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ST. VINCENT'S SECONDARY SCHOOL

JANUARY 2010

Despite floods, water shortages, snow and ice the first term has been a very successful one for our school with continued success in the academic, sporting and cultural fields at local and at national level. I would like to congratulate all of the students and the staff involved. Now, more than ever, in these times of recession we understand the importance of education to our future recovery as a nation. Attendance, study and application to work are the foundation of educational success and I would ask that parents/guardians continue to emphasise this at home as we do in school. I would also like to take this opportunity to wish the entire school community a very happy and peaceful new year. *Donnchadh Ó Briain, Principal*

SCIENCE RAP SUCCESS!



The Science department went musical last October, when a number of Second and Fifth Year students entered a national science rap competition run by The Alimentary Pharmabiotic Centre, UCC. *Science Raps*, was a science week competition, in which students composed and recorded a rap on the theme of Innovation and Creativity.

Entrants encouraged by their science teachers, **Ms. Ferriter**, and **Ms Dodd**, music teacher **Ms. Buckley** and leaving certificate rap enthusiast **Colette Hyde** worked hard on their compositions. They had a great deal of fun and finally entered seven entries with topics ranging from radioactivity to DNA to electronics.

Chloe Murphy, a second year student won second prize with her composition on Electronics. Well done to Chloe and all the other entrants. Thanks also to Don and his colleague from St. John's College who recorded all the entrants, making this a very exciting experience. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HR8wg_Ft690

All entrants had a wonderful morning in the City Hall at the Discovery Science Exhibition and the chance to meet Jon Chase, the famous English rapper who promoted this competition.

Check out the winner and all the entries on www.youtube.com



GET MORE ON THE WEB:

- The full online version of this newsletter is available on the school website with full colour photographs

TRANSITION YEAR ON SIX ONE NEWS!

On The 30th of November all of fourth years had a workshop created by Tyndall Science Company on Nano Technology – everything small!!

The Workshop lasted an hour and a half with some exciting and interesting facts on stain proof fabric and making nano ice cream. RTE news was there to film the workshop. They interviewed our speaker from Tyndall asking her to explain what they were trying to teach students. **Shanagh Brereton**, **Chloe Griffin** and **Elaine Ferro** were also interviewed. The report was shown on the six-one news that evening. We found the day to be very interesting and informative, it taught us about how Nano-technology is relevant in our every day lives and also a little bit about how the media works.

TRANSITION YEAR NEWS

OUTDOOR PURSUITS

Kilfinane is a small village in County Limerick, it has a centre for outdoor education which our school visit every year. We were given the opportunity to experience many outdoor activities such as night orienteering, rock climbing and a number of water activities including river walking, kayaking and canoeing. We also learned how to build our own shelters from forest materials and once we had them we had to sleep out under them in plastic survival bags. We even had to dig our own toilet! We

did spend one night in the centre where we each shared our rooms with 5 or 6 friends sometimes squashing four to a bunk.

Every morning at 8am the loudest alarm clock would make a terrifying screaming noise. We would all get up and get ready to go for breakfast and at 10 am our day of activity would start.

Our activities ran throughout the day with a brief stop for lunch then at 5pm we would all sit down for dinner like a big happy (exhausted) family. Every group had to take it's turn on clean up and set up

the kitchen for the following day. After that we had time to relax and shower before our trip to the shop for munchies and then our night time activities would start.

After three action packed days it was time to go home, we all cleaned our rooms packed up our muddy gear and waved goodbye to all our instructors. It was a very good experience and I would recommend Kilfinane to anyone who wants to try something new.



ORIENTEERING

In early September 4th years went orienteering on the free course at Cork's marina. The students were divided into groups, given a map and told to get around the course as quickly as possible. The groups were very competitive, we spent the morning sprinting up and down the marina looking for controls, the eventual winners were **Amy O'Gorman** and **Laurey Casey**. We took a well earned rest by the pond and serenaded some passers-by with an Abba medley before heading back to school.

DOES YOUR MOTHER KNOW ?

