St. John's Lutheran School
Alumni News

Newsletter Volume 1 No. 2

Greetings!

Shrieks of joy and laughter could be heard when the Daycare students were allowed to play on their new playground. They had waited all summer for the new play area. The students had to be patient, but for the little ones, it was a long summer.

Groundbreaking for the new Daycare portion took place on May 1, 2014. Early this past summer, the original Daycare playground was taken out and a temporary one set up on the north side of the building. The students had a play area, but it was not what they were used to. Construction continued all summer with progress being made at a good rate.



August 15 was the target date for completion of the Daycare wing. This only left a few days for all the rooms to be set up and ready for DCFS inspection. All was in place when the day came, and the new rooms were opened on Sept. 2. At this time, the Preschool also started in the vacated Daycare rooms in the back of the gym (formally the old locker rooms). The school year finally felt right as all of our students were able to attend school and be in their designated rooms. Enrollment is great with 51 children in Daycare not enrolled in Preschool, 44 in Preschool and 184 in K-8! We have 279 children who hear the Word of God each week! What a blessing from God!



The Daycare students are overjoyed with their new spaces. Our Preschool students and K-8 students are now waiting patiently as they are without a playground and waiting for their new spaces to be complete. The wait will be long as the addition and renovation will not be complete until 2015. However, the facility will long serve the congregation and school for many years to come.



Countless hours were put in by faithful volunteers. The topography of the parking and green space on the south side of the property changed dramatically. Trees were taken down, the two sheds were cleaned and moved, playground equipment moved, tons of dirt were hauled to level off the future building site, and the new Daycare playground was built. All of these jobs were completed with volunteers! Inside the building was equally busy. Work was completed as classrooms were moved, closets cleaned and storage area increased, the library moved, and items moved to the storage shed and trailer. Volunteers were once again called upon for cleaning to be completed before the start of school. Indeed, it was a very busy summer!

Our theme for the new school year is "Called to Serve" with our theme verse being Joshua 24:15b, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Throughout the year, we will study people from the Bible who had their calling to serve the Lord. Examples are Joshua, Joseph, Samuel, Jonah, the Disciples, and many others. Each of us has been called to serve our Lord in our own way. May we be of service to Him in all we do each and every day.

In His service,
Deitt Schneider

A Visit With Alumni

Hilda Emilie (Anna Amanda) Gurney (nee Voges) was born on December 7, 1916. She is an alumnus of St. John's Lutheran School, Class of 1930. Hilda loved school and received an excellent education at St. John's. She has wonderful memories of her time at St. John's. One vivid memory was of her younger brother, Emil, getting into trouble at school. She said that Teacher Persson took him to the closet and spanked him. Emil came out of closet laughing, but he didn't let the teacher see him laughing.

At age of 97, Hilda describes her life as having many blessings. In 1940, she received her registered nurse certificate from St. Louis Missouri Baptist Hospital, and then worked at the St. Louis Children's Hospital for a short time. Later that same year, she traveled to California and cared for her older sister's four children after her sister's death. She subsequently married their father, Harlan A. "Bud" Gurney. From this marriage, she had one daughter, Hilda Carolyn, while also raising four stepchildren, Harlan Leslie, Geraldine Emilie, Helen Merie, and John Voges Gurney. Geraldine and Helen Merie are deceased.



Bud and Hilda Gurney

Hilda's husband, "Bud," and Charles Lindbergh had met and begun their aviation careers as teenagers, barnstormed, and flown the early airmail from Lambert Field together. Many families in our area became acquainted with Charles Lindbergh and Bud Gurney in the 1920s, as each of them would occasionally land in Red Bud during that era. Hilda and her husband cherished their longtime friendship with Charles Lindbergh. Hilda and Anne Morrow Lindbergh became friends, and Hilda always had the guest room ready for Charles when he came to visit.

Hilda and Bud were founding members of St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Woodland Hills, CA, and Hilda served as president of the church's Women's Guild. She served two terms as president of the Woodland Hills Republican Club and was a long time member of the Woodland Hills Book Club. She acquired a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Health Education at California State University, Northridge. Since aviation was important to the family, she obtained her Private Pilot license in 1969, at the age of 52, at Van Nuys Airport. She also attended Pierce College to take tennis and golf lessons. Hilda gave up playing tennis at age 92, then golf at age 95. Over the years, Hilda served on many juries and frequently donated blood to local blood banks. She drove her cars and kept up her own home until October of 2013. She now resides with her daughter at Hilda Carolyn's horse farm.

Daughter Hilda Carolyn is a horse breeder and renowned expert in dressage, a competitive event in which horse and rider are judged on the elegance, precision, and discipline of the horse's movements. In 1976, she won a Bronze Medal in team dressage as member of the United States team in the Summer Olympics in Montreal. She trains horses and riders in dressage at her farm in Moorpark, California, conducts clinics, and judges dressage competitions in the U.S. and internationally. She instructed her mother, who owned her own horses and rode dressage as well. Hilda Carolyn was inducted into the United States Dressage Federation Hall of Fame in 2007.



L to R: Carol Gurney & husband, Harlan L. Gurney, Hilda E. Gurney, Hilda C. Gurney, Joan Voges, Kenny Voges, nephew of Hilda E. Gurney

Sons Harlan and John were both aviators. Harlan retiring from the U.S. Air Force as a colonel in 1978, and subsequently from Martin Marietta space launch operations at Vandenberg Air Force Base in 1991. John is retired from his lifelong occupation as an aviation and naval navigation guidance system engineer, technical representative, and part-time movie industry stunt flier.

