



St. Michaels University School

Outstanding preparation for higher learning and for life.

DECEMBER NEWSLETTER

ST. MICHAELS UNIVERSITY SCHOOL
JUNIOR SCHOOL
820 Victoria Avenue
Victoria, BC V8S 4N3
Phone: (250)-598-3922

Volume 5, Issue 4

December 1, 2011



Dear Junior School Parents:

Preparations for Christmas events have begun and there is an excitement in the air at the Junior School! Congratulations to the Parent Auxiliary and Teresa Zwicky (Gala Chair) for the spectacular Christmas Gala held last Saturday evening. It was a wonderful way to build community with K-12 families!

This newsletter will not only keep you up-to-date on school news and activities, but will provide you with an overview of the many upcoming December events.

Our recent *Admissions Information Evening* on Thursday, November 17 was a tremendous success. Over 35 parents attended the presentations given by entry-year teachers and by current parents and students. I would like to especially thank the Junior School *Parent Welcome Committee* for their support to this important event and the Admissions process generally.

MUSIC PERFORMANCES:

Strings Concerts – November 22 and 28, 2011

The Grade 5 String Ensemble played for an appreciative audience of parents, grandparents and friends on **Tuesday, November 22**. In their concert, the students presented a selection of pieces that have been studied since September: some in unison and others that included harmony voices. It was rewarding for the students to play as a string orchestra of 35 members in the large assembly hall and the sounds that they created were, musically speaking, very satisfying. The students deserve congratulations for the co-operation, determination, self-discipline and perseverance that they used in preparing the concert material and performing with fine spirit. Congratulations to Mrs. Smith for her support and dedication.

Congratulations also to the Grade 4 Strings who had their debut performance on **Monday, November 28**.

School-wide Christmas Assembly for “Students & Staff” – Friday, December 2, 2011.

The entire school student body (K-12) and staff will participate in a special Christmas Assembly at the Senior School on the afternoon of **Friday, December 2**. Dismissal and pick-up will be at the **Junior School** at 3:15 p.m. There will be After School Care as usual.

SPECIAL EVENTS:

Primary Christmas Concerts – Wednesday, December 7 and Thursday, December 8, 2011

On the afternoon of **Wednesday, December 7** at **1:30 p.m.**, our annual Primary Christmas Concert will be held for **Grandparents and Senior Citizens from the community**. Following the performance, tea will be served by the Grade 3 class.

The following evening, **Thursday, December 8**, the **parents and siblings** of the Primary children are invited to attend the same performance in the gym. It will start at **6:30 p.m. sharp** (doors will open at 6:00 p.m.) and we hope to have a special visitor arrive at the end of the event!

Junior School Carol Service – Tuesday, December 13, 2011 at 6:30 p.m. (please note time change this year)

The Junior School Carol Service will be held on **Tuesday, December 13** from 6:30-7:15 p.m. at the Richmond Campus in the Chapel. This service honours the Christian traditions of the school and our Grade 4 students participate in the Nativity Play, while the Grade 5 students participate in a number of musical performances.

We recognize that some of our students come from religious traditions other than Christian and may wish not to actively participate in the service but simply attend with their family. Should this be the case, please contact me or your child's teacher.

Further letters from the teachers will be sent home with specific details for the Grade 4 and 5 students.

Primary children should arrive at 6:15 and be in #1 uniform with long-sleeved shirts and sweaters. Kindergarten children should attend in their red shirts with sweaters on top. Seating for the service is limited. Use of cameras during the service is not permitted in the Chapel, but there will be an opportunity to take photos immediately following the service.

Christmas Carol Sing-Along – December 12, 13, 14

Again this year, to help the children learn Christmas carols and to build community spirit, there will be an opportunity to sing Christmas carols each morning starting **Monday, December 12 at 8:10 a.m.** in the gym. As students arrive they may put their backpacks in their cubbies and proceed to the Gym for about ten minutes of singing. Parents are welcome to join us!

Change in Pizza Days for December

The last pizza days before the Christmas holidays will be on **Tuesday, December 6 and Tuesday, December 13**, (instead of Wednesdays). Pizza days will begin again on Wednesday, January 11, 2012.

JUNIOR SCHOOL LEADERSHIP INITIATIVES:

Our SMUS vision encourages every child to participate in service related events to support their leadership development. The Junior School has the following Service activities for the month of December:

Mustard Seed—Food Collection

At this time of the year it is very important that the students continue to participate in giving to others less fortunate in our community. The students will be collecting cans of goods to contribute to the Mustard Seed for the important Christmas collection and we thank all families for their support of this cause. Boxes for the Mustard Seed are located in the main foyer.