As part of our 4th Year course we are doing a show called 'Does Your Mother Know'. So far, we have given out the parts and the different positions that needed to be filled. Most of the leads have got over the hardest part, that being learning their lines! Dances and scenes are coming together well already and everyone is having a ball. This part of 4th Year is definitely worth while, no one is left out, it's a group activity that includes all students and everybody who wants to be involved is involved!

We hope all students in the school will support our show, which will be on in February.



RELIGION DEPARTMENT

The **School Mass** to mark the beginning of the school year was held on Wednesday Oct.7th in the North Cathedral. The theme of our Mass this year was **Community** and this was especially reflected in the Offertory Procession and the prayers of the Faithful which highlighted the need for Community now more than ever in our country. All members of the school community were invited to attend. A special welcome was extended to our new First Years and the Mass was celebrated by Fr. Christy Harrington.

Our Sixth Year students were offered the opportunity to attend a one day retreat at the **La Scala Retreat Centre** in Bessboro Blackrock at the end of September. The students who participated found it to be a positive and enriching experience.

All Fifth Year students attended a one day retreat in the beginning of October which was held in the school. The retreat was facilitated by the **Connect Retreat** team and again the feedback from the students was very positive.

Our Fourth Year students were visited on a weekly basis for three weeks by members of the **Mna Feasa Women's Domestic Violence Project**. This project raises awareness with young people around domestic violence putting a particular emphasis on healthy and unhealthy relationships. It is hoped that working with young people will help towards breaking the cycle of violence for future generations.

Well done to Transition Year students also for raising €1200 for the **Hope Foundation**, the Cork based Charity that works with street children in Calcutta. The money was raised by selling Irish Made Butler's Chocolate in the school.

Well done to the students who supported the **Annual Concern Fast** which was held on December 3rd.

Our **Christmas Carol Service** took place this year on Wednesday December 9th in the Social Area in the School. It was a happy and enjoyable occasion and we wish to congratulate our music teacher **Ms. Danielle Buckley** for the wonderful performance of the First Year choir and all the students who participated. The service concluded with a fleeting visit from Santa.



He's making a list!
He's checking it twice!

GERMAN DEBATING

On the 20th of November 2009 four Fourth Year students and their loyal supporters set off with **Mr. O'Donovan** and **Ms. Twomey** in the very stylish St. Vincent's bus across the city to Christ the King Girls' Secondary School. The topic to be debated that day was: *Fourth Year is a waste of time*. Even though, our four intrepid novice debaters (**Agnieszka Kleczar**, captain, **Alison O'Donoghue**, **Kayleigh Keane** and **Vanessa Neville**) did not agree with this motion, they debated valiantly that it was true and they came within one point of beating the four sixth years on the opposing team. The judges were most impressed by their command of the language and their enthusiasm for the subject. The girls have certainly learned how to stand up and address a group of their peers in a foreign language and did themselves, their teacher and their school proud.

Well done girls.

GAISCE

In October a speaker from the Gaisce awards visited the school to speak to Transition Year students. He explained how our students could apply for the Bronze award which will take 6 months and many hours of volunteer work, skill development and involvement in a new sporting activity. Five Transition year students have begun the application process. We wish them every success in their endeavour.

EMPOWERED LEARNING

On Friday the 4th Of December, Transition Year students had a workshop on 'Empowered Learning'. Sounds fun huh? Learning how to learn. But to our surprise, it was actually very good and very helpful in regards to learning techniques. In the seminar we were shown just how useful mind-mapping can be and how it can help you understand things better and faster. He showed us different ways to improve your memory, what type of learner we are and how to wake up your brain when falling asleep, like most of us do in class everyday! He showed us that studying for exams doesn't mean sitting down for hours on end reading a book that really only has about 4%, on average, of relevant information. We would really recommend this workshop to any student in or going into an exam year, it's well worth it!

CHAMPIONS AGAIN!



The Senior team were very successful in winning all five matches of the basketball season, defeating North Presentation, Ursulines Blackrock, Coláiste an Phiarsaigh and St. Mary's Charleville in the early rounds.