Hilda is still in relatively good health considering her age of 97. She says that Red Bud, especially St. John's, was very good to her!

A Word From Pastor

A new school year has begun at St. John's. I just came in from directing the traffic of parents here to pick up their children from school. Yes, we need traffic control this year! We line up three rows of cars in the west parking lot just to pick up the students in the lower grades. Students in the upper grades leave through the north door onto E. S. Sixth Street.



Why do we need to do this? First, we have added students. This year there are 184 children in our Kindergarten through 8th grade classes. This includes two rooms for Kindergarten and two rooms for second grade. This is up 19 from the end of last school year. Also, seven years ago, we began the 2007-2008 school year with 104 students. This increase in enrollment has taken place during an economic downturn at the same time that many parochial schools have been struggling to maintain their numbers or even keep their doors open.

The second reason we need traffic control is that because of our growth we are in the midst of a building expansion. This has eliminated a good part of our off street parking and driveway.



The Daycare portion of this expansion is complete! The job was done very well, and the three new rooms added to the west side of the building south of the existing Daycare look like they have been there all along. More rooms mean more children in our Daycare. This means more children able to be in our Preschool and hopefully move up into our Kindergarten and grades in the future.



Now the bigger project is to add on to the east side of the building going south out of the back door. This expansion of classrooms, library, bigger kitchen, offices, and gymnasium will cover what used to be the blacktop and playground areas. It will be a mess around here for awhile but, once complete, it will be a great facility for education and extra-curricular opportunities well into the future.



These things only can happen with the support of St. John's members who are empowered by God's Word and Sacraments, with the dedication of a professional staff who are guided by faith in Jesus as their Savior and with the participation of Spirit-filled school families in classrooms, activities, and fundraisers.

Thank you for your part in St. John's story leading up to this great time in our school's history. Thank you for your encouragement as we add another chapter to this story and expand our facilities so that even more students can be a part of this story, His story, in the future.

In Jesus' Name,
Rev. Mark Alan Nebel, Senior Pastor

Church Renovations







Renovations to the church have been completed.

Dinner Auction



On Saturday, March 14, 2015, St. John's Lutheran School in Red Bud, IL, will host its 7th annual Dinner Auction, ***A Night at the Kentucky Derby***, to benefit the school. Please accept our invitation to be a part of this very worthwhile event. If you would like to attend, a form to purchase tickets is included in this newsletter. This event has become our biggest fundraiser and is vital in helping our school continue to provide the highest level of Christian education for our growing student body. St. John's Lutheran School is home to over 200 students in grades Pre K through 8th grade. These students will all greatly benefit from the funds raised from the Dinner Auction. To those of you that supported our past Dinner Auctions, we are extremely grateful. If you would like to donate an item to this year's auction, please complete the enclosed donation form.

Please contact Amber Piel at fiveaps@gmail.com or her cell # 314-277-4422 if you have any questions regarding purchasing tickets or making a donation.

Thank you for your time and consideration in helping make our 7th annual Dinner Auction a success!

Respectfully,
St. John's Lutheran School Dinner Auction Committee

Donations can be mailed directly to:
St. John's Lutheran School
Attn: Dinner Auction
104 E. S. 6th Street
Red Bud, IL 62278

St. John's Lutheran School is a 501 c (3) non-profit organization. Our non-profit tax ID# is 370696440. Please see enclosed forms for more information.

Tickets are $35 per person and includes
Dinner & Dessert & Unlimited refills on soft drinks, draft beer & specialty drink of the evening
Doors open at 5:00 p.m. at Hecker Community Center

Capital Campaign

St. John's is a bustling place beginning in the morning and continuing throughout the day. St. John's has been blessed with a growing student population. The recently completed Daycare addition is near capacity at 69 with only two spaces left available. (Time to build again!) Preschool numbers total 44 and Kindergarten through eighth grade total 184. The enrollment reflects the need for this expansion. Construction of the new library, offices, gymnasium, and the additional four junior high classrooms continues at a brisk pace, due in part to the excellent fall like weather and of course to the many volunteers that have helped with this project. The outpouring of help has been a true blessing during this construction process.

The Building Committee, at their last meeting, voted unanimously to build four junior high classrooms which will help accommodate the growing Kindergarten through eighth grade classes. Constructing the junior high at this time is a more efficient use of resources that will bear benefits now and in the future.

The Church has received a renovation that includes new flooring, refinished pews, new lighting, and a new sound and video system. The nave and narthex of the Church has been painted in a beautiful traditional style.

Thanks to the staff at St. John's that has made adjustments in their schedules to accommodate the construction process. Staff members have taken on a variety of new jobs from directing traffic to changing offices and classrooms. Coping with these adjustments during this construction period will help to result in a beautiful and efficient new facility where the Word of God will be taught and proclaimed.

Pledge and cash funds received to date total approximately $1.6 million, which puts us at about the half-way point in our Capital Funding Campaign. Funding will become more critical as the project evolves and more expenses are incurred. Your gifts remain important to the success of this campaign. Thanks to everyone that has participated with their Prayers, Presence, Presents and Priorities. Praise be to God.

Stuart J. Langrehr
Congregation Chairman

