

MSA

Blue & White

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER | FALL 2011



Principal's Message *by Sue Moench*

'All human beings are born with unique gifts. The healthy functioning of our community depends on its capacity to develop each gift.' Peter Senge 'The Learning School.'

As we begin another school year, we wish to focus our energies on making sure that we develop within each of our students the unique gifts they have been born with, have developed, and will acquire and create. Education is an evolving process.... it is lifelong....and it must always be pursued no matter what our age. At MSA, we are developing life-long learners who should be eager to accept the challenges of our curriculum and to live what they have learned. As we walk the halls of our school and listen to what is happening in our classrooms, we sense an excitement and a thirst for learning. The curriculum challenges our students to think critically, create, problem-solve and look at our world as an ever expanding opportunity. We take

every opportunity to reinforce within our students the need to go beyond the limits of the classroom.

In order to assist our students in maximizing their potential, each year the school sets goals which are intended to advance and offer us challenges that will be inspiring and fulfilling. For this academic year, we have three main focuses:

1. Enhanced development of teaching and learning through the new curriculum.
2. Maximizing learner outcomes by differentiating instruction to meet the diverse learning needs of our students.
3. Implement a new administration software program intended to meet the communication needs of parents in monitoring their child's progress as well provide a liaison with Alberta Education.

Achieving these goals will continue to improve the outstanding learning environment of MSA. School

improvement is critical for all outstanding institutions. "It is the single most important business of a school. It is the process that schools use to ensure all students are achieving at high levels. "The combination of these concepts constitutes the foundation for positive improvement results; meaningful teamwork; clear, measurable goals; and the regular collection and analysis of performance data." Mike Schmoker.

Through achieving our objectives, we will be able to set measurable goals, work as a team in accomplishing these goals, and use our performance data to analyze the results and set new targets.

The culture at MSA is changing to be one that demands high achievement. Change in the culture of schools means there is a change in teaching and learning. Teachers are engaging their students in positive learning experiences which are encouraging students to become active learners.

At MSA we are dedicated to providing for our community with well-educated individuals who have developed their gifts so they will be community minded and productive members of society ready to take on the challenges of their future.



M.S.A's Miraculous Christmas Wish Radio Show

Good morning Bermuda! Murphy in the Morning is on the air broadcasting live from the mall, and the phone lines are open taking requests for special Christmas wishes, ready to make the winning wish come true. Tiffany Buffington and her friends are out to win... even if it means stacking the odds against Carol Hartman...who instead has a miraculous idea of her own.

Come and enjoy a story with a theme of hope and acceptance at MSA's Annual Christmas Concert and Tableau on December 13th, 14, & 15th. The show will feature the students from Grades K-12. Tickets available Nov 28th: \$10.



Ring Mass: A Right of Passage

A very special day in the life of a Senior at Mount Saint Agnes is the day when they receive their class ring. It is traditional that the seniors receive their rings at the beginning of the school year. On September, 23rd, 2011 the rings were blessed by Bishop Robert Kurtz and distributed by our Principal, Mrs. Sue Moench and Assistant Principal Mrs. Margaret DiGiacomo.

The ceremony takes place after the celebration of a special Mass which is planned and carried out by members of the student body. Kindergarten students, Crishante Dill and Jacob Madeiros, carried the rings to the altar at the beginning of mass.

Prayer Service for St. Francis of Assisi

On October 7 grades K to 6 attended a prayer service in honor of St. Francis in the MSA auditorium. Live animals were present for a blessing from Father Joseph Morley, who officiated the service. During the service Mrs. Claire Marshall made a tribute to Paul Douglas, a ninth grader who found her dog after she had gone astray for three weeks. After the blessing of the live pets, Father Morley blessed all those who had brought photos of their pets to the service. These photos will later be displayed on a bulletin board in the school hallway. The final song "Let There Be Peace on Earth" was sung on the field where David Lopes and his granddaughter Brianna Lopes released white doves into the sky. Everyone enjoyed the service which had been arranged by Mrs. Boyle, Miss Tatem, and Ms. Martin. Even Mr. Burgess helped out by dressing as St. Francis. Thank you to one and all for assisting in making this service a memorable one.

