

SANCTA MARIA COLLEGE

Louisburgh, Co. Mayo



Newsletter Winter 2012

DISTANCE LEARNING INITIATIVE

We have partnered with Our Lady's Secondary School, Belmullet to offer students a new and innovative way of learning over the net thus broadening the curriculum by participating in a distance learning initiative. The pilot project is currently being run in both schools. We are the first two Mayo Schools to engage in this initiative. Students are offered Applied Maths and senior Home Economics as part of the project.

The availability of 100MB high speed broadband in both schools has provided the opportunity for distance learning to take place. This distance learning methodology allows for the teacher giving the class to do so from their usual location, but instead of students having to be in the same physical classroom, they can participate via a video link from the

other school. This allows all students to participate in the class without having to travel to a central location. Both the teacher and student can see and hear each other as well as being able to share content such as homework or presentations over the internet.

A culture of e-learning has been established here in recent years with i-pads introduced in classes. This latest project is another example of creating awareness of IT among all students at the school. By choosing a unified communications platform, we are able to provide a fully featured distance learning solution for all our students. We hope to expand this pilot project to include working with the nearby Islands and indeed other countries in the near future.

THE GATHERING 2013

Students are launching a novel and exciting fund-raising drive which will see them reaching out to their friends and relations throughout the world over the coming weeks. They are running a fun on-line quiz on Louisburgh and Mayo which members can join for a subscription of €12 and have an opportunity to win great prizes including a \$2,500 holiday in Ireland, 7 nights stay for up to 6 people in Breaffy House Hotel Resort etc...

In addition all members will automatically receive a \$100 CIE Tours International discount voucher which can be used against any holiday in the 2013 brochure. Students will be promoting local arts, culture, heritage, sports, tourism and business to the diaspora and will showcase the special attractions of the Louisburgh area and Co. Mayo using the on-line quiz and information links.

Using a variety of communication channels, including e-mail, text, land mail and social media, students can contact relatives, friends and past pupils and invite them to participate and raise money which will be used to promote a state of the art outdoor exercise park. Parents, neighbours and fellow students are encouraged to take part and answer questions about Mayo in general and Louisburgh in particular. Further details are on www.iquestireland.com and www.sanctamaria.ie. The closing date is January 20th 2013 so please contact those overseas over Christmas.



Pictured are the students from both schools who are taking part in the project along with their teachers and school principals.



Students and staff from Sancta Maria pictured with the members of the Iquest Ireland team and main sponsors at the official launch in November.



The Transition Year Iquest co-ordination team and their teacher Ms. Donnelly pictured with Deirdre Needham (Parents' Association) and Andy Durkan (Board of Management) at the official Iquest launch in November.

STUDENTS ON THE AIRWAVES

Maura Gibbons, Jack McEvoy, Conor Neuhaus and Saoirse Lally made their inaugural visit to Westport's local radio station WRFM on 10th October last along with their Irish teacher, Ms. Walsh. Taispeantás is the 'Seó déanta as Gaeilge' at WRFM and is produced by Des Cafferkey. The show aired on 11th November. The students spoke in Irish about various aspects of school life but especially the opportunities that TY is providing for them through extra curricular activities this year. Transition Year students also visited both Castlebar Community Radio and Midwest Radio in Ballyhaunis to promote the Gathering school fundraiser in December. Emma Needham, Lisa O'Toole, Eoin O'Malley and Megan O'Malley spoke to Tommy Morahan in CRCFM and Tommy Marren in Midwest about their role in this project.



SCIENCE

All those interested in participating in Scifest 2013 can contact Mr. McCarthy with their ideas.

Last year the School won a Category 1st prize in Sligo IT! Cash prizes and trophies are available.

Teams of 3 are recommended however individual and two member teams are also allowed. Get thinking about some ideas over the Christmas break.

BOYS SPORTS

A hard fought draw was secured by the junior boys gaelic team in the 1st game of the Connacht league played against Scoil Mhuire, Swinford.

