

ARCHIVES

THE ALUMNI NEWSLETTER OF ST. JOAN OF ARC SCHOOL



Saint Joan of Arc School is accredited by the
Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools
and is also a nationally recognized
Blue Ribbon School of Excellence

Our mission is to teach, build community, and serve.

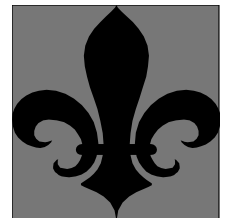
DARE THE IMPOSSIBLE: LIVE THE VISION



St. Joan of Arc School is blessed to have many alumni and friends who care about our school and its future.

This newsletter is dedicated to all our supporters. We thank you for your assistance and prayers!

Be sure to visit us on the web at
<http://www.sjaschoolny.com>





A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRINCIPAL



Dear Alumni,

Let me take this opportunity to introduce myself to you: I am John Fruner, the new principal of St. Joan of Arc School. After forty years of dedicated service, fifteen as principal, Mrs. Linda Kelly decided to retire. She left me a healthy and thriving school, full of energy and the best students in our Diocese! The staff is equally dedicated to the success of each student, working as a team to provide whatever services are available for its students.

Currently we provide Art, Music, Band, Piano, Computers, Physical Education, Dance, World Language (Italian, French, and Spanish) along with our traditional academic subjects. The place is crowded with 552 students! Next year we are expanding our classes to include full day Nursery and Pre-K classes. The interest in our already full day kindergarten program is astounding! We simply couldn't accommodate all the requests that came in for admission. We hope that with three kindergartens in September 2010, we can accept as many children as we can who want to be part of the proud St. Joan of Arc Catholic School tradition.

Over the summer the parish gave the school a new boys bathroom, two new office spaces, and totally renovated the first floor classrooms. Dropped ceilings were taken down, each entire classroom was repainted, and we installed ceiling fans. Electricity was updated to better provide for computers and Smart Boards, although we only have one Smart Board right now.

New desks were purchased for one eighth grade and the first floor World Language classroom. An anonymous donation of \$5,000 will provide the second eighth grade with new desks, some time around Christmas. We are slowly paying off the other two classroom's new desks.

The school yard side of the building was pointed and a new roof was put on Ward Meehan Hall.

This year's fundraising efforts will go to provide students with wireless laptops and some Smart Boards. In October we began an optional fundraiser, in November we will have a Book Fair, and in January we will be selling boxes of candies for a dollar a bar. We hope that this money provides us with some financial resources to be more computer based.

The Diocese is just beginning a computerized student information system called Information Now (or iNow.) This program will enable students and teachers to access their grades online, at any time. Considerable time and effort has been put into the training, data entering, and adjustment to a totally computerized way of doing our attendance, grades, progress reports, and report cards. While we will still distribute hard copies of report cards, they will also be available online.

Scholarships continue to be given to the school in the name of former graduates or their deceased family members. Due to the economic strains placed on families, more and more families are finding St. Joan's a more difficult option for the education of their children. We are doing our best to keep costs down but with two older buildings, financial resources are stretched.

By way of example, our original fire alarm system has many alarm boxes that simply don't work anymore. Their parts are no longer available because that system is no longer in use. (It's like trying to find an 8 track cassette tape player's parts.) The proposals for a new system that meets all the fire codes (for both buildings) are more than we can afford at this time. We pray that we can save the money over the next few years in order to replace that entire system, before it totally breaks!

The PA system (from the early 1950s, complete with tubes!) has been updated as best as it can with a new console. The cost the school laid out was \$4,655. The original speakers and wiring remains since the cost of replacing that part of the system is over \$30,000.

The present phone system is being replaced because it no longer meets the needs of the office and the school. Like the fire alarm system and PA system, parts of the phone system are no longer available, however, the new system will work through the internet. Our present DSL computer lines have to be converted to T1 lines to enable us to add some more phones, voice mail and the ability to transfer calls to different phones. We are hoping, over the summer of 2010, to install a simple phone in each classroom providing teachers with a way to communicate with one another, the office, and parents. This improves the safety of the building as well. The system will have voicemail for each teacher. The system's new wiring, required computer equipment, and the hardware are not totally covered by any New York State grants, so much of the cost will be absorbed by the school.

