St. John's Lutheran School
Alumni News

Newsletter 11

The Joy of Children

School News: The school year for 2019-2020 has gotten off to a great start! We were welcomed back by a beautiful sign that said, "WELCOME BACK SJL!" provided by our Parent Teacher League. Each new Kindergarten student had a sign placed in their yard, "Home of a NEW St. John's Lutheran COUGAR." What a wonderfully warm welcoming feeling this gives to all of us as we begin a new school year! Our enrollment is down slightly, but our numbers are still good. We have 168 in K-8, 41 in Preschool, and 69 in Daycare with students not in our Preschool. This gives us a total of 278 students who get to pray and sing praises to God on a daily basis! New staff this year include Patty Schnepel as 1st grade aide, Becky Rhodes as morning custodian, and Kaleigh Johnston as Preschool aide. Mrs. Stephanie Valleroy has completed her Colloquy requirements and was installed as a Called teacher of St. John's Lutheran School. She is now teaching 3rd grade. While Julie Ratz is out for medical leave, we have Sue Guebert and Pat Malik helping in the office while Jessica helps cover Julie's duties.





Faith, Family, and Friendship: As part of our annual Dinner Auction held in March, one item I offered at the auction in 2018 was to "Dress the Principal for a Day." I had seen this on another dinner auction billing and thought the students would have fun dressing me for the day. I had no idea some friends from Okawville who normally attend this event would make the purchase. So, one day last March, my friends came to school to "Dress the Principal for the Day." They had a fun time talking to the students about staying in school, holding on to friendships your whole life, and helping each other make right decisions. Otherwise, a person with no help or guidance may end up like me in the picture, needing lots of help and guidance! My friends who bought the Dinner Auction item were Terry Dick, and Kathy and Bruce Barkau. They are pictured with me and have been great friends because of our faith, our families, and friendship! The "Dress the Principal for the Day" item was sold again at the 2019 auction, and I have to wonder what my next day will look like! All in good fun and great support for the school!



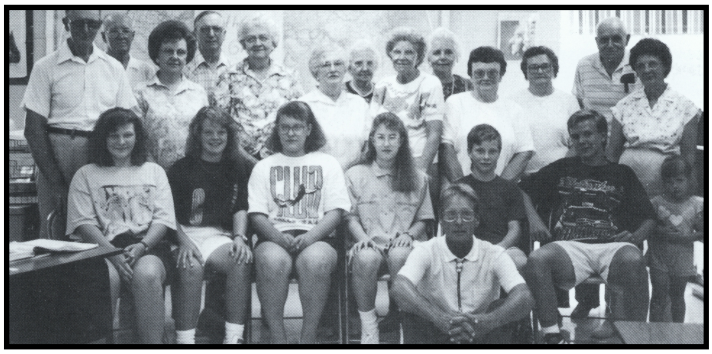
Blessings to you,
Deitt Schneider

A Visit With Amber Piel, Wife of Alumnus Alan Piel

It is hard to put into words what St. John's Lutheran School has meant to our family. My husband, Alan Piel, is a 1992 graduate of St. John's Lutheran School. He coached the boys' basketball team for several years before we had our own children, and he will be starting his sixth season as the girls' basketball coach this fall. My first exposure to the Lutheran School was when he coached the boys, as I attended the public school. I always assumed our children would attend the public school, but Alan was not in agreement! After seeing how close the boys and parents were at SJL, I understood the difference. It is hard to explain to those that have never been a part of a small Christian school, but there is nothing better.



We were blessed with three daughters that have attended SJL. Avery graduated in 2017, and is currently a junior at Red Bud High School, Aubrey graduated in 2019, and is currently a freshman at Red Bud High School, and Addyson, currently in sixth grade, is our last Cougar left. From a parents' perspective, sending our girls to SJL made "letting them go" a little easier. The teachers and staff love the kids like they are their own. There is a sense of family and security for the students and a sense of feeling that as a parent, you are also a part of the fabric of the school.



Grandparents Day – Class of 1992

St. John's provides a great education, amazing athletic opportunities, and a strong foundation of faith. The wonderful memories we have made with our girls and other school families are priceless. We have formed friendships with many because of the school and our shared love for it and commitment to it. We have had the privilege of watching the school grow to what it is today. We have really enjoyed seeing the dreams that many had for the school come to fruition. Having worked on the PTL dinner auction for the last 11 years, it has been amazing to witness the generosity of school families, church families, and alumni that have continued to support our school. Having only one daughter left at SJL, I feel like our memories are even sweeter. I'm trying to hang on a little tighter, knowing that the years pass so quickly. We will always be proud supporters and advocates for the Lutheran School. St. John's has been such a huge part of our lives and our girls and we will be forever grateful for that.



Avery's Confirmation Class of 2017



Aubrey's Confirmation Class of 2019

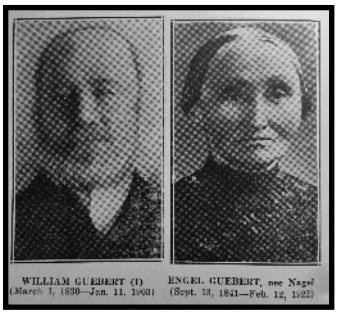
A Visit With an Alumnus: David Guebert



Hello, I am David A Guebert, and I use my middle initial because there are several David Gueberts. My wife is Alice, and we built a house on the home farm that my father, Carl, bought in 1946, which is also the year I was born. Dad had a dairy business, which I became a partner in 1970 and then took over in 1979 when Dad retired. I had married Alice in 1974 (who was confirmed into our church in 1975) and she took Dad's place milking cows with me until 2008 when we sold the herd and retired from milking. We're now full-time grandparents and world travelers.