Making Hunger History Week at MSA

On Friday, September 30th, MSA participated in the "Making Hunger History Week" project sponsored by the Daily Bread Feeding Programme. We declared September 30th to be "Make Hunger History Day" at MSA. We asked each homeroom class to participate by having students bring in canned goods. The class at each level that brought in the most canned goods would receive a special treat from the Principals. We also declared Friday a NON UNIFORM DAY and in order to participate, each student was to bring in at least one canned good. Congratulations to Grade One who were the biggest sponsors of this project.



PartnerRe: Dollars for Hours

On Friday, September 30th, the Grade 12 students made their way to the Gladys Morrell Nature Reserve in Somerset. There they spent the day being introduced to Bermuda conservation management principles and practice by Dr. David Wingate. Their tasks for the day were to remove invasive species; plant native and endemic plants; clean and clear any waste in the area; clear walking paths. It was a very hot and humid day, but they persevered and were rewarded with a very different landscape when they left.

Chairman's Message *by Garry Madeiros*

In September we commenced the third year of our planned three year implementation of the Alberta Curriculum. This does not mean that we have completed our journey. It just signifies that all core subjects required by the Alberta Curriculum are now being taught. The most challenging and important part of the transition is the method of instruction which is inquiry based teaching and collaborative learning. This will continue to require strong commitment and hard work by our faculty, as well as on going professional development opportunities and other program resources provided by the school. It is important to remember that we chose this curriculum because it is based on a philosophy that students must be problem solvers, collaborative workers, community/active citizens and global thinkers. All the aspects we believe are critical for our future.

During the summer a number of projects were completed that have either improved aesthetics, refurbished old plant or added new facilities and systems. The most obvious project was the painting of the school, and the colour scheme has generated a wave of positive responses, including words like inviting, warm and fresh. The apartment has been converted into two classrooms which will be discussed further in a future communication. The courtyard bathrooms have been totally renovated. Some minor work included grills for the gym windows, ceiling tile replacement and a mini-science lab for middle school which will be completed during the November break.

Major additions and improvements have been made on the security systems of the school both internally and externally. Security and safety are of paramount importance for our students, faculty and staff. We have installed access control for our gates and the two main doors to the school in conjunction with an intercom and monitoring system. Although we have had some teething problems and some fine tuning still has to be done, control of access to our facility has been greatly improved. In addition we have installed a new CCTV system that includes a network video recorder that can service up to 16 analogue and 64 digital cameras on one server unit. Our old system comprises of 16 analogue cameras and the new installation added 30 digital cameras. The coverage, clarity and benefits of this new system are tremendous.

A new administration package was also installed before the school year commenced. The most important aspect of this system is that it links directly into the Alberta system which allows easy electronic transfer of student data. It is comprehensive in the modules it provides the office for administration of the complete education product but it also includes a very user friendly teacher portal, Home Logic.

Three Board of Governor members stepped off the Board at the end of the school year; Lorna Dixon Marable after two years, Joe Kelly after four years and Tonya Marshall after six years. They graciously and voluntarily gave up their time, energy and skills for the school and the MSA family. I extend the gratitude, thanks and appreciation from all of us for their support, contribution and commitment made during their terms. I express a further thank you to Joe for his role as Facilities Chairman. He worked tirelessly on our behalf and always provided balance, prudence and a special tenacity in all the projects he was involved in. I extend a special thank you to Tonya who served as Deputy Chair for the last three years, and provided us the benefit of her legal expertise on a number of occasions. I will miss her wise counsel.

I take pleasure in announcing that two new members were appointed to the

Board; Dr. Tina Arorash, a Bishop's appointee and Lori Samson, a H&S appointee.

Tina is a graduate of MSA, class of '89 and has a PhD in Clinical and Counseling Psychology from Columbia University. She was a consultant Psychologist for Bermuda Government in the Dept. of Child & Family Services from 2006 – 2011. Just recently, in July, she joined the practice group "The Association of Diagnostic and Psychological Services". There she provides psychological assessment, intervention and consultation services for children, adolescents and their families as well as intervention services for adults. Last year Tina served on the Board's Academic Committee.