This past week we had to replace the door to the roof because the original door and jam had corroded. No matter how we secured the door, the original rotted wood could no longer keep the door in its frame or the door locked. Not bad, though, for a door installed in the early 1920s!

The news, though, is good here at St. Joan's. We are already receiving requests for registration for September 2010! Plans are in the works for moving our six grades to the top floor and creating a middle school with an extended day. Sixth, seventh, and eighth grades will have physical education in separate classes for boys and girls. A full time Learning Center Director will run our individual instruction for students who are struggling or who have I.E.Ps. (Individual Educational Plans) Another Learning Center teacher will work full time with students whose first language is Spanish and who are struggling expressing themselves in English.

We believe that after September 2010, we will not have any spare space left in our buildings, and hope to have between 600 and 650 students in the school.

With your prayers, encouragement, and support, I know we can do it!

Sincerely,

Mr. John Fruner
Principal



TUITION ASSISTANCE (Scholarships)

Our students come mostly from low income families living in Jackson Heights. Many of these students' families are plagued by unemployment and a diversity of social and economic problems. While our tuition remains well below the cost to educate a student, many parents still are not able to provide their children with a Catholic education. Recently, due to the economic situation in our country, more and more families can no longer afford tuition. When this occurs, we try and find a sponsor without removing the student from St. Joan's due to the family's inability to pay tuition.

We always need tuition assistance for students who can not afford tuition at St. Joan of Arc Catholic School. Assistance is in the form of being "A Student Friend," providing a partial scholarship for the student for a period of one academic year. The student is required to maintain an 85, overall average and will communicate with his or her "friend" monthly. You may remain anonymous. "A Student Friend" contributes any amount up to \$3,000. The choice is up to you.

An emergency fund is also needed to assist families who need temporary help or are experiencing some sort of crisis, such as unemployment, illness or a rent increase. There are students in our school who are undergoing cancer treatment. Their co-payments are in the thousands and they often choose to pay these copayments and then agonize about how they can pay tuition.

Scholarships can be in memory of a student, a loved one, a parent, or a class. Providing the student with a short bio of the person enables us to try and match a student who exemplifies the attributes of the one who is being memorialized in the scholarship.

This one way to keep St. Joan of Arc Catholic School available for those who need it most.

Please contact Mr. Fruner, Principal, to discuss this more.



*** WISH LIST ***

For St. Joan of Arc Catholic School
2009-2010

Enabling us to provide a specific course, update our aging buildings, or sponsoring a project is a way to create a legacy for your class, family member, or to remember what St. Joan of Arc Catholic School meant to you as a child. You can choose from a number of areas that the school needs financial resources for, or speak to the Mr. Fruner, our new principal, about your own ideas. You can e-mail him at PrincipalSJA@aol.com or call him at the school.

Current Projects:

Replacement of Public Address System Console (Original Console was installed in the early 1950s, complete with tubes!) IN PROGRESS	\$4,650
Upgrade of DSL computer lines to T1 lines IN PROGRESS	\$8,955
New reception desk/computer desk for office ORDERED	\$1,400
2 Lap tops for Smart Board and Projector ALREADY IN USE: Ordered September 2009	\$1,000 each
Flat Screen Monitors for Classroom Computers 30 are needed	\$500 each
Laser Printers for Office (old ones can't handle new report cards) ONE ALREADY IN USE: Need two more.	\$1,000 each
New Security Door to Roof REPLACED October 15, 2009	\$1,000
New Camera Security System for doors, school yard, stair wells	\$5,000
New Dry Erase Boards (4 were purchased) ALREADY IN USE: Ordered August 2009.	\$250 each
New tables for Kindergarten class ALREADY IN USE: Ordered September 2009	\$500 each
2 new computers for Office	\$1,200 each
Renovation of Original Principal's Office (now 1 st floor faculty room) [New Pergo Floor, new paint, repaired walls] Repair of First Floor Hallway (walls, ceiling) RENOVATION COMPLETED: August 2009	\$2,250 \$6,750
Additional furniture and supplies for Learning Center ALREADY IN USE: September 2009	\$2,675
Replacement of Fire Alarm System Original system installed in 1924, additional alarms and bells installed in 1951. Problem: Gym alarm box is broken. Can not be replaced. Fire Alarm panel no longer functions in both buildings. Gongs ring but not consistently. System no longer meets fire codes. Smoke detectors need to be added that are connected to alarm system.	\$35,000