A very entertaining game finished out on a score line of 2-7 to 1-10. Stand out players for Sancta Maria were Oisín Lally, Fionn McDonnacha and man of the match Kevin O'Malley.

There are three more games remaining in the league which have been delayed due to the bad weather.

U17 soccer will commence in the New Year with games against Balla and Belmullet. The Senior Boys Gaelic and Soccer teams have both competed in their respective leagues this term having played Castlebar and Oranmore, Galway where they lost out narrowly but they did record wins over Achill and Belmullet.

SCHOOL TOUR TO PARIS 2013

A group of 46 students and 5 teachers are off to Paris during the February mid-term. The tour which takes in the city's many famous attractions and landmarks also includes a visit to Disneyland and a night time boat trip along the famous Seine River. Organised by the French and art departments in the school the trip will also take in several world famous museums. A safe and enjoyable journey is wished to all. Bon voyage!!

TY TRIP TO THE DAIL & FOUR COURTS

On 18th December our Transition Year students travelled to the Dail where they were met by Mr. Michael Ring, Minister for Sport and Tourism. The students were given a guided tour of Leinster House while the Dail was in session. They also visited the Four Courts where they also received a guided tour and were allowed sit in on a real life court case.

SAMBA DRUMMING WORKSHOP



Transition Year students taking part in their annual Samba Drumming workshop

STUDENT OF THE MONTH

The students of the month for the year so far were

September	Cormac Kelly	5th year
October	Megan Walsh	3rd year
November	Eugenia O'Malley	2nd year

COPING WITH TEENAGERS – INFORMATION EVENING

The evening which was held on November 20th last was led by qualified facilitator in the 7 Habits, Ms. Marian Gill, and proved to be an insightful and thought provoking evening for all. Everyone knows that life can be difficult at times: regardless of age, we all go through stresses and strains. From money worries or exam stresses to relationship difficulties and work pressure. We often stop and wish for a little helping hand to help cope with these problems. That is where The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teenagers comes into play. Devised originally by Stephen Covey as Habits for Highly Effective People, his son Sean revised the Habits to suit the lives of teenagers and their parents. Known as the period of 'storm and stress', the teenage years are often difficult for both the teen and the parent. These habits offer practical, helpful ideas to help make these years less stressful.

STUDENT COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES 2012-2013

The Student Council representatives for 2012/2013 are Finn Costello, Paddy McCarthy, Ciaran Needham, Donnacha Hanks, Oran Flynn, Oisín Lally (Deputy Chairperson), Lisa O'Toole (P.R Officer), Maura Gibbons (Chairperson), Lisa Needham (Secretary), Laura Hastings (Treasurer), Emma O'Malley and Tomas Kelly.

A new student council for 2012- 2013 consisting of 12 new members, 2 from each year, was elected. The representatives were chosen by their classmates via a private vote. Every student in the school was entitled to vote. From there, all representatives were elected and a student council committee was formed to act as a binding connection between the student body and the teachers/ principal/ board of management. They were chosen by the student council members by means of a democratic vote.



Members of the Student Council with the staff representative Ms. Rennick

MAYO-ROSCOMMON HOSPICE FUNDRAISER

The Transition Year students raised €450 for the Mayo Roscommon Hospice foundation in September by holding a raffle in the school for a signed Mayo jersey. Andy Moran, Captain of the Mayo Senior Football Team and Development Officer with the Mayo-Roscommon Hospice travelled to the school just days before the All-Ireland Final to raffle the jersey and accept the cheque from our students. Also in attendance was John Staunton – son of the late Joe Staunton who starred on the last Mayo Team to win an All-Ireland in 1951 who kindly brought along his late father's medal, jersey and football boots to show the students. Ms. McGing brought along her All-Ireland medals which she won with Carnacon and the Mayo Ladies Football Teams to show the students on the day.



