and 4 lunches, students from both companies sold their products in the atrium. In total they raised over \$600 for Lessard House and HIV research. These students endured all the phases of running a business, from idea generation and planning, to production, sales and liquidation.

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!



The class was divided into two companies: Spirit Wear T-shirts, and Brownies. Each company underwent various trials and tribulations of managing their business, but in the end everyone was victorious. Besides the fact



that these students did a great job with their companies, they were able to obtain something even more glorious: real life knowledge and experience that will help them not only in their business studies, but also their problem solving, decision making, numeracy, literacy, communication and team work skills.

We wish to thank Mr. Tom Rawley (J.A. Consultant) and Mr. Wittmann for their endless support and motivation. It was greatly appreciated from both companies.

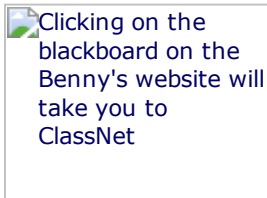
J.A.'S MANAGEMENT TEAMS:

Position	Saints Conquering Cancer Spirit Wear	D-Browns Deliciousness
President	Stefania Milivojevich	Lilliane Dos Santos
Finance	Matt Grigg, Ken Pugsley	Jordan McKoy
Human Resources	Cindy Da Costa, Natasha Crick, Jessica Keltie	Alex Murray
Marketing	Ryan Da Silva, Adam Petersen, Shawn Adams	Alex Da Silva, Jordon Kings
Production	Lauren Polyak, Felicia Ree	Jenn White, Carlos Martinez, Matt Da Silva

LANGUAGE & COMMUNICATIONS All students and parents are encouraged to read for at least 15 minutes a day. Pick a book, magazine, newspaper and enjoy!

Students in grade 10 and their parents are reminded that the Literacy Test will occur on April 2, 2009. In addition to in-class activities, there will be multiple preparation opportunities so stay tuned for details.

And the ski trip to St. Donat Quebec (Feb. 22-25, 2009) is fast approaching!



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.

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

On January 13, all first semester grade 9 English classes will write a practice literacy test.

LITERACY TEST Attention all Grade 10 parents! The

LITERACY TIP #4

Literacy is the Reason for the Season?

Ho Ho Ho! In the spirit of Christmas the literacy committee thought it would be fun to have students and staff of St. Benedict write letters to Santa. The purpose is to encourage students to write for at least 20 minutes on a topic they know and to have some fun.

The letter writing will happen during period 3 and 4

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.

on Thursday December 11th. The most creative letter in each grade as well as the most creative letter amongst our staff will win movie passes to enjoy over the holidays :) Winners will be announced at our annual Christmas assembly.

Teachers and students, get those creative juices flowing and think of all the things you would like to wish for from Santa.

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

SR. GIRLS VOLLEYBALL

By Mrs. J. Soers

The Sr. Girls' team has had a strong start to their season and is currently undefeated after four matches. As the record shows, our girls defeated Woodland in three sets, St. David's in four, Rockway in an exciting five-set match, and Monsignor Doyle in three. The team roster includes Tiffany Barthe, Kass Fernandes, Julia Genovese, Amber Gibson, Jenna Gilbert, Breanna Girard, Leah Melville, Becky Pavlik, Tia Semplonius and Kaitlyn Skinner. Each of these girls dedicates several hours per week to the sport they love and all of their hard work is paying off. Thanks to the teachers and the parents of our community who support these young ladies as they continue to improve and represent St. Benedict in true Saints fashion.

GIRLS' HOCKEY

By Mrs. L. O'Neill

The Girls' Hockey team has had a great start to the season with two wins. We have added to our talent this year with some grade nine rookies and are pleased to have some of our returning veterans, making for a good team. After a great start we played the always tough Southwood High School team and were defeated. We now have two wins and two losses, but are looking to get back on a winning track on Thursday in our game vs. Elmira.

We have added to our talent this year with some grade nine rookies and ... have some of our returning veterans

Our next home game will be Tuesday December 16th at 2:30pm at Hespeler Arena - stop by and cheer the girls on! And remember . . . Keep your stick on the ice!