Projects for Summer 2010:

Fire doors to replace existing wood doors at each end of the hallways. 12 doors needed for main building. [These are wooden doors that do not meet current fire codes. Doors now must be metal and fire resistant.]	\$6,000 each
Original Front Doors of the school need to be replaced with electronic buzzer and lock system. 2 doors are needed.	\$4,000 each
Removal of existing Science lab to be returned to a classroom (To be completed Summer 2010)	\$10,000
Creation of a boys bathroom and girls bathroom on third floor. (There is no boys or girls bathroom on third floor.)	\$50,000 each
Creation of bathroom for Kindergarten classrooms that will be relocated into main building in order to provide 3 kindergartens for September 2010. (Law requires us to install a bathroom in existing classrooms in order to convert these classrooms into kindergarten classrooms.)	\$15,000 each
Kindergarten furniture for 3 new kindergarten classrooms in main building for September 2010.	\$9,000 each
Relocation of Chalk Boards not in use in the Ward Meehan Hall building to main building. (They are "retro-fitted" into existing board space in our main building.) 16 boards to be moved and "retro-fitted" Summer 2010.	\$1,000 each
Removal of carpet in hallways. This needs to be done in the summer when the children are not in the building to neutralize the carpet adhesive. (First, second, third floors)	\$10,000 each floor
Smart Boards (including projectors, wall mounts, wiring)	\$7,000
Class sets of lap tops	\$1,500 each lap top
Mobile Laptop Storage Carts	\$1,500
Wireless Routers for Mobile Laptop Storage Carts	\$200 each
Wireless Laser Printers for Mobile Laptop Storage Carts	\$1,000 each

Your support directly impacts current students as well as the future generations. We are grateful for your donations and we thank you. You may be assured, a gift of any amount casts a vote of confidence towards our efforts to educate and nurture young people with Christian ideals.

CORRECTION

We are delighted to borrow the words of Mark Twain to convey that our report on "the demise" of Brother Patrick Hogan, F.M.S. "has been greatly exaggerated." Brother Patrick, like the great American author, had his memorial tribute prematurely published in the media. Brother's name appeared in our last edition of *Archives*. An editorial blunder placed Brother's biography in our "In Memoriam" file instead of our "Arc Accolades" folder. Our intention was to acknowledge Brother Patrick's recent celebration of his fiftieth anniversary as a Marist Brother and many years of service to our community. We proffer the sincerest of apologies for our error and extend our belated best wishes to Brother Patrick on the milestone of his golden jubilee. With these good wishes also come our sincerest hopes that he may be blessed with another fifty years of health, vigor, and service to our Lord and His people.

Reaccreditation Process Nears Completion

As alumni of St. Joan of Arc School, readers of "Archives" are fully aware and have experienced first-hand St. Joan of Arc's long standing commitment and pursuit of both spiritual and academic excellence. For over eighty years, graduates of St. Joan of Arc School have left our hallowed halls and then went on to continue their education at some of the finest high schools and universities, many with the aid of scholarships. Many alumni credit the foundation that they received at St. Joan of Arc School as the basis on which they built their successes both scholastically and in their selected career paths. This legacy of excellence remains a key component to the character of St. Joan of Arc School and our present student body and staff are as fully dedicated to its continuation as at any time in our long history.