Andy Moran and Carol Ralph (Louisburgh Hospice Branch) receiving the cheque from TY students Maura Gibbons, Kelly Fetherston, Dylan Corr and Megan O'Malley.



John Staunton and Andy Moran proudly displaying the jersey worn by the late Joe Staunton in the 1951 All-Ireland Final with Pauline Moran, Tom and Joe Dawson (grandchildren of the late Joe Staunton), Michael Davitt, and Michelle McGing.

WILLIAM MCNAMARA AWARD



Congratulations to Paul McDonnell who achieved the highest Leaving Certificate result in Sancta Maria College in 2012. Ms. Ann McNamara presented the award to Paul McDonnell. Congratulations to all our Junior and Leaving Certificate students on their achievements.

LEAVING CERTIFICATE GEOGRAPHY FIELD TRIP



Pictured are Alan Needham and Ellen Cox recording the data as part of their Leaving Certificate Geography Field Trip to Carrowmore Beach.

On September 12th the Leaving Cert. Geography class took part in their Geographical Investigation, a core element of the Geography syllabus, worth 20% overall. The day involved a number of activities such as measuring the height of the cliffs at Carrowmore Beach and calculating wave frequency. The focus of the study was the Coastal Erosion processes at Carrowmore Beach.

SURFING AT CARROWNISKEY BEACH

As part of the 1st year induction programme all students participated in surfing lessons at Carrowniskey Beach in early September.



1ST YEAR STUDENTS



Pictured are the 1st year students at Sancta Maria College.

SPIKEBALL

13 Transition Year students studied the rules of Spike ball, then we each sat a test ,and after that we had a full day of coaching by Loretta who was from the Spike ball Association of Ireland. We learned all the basic skills that are put into the game .These skills were the Volley ,the Forearm pass ,the Underarm Serve and the Spike. We were also given a Log Book which showed all the basic information that we needed during the program.

A few weeks later and it was time to start the 6 week program with the local primary schools which were Louisburgh, Kileen, Murrisk and Lecanvey. We were split into groups of 3 or 4 to coach each school. We coached two schools on Tuesday and the other two schools on Wednesday in our school gym for an hour each week. Over the 6 weeks they were taught all of the main skills to put into a game of Spike ball, and each pupil got the chance to play a game and put the skill they learned into practise each week. This year's Spike ball Leaders were, Maura Gibbons, Aishling Hastings, Rachel Mc Evilly, Chloe Mc Gonagle, Ann Sammin, Zoe Adons, Saoirse Lally, Michaela Walsh, Emma Needham, Lisa Marie O'Toole, Megan O'Malley, Nicola O'Leary, Kelly Fetherston.
By Emma Needham. (TY student)



Members of the Transition Year spikeball leaders team.

GIRLS GAELIC PANEL



Members of the Girls Gaelic panel wearing their Mayo jerseys with pride at a training session in September.

FUTSAL COMPETITION

The 1st year boys participated in a Futsal competition in Castlebar recently where they competed admirably against St. Louis Kiltimagh and Rice College Westport.



VOLLEYBALL

This year Sancta Maria has a senior and cadet girl's volleyball team as well as the introduction of a new senior boy's team. The senior girls competed in the top division and were unfortunate to be defeated by Naas in the All-Ireland Quarter Finals.

The Cadet team are also participating in the A division and are still in the running for the cup. Both the senior and cadet teams are trained by Ms. McDermott. This year, Mr. O' Malley set up a senior boys team and they competed in the B division reaching the All-Ireland Quarter-Final.



Members of the Senior Girls volleyball team



Members of the Senior Boys volleyball team with their coach Mr. O'Malley.

