

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHOLIC COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Issue #305
Spring, 2011



BEHIND THE SCENES

This issue of the VOICE is dedicated to the volunteers of our parish who work “Behind the Scenes.” Their works demonstrate their faith and commitment to building a Christian community.

By no means are all the volunteers, who spend endless hours on tasks that few realize, covered in the eight pages of this issue. Instead a few of the committees and individuals who graciously submitted to interviews and posing for pictures serve as a small sample of all the good work that is done each day by



the many volunteer parishioners.

If you are a “Behind the Scenes” volunteer and are not recognized in these pages, know that you are appreciated for all you do for the St. John’s community. The editors plan to highlight more of St. John’s volunteers in forthcoming issues of the VOICE.

To all who work “Behind the Scenes,” thank you for your dedication and time in making our parish “a visible sign of the Risen Jesus” and wonderful faith filled community in which to live.

HELPING FROM HOME

Having mobility issues which prevent her from getting out much, Manette Devroy dedicates her home bound status doing good things. Manette is unable to drive or do much house cleaning. She has a friend to shop for her and a cleaning lady to help keep house. She adds, “I have a couple of wonderful nieces and step grandchildren who come and get me out once in awhile.”

Being a recipient of St. John the Baptist’s home bound ministry, Manette feels blessed to have a home bound Minister come to her home monthly with the Eucharist, a little visit, and a bulletin.

It was in the bulletin a few years

ago that she saw a request for people to make booties for the Elizabeth Ministry. She said to herself, “Now that is something I can do!” In the past two years she has made over 130 pairs of booties for distribution through the Elizabeth Ministry which ministers to mothers.

When she read that St. John’s had started the Prayer Shawl ministry, she was delighted to help with that also. She has already made three shawls for the ill.

Manette is an inspiration to all of us with her “can do attitude.” Working behind the scenes, she dedicates her time to helping others. Thank you Manette.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

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| ✠ Coffee & Donuts – May 1, Jun 12, 26 & Jul 31 | ✠ Plant Sale – May 21 | ✠ Anointing of the Sick – June 4 after 4:30 p.m. Mass |
| ✠ Art Show – May 4 @ 6:00 p.m. school | ✠ Welcoming Weekend for New Members – May 21 & 22 @ 8:00 a.m. | ✠ New Member Sign up – June 7 @ 7:00 p.m., Fireplace Room |
| ✠ Spring Concert – May 4 7:00 p.m. school | ✠ Confirmation Mass – May 22 @ 10:00 a.m. | ✠ All School Closing Liturgy – June 8 @ 11:00 a.m. |
| ✠ Adoration – May 5, June 2, July 7 | ✠ Baptisms Class – May 26 @ 7:00 p.m. fireplace room | ✠ Parish Summer Picnic – July 16 @ 5:00 - 10:00 p.m., July 17 @ 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. |
| ✠ Date Night – May 6 @ 6:00 p.m., narthex | ✠ Memorial Day Mass at Cemetary – May 30 @ 8:15 a.m. | ✠ Vacation Bible School – July 25 - 29 |
| ✠ First Eucharist Masses – May 14 @ 4:30 p.m. & May 15 @ 10:00 a.m. | ✠ 8th Grade Graduation – June 1 | |
| ✠ May Crowning – May 18 @ 6:30 p.m. | | |

“Take the first step in faith. You don’t have to see the whole staircase. Just take the first step.”

- Martin Luther King Jr.

ST. JOHN’S WEBMASTER

Hopefully, all members of the parish are aware of St. John’s internet web site. Since we are in the age of technology, a presence on the internet is essential for getting our message out. Pam DeGrand is the webmaster for the parish’s web site (www.sjbh.org). Pam definitely works behind the scenes. She has been the webmaster for our parish since 2007. As webmaster, Pam posts the bulletins, updates parish information, forms, and web pages. She also adds pages as needed; designing the layout, colors, and fonts to make the pages user friendly and eye appealing. Pam communicates regularly with parish staff to keep abreast of any changes and occasionally meets with them as new ministries or Faith Formation content is added. She stated, “I also work with other ministries to get pictures, the VOICE, and audio and video items posted to the web site.”