World Vision Assembly

This year the Junior School will again participate in a Service initiative to support World Vision. Children are being encouraged to earn their donations at home to contribute to purchasing a stable full of animals.

For more details, please refer to the letter and catalogue which was sent home on Monday, November 28. A World Vision Service Day will be held on **Friday, December 9**. Children are encouraged to bring a loonie or toonie in support of this initiative and in turn may wear their street clothes.



Grade 2 Service Learning Project

The Grade 2 class has been involved in making and selling gingerbread stars as our annual service learning project. Students have been actively involved in every step of the process, from measuring the dry ingredients, to rolling and cutting, to decorating, packaging, recording orders, selling, and counting up the money. We are thankful to Sodexo at Brown Hall for baking the cookies for us. The final tally is not in yet, as we have a considerable number of cookies left to sell. They can still be purchased afterschool at the Grade 2 classroom, at \$5.00 for a bag of 3 delicious cookies.

After some discussion, the Grade 2 students decided unanimously to split the proceeds of this project. We will buy toys with half of the money on our class toy shopping trip on December 12th. The rest of the money will go to support Tristan Taylor, a local man who is battling neuroblastoma. (The students wanted to direct all of the money to Tristan, but we had already committed to Santas Anonymous and sold the cookies on that premise.) To learn more about Tristan, follow this link: <http://youtu.be/QI1UCTf8eVw>

Thank you for supporting our Grade 2 Gingerbread Project!



Stocking Project

It is a tradition at this time of year for the Grade 5 classes at the Junior School to participate in a Christmas Service Project. This year they will, once again, be filling a stocking for a child in need. In previous years these stockings have gone to the Dominican Republic, but this year we will be supporting local children in Victoria through the “Warm a Soul” initiative. Grade 5 students will be organizing this in their Life Skills classes and Grade 5 parents will have received a detailed message about this.

Virtue for the month of December: Generosity (please see attached write-up)

STUDENT SAFETY

- A reminder that students should not be dropped off prior to 8:10 a.m. when there is a teacher on duty.
- Students who do not take the bus home **must** wait at the gate for their parents to pick them up from the teacher on duty. For those students who have permission to walk home, please remind them that they need to use the **crosswalks** when leaving the school. It is very dangerous for students to be running across the road by the gate as they cannot be seen. Vehicles, especially buses parked on either side of the driveway, block the visibility of drivers on the road. A number of near-misses have been reported.

Parking Issues

We would again ask parents to be mindful of our neighbours when parking near the school. Neighbours on the **smaller side streets** would also very much appreciate parents being careful not to park on their lawns as there are no sidewalks or boulevard borders to guide vehicles on those narrow streets. Thank you very much for your help.

HOLIDAY DATES

School ends for the holidays on **Wednesday, December 14 at 11:45**. The children will receive their Report Cards before they leave. Buses will pick up students shortly after dismissal. There will be **After-School Care** on that day from 11:45-5:30. School resumes after the holidays on **Thursday, January 5, 2012** (day 8). Teachers will be attending a Professional Development Activity on Wednesday, January 4, 2012.

Day Camps during the Holiday Season

Please see the brochures in the hall or check the website below for details.

http://www.smus.bc.ca/campus/extension/chlg_xmas.asp

On behalf of the Junior School Staff, I would like to wish you a joyous holiday season!