Lori, nee Dunstan, is a graduate of MSA, class of '82. She spent twenty years with ACE Limited retiring at the end of 2010. Her first eight years was in the Accounting area and the remainder was in Administration with the last four years as Chief Administration Officer for the ACE Group of Companies, Bermuda. Presently on a part time basis she provides support to the ACE Foundation overseeing all matters pertaining to its day-to-day operations. Lori is the Chairman of the ACE Foundation – Bermuda, and a trustee of the ACE Foundation- International.

The Officers of the Board for this year are Garry Madeiros, Chairman, Chris Coelho, Deputy Chairman, Michael Smyth, Treasurer and Colleen Sinclair, Secretary.





New Teachers

Marc Burgess

Marc Burgess is the new Middle School Math teacher. He was born in Medicine Hat, Alberta, Canada. He went to school at Crescent Heights High School, where Mrs. Moench was his vice-principal for a year! After that, he attended Shorter College (now Shorter University) in Rome, Georgia, USA. He graduated with a Bachelor's and a Master's degree of Education. For a year he remained there and substitute taught for Rome City Schools, then moved back home to substitute teach in his home town. That's when he heard of the job at MSA, so he thought what better way to start a teaching career than in Bermuda! When he's not working, he likes to go to the beach to swim and snorkel, run, rock climb and bike. He's looking forward to his first year at MSA, and hopes that it is a memorable one.



taught at East End Primary. She chose to come to MSA as she wanted to expand on her teaching expertise and MSA offers a quality education. In her spare time she loves to spend quality time with her family, her hobbies include watching movies, reading and biking.

Alexandra 'Lexi' Tatem

Lexi is the new Elementary and Grade 6 Science teacher. Born and raised in Bermuda and a MSA graduate. Her father is Bermudian and her mother is from New York. She has one younger sister. She has one dog named Jax and a cat named Tibby.



This is Miss Tatem's second year of teaching. She taught middle school and high school science at Somersfield Academy before joining us at MSA. MSA has always felt like home. She is excited to be able to teach science to the elementary students - an initiative taken on by MSA that no other school has.

In her spare time, Lexi likes to swim, read, and hang out with her dolphin friends at Dolphin Quest.

Sara N. Thomas

Sara Thomas is one of the new high school math teachers. Her primary focus are those students who are in Grades 9 and 10 although she does have the privilege of teaching a small group of seniors as well. She recently graduated from the University



Kim Raymond

Kim Raymond is the new Elementary PE, Middle school PE (6 & 7) & Health teacher. She was born and raised in Bermuda, and has lived in St. Georges her whole life. This is her 9th year of teaching. Kim has a BSc. in Health & Physical Education (K-12) from North Carolina A & T State University and a MS in Sports Management from Purdue University. Before coming to MSA Mrs. Raymond



What Makes A Catholic School Different?

A Catholic school pursues the same academic goals as other schools as it strives to assist students to achieve success in the traditional academic disciplines. Catholic schools educate the whole child. They address not only the intellectual, physical and psychological capacities of a child but also the moral and religious dimensions.

The following are four of the distinctive traits that contribute to the philosophy of a Catholic school:

- 1) The values that are disseminated are rooted in scripture as well as the teaching and tradition of the Catholic Church;
- 2) Rich symbols of the faith are evident in the school and the motto and logo reflect the faith dimension that is present;
- 3) Celebrations which range from simple classroom prayer to Eucharistic celebrations are part of the school experience; and
- 4) Teachers, administrators, and support staff understand their role as one of service. It is, in fact, a ministry.

Congratulations to:

Lyndsay Taylor (2000) who married John Ronan IV on July 23, 2011 at St. Patrick's Church.

Kristen Frost (2002) and Garrett Booth (1999) who tied the knot on July 30, 2011.

Nadia Aguiar (1996) and Tim Hasselbring who had a baby girl Havilland Lee Hasselbring born June 15, 2011.

