

**Weekly Message from the Principal**  
**Mary Ann McQueen**  
**February 24, 2017**



### **“Ritzy” Volunteers! We Need You!**

The St. Mark 2017 “Puttin’ on the Ritz” Auction is coming soon! We need your help! Now is the time to find the perfect opportunity to help out at your child’s school.

Volunteers are needed for many tasks to ensure that the night is a huge success. On the *day of* the auction, help is needed from first thing in the morning, throughout the day and during the event itself. Volunteer shifts can range from 20 minutes to several hours.

Please go to the link below, which is a SignUp Genius for the Auction.

#### **Instructions:**

Click the link: <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f0445a4ab2da2f94-23rd>

See email sent 2/21/17 for further instructions

**Baskets are also needed**, please donate any unwanted baskets to the school for our fabulous event on March 18. The auction committee would greatly appreciate it!!!

The Auction committee is doing a great job and the details are coming together in a really lovely way! Thanks to all who are so generously supporting this event! It is really appreciated.

#### **RAFFLE NEWS:**

It’s a real competition for first place as the end of the round one competition comes to a close. There will be two more contest deadlines so plenty of times for other grades to WIN! Currently K and 1<sup>st</sup> grades are in a dead heat to win the first class contest. The 7<sup>th</sup> grade is right behind them closely followed by the 4<sup>th</sup> grade. The class with the highest % of students who have sold two or more books will win extra recess and a free dress pass! In addition, they will win an extra “baked treat” from Mrs. McQueen Keep up the great sales!!!

Individual prizes include some great SMS swag! These items will be posted to the front bulletin board this week so that the students can see these items up close and personal!

#### **"ONE CALL" Emergency Contact System:**

The "message" sent to you by St. Mark "Emergency and Important Information Alert System", "One Call" regarding heavy rains and modified pick-up procedures was very effective. We appreciate your careful and prompt response!

It is important that you receive our *text messages* this way, in case of an important message that needs to reach you in a timely manner or an emergency message.

**If you did not receive the text message** last week from St. Mark School, we **do not have emergency contact information** for you and its important that you reply to this e mail with a Cell Phone number that we can send Important and emergency information in the future.

## **YEARBOOK ONE-LINERS**

We are offering families of students in TK-7th Grade the option of submitting a simple dedication to their student(s) in the yearbook FREE OF CHARGE! Please click on the link below to get started.

[https://docs.google.com/a/stmarkschool.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdVpnzRyUjEM3HV0YY\\_N0wXdNVEogStNQkxmM8M6PfHYuYECQ/viewform](https://docs.google.com/a/stmarkschool.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdVpnzRyUjEM3HV0YY_N0wXdNVEogStNQkxmM8M6PfHYuYECQ/viewform)

## **LITURGIES AND POTLUCKS:**

We have already had three liturgies and potlucks for grades 5-6, 7-8 and 1-2. They have been so beautiful, celebratory and meaningful. These liturgies provide such a rich opportunity for students to lead and participate in liturgy and the potlucks are special community gatherings. Thanks to our room parents for the love and care that they put into these events. They are so memorable!

## **THE SCHOOL GARDEN: Celebrating the winter harvest and cheering on the broccoli....**

Would you believe that students lined up today, voluntarily, to enjoy some fresh broccoli, chard, chard leaves and broccoli leaves from the school garden. These fresh and organically grown vegetables were harvested, roasted on high heat for about eight minutes with a little olive oil, salt and pepper and then reheated, slightly just prior to serving.

More than fifty students enjoyed these fresh vegetables today in grades TK-3. They were incredibly patient waiting for this “treat” and very polite! Such nice manners, parents! They devoured the vegetables, were so excited to be enjoying them and came back for seconds. It was a thrill as their principal to share this harvest with them and to see their genuine enthusiasm for the vegetables. Please ask your child about this experience. We will continue to cultivate the garden and students will continue to enjoy its bounty! Enthusiasm for the garden and healthy eating is contagious! I am very confident that the garden will continue to reap many healthy and educational awards in the future!



## **Mindfulness Update:**

Each week Cary Saltsgaver provides an update of the work that she is doing in the classroom with students in grades TK-6. Please see below!

These sessions are really enjoyable and meaningful for students and faculty. The cumulative effect, combined with discussion and practice at home, could be life changing! We are thrilled to be implementing this program!

"The road to compassion starts with pure attention." -Daniel Goleman

## **Appreciations**

Thank you Dana for sharing the mindful moments you are seeing in and out of the classroom!

Thank you Mary Ann for sharing the delicious greens from the garden!

Thank you Ally and Elizabeth for your thoughtful considerations during mindfulness.

Thank you Teresa for joining the 6th grade mindfulness lesson today.

## **Mindful Movement**

Once we become aware of sensations in the body, we can explore our sensations as we move. We begin with simple movements, everyday movements, that we do automatically. From these simple movements, we progress to becoming aware of larger body movements.

We started by talking about how we take simple movements, movements we do everyday without even thinking about it, and do them in slow motion.

## **Mindful Itching**

Pretend you have an itch somewhere on your body and itch it like you would normally itch it.

Now...try it in slow motion.

Feel your muscle in your arm tightening, feel your elbow bending, feel your fingers moving...

How did that feel?

"I feel tired, tickly, fizzy, chills, pain, itchy, good, awesome, funny, quiet, weird, like a massage, like play dough, like my nails were digging in"

## **Mindful Standing/Sitting**

Stand up like you normally stand up and sit down like you normally sit down.

Now...try it in slow motion.

Feel your body getting ready, feel your feet moving underneath you, feel your muscles tightening, feel your knees bending, feel your back leaning...

What did you feel?

"My knee hurt, relaxing, legs hurting, heavy, I feel my joints, clicking (bones), mumbly, calm my heart and calm my body down, calm, like water and sand, pressure, good, stretching, muscles, like I'm doing a dance move, it felt like my thighs were on fire"

### **Mindful Walking** (2nd and 6th grade)

Stand up and walk like you normally walk (in a circle).

Now...try it in slow motion.

Feel your knee bending to bring your foot through, feel your heel touching the floor, feel the bottom of your foot on the floor, feel your weight shifting...

Try picking up one foot and breathing in, putting your foot down and breathing out.

How did that feel?

"I didn't like it, it was hard to balance, like I was walking on a tightrope, I noticed my breath more, I noticed I was taking short breaths, I was taking shorter steps"

### **Mindful Writing** (6th grade)

Pick up a pencil and write your name like you normally write your name.

Now...try to write your name in slow motion.

Notice every movement, how your fingers feel on the pencil, how the pencil feels on the paper, how your fingers are moving...

How did that feel?

"I was pressing harder, the pencil feels lighter, my writing is better faster, by writing is better slower"

The more mindful we are of our bodies, the less our thoughts tie us up. Think of a simple movement, a movement you do everyday without even thinking about it, and see if you can do it in slow motion. See what you notice when you do it in slow motion.

Maybe brushing your teeth, washing your hands, opening a door...

Next week we are going to practice mindful eating by exploring our sense of touch, smell, hearing, sight, and taste.

With gratitude,

Cary

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