We have three daughters that all attended St. John's, Becky, Traci, and Karla. Becky is an OR Nurse at an outpatient surgery center in St. Louis. Traci is a manager for Washington University at Siteman Cancer Center, and Karla is an ICU nurse in Lebanon MO. There are six grandkids that have or are currently attending our school (except the baby). Traci and Alan Proctor have three girls, Madi (14), Hailey (12), and Kaydence (7). Becky and Kevin Biffar have two boys, Jake (12) and Joey (9). Karla and Gabe Hernandez have a 9 month old, Noah.

Our grandchildren make the fifth generation of our family at St. John's. My great grandfather, William Guebert (pictured below), came from Germany to Red Bud in 1850. He was a charter member of our congregation. He gave $2,000 of the $12,000 to build the original church.



WILLIAM GUEBERT (I) (March 1, 1830—Jan. 11, 1900) ENGEL GUEBERT, nee Nagel (Sept. 18, 1841—Feb. 12, 1922)

I have four brothers and three sisters (pictured below) and we were all confirmed by Pastor Gross. He mentioned at my parent's 45th anniversary that he was proud to have confirmed all eight of us. Mr. Ron Snyder was my 7th/8th grade teacher and he taught all three of my girls and was my granddaughter Madi's favorite substitute teacher. A little note about Mr. Snyder, I always thought he would have been a good dairy farmer, because in dairy, you need know and do a lot of different kinds of work every day. Besides teaching two grades, he was principal, secretary, athletic director, basketball and track coach, church organist, and choir director. He did all of this and more with a large family.



The old school had four large classrooms so there were two grades in each room. My time at St. John's was from 1952-1960. The number of students then was almost as it is now. My favorite meal was homemade chili and donuts. I miss the Christmas program we held at church on Christmas Eve, with the entire school body. We would march in down the side aisles and sing "O Come All Ye Faithful." It was a wonderful service with the organ and the atmosphere of church.

We live in the Waterloo school district, so there was no bus service for us, but that didn't keep our parents from sending us to St. John's and the same is for our grandkids as we take them to school. St. John's has always been a top-rated school. I don't know much about Red Bud High, but I can tell you that three of my siblings were Valedictorian at Waterloo High School, which shows what a good grade school can do for you.



As for me, I consider our church and school to be one in the same. I have tried to follow my parents and grandparents with farming and being very involved with our church. It is important to teach your kids religion young so they continue to believe and pray.

The Pastor's Perspective

This time of the year I am asked a common question, "How is the new school year going?" This question comes from members of our congregation, from people in the Red Bud community, and from other pastors in our Southern Illinois District. Typically, they expect to hear in my answer enrollment numbers, such as, are there more or less students this year than last year. They also are interested in any staffing changes that have taken place over the summer. I am confident that Mrs. Schneider has detailed those items in her article for this newsletter.

From my point of view, I have the privilege, joy, and opportunity of teaching 18-8th grade students the Bible from Genesis 1 to Revelation 22. While there may be some of my pastoral colleagues who would rather not teach confirmation instruction, I really enjoy being with those young people at this point in their lives. Yes, it is an awkward stage. Yes, they can be goofy at times. And yes, they don't always get my jokes (which are funny, contrary to popular belief).

But that 8th grade year puts them on the brink of adolescence and on to adulthood. Changes are coming to their lives in a fast and furious way and for which they are very likely ill-prepared. While I hope to prepare them for life past grade school through the teaching of the Christian faith, I also desire to build a relationship with them during this year that will continue for their Christian lives past grade school.

This year I am doing something new. Before school began, we were faced with an opening in the first hour time slot for the 7th grade class. It was supposed to be their time for Art, but no one was available to teach it. Where angels fear to tread I said, "I will combine the 7th and 8th graders for that first hour on Fridays." Over the years, I have been frustrated with how little time I can spend on Creation while teaching Genesis to the 8th graders. So, at least for the first semester, I am teaching both grades "The Beauty and Wonder of God's Creation: The Intersection of Bible, Theology, Science and Art."

An old saying is, "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing." A famous Clint Eastwood line (I think) from one of his movies is "a man's got to know his limitations." So while the Bible and theology parts of that class are in my wheelhouse, I am getting help on some of the science, and definitely the art parts of the course. I am excited about working on this new material. We only have had three sessions of it, but the students (45 of them together) have been well-behaved and receptive to the material



I still am working on the complete outline for this course. There is much more that could be said on the topic than what we will be able to cover in 14 sessions, but it will be much more than I have been able to give them previously. If you are interested in how this is going, send me a note and I can email you the outline. Maybe there is something that your alma mater still can teach you!

God's blessings,
Pastor Mark Alan Nebel

Attention!



Any alumnus or alumna
who would like to be featured in our Alumni Newsletter,
please email alumni.stjohn@gmail.com.
We would love to hear from you.

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while adding you to our email list.