Pam has been involved in Information Technology for years. In 1997 she received a degree from NWTC in the Network Specialist Program. “Besides learning about computer equipment, software, and programs, we were introduced to what most people would call the ‘back end’ of the Internet. I learned how to post the images, pages, and files, so that other people could go to the web site address for the information they needed. In other words how to be a webmaster.”



Pam learned about the call for help with the parish’s web site when she registered for the parish after moving to Howard from Luxemburg. At that time she was working at NWTC as a web site developer. When asked if she could help, she readily agreed. She stated, “Most people consider me to be a ‘techy’ person because I really enjoy getting the most out of the computer. But I also really like working with the dedicated parish and volunteers.”

Pam is now retired, but thankfully she is still interested in computers and helping the parish get its message out on the internet. We are blessed to have a person like Pam who works behind the scenes to make our parish more visible to the world.

KNITTING FOR COMMUNITY

“When I retired, I told people that I planned to knit and crochet all the time!” stated Evelyn Italiano. Well she does not do it all the time, but she certainly has done it a lot of the time. Evelyn has been making people happy by turning knitting and crocheting into her ministry.

Evelyn knits and crochets baby sweaters and slippers and children sweaters, hats, and mitten sets for the missions. She became involved two years ago when she saw the display in the narthex from the mission group headed by Linda Kwaterski. “I spoke with Linda and the missions became my mission,” stated Italiano.

She also makes lap throws for people in wheel chairs and the el-



derly in homes where St. John’s does a weekly communion service. When she heard that the parish needed booties for newborns, she offered to make them as well. The Prayer Shawl Ministry offered her another opportunity to share her

passion for knitting and crocheting. To date, she has made twelve prayer shawls.

Evelyn has been knitting and crocheting for fifty-two years. Along the way she taught the craft for fourteen years at NWTC. She has worked at numerous knitting and crocheting stores. She retired from a career in banking.

“I have needles in my hands all the time. I do it whenever I can: in the car – when my husband is driving of course – in waiting rooms, watching TV... I just love it!”

The St. John’s community is blessed to have someone willing to reach out to others with the crafts she loves. Thank you Evelyn.

AN “EXTRA HELPING”

What do you get when you take a cup of computer knowledge, a spoonful of creativity, a handful of generosity and a dash of patience and stir it together? A real behind-the-scenes asset to the parish. Gary Van Helvoirt has been a member of St. John’s for twenty-two years. Early on, he volunteered for things such as being a third grade faith formation teacher and was a vi-



tal part of the RCIA team for many years. He also served on the Board of Religious Education and was involved in various ways in planning for the new church. More recently, after his retirement from Wisconsin Public Service in 2005, he’s become involved in new and different ways. He is a lay leader of prayer, assists with adult confirmation, develops the minister schedule for weekend Masses, and works on the layout for the VOICE and bulletin ad page. Gary dedicates Tuesdays to helping out in the Parish office. Those days mostly involve helping members of the staff utilize computer technologies to make their jobs easier. When asked what is the one thing he enjoys most about his volunteer work he said, “Making things easier or

better for others.” Members of the Parish staff were quick to comment that “Gary is a Lifesaver.” “He is always willing to help, no matter what it is.” “He makes the difficult tasks easy.” Perhaps the most important comment is “It’s hard to beat one of his delicious pies!” What does he find most challenging? Preparing to lead a lay prayer service by “contemplating Scripture and developing a meaningful reflection, hopefully giving people something to both think about and act on,” he stated. We are blessed that Gary has answered the call to be involved in so many areas of parish life.

Outside of volunteering at church, Gary enjoys cycling, gardening, cooking, brewing beer, reading, and helping family and friends with their computer problems.

BAPTISMS

Together we welcome the following children who joined our Catholic family.



- † *Aaron Alan Finn* – Son of Mark & Kathleen
- † *Autumn Marie Nowak* – Daughter of Daniel & Jamie
- † *Caitlin Grace Tetzner* – Daughter of Jared & Danielle

- † *Alexandra Marie Grzybowski* – Daughter of Michael & Melissa
- † *Marlee Jean Hampton* – Daughter of John & Laurie
- † *Sadie Reese Harrig* – Daughter of Scott & Carol Jean
- † *Hazel Leigh Lewis* – Daughter of Jamie & Elisia
- † *Jayden Renee Turensky* – Daughter of Joshua & Nicole
- † *Marin Ann Vincent* – Daughter of Christopher & Kimberly
- † *Greenlea Marie Salazar* – Daughter of Henry & Bridgette
- † *Leesel Sue Aleson* – Daughter of Erik & Janel

HELPING STUDENTS ACHIEVE

Helping students achieve academic success through collaboration with the teachers is one role that Gina Vecera does at St. John the Baptist School. Working behind the scenes she coordinates with classroom teachers giving ideas for enrichment, providing resources, and working one-on-one with students.