The team then went on to beat Presentation Bandon in the Cork semi-final in our school hall on Tuesday 8th December. The team played the Cork final in Neptune Stadium on December 16th against St. Aloysius School, Carrigtwohill. In a very close contest the spirit of St. Vincent's shone through and the girls were successful in bringing the trophy home. Well done to the team and to **Dommie Mullins** and **Janice Dupuy** for their hard work in training all of the school teams.

DRIVE FOR LIFE

In early September Kieran McNeely came in to talk to TYO about driving safely. He spoke at length about how to be a safe driver. To emphasise the point he showed videos of what can happen if you have a bad crash. It was very interesting and enjoyable. In the end he gave TY students a sample drivers test. It seems that many of us have a lot to learn before we get behind the wheel.

HOLD THE BACKPAGE

PE NEWS

1st Year Beibhinn and 2nd Year Sile have spent the last four P.E classes attending dance lessons in the Firkin Crane theatre. The first two weeks the students learned some hip hop dance routines. In the second two lessons they had instruction in salsa and tango. Lessons were very enjoyable and students left the course knowing the basics of several dances.

SELF DEFENCE

4th and 6th Year classes recently had a series of self defence classes with instructor Peggy Taylor. Peggy began with basic safety tips for girls, she emphasised the importance of personal safety. She then taught them how to defend themselves in case of an attack and get out of danger quickly. Students had the opportunity to take out all their frustrations by punching and kicking punch bags.

FIRST AID

Transition years participated in an introduction to first aid earlier in the term. They learned the basics of CPR, bandaging and choking. For students who are interested in learning basic CPR at home DVD and mannequin can be borrowed from **Ms. Woods** and **Ms. O'Sullivan**.

EDMUND RICE SUMMER CAMPS

Last April eight 5th Year students volunteered for the Edmund Rice summer camps. The girls spent several Wednesday afternoons training with the boys who volunteered from Presentation Brothers College. They also attended interviews and a first aid training day. The girls then sacrificed a week of their Summer holidays (unpaid!) to work as leaders in a Summer camp for local children. Although the girls were exhausted after their week of teaching the camp was a great success. Well done to all the students involved.



VISIT TO BOSTON SCIENTIFIC

On Tuesday the 10th November 17 students from the Dearbhla class in Transition Year along with their teacher took part in a business visit to Boston Scientific. This visit was organized in conjunction with Junior Achievement and Danny Aherne who is the facilitator in Boston Scientific. The programme not only allows the students to learn the importance of entrepreneurship to the future of the Irish economy, but also to learn about the day to day experience of business by setting up their own company. The students tackle many of the pressures and hassles facing start-up businesses in today's world including Staffing, Production and Health & Safety. The students develop their own Business Plans and then launch their business, selling their product.

During the visit which included a tour of Boston Scientific's key facilities and processes, the students had the opportunity to ask questions in a workshop held in the company's Training Suite. Students also participated in a sample Induction Test to check their agility in dealing with building a product. This involved moving tiny rings onto bars using only a Tweezers. Following this two students then had to dress as if they were entering a "Clean Room" in the company. The students had a thoroughly enjoyable morning and also gained invaluable experience of what life is like in the working world.

WINNING ENTREPRENEURS SHINE AT TRADE FAIR

On Thursday 10th December 2009, the students of Transition Year took part in a Trade Fair in Douglas Shopping Centre organized by Junior Achievement.

Here the students had to set up a Trade Stand and sell their products to the general public. This allowed the students to experience what it is like for any business trying to launch and sell a product. There were three companies representing St. Vincent's; Envirofun, Framkah and Inspirations.

There was a huge amount of effort put in by all the students in preparation for the event, making their stands, producing banners, business cards, flyers and producing a stock of products. Envirofun organized fun days for students e.g. quizzes promoting environmental issues. Framkah designed and produced hand-crafted Photo Frames and Inspirations produced beautiful hand made Christmas Cards and hand painted Christmas Mugs.

All the companies had a wonderful day out with Envirofun winning the award for Best Marketing Strategy at the Trade Fair.

SOCCER

Well done to our Junior soccer team who were victorious in a recent tournament involving four local schools. Thanks to Mr. Ellard and Mr. Barry the coaches.