SR. BOYS' BASKETBALL

By Mr. J. Malnerich

The Senior Boys' Basketball season is in full swing with the boys just coming off a Consolation Championship in the Boul Coull Classic Tournament in Niagara Falls over the weekend. The boys lost their first game against Westlane, the eventual tournament champions, but regrouped to beat the Centennial Cougars 48 to 46 in the championship game. In their second game they defeated Stamford from Niagara Fall 50 to 45.

The Saints' next game is on Wednesday as they travel to Resurrection to battle the red hot Phoenix team. Tip-off is at 5pm. The boys will be at home this weekend to compete in the Southwood Invitation Basketball Tournament. Their first game of the tournament is at 3:30pm gains KCI and will be played at Glenview Secondary School.

Student Activities

LINK CREW CONNECTS STUDENTS ON THE WEB

By Mr. J. Curtis

Link Crew is a mentoring program that connects senior high school students with grade nines, who meet regularly to offer support and encouragement, and help the new students navigate the difficult challenges of high school.

The program begins with an Orientation Day on the first day of school in September, and continues throughout the year with academic support and social events. By providing grade nine students with practical information about the school—and survival tips for high school—in a non-threatening environment, Link Crew provides a smooth transition for a difficult time in a young person's life.

With the success of the program here at St. Benedict, we've developed a Link Crew Website that offers students background information, photos from previous events, and details about future initiatives. Anyone can access the site from the St. Benedict Website. Simply click on "Student Activities" on the left-hand sidebar menu, then click on "Link Crew". Let us know what you think.



IS THERE A GRAD IN YOUR HOUSE? Grad Photo sign ups are this week during periods 3/4 in the SAC office. **Grad photos will run all day from Tuesday, January 6th until Thursday, January 15th in the Skybox.**

SAC'S "'T WAS THE WEEK BEFORE CHRISTMAS" EVENTS FOR NEXT WEEK:

Monday: Candy Grams (selling outside SAC office)

Tuesday: Name That Christmas Tune (1st period)/Movie in caf

Wednesday: Red/White/Green Shirt Day

Candy Cane Handout

Pics with Santa and Elf in the atrium

Thursday: Door decorating/ornament making (winners announced end of day-class prizes on Friday)

Friday: Christmas Assembly

'T WAS THE WEEK BEFORE CHRISTMAS.... SAC STYLE

'Twas the week before Christmas, and all through the school

Not a student was stirring. The weather was cool -

But homework before the holidays is not,

Decorations and trivia - there's a lot

To be won in the last two weeks before break.

Wintersong is on the twelfth, don't be late!

Candy grams at lunch on the fifteenth,

Name the tune follow on the sixteenth,

Check out a movie in the café at lunch,

It'll make that café food easier to munch.

Plus, dress up on red, green and white day

It's the seventeenth, so don't delay!

Pose for pictures with Santa for a candy cane,

But wait - more prizes remain!

Have a productive class and decorate your door,

Make it impossible to ignore!

End things off with a bang at the Assembly,

Cheer on Dance Crew and Artificial Intensity!

Go on break and get your beauty sleep -

Grad photos in January - don't look like a creep!

Other News

DO YOU OR A FAMILY THAT YOU KNOW NEED HELP DURING THIS CHRISTMAS SEASON?

By MRS. C. McDONALD-REIS, SOCIAL WORKER

Sometimes we each become aware of situations where families are stressed at Christmas and we are unsure of what to do. It may be even worse for some this year in our region as so many industries and manufacturing plants lay-off workers or close their doors permanently.

Families can receive help in Cambridge through the Cambridge Fire Fighters Association. Applications are available (confidentially) at the Salvation Army Office, 16 Shade Street, Cambridge, 519-623-1221. Food hampers and gifts are available. Please also keep in mind that our parishes' St. Vincent de Paul Societies can help during the holiday time.

Families can also see the Outreach workers at the neighborhood community centers. Outreach workers are able to help families with the stresses of financial strain.