She also observes students' individual needs and oversees special testing that might be required. When

necessary, she makes referrals to the Howard-Suamico Schools and facilitates communication between parents and staff. "If curriculum adjustment is necessary for a student to succeed, I provide Individual Support Plans. I also oversee students' academic progress and modify plans as needed," stated Gina.

In addition, Gina helps facilitate the standardized MAP [*Missouri Assessment Program*] test and analysis



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ORGANIZING THE SUMMER PICNIC

Every July, St. John's celebrates community and encourages fellowship through our parish picnic. Events like the picnic take a great deal of cooperation and coordination to be successful. When attending the picnic you may not realize the hours of planning and implementation that go into it, the many hours spent "Behind the Scenes."

For the past two years, Len Rizzo has been the chairman of the event, but he stresses, "Along with a fantastic committee." Len explains, "An event like the picnic cannot become a reality without a dedicated committee that plans the event and works towards its success. Actually we don't have a lot of meetings, because everyone knows what they have to do and they do it." Members



of the picnic committee are: Jerry and Karen Patenaude, Hal Tust, Chuck Johnson, John Gerczak, Paul Matuszak, Monica Hoff, Dave Van Zeeland, and Mary Kazmierczak. Besides the committee, Gary Van Helvoirt publishes a flyer for the event. Pat Lane and Jack O'Neil take care of publicity.

Len worked on the committee many years ago. He co-chaired the food tent for several years before taking a few years off. "Two years ago, I felt it was time to get involved in the picnic again."

This year the picnic is on **Saturday, July 16 from 5:00–10:00 p.m. and Sunday, July 17 from 11:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.** An added event to the picnic is a parish Raffle run by Karen Patenaude. There are twenty-two prizes and one \$2,000 prize. The drawing is at the end of the picnic at 4:00 p.m. on Sunday.

"We are hopeful that the picnic will generate a great deal of excitement and revenue for the parish," stated Rizzo. Len asks everyone to save the dates and come to the parish picnic.

REST IN PEACE

Together we pray for those of our faith community who have died.

May they rest in peace.

✠ Ronald J. White

✠ Joyce A. Steffel



✠ Ruth C. LeFebvre

✠ Dorothy L. Matuszak

✠ Alfreda Tilly

✠ Harold Dorn

✠ Bernard Karls

✠ James Zilles

Our love and support to their families and loved ones.

HELPING STUDENTS ACHIEVE *cont'd*

which helps to identify students who may have academic needs.

Gina also works one-on-one with students in reading, spelling, and math strategies. "I am flexible when working with students. Sometimes I work with small groups. With the

older students, I may help them during their study hall," Gina said.

With an undergraduate degree from Northwestern and a Master's Degree in Counseling from the University of Nebraska, Gina is well suited for her position as Supportive Consultant at the school. Along

with advocating for students in her role as Supportive Consultant, Gina is also in her ninth year of teaching Spanish.

Quietly working behind the scenes, Gina helps ensure that every St. John student has the opportunity to succeed.

PASTORAL COUNCIL

The Pastoral Council is a vehicle for fulfilling the parish's mission by fostering growth and sharing spiritual gifts and talents. The Council plans for the current and future needs of the parish, the diocese, and the broader community.

The Council is made up of ten parishioners, a parish trustee and Fr. John. Currently, Sarah Wulf is the chairperson. "We work as a team to advise and consult with Fr. John regarding certain programs, operations and activities of the parish, stated Sarah. "Through the workings of the Holy Spirit, we become the 'eyes' and 'ears' of the parish. At the meetings, we work together to meet the needs, concerns, ideas, hopes, and dreams of our fellow parishioners. We make consensus decisions by prayerful discernment, while respecting the authority of Fr. John and the Staff," she elaborated.