Best regards,

Nancy Richards, M.Ed
Junior School Director



SMUS JUNIOR SCHOOL

December 2011

At a Glance

- Thurs., Dec. 1** (day 8) Grade 4 Girls' Sports Club (3:15-4:15)
- Fri., Dec. 2** (day 9) Primary Concert Rehearsal (9:00-9:20 a.m.)
School Wide Assembly for staff & students only (1:30-3:00) at Sr. School
Grade 5 Boys' Sports Club (3:15-4:15)
- Mon., Dec. 5** (day 10) Chapel cancelled
Primary Concert Rehearsal (8:30-10:00 a.m.)
Grade 4 Boys' Sports Club (3:15-4:15)
- Tues., Dec. 6** (day 1) Primary Concert Rehearsal (8:30-9:30 a.m.)
Pizza Day * on Tuesday this week
Grade 5 Girls' Sports Club (3:15-4:15)
- Wed., Dec. 7** (day 2) **Primary Concert & Grandparent Tea** (1:30-3:00)
No sports
- Thurs., Dec. 8** (day 3) Grade 4 Girls' Sports Club (3:15-4:15) Outside
Primary Evening Concert (6:30 p.m.)
- Fri., Dec. 9** (day 4) **World Vision Service Day**—Students may wear red & green (donation)
Grade 5 Boys' Sports Club (3:15-4:15)
- Mon., Dec. 12** (day 5) Carol singing in the gym (8:10-8:20)
Chapel (#1 uniform)
Kindergarten Polar Express morning (8:30-9:30 a.m.)
Grades 4 & 5 Carol Service Rehearsal at Sr. School. Leave at 8:45, return 11:30.
Grade 2 Shopping Trip to Toys R Us (9:30-11:45)
- Tues., Dec. 13** (day 6) Carol singing in the gym (8:10-8:20 a.m.)
Grades 4 & 5 Carol Service Dress Rehearsal. Leave at 8:45, return at 11:30.
Pizza Day * on Tuesday this week
Junior School Carol Service at the Sr. School Chapel (6:30 p.m.)
- Wed., Dec. 14** (day 7) Carol singing in the gym (8:10-8:20 a.m.)
Final Assembly
School closes for Christmas holiday (11:45)
After School Care (11:45-5:30 for those who have pre-registered)
No Sports after school today



2012

- Thurs., Jan. 5** (day 8) First day of classes (8:20 a.m.)
- Wed., Jan. 11 &
Thurs., Jan. 12** **Parent/Teacher Interviews with Specialty Teachers** (more information will follow at a later date.)

St. Michaels Junior School

Virtue of the Month for December: Generosity

Generosity and December seem to go together very nicely. It's a time when we are more inclined to think about the needs of others. Food banks across the province rely on donations at this time of year. During the months of November and December food banks like Victoria's Mustard Seed receive 60% of their annual monetary donations. We dig deep at Christmas, but often forget about those who live in poverty the rest of the year. Let's make a promise to keep that spirit of generosity going through the year in 2011.

What does generosity mean to you and your family? Of course, it's about giving and sharing. Generosity is giving freely without a sense of fulfilling an obligation, getting attention or receiving something in return. There are no "strings" attached to your gift. As most of us prepare to give and receive gifts at Christmas, it's a good time to reflect on what giving means to us, as well as our patterns of consumption and the materialism with which we are surrounded.

Generosity begins by paying attention and recognising someone else's needs. It shows a willingness to sacrifice, to give something away that we value—it may be money or gifts, or it may mean giving our time, knowledge, energy, or attention. It may be the gift of love or forgiveness. When we give freely of ourselves, our hearts are warmed, and our spirits lifted. It's a natural "high" that is also catching. When we witness acts of generosity we, too, are inspired to give.

Mostly, we think about how our acts of generosity make the receiver feel happy, but what we really know to be true is that, as givers, we are the greater beneficiaries.

What would generosity look like if...

A friend is feeling sad and doesn't feel like playing the game you had in mind at recess?

Your father is cooking dinner and needs someone to set the table?

Someone in your class has forgotten to bring their lunch?

Your mother seems tired lately?

Tessa Lloyd, Junior School Counsellor

PREPARING FOR HOLIDAYS – GOING SHOPPING

While we look forward to spending time with family and friends during the holiday season and seeing the excitement in our children, holiday shopping can sometimes be a bit of a trial for parents, especially when it's necessary to take the children with you. To help your children to behave responsibly during your holiday shopping trips, try the following ideas:

- ◆ Before you leave home, tell your child where you will be going, what you will be buying and when you will be back.
- ◆ Plan some activities for the shopping trip. For example, you can involve your child in the shopping trip, i.e. make a shopping list for him/her; ask him/her to choose a toy for their cousin; or for younger children, spotting different colours, shapes and sizes of items while you shop.
- ◆ Make a few appropriate shopping behaviour rules and discuss them with your child before you leave. Make the rules positive and state them clearly, i.e. stay close to Mom or Dad; walk in the store; ask before you touch.
- ◆ Praise your child for behaving well and following the rules, i.e. "You are staying close to Dad while we shop Brendan, thank you."
- ◆ If your child does not follow the rules, remind them and tell them what to do instead, i.e. "Stop running, you are to walk in the store."
- ◆ Back up your instruction with a consequence if your child still does not follow the rule, i.e. you can ask them to stand beside you for a short, set period of time, and then resume the shopping trip.