Rui DeSa (teacher) and McKenna on the birth of their baby boy, Dunstan Hilário on September 23, 2011.

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A Piece of History *by Sister Judith Marie Rollo*

In the June newsletter appeared the story of Mother Fidelis acting as a match maker between Doctor Percy Shelley and the nurse Dorothy Tucker while they were quarantined on Nonsuch Island. With gratitude to Joan Blee who furnished a family tree it is interesting to note that in Mount Saint Agnes today there are direct descendents of Dorothy Shelley. They are her great grand nieces, Mya and Sadie Leighton and by marriage great grand nephew Joshua Blee and great grand nieces, Heather, Sydney and Hannah Blee. As a widow Dorothy Shelley had many a conversation with Sister Jean de Chantal Kennedy and shared with her the story of how Mother Fidelis played Cupid! In spite of all the hardships that were endured while in quarantine, many friendships were forged which lasted a life time.

The story of the quarantine ends on an ironic note. An analysis of the disease proved that no one had small pox, but rather the relatively harmless cowpox!

Where Are They Now

Laura Allen Nonemaker, 1959

Laura graduated from Mount Saint Agnes Academy in 1959. Her desire to write took root when a favorite teacher, Sister Jean de Chantal, published her essay in the Royal Gazette. The aspiration sprouted again during the 1980s, when she conceived the idea for TecNotes, a newsletter she wrote and edited for TubeTec Inc. Since then, Laura has written in a variety of genres and her work has appeared in *Essence Treasury: Celebrating the Season, Alive!* and *Kentucky Monthly Magazine*.

The publication of Benny's Angel is the realization of a dream. The first in her series called God's Secret Garden Adventures, this colorful storybook conveys to little hearts the importance of prayer and the value of trusting God.



Laura and her husband, Paul, live the life of "snowbirds" in Louisville, Kentucky and Cape Coral, Florida. Their blended family consists of five children, six grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, and one calico cat.

Where Are They Now

W.D. (Bill) Laurie, 1968

Bill came to Bermuda in July of 1967. He was a MSA senior class member of a Commonwealth Essay Writing Competition which won first prize. Bill has, for forty years, stated that Sr. Marion Edwards inspired his fervour for international affairs that became central to his professional career.

Bill returned to Vancouver, Canada in 1969 where he enrolled at the University of British Columbia. In

1972 he joined the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and worked until 1975 as a Mountie in rural Alberta. He was then moved throughout Canada where his duties became focused upon national security. After 15 years of this work, Bill became an authority on many issues and became involved in Asian Based Organized Crime (Triads) and Counter Terrorism. He retired in 2007 as a liaison between police and organized labour.

Bill is married, enjoys his five children and five grandchildren and lives an

Alumni News

by Tamara (Pratt) Lewis

The end of 2011 is fast approaching. The Alumni Association is hoping to put on some new events and continue with the old favorites this school year. So please, keep your eye on your email and the MSA website for any exciting events planned and come out to support the Alumni Association. You never know who you may bump into. It could be an old lost school friend; someone you have not seen since school days.

Mark your calendars as the AGM is scheduled to be on January 18th, 2012. Join us with your fresh and innovative ideas and suggestions to bring more of our MSA Family together. We are always looking for more volunteers to join the Board or Social Committee and to give back to our school.

Thank you to everyone on the Board and Social Committee that help make these wonderful events possible.

If anyone does have any ideas or suggestions to keep the MSA Spirit going, please forward them to Lisa Stevens at lsteven@msa.bm.



active life with running and tennis. Bill is an avid traveller and enjoys a wide variety of interests, including genealogy, scotch whisky and the treatment of animals. Bill has twice returned to visit MSA and hopes to communicate with other members of his graduating class of 1968. Bill lives in Vancouver, British Columbia.



Grandparents Day

Grandparents and other older adults can be very important people in children's lives. Children feel a sense of pride and accomplishment when they know that people in their extended family and community are interested in their education. So in recognition of this Mount St. Agnes had a special celebration! Grandparents' & Grandfriends' Day recognizes the importance of our heritage, our community, and relationships across generations.