CAREERS

As you may be aware, we are entering a very busy time in the Careers calendar. The CAO application process is open and students must register an account and begin the process of selecting possible courses of third level study. Leaving Cert students are timetabled for a class of Career Guidance every week. In this class the application process is explained and ways to research courses and careers is dealt with. They have access to the computer facilities during this class. They can also avail of a one to one session with the Guidance counsellor to help research and select possible courses. But it is important that parents be part of this process. There can be difficult decisions to make and it is vital that parents are there to offer support. Some basic points to remember

- Students should select courses that they like or have a genuine interest in,
- They should aim to achieve as many points as possible.
- They need to thoroughly research the course, qualification, follow on studies, etc
- They should avoid picking courses based on what friends are doing or the location of the college.
- They should make sure they are happy with the order of the courses on the CAO form.
- They should talk to someone if they have any questions or worries.



A group of science students working on their ecology fieldwork project at Carrowmore Beach as part of their Junior Cycle syllabus.

There is a full range of resources and links in the Guidance section of the school website or you can contact Mr. Berkeley the Career Guidance Counsellor. For information on all financial aspects of 3rd level education, grants etc.. please go to www.studentfinance.ie

ADULT EDUCATION

The benefits of lifelong learning go beyond the traditional view of keeping the mind sharp or improving memory. In today's global work force, continual learning is an important component of improving job skills. You may wish to learn a skill to enhance your possibilities in the job market, take professional training in a particular area, re-train in a new area for future employment or take a stepping stone to further education. Sancta Maria College now offers a varied adult education programme for Post Leaving

Cert/Mature students. Courses are currently offered in the following areas:

CHILDCARE

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

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION AND IT SKILLS

Post Leaving Cert. Course
This course is designed primarily for adults who wish to acquire/ update

computer skills or retrain in modern office technology.

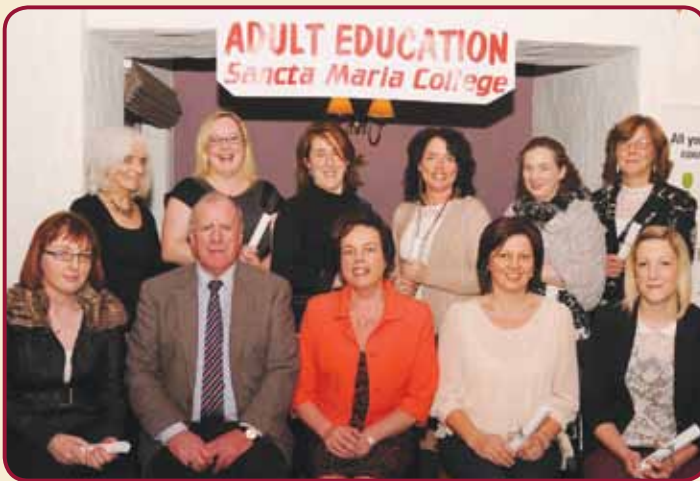
BACK TO EDUCATION INITIATIVE

Part – time Evening courses

The BTEI provides part-time Further Education programmes for young people and adults. The aim is to give participants an opportunity to combine a return to learning with family, work and other responsibilities. We currently offer courses in Childcare at Level Five and Level Six.

GRADUATION EVENING

We recently held our FETAC graduation evening, where participants from all courses held in 2012/ 2013 received their FETAC certificates and awards. Awards were presented to Business/IT students at level four and five. Childcare awards were presented at level five and level six graduates were presented with their Supervision in Childcare awards. Level six graduates can access third level colleges directly on completion of this qualification. The awards were presented by Mr. Pat Sheridan, Chairperson of the Board of Management. All students were congratulated on their achievements and wished well.



Childcare Students at Sancta Maria College

Back: Maureen Smith (Tutor), Agnieszka Gacal, Marcella Green, Maureen Bourke, Yvonne Mc Neill, Mary O'Malley Front: Georgina Grady, Pat Sheirdan (Chairperson, Board of Management), Pauline Moran (Principal), Rita O'Malley and Mary Walsh.