The Pastoral Council definitely works behind the scenes to ensure the parish follows its mission, "To become a witness to the living Christ." "There is no ONE on the Council," stated Wulf, "we operate as a WE."

The Council meets on the first Thursday of every month for about two hours. Every May, parishioners have the opportunity to step forward and volunteer to serve on the Pastoral Council. Volunteer names are

placed into the selection process. With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the new members are selected by lottery on Pentecost Sunday. Pastoral Council members must be baptized, a registered member of the parish, an

active Catholic who participates in the parish worship life, especially Mass and the sacraments. No special talents are required, but the person should have a deep personal commitment of faith and a concern for the needs of the parish.

When asked what rewards might come to Pastoral

Council members Sarah stated, "There are opportunities to grow in relationships with fellow parishioners, to share your faith with others, and to experience a sense of purpose and meaning by putting faith into action. You can't emphasize enough the sense of accomplishment felt by positively impacting the parish community through service."

Our Pastoral Council members are: Sarah Wulf, Dave Wojcik, Dave Kattar, Dale Phillips, Sarah Neal, Quinn Frye, Chuck Gille, Jerry Jessick, Kelly Pepin and Mark Hebert along with parish trustee Lynn Greisinger, Father John and recording secretary Joan Blecke.

We thank this group who work behind the scenes to make our parish everything it can be.



RUNNING THE SCHOOL AUCTION

The St. John the Baptist school auction is as much a rite of spring as is snow melting and warmer weather. The auction is the school's major fundraiser of the year. It makes a huge impact on the budget and special items the school offers students. The biggest challenge with any fundraiser, and this one in particular, is getting a volunteer to chair the event.

This year Karen Tooley, a mother of three with a full time career, stepped up to do the job. "What better way to get to know a lot of people very quickly!" Karen stated. "Since I work during the school day, it is not always easy to volunteer during the day. I saw this as a good way to get to know a lot of people and staff members during off hours."

Karen identifies herself as an organizer by nature. She loves to coordinate big events. "I also feel very



strongly about our duty of stewardship to God and our school. I'm also doing this as a role model to my children. It is not enough to talk the talk. If we don't walk the talk, who will?" Karen asked.

Karen has gotten to know many wonderful people. She has nothing but praise for the many committee members who help make the auction a success. Regarding this Karen said, "Everyone welcomed me very

warmly with kind words, helpful advice, and hardworking hands. The auction committee is truly a crew of very dedicated people."

While Karen is a newcomer as a parent, she is not new to the St. John's school. She attended the school from first through eighth grade, graduating in 1987.

She and her husband, Dan, met in high school and have been married for fourteen years. Both grew up in Howard. They lived for ten years in Menomonee Falls, but decided to come back home to be closer to family. They have three daughters: Adelyn-7, Alyla-4, and Analese-1.

While the work she does is "Behind the Scenes," her efforts, leadership, and results are very visible. We salute Karen and the auction committee for their dedication and time. The auction was on Saturday, April 9 and was a huge success.

A HAND IN MANY PLACES

Stewardship is a big part of Pat Lane's life. She and her husband, David, joined the parish in 2006 after retiring from a career in education. Pat immediately became engaged in parish life. She became a member of the newly formed Stewardship Committee where she offered to be the volunteer Stewardship Coordinator. In that capacity Pat met with staff and Father John to help develop the stewardship initiatives. In addition to that committee, Pat has worked "behind the scenes" to plan and coordinate the Stewardship of Sharing, the Stewardship of Service, and the Stewardship of Prayer weekends that are held each year. Along with the commit-

tee, she helped plan and develop the Stewardship of Service videos and DVD's that have spearheaded the renewal of commitment to stewardship. You will frequently see her running around with her camera capturing the perfect picture, although she often calls on committee members to help in this regard. "Our committee works so well together," she stated. "More and more, we see our mission is to help educate people on the principles of stewardship and to inform them about opportunities to become stewards."

In addition to her efforts with stewardship, Pat is the principal writer and editor of the VOICE. She also does the "Welcome to Our



Parish" display seen in the narthex monthly, is a Eucharistic Minister, a Greeter, and does Liturgy of the Word with Communion for residents of Hampton Manor. "I have my hand in a lot of activities here at the parish," she stated. "Jumping in and volunteering made me feel at home in the parish."