On September 9th, MSA students and over 150 grandparents filled St. Theresa's Cathedral at a 10:30am Mass celebrating the Opening of School and Grandparents' Day. Bishop Kurtz presided over the Mass, with students and grandparents participating in different areas of the celebration.

After Mass grandparents and grandfriends were invited to a brief reception in St. Theresa's Hall to thank them for all that they do for the school and for our students.

After the reception, Grandparents were able to visit with their grandchildren for the afternoon.



Is Faster, Better? *by Sister Judith Marie Rollo*

In the long walk, down, the American Airlines terminal at JFK, there is an electronic poster flashing the words: "If anything is worth doing, it's worth doing faster." Somehow this change in the adage, "Anything worth doing, is worth doing well" really grates on me. In our high tech world of this 21st century many of us, including me, want some of our "electronic toys" to work faster but there are far more tasks that we are required to complete where faster is definitely not better. Where it is important to really concentrate on what one is doing, to be reflective about the purpose of our task, to be truly aware of the present moment, to be present to the people in our lives - then faster is not better. The quotation below is from the introduction by Ronald Rolheiser to

his book, "**Forgotten Among the Lilies**".

"Rarely do we taste the food we eat or the coffee we drink. Instead we go through our days too preoccupied, too compulsive, and too dissatisfied to really be able to be present for and celebrate our own lives."

This quotation came to my mind when I thought about how so many of us are not taking the time to be fully present to what we are doing. We seem to want to finish quickly whatever we are doing to get on with the next thing.

When we are at prayer or at Mass are we looking at our watches and thinking about what we are going to

do next? Do we choose to worship at a place where we know the service will be faster? When someone is speaking to us are we secretly wishing them to hurry up so we can "get on with it"?

The Sacrament of the Present Moment means that each moment of our lives is open to "grace", that is, God dwelling within but we need to be in welcoming awareness to receive it. If we are leading our lives in such a welcoming awareness then faster will not be better. We need to slow down as the hackneyed expression says "and smell the roses".

PS: The terminals electronic posters are now changed!

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of Lethbridge, Alberta with her teaching degree. The opportunity to teach as MSA was not something that she would have imagined possible but now she is excited for the challenges and learning experiences that are ahead of her. She was born and raised in Edmonton, Alberta and has lived for the past ten years in Lethbridge, Alberta. As such, she has grown up in the Alberta system of education and is quite familiar with what the system requires and the kind of education that comes with an Alberta high school diploma. When she is not working, she loves to read, cook and do needlework. She is also learning to scuba dive and is excited to begin volunteering at a stable and the SPCA while here on the Island.

Shaun Thomas

Shaun Thomas is another of our high school math teacher to join the MSA Team. He has joined us with his wife from Alberta, Canada.

Shaun has a combined B.Sc/B.Ed majoring in Physics and Science Education and minoring in Math and Math Education from the University of Lethbridge.

Shaun believes that the fundamental goal of the teaching profession is to facilitate students learning and growth. To make

students analyze, criticize and synthesize. To challenge students to move beyond what they thought was possible for them and to see what they are capable of. He believes that the purpose of teaching is to encourage, support, and guide students so that they will see their potential and seek to achieve it.

Shaun has spent five summers, while in High School and college, working at a summer camp as a camp counselor and as program director. He has worked five summers in the forests of Northern Alberta as a treeplanter and foremen enduring great mental, emotional and physical challenges. And during his last five years he has volunteered with a Church Youth group mentoring a group of young men.

Peter Callaghan

Peter was born in Toronto, Ontario. He is the second oldest of nine children. Peter graduated from Queen's University, Kingston and Teachers' College and Sheridan College in Oakville, Ontario. He was offered a job in Bermud and Vienna, Austria on the same day. He has four children. In his spare time he like to golf, dive, watch and play sports, read and write. He is a true Toronto fan as he cheers on the Maple Leafs, Raptors and Blue Jays.



Apple Fest!

