

ST. FRANCIS DE SALES CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL NEWS



Message from the Chair

Welcome to the first issue of our School Council Newsletter of this school year. It's hard to believe that Thanksgiving is behind us already, and Halloween is fast approaching! My name is Lorraine Fenn, and I am honoured to be serving as Chair of the St. Francis de Sales Catholic School Council this school year. Returning to serve on Council again are Bernice Chiniborch (Community Rep), Tammy Demidoff, Dorothy Hudson, Patricia Meagher (Non-teaching Rep), Shelley Nadeau (Secretary), Debbie Shea (Parish Rep),

Tracey Stringer and Margaret West (Treasurer). We are happy to welcome new Council members Anik Blanchard (Teaching Rep), Derek Haime (Principal), Nancy Hewitt, Tracey Nichols and Janet Yanosik. Susan Hoysted will be acting as Teaching Rep until Anik Blanchard returns from her maternity leave. Together, we are parents of at least 30 children, ranging in age from new babies to grown adults. This dynamic blend of experience and fresh thinking promises to make this an exciting year at St. Francis!

Media Awareness Network

By Shelley Nadeau

**NATIONAL
MEDIA
EDUCATION
WEEK**
NOVEMBER 5-9, 2007

Television, movies, music, video games, the Internet...sometimes, the sheer volume of media and pop culture influences in our kids' lives can seem overwhelming. Stuffed gorillas, frogs, cats and dogs come with passwords for **Webkinz World**, an online site where kids bring their pets to life, make friends and challenge other kids' pets to games. Webkinz users can buy clothes for their pets and decorations for their rooms with virtual cash they earned by playing games or taking educational quizzes.

Many children today spend more time interacting with media than they do attending school. While young people are immersed in media environments—watching, reading, listening, interacting, and creating—they are learning about the world and forming perceptions of themselves and others. This “informal” learning is happening largely without adult guidance or significant reflection. In order to be literate today, young people need to develop a whole range of critical thinking, communication and information management skills to apply to their use of media—and media education is an essential tool in

helping them acquire these skills.

The Media Awareness Network (MNet) and the Canadian Teachers' Federation are partnering for the second consecutive year to present National Media Education Week, November 5-9, 2007 (www.mediaeducationweek.ca). The purpose of the week is to promote media literacy as a key component in the education of young people, and to encourage the integration of media education into Canadian schools, homes, and communities.

E-Parenting is this year's theme for National Media Education Week. *E-Parenting* is a key responsibility of today's net generation parents that focuses on understanding young people's cyber culture and being actively involved in their Internet use.

Celebrate this National Media Education Week by learning more about media influences on children and teens. Familiarize yourself with media your children favour. Talk to your kids about what they're seeing, hearing and playing. Discover what they enjoy and why.

In June 2006, the Canadian Home and School Federation and Media Awareness Network formed a partnership to create a national school-based Internet safety program for parents. It was through this partnership and funding provided by Bell Canada, that

the *Parenting the Net Generation* workshop was developed. This half-hour presentation provides a brief overview of the issues related to young people's online activities – safety, privacy, cyber-marketing, information authentication and ethical online behaviour. This workshop is designed for school councils, parent groups, libraries and community groups and is available for free to all school councils across Canada until July 31, 2008.

The Parish Connection

By Lorraine Fenn

Here in Smiths Falls, we are fortunate to have an active parish with many interesting ministries that serve our various needs. One ministry that is very near to me is the RCIA. RCIA stands for the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, and its purpose is to prepare adults to enter the Catholic Church. These participants may be non-Catholics wishing to convert to Catholicism, or adults that have been baptized as Catholics but have not received the sacraments of Eucharist or Confirmation. To go through the RCIA process is a journey of self-discovery and enrichment, truly a life changing experience.

On Sunday, October 7, 2007, Lynn Charette completed her RCIA journey and was welcomed into the Catholic Church. If you were at the 11:00 a.m. mass, you would have seen Lynn be baptised, then receive the sacraments of confirmation and communion. On speaking of her RCIA experience, Lynn says: "Attending the RCIA classes has been a very uplifting spiritual experience for me. I've learned so many things about the Catholic faith and I will continue to learn more. I can't say enough about Lorraine Fenn and Eleanor Glenn. These ladies are so knowledgeable and they give so much of themselves to this program. It has been a pleasure. I feel at peace with myself and blessed to have gone through the RCIA program. I encourage others who are thinking about joining this program to do so. It will bring you closer to your faith in God and show you the way to spiritual guidance."

If you would like to see this workshop come to St. Francis de Sales School, please contact Shelley Nadeau at (613)283-3832.

Please visit <http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/parents/index.cfm> and <http://www.cca-kids.ca/tvandme/english/parents/index.html> today to learn more about talking to your kids about media.

What's happening...

First Communion Parent Meeting: Parents of children preparing to receive Reconciliation and the Eucharist are asked to please attend the parent meeting to take place in Hanley Hall on Thursday, October 18 @ 7:00 p.m.

Haunted Halloween Walk: October 25-26-27 at The Garden Market, 115 William Street West from 7:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. A portion of the proceeds from this event will be donated to St. Francis de Sales Catholic School Council.

Next meeting: Monday, October 29 @ 6:30 p.m. in the library, everyone welcome.

*Grant us, O Lord Jesus,
to imitate faithfully the example of your Holy Family.
May peace, love and happiness prevail.
Grant us the grace to be the parents
we should be for our children.
Grant that our child may find solid support
for their human dignity
and for their growth in truth and love
within the embrace of our home.*

Source: Catholic Online

Our parish's RCIA program is a unique program in that it runs throughout the entire calendar year, which means you can join at any time. The group meets every Sunday in the Adoration Chapel at 10:30 a.m. and also every other Monday night at Hanley Hall from 7:00 p.m. to approximately 8:30 p.m.

If you are interested in starting on your own journey through the RCIA to the Catholic Church, please call the rectory office at (613) 283-0220.

If you are interested in volunteering, would like to attend a meeting or if you would like to learn more about the St. Francis de Sales School Council, please contact the school at 613-283-6101 or approach any member of council:



Chair—Lorraine Fenn, **Treasurer**—Margaret West, **Secretary**—Shelley Nadeau, **Community Representative**—Bernice Chiniborch, **Parish Representative**—Debbie Shea, **Non-Teaching Representative**—Patricia Meagher, **Teaching Representative**—Susan Hoysted, **Principal**—Derek Haime, Tammy Demidoff, Nancy Hewitt, Dorothy Hudson, Tracey Nichols, Tracey Stringer, Janet Yanosik