Business and IT students at PLC Graduation evening

Back Row (l-r) Ms. Finola Foy (PLC Co-ordinator), Cathy McGreal, Sindy Gill, Mary O' Grady, and Patsy Foy. Front Row (l-r) Bernie Gill, Pat Sheridan (Chairperson, Board of Management), Pauline Moran, (Principal), Nicola Maxwell and Padraic Frazer

SOME OF THE 'PREMMIES' FROM SANCTA MARIA COLLEGE

A coffee morning was held recently by the Transition Year religion class to raise funds for the charity Irish Premature Babies. This charity helps families who have to deal with preterm birth; they provide a buddy system for parents, buy equipment for the neonatal intensive care units. They are currently fundraising to buy a property in Dublin close to the hospitals for parents whose babies have been transferred to the capital for treatment. 300 euro was raised and they would like to thank everyone who donated.



C.S.P.E students pictured with a Guest Speaker on her recent visit to the school. She gave a very worthwhile presentation on the role of the Simon Community.

TY BANK



Pictured are the Transition Year students who have set up a TY bank in the school called bank baby bank!



LEAVING CERTIFICATE SET WORKS



Leaving cert music students from Sancta Maria College and Sacred Heart Secondary School, Westport who recently travelled to the national concert hall to see their course works being performed live.

GREEN SCHOOLS

The Green Committee continues to work on saving energy and water in the school and on reducing the amount of waste that we produce. Water is the focus of our work this year as we are working towards achieving our third green flag in the spring. Transition Year students are exploring the sources of water supplies and are looking at the effect household cleaning products have on our rivers and lakes.



NAPD CREATIVE ENGAGEMENT PROJECT

The Transition Year students are currently participating in a jewellery making workshop. The facilitator is Colombian born Victoria Foutz. One of her celtic pieces was commissioned for the Broadway opening of Riverdance. Her designs are also worn by actress Kate Hudson and Rebecca Storm. Our students are really enjoying the course and we hope that their designs will be showcased in the future.

A sample of the items currently made by our students.



GREASE IS THE WORD!

There has been great excitement around SMC since the announcement of Grease as the choice of musical for 2013. Last staged in 1998, it has been a wished-for announcement for many a TY class and this year's TY group are looking forward to showing their talents in staging the show. Stage manager Saoirse Lally was a popular choice among her peers, and is sure to guide her year group in the production of a very successful show.

The plot and songs of Grease are among the most famous and well-loved of any musical, and the school corridors have been filled with renditions of "Greased Lightening" and "Summer Nights" over the past month.

This year we have a new director, Ms. Marian Gill, who under the wonderful and experienced guidance of Ms. Marina Rice is looking forward to getting rehearsals into full swing. Ms. Gill said "The attitude, enthusiasm and fantastic musical and acting abilities of all the cast will make this show one for all the family to enjoy and one to remember for a long time".

The musical will take place from Friday, February 1st to Sunday 3rd in Louisburgh Town Hall. Tickets will be available from the school in the New Year with people encouraged to buy them early to avoid disappointment.

This years' talented cast are wished all the very best for a great show.

CAST:

T- Birds:

Danny
Roger
Kenickie
Sonny
Doody

*Jack McEvoy
Tom Dawson
Eamonn O Malley
James Gibbons
Seamus McEvoy*

Pink Ladies:

Sandy
Rizzo
Marty
Frenchie
Jan
Patti
Eugene
Ms. Lynch
Vince Fontaine
Johnny Casino
Cha-Cha
Teen Angel

*May Billington
Christina McDonnell
Jenny Ferson
Rosa Gavin
Natalie Prendergast
Eilish O Malley
Sean Doherty
Katie Cox
Conor Neuhaus
Brendan McGuinness
Aine O Reilly
Liam MacReamonn*

CRAFTS

A number of students took part in a course on sugar craft. They were taught by Bernadette Burke in the delicate art that is crafting sugar paste into flowers such as arum lilies, tiger lilies and red and white roses. The course took place over the space of three weeks and each class took two hours. There was a great sense of accomplishment felt by the students when the flowers were completed.