On Friday, October 7th, 2011 Kindergarten celebrated "Apple Fest". Students tasted Gala, Granny Smith, Washington, Macintosh, Red Delicious, Golden Delicious and Braeburn apples with peanut butter, chocolate and strawberry sauce. Students helped to make applesauce...mmm delicious! After listening to the story of *Johnny Appleseed*, the students decided to call Mrs. Resendes Mrs. Appleseed for the day since she gave each child an apple seed to take home. Apple trees were made from torn construction paper. Miss Murray showed students what an apple looks like inside when cut in half horizontally. The children were impressed to see the shape of a star! Apples were painted and used for printing patterns.



THANK YOU from the MSA Community Feeding Station!

Charlene White and Lilda Spencer have been operating the MSA community feeding station for the past year. It is located just below the entrance ramp at Bull's Head. They are feeding approximately twelve cats. With help from BFAB, many of the cats have been neutered, and efforts will continue this year.

Charlene and Lilda were both off the Island for the Easter and summer holidays. However, they could not leave the island knowing the cats were not being cared for in their absence. Words cannot express how grateful they are to the parents and teachers who helped with feedings during the Easter and summer holidays. A huge thank you to the following caring individuals:

Kelli Soares
Karen Penacho
Sonia Rymon-Lipinski
Gina Cook
Jackie Tailsford
Nicola Ferreira
Janet Laing
Bambi Bull
Kathy Hui
Janet Laing
Bonnie Exell
Theresa Fletcher
Nelia Pimentel
Sue Moench
Margaret DiGiacomo
Members of the National Honor Society: Jen Chisnall, Thomas Mahoney, Nicole Pimentel, Kyla Sinclair, Amanda Correia, Leanne Moniz, Heather Blee, Chelsy Furtado and Nick Coelho

These cats, like all feral cats, are living in these conditions because of human neglect, and your actions demonstrate the compassion and generosity that exists in the MSA community.

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Well, it's hard to believe another Bazaar has come and gone. This year's theme was "Cirque Du MSA" and it was held on Friday, October 21st and Saturday, October 22nd, 2011 on the school grounds. As in the past, the preparations for the Bazaar consisted of the usual chain of activities taking place with planning, construction, painting and last but not least – the sale of raffle tickets. The title for most sales by class this year was an exciting competition, Kindergarten put up a good fight, but in the end Grade 3 surpassed them. Grade 6 won the Grade 6-12 division. Connor Sinclair in Grade 5 sold an outstanding 508 tickets and Nola Mingledorf in Grade 6 sold 150 tickets. Congratulations to all the winners, and to all the students who knocked on doors and desks selling those tickets.

As soon as the stalls were set up, the Stall Managers were busy painting and decorating them in "Cirque Du Soleil" style. Our Judges this year were Father Paul, Sister Judith and Sister Doloris. This year, the Judges rated on originality and creativity – combining all the stalls together. For originality, 3rd place went to Coin Toss - 2nd place went to Fish Bowl and 1st place went to Ducking Stool. Honorable mention went to Hit the Jackpot. For creativity, 3rd place went to He-Man - 2nd place went to Ice-Cream and 1st place went to Popcorn. Congratulations to all of you for another outstanding year of design!

We had a few performances throughout Friday. After Father Paul blessed the Bazaar and Mrs. Moench said a few words, we invited the Bermuda Gymnastics

Association to perform for our students. Braedon Cooke, Jacob Madeiros and all their fellow gymnasts did an outstanding performance. We had Dottie the Clown in Kiddyland doing tricks and blowing hat balloons, we had Mr. Magic walking around performing magic tricks, we even had one of our new school Teachers, Mr. Thomas doing balancing acts with chairs and all sorts of things. The school had the honor of having a few of the performers from Proud to be Bermudian sing for us, with students joining in with them.

On behalf of my fellow Bazaar Committee members, I would like to extend a huge THANK YOU to all students, teachers, parents and friends of the MSA family who, once again, came together and helped to make this year's Bazaar the success that it was.



The Blue & White is a newsletter published by the Development Office at Mount Saint Agnes

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