HOSTING MIDDLE SCHOOL MANIA

Take two dedicated volunteers, Holly Van Pay and Laura Boyden, lots of donated food, add forty-five grades 6-8 youth, and you have Middle School Mania!!! St. John's Youth Ministry Program under



the direction of Jody Engebos hosts the event twice a week when there are Faith Formation classes. The program provides "hang out" time for middle school youth before their Faith Formation classes. Students can come to eat (what else for growing adolescents), hang out, do homework, eat supper, joke, and play games with other students who share their beliefs. The menu includes Josephine's Pizza, soda, water, chips, nachos, and whatever else is donated to the Youth Ministry Program.

"This program is impos-

sible for me to run myself," stated Jody Engebos. "Without the help of Holly Van Pay and Laura Boyden, the program would not happen." Holly and Laura help serve the food, clean up, and supervise the students. They certainly are part of the "behind the scenes" work of our youth ministry. We thank them and all who volunteer to work with our youth.

Next year Jody is planning a "High School Hangout" in the upper Ministry Center on Wednesdays from 6:30 – 7:30 p.m. For that to happen, she will need more help. Here is an opportunity to work behind the scenes for our youth.

FACILITATING PARISH COMMITTEES

Working as a trained facilitator, Jerry Berg utilizes the skills he applies in his job with Foth Infrastructure and Environment, by working with parish teams such as the Pastoral Council and Faith Formation Board. He does this by facilitating their annual planning sessions and helping them work through goals and objectives. Jerry stated, "I am trying to support the Pastoral Team wherever they need help, especially with the Adult Faith Formation efforts. Most recently, I worked with Ruth Holloway to pull together the 'Longing for the Holy' adult sharing group activities."

Jerry and his wife, Marie, have been members of the parish since 1974. Their two children attended St. John's. In the past Jerry had been very active serving on the Pastoral Council, FOCCUS team, the picnic and other activities. He is currently



a Lector, a SCRIP volunteer and on the CRHP continuation committee. "While all that was great," stated Berg, "I backed down over the past few years, but was looking to get re-engaged. I met with Father John, and after he delved into my skill sets which included facilitating team meetings, he pointed out that facilitating parish committees would greatly help the parish. So that is where my emphasis is now."

"My goal is to help where need-

ed," he emphasized. As Jerry started back on his journey he found that his leadership and facilitation skills were not enough. "I needed to strengthen my knowledge of our Faith and Spirituality," emphasized Berg. To that end, for the past two years he has been engaged in the Commissioned Lay Ministry programs offered through the Diocese and Silver Lake College. "The program and the educational opportunity have been nothing short of wonderful," he states. "The program will allow me to have even more to share with the members of St. John's and the Diocese."

Using skill sets to help the parish was Jerry's goal. Working behind the scenes he is helping to make St. John's progress and strive toward becoming a visible sign of the Risen Christ. We thank him for his leadership.

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SHARE YOUR FAITH

All that we have and all that we are is a gift from a loving and generous God. Stewardship is a way of life based upon gratitude for these gifts. This includes our time, our talent, and our treasure. It also includes the gifts of the earth and all it holds, our faith, our personal vocation, and our very lives. We are stewards, not owners of these gifts. Our gifts are not to be ignored or used solely for ourselves, but are made available to build up the Kingdom of God. Stewardship involves a free choice to use God's gifts out of motives of love, thankfulness and justice, not guilt or fear. This may require a conversion of mind and heart.

Stewardship is a holistic approach to faith. It addresses our inherent need to give back to God. Stewardship relates to all other areas of ministry. It grows out of a desire for lifelong faith formation. It draws strength from prayer and liturgy. It leads to a life dedicated in service to others. And it includes the sharing of financial resources to address the needs and concerns of the people of God in our parishes, communities and around the world, through charitable giving.

Stewardship is about spiritual development. It is about responding to the call to be a disciple of Christ. Stewardship applies to every aspect of our individual lives and to the life of the parish community. Stewardship is best understood by living it. The Catholic Bishops' Pastoral Letter on Stewardship describes a Christian steward as:

***“One who receives God’s gifts gratefully,
Cherishes and tends them in a responsible and accountable manner,
Shares them in justice and love with others,
And returns them with increase to the Lord.”***