Planning ahead and explaining the rules and consequences to your child before you set out on your holiday shopping trip can help to make your trip more enjoyable. Have a happy holiday season.

For more information contact:

- ◆ Your local Health Unit
- ◆ Triple P Positive Parenting Program www.triplepvp.ca

Health Units:

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|--------------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Esquimalt | 250-519-5311 | Salt Spring Island | 250-538-4880 |
| Outer Gulf Islands | 250-539-3099 | Sooke | 250-642-5464 |
| Peninsula | 250-544-2400 | Victoria | 250-388-2200 |
| Saanich | 250-519-5100 | West Shore | 250-519-3490 |



LIFE-THREATENING FOOD ALLERGIES AND SPECIAL DAYS

Special days like birthdays, Easter and end-of-the-year parties are times of celebration with friends, family and food. However, there are students in our school with life-threatening food allergies and these students are especially at risk during these times. You can help to keep allergic students safe by:

- ◆ Celebrating with stickers, games or prizes instead of food
- ◆ Not sending or bringing peanut and nut-containing products to the school or classroom

Refer to your school's policies and procedures around life-threatening food allergies for more information.

For more information contact:

- ◆ Your local Health Unit
- ◆ HealthLinkBC at 8-1-1 and ask to speak to a Registered Dietitian or www.healthlinkbc.ca/dietitian/
- ◆ HealthLink BC File #100 Severe Food Allergies in Children: www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthfiles/hfile100a.stm
- ◆ Anaphylaxis Canada www.anaphylaxis.ca/
- ◆ Your doctor
- ◆ Your pharmacist

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KINDERGARTEN IMMUNIZATION PROGRAM

Immunization clinics for kindergarten-aged children are held at health units at various times throughout the year.

Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis and Polio: Most children in kindergarten are due for a booster dose of this vaccine. This vaccine protects against all four diseases in one shot.

Hepatitis B: Children born on or after January 1, 2001 should have received a 3-dose series of hepatitis B vaccine. If your kindergarten child has not completed a series of hepatitis B vaccine, it is recommended they receive the vaccine in the kindergarten year.

Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR): Children should have received two doses of MMR vaccine by eighteen months of age. If your kindergarten child has not had both doses of MMR vaccine, it is recommended they receive the vaccine in the kindergarten year.

Meningococcal C: Children born on or after July 1, 2002, should have received 1 dose of Meningococcal C vaccine. One dose after one year of age and a reinforcing dose in Grade 6 provides protection against this type of meningitis.

Varicella (Chickenpox): Children who have not had chickenpox vaccine or disease after one year of age should be vaccinated against chickenpox in the kindergarten year. One dose provides protection against the disease.

All these vaccines are provided free of charge by the health unit or your doctor. To check your child's immunization status or **to make an appointment**, phone your local health unit.

For more information contact:

- ◆ Your local Health Unit
- ◆ HealthLinkBC at 8-1-1 (a free call) or www.healthlinkbc.ca
- ◆ Your doctor
- ◆ www.immunizebc.ca

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| Saanich | 250-519-5100 | West Shore | 250-519-3490 |

BC HEALTHY KIDS DENTAL PROGRAM

Basic dental coverage is available for children through the Healthy Kids Program. Dependant children under 19 years of age may be covered for dental care if the family is approved to receive premium assistance for BC Medical Services Plan (MSP).

Children are eligible for up to \$1400 of basic dental services every two years. This includes services such as exams, x-rays, fillings, cleanings and extractions. Some services are limited. For example the program does not cover orthodontic treatment. Healthy Kids may not cover all of the costs and there may be additional charges for each visit. Before treatment begins, confirm that your dentist is accepting children covered by the BC Healthy Kids Program, and what part of the services will be covered.

To use the services, take your child's BC Care Card to the dental office and they will confirm coverage before each appointment.

To find out if your child is covered call:

- ♦ **1-866-866-0800** **Press "4" and then "2"**
(have your child's Care Card Number handy)

Or access the website at www.sd.gov.bc.ca/factsheets/2005/healthy_kids.htm

For more information contact:

VIHA Child, Youth and Family Community Health Dental:

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|----------------|----------------|
| Victoria | 250-519-5100 |
| Esquimalt | 250-519-5311 |
| Nanaimo | 250-739-5845 |
| Port Alberni | 250-731-1315 |
| Courtenay | 250-331-8526 |
| Campbell River | 250-850-2124 |
| Toll Free | 1-800-663-7867 |