Often families struggle in silence with financial challenges and feelings that can often prevent them from asking for or accepting help. In a truly Catholic Christian community, we need to recognize that we each experience some form of need sometime in our lives, whether financial, physical, emotional or spiritual. Reaching out to others in need and reaching out for help are part of who we are as children of a Creator God.

RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES WHEN THE FESTIVE SEASON MAY NOT BE SO FESTIVE

By MRS. C. McDONALD-REIS, SOCIAL WORKER

Holiday times such as Christmas are traditionally filled with families getting together and sharing in holiday joy. The Christmas Season can be a difficult time for some families who are missing loved ones who have died throughout the year, or when the pain of a loss increases.

Ros Crichton from The Coping Center in Cambridge offers support to families who have are grieving the loss of someone that they love. Ros and her team offer support groups and individual counseling to families and individuals who are grieving. For more information call 519-650-0852 or you may click here for [The Coping Centre Website](#).

Dena Moitoso is a grief counselor for the Erb and Good Family Funeral Home and is running a evening for families about "Surviving the Holidays after the death of a loved one" on Thursday December 11, 2008 from 7-9 pm at The Erb and Good Family Funeral Home at 171 King Street South, Waterloo. RSVP to attend 519-745-8445.

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.

NEWS FROM SCHOOL COUNCIL

By MRS. B. LUTES, SCHOOL COUNCIL CO-CHAIR

Cupcake Bake is almost here!

We will be baking in the kitchen classroom, room 107, on Tuesday December 16th. We will be starting to bake cupcakes around 3:00, so feel free to join us anytime! Students who require community service hours can also help out!

Please bring the following to the cupcake bake: mixer, mixing bowl, measuring cups, large mixing spoon, cupcake pans, cooling racks, knife to ice cupcakes and oven mitts.

I will supply: cake mixes, eggs, oil, icing, candies (for the top of the cupcakes), cupcake papers, dishsoap, toothpicks and tea towels.

Cupcakes will be sold on Wednesday December 17th, over the two lunch periods in the Atrium. We will be at the school around 10:15, to set up and then sell cupcakes from 11:03 to 1:04, and will probably be finished around 1:30.

If you are able to help out on December 16th to bake the cupcakes and/or on December 17th, with the selling of the cupcakes, please send me an email to confirm the times you are available.

Let me know if you have any questions or need further information. Hope to see you on the 16th and/or 17th! Looking forward to another fun-filled, cupcake baking, good time!!

Belinda

phone: 519-740-2169

email: dolphins@rogers.com

AGENDA DESIGN PROPOSITIONS

By MR. M. HUEMILLER

Mr. Huemiller's Grade 12 Design students have created proposals for next year's Student Agenda Cover. After much hard work, the covers have been mounted and will be on display in the Atrium this week. Students and Staff will have the opportunity to vote for their favourite design proposal. The winning design will appear on next year's Bennies Student Agenda cover and will be included for viewing in a future issue of the BENN Newsletter.

A special thanks to the following students for their excellent designs: Diu Bui, Yazmin Butcher, Amber Schouten, Andrew Silver, Michelle Sterba, and Karolina Wojtynski.

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, January 29 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, [Andrew Bagley](#) or [Belinda Lutes](#).

SAVE THOSE ZEHRS TAPES! Friday, December 12 is the deadline to hand in your full boxes of Zehrs tapes! Remember that the homeroom with the highest total wins a complimentary breakfast feast! Money raised goes towards the Math Department's purchase of Ti-Nspire CAS graphing calculators!

Dates to Remember

December 8-12: Christmas around the world

December 12: Christmas basket assembly

December 12: Wintersong

December 17: SAC Spirit Day

December 19: Christmas assembly

January 5: Back to school!

Miscellaneous

NEWSLETTER FEEDBACK

This Newsletter ... is awesome. This is my son's first year at St. Benedict's and this newsletter helps keep him (okay, me) informed on what's happening at your school. I think it's GREAT! I look forward to every issue. We as parents appreciate all the work that goes into such a project. Keep up the good work and keep the news coming.

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 **189** 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!](#)

M E R R Y C H R I S T M A S F R O M
A L L O F U S A T
S T . B E N E D I C T C . S . S .