As a part of St. Joan's pursuit of the best, we were one of the first groups in our diocese to be granted accredited status by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Elementary Schools in 1990. The Middle States Association ascribes to a "peer-review model of accreditation" and is comprised of a number of associated schools who are fully and whole heartedly dedicated to the "educational responsibility to seek continuous improvement." The Middle States paradigm for school improvement is based on the concept of scrutiny and evaluation of schools from both within and outside the institution. Along with this system of examination, member schools seek to be responsive to new educational trends and the needs of their school community through strategic planning and the establishment of long-term goals. In this way, member schools continually take part in a cycle of review and evaluation that will keep them focused on the pursuit of excellence in education. Past goals that have been realized at St. Joan of Arc School as a result of our involvement in the Middle States process have included the establishment of our Learning Center, the enhancement of our Fine Arts program, the procurement of computer hardware, and a reevaluation of and recommitment to our fundamental identity as a Catholic school, to name just a few.

Last year the dedicated faculty of St. Joan of Arc School, under the leadership of their selected steering committee, Mrs. Susan McEnery (primary coordinator and first grade teacher), Mr. Michael Donovan (immediate coordinator and sixth grade teacher), and Mr. Paul Mazza (junior high coordinator and seventh grade teacher), embarked on the seemingly insurmountable task of completing the newly authored "Renewing the Vision" protocol designed specially for Catholic elementary schools by the Middle States Association. It was an arduous and rewarding task that culminated in June with a collation to toast the faculty's completion of and unanimous approval of their self-study document. This document includes a statement our school philosophy, a school context narrative which relates our history, along with a description of how we live our Catholic identity, an outline of our academic programs, and a listing of our student services and extra curricular offerings. Also included in the study are an analysis of our current student population, community demographics, financial stability, and an assessment by both the faculty and our parents of St. Joan of Arc's adherence to the Standards of an Accredited School that have been formulated by the Association and which serve as the guidelines for acceptance by the Middle States Association. Additionally the study required the inclusion of and examination of our testing data, a true source of pride to the students, parents, and staff of St. Joan of Arc School. Our students achieve above and beyond their city, state, and diocesan counterparts - but that would come as no surprise to an alumnus of St. Joan of Arc School. Today, as always, excellence remains the hallmark of a St. Joan of Arc education.

The completion of our self-study reaffirmed to those of us at St. Joan of Arc that we are in fact true to our philosophical commitment to the spiritual, academic, and personal growth of our student body and all members of our school community. At St. Joan of Arc School our Mission Statement, "Dare the Impossible, Live the Vision", is not just a catchy slogan but words which we live by. Our participation in the reaccreditation process also affirmed that St. Joan of Arc is a viable and stable institution in terms of both enrollment and finances. It also verified the fact that the children entrusted to us are receiving the support, encouragement, and nurturing that they need for their journey to becoming "the mightiest of trees" enabling them to realize and use their God-given talents and gifts.

Currently, we are nearing the end of our reaccreditation cycle. In early December, we will welcome four members from the Middle States Commission for a site visit to our school. These esteemed colleagues are charged with the task of validating our self-study. Their visit will conclude with a list of commendations and recommendations. We are most confident that their visit will result in our reaccreditation by the Commission in the spring of 2010. Even though the day-to-day workings of St. Joan of Arc, our self-study, and our many accomplishments speak for themselves a few prayers on behalf of a successful site visit from our faithful "Archives" readers could only help our chances. So please take a few moments to offer a prayer to our patroness on behalf of your alma mater.



ARCHIVES

St. Joan of Arc School
35-27 82 Street
Jackson Heights, NY 11372



Alumni Bulletin Board

CLASS OF 1953

Richard Fitzsimons is searching for a photo of his 1953 graduating class. The photographer who took these pictures is no longer in business, and the school does not have a copy. If anyone still has their diploma case with this picture, please consider sending a copy to Mr. Fitzsimons. You can contact him at 15 Chandlers Lane, Fairfield, CT 06824; phone numbers 203-259-2955, 203-520-805; email richiefitz@optonline.net.

ALL ALUMNI

We receive many requests from graduates trying to locate former classmates. By increasing our database, we would be able to reunite many more people. If you're willing to add your email address to our alumni website, please let us know. Contact us at St. Joan of Arc School 35-27 82 St. Jackson Heights, NY 11372, (718) 639-9020, Fax(718) 639-5428, email SJAalumni1@yahoo.com.