Pictured are the students who participated in the sugar craft course with Ms. Bernadette Burke.



One of the many creations hand made by our students in Sancta Maria.

THE PARENTS ASSOCIATION

A new Parents' Association has been formed consisting of representatives from each year. Representatives are elected by other parents. They provide a link between the school and the parents. The new parents association would really like to build on the great work carried out by previous associations and try to ensure a vibrant and relevant group within the school. They meet every 4-5 weeks. The next meeting will be held on January 16th 2013 at 7.30pm. Fundraising is a big and necessary part of the PA activities. All money raised will be spent on events for the students/parents and/or towards necessary expenses of the school. The members of the Parents Association are Una Morrison, Geraldine Keane, Tom Treacy, Sharon O'Reilly, Nora Prendergast, William McDonnell, Deirdre Needham, Michael Fetherston, Siggie Neuhaus, Rosaleen Gibbons, Maura Kerrigan and Seamus O'Toole. Thank you to the outgoing parent representatives: Dolores Rodgers (who served as Chairperson), Ann Lally (who served as Secretary) and Deirdre Needham who continues as Treasurer. The current Chairperson of the council is Geraldine Keane and the secretary is Nora Prendergast.

MENTORS

At the beginning of the school year each first year pupil was assigned a fifth year student who befriends and takes a special interest in them. It is a help in initiating the first year students into a new school environment and gives first years a sense of security. This mentoring continues as necessary in second year. Their tutor is Sr. Marie King.



The Mentors for 2012/2013 with their tutor Sr. Marie King.



Ashling Hastings and Maura Gibbons pictured at Little Killary Adventure Centre.



TY students climbing the wall at Little Killary Adventure Centre last September as part of their Ty induction trip.

CAROL SERVICE

On 7th December a carol service took place in the parish church attended by all the school community as part of our spiritual preparation for Christmas.

HSCL

Sr. Marie King as Home School Community Links person would like to thank all the parents who welcomed her into their homes. The exchange of information on the educational aspect of their son/daughter life is very valuable and worthwhile. She looks forward to meeting more parents in the New Year. Here in Sancta Maria College we strongly encourage parents to work in partnership with the school for the welfare of all our students.

SPONSORSHIP

The school wishes to thank all who have so generously contributed to all the activities throughout the school year. Your contribution is much appreciated.

SYMPATHY

We extend our condolences to members of our school community who have been bereaved this year.

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SANCTA MARIA CHOIR EVENTS

The Sancta Maria College choir had two exciting events before Christmas. Firstly, on Saturday December 8th on The Square, Louisburgh after evening mass, the choir performed a selection of Christmas Carols and songs.

Secondly, on Saturday December 13th at 8.30pm in Lecanvey Church the Choir opened an exciting event. Renowned singer songwriter Mick Hanly headlined the show with the choir joining him in song to close the show!



Thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter. It is a testament to the wonderful array of work and activity carried out by the entire school community. Some wonderful new initiatives have been developed this year with distance learning and the involvement in the Gathering. Both activities offer our students the opportunity to broaden their minds in terms of learning and leadership. Our extra and co-curricular activities continue to play a huge part in the holistic development of our students. This year has seen the introduction of boys volleyball as well as the continuation of all our other sports. Students have also been offered the opportunity to travel to Paris during the mid-

term break to learn more about the language, art and culture of France.

Teaching and learning remain central to the life of our school. The MLL (Whole School Inspection) is available on our award winning website www.sanctamaria.ie and affirms the work of all the school community.

We continue to promote health of mind and body. We urge you all to get involved in the duathlon planned by the Parents Association. Finally I wish to thank the staff, students, parents (including both Student Council and Parents Association) and the Board of Management for your support and work. Ní neart go cur le chéile.

Seasons greetings to all, **Pauline Moran**

