

CATHOLIC CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

School Newsletter

Newsletter
August 2009

From the Principal's Desk:

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I hope that this back-to-school newsletter finds you enjoying your summer and serves as a reminder that the 2009-2010 school year is right around the corner. I would like to extend a warm welcome to those of you who are new to the Catholic Central High School community and a "welcome back" to those returning.

Along with some personal relaxation and time with my family, I have been busy this summer hiring what I believe are some very high-quality educators to replace a handful of veteran staff members who have left Catholic Central for various reasons. Thanks to Tom Maj, Brian McFalone, Gary Dickerson, Ruth Meyering, Brenna Stibitz, Lauri Ford, Jack Young, and Anne Budnick for their years of service to the students of Catholic Central. We wish them many blessings in their future endeavors.

To replace these staff members we have hired an exceptional group of educators to continue the tradition of excellence at Catholic Central. Please join me in welcoming the new staff members to our community and in offering them our support and encouragement.

Greg Deja (pronounced dee-jay) is our new Assistant Principal. Greg is originally from West Michigan and after receiving his BA in English from John Carroll University and his MEd in Administration from Providence College he has served as a Dean of Students and English teacher at Bishop Feehan High School in Attleboro, Massachusetts. Greg will bring some new innovative ideas and a great deal of passion for Catholic education to our CC community.

Cheryl Lambert joins the Math Department and will be teaching Algebra, Algebra Essentials, and Pre-Algebra. Cheryl holds a BS in Chemistry and Biology from Aquinas College and has eight years of teaching experience two at CC (90-92) and six at Kenowa Hills High School. She has most recently worked part-time as a substitute teacher at CC and as an ELL aide at Forest Hills Northern High School. We welcome Cheryl back to where she started. Cheryl and her family are very active members of St. Thomas the Apostle Parish.

Bob Koch (pronounced cook) also joins us as an instructor in our Math and Technology Departments and will be teaching Geometry, Algebra II /Trig and Computer Applications. Bob has a BS from the University of Cincinnati in Chemical Engineering, an MBA in Finance and Accounting from Columbia University Graduate School of Business, and his Secondary Education degree in Mathematics from Cal State Northridge. Bob has taught Math for eight years in the state of California and most recently in Kentwood. Bob is a member of St. Jude Parish.

Sue Waldron is the new Administrative Assistant in our CCHS Guidance Department. Sue brings many valuable experiences to our school community. For three years she served the Holy Family Parish of Grand Blanc and more recently, served as Customer Service Manager as well as the Call Center Manager at Davenport University.

Lori Bailey has been hired as an Office Manager for the Athletic Department. Lori brings a wealth of office experience to the Athletic Department most recently managing the office of Cox Auto Mart/ Auto Trader Magazine.

Important Phone Numbers

Main Office: 233-5899
Attendance: 233-5812
Guidance Office: 233-5810
Athletic Office: 233-5898
Business Office: 233-5976



Steve Passinault, **Principal**
Greg Deja, **Assistant Principal**
Heidi Clark-Smitley, **Director of Guidance**
Todd Kolster, **Athletic Director**
Kathryn Walsh, **Campus Minister**
Mary Ottenwess, **Technology Director**

From the Principal ~ cont.

Genevieve McKeiver has been hired at Catholic Central as an Advancement Director and will work with **Cindy Sielawa** (CSS Vice-President of Marketing and Development) to develop new strategies for marketing, recruitment, alumni relations, and fundraising for Catholic Central High School. Genevieve is a 1996 CC grad and earned her BA in Communications from Michigan State University. She has most recently worked in Communications with the Spectrum Health Cancer Program.

In addition to these school personnel changes there has been a restructuring of the **Catholic Central Athletic Boosters organization**. With the mission of "building community" and raising money for athletics and other school needs, the boosters have grown to a group of over 70 parents and alumni who are volunteering their time and talent for the students at CC. We still need your help! All are welcome to be a part of this enthusiastic and well-organized group. Soon there will be a link from the CC website to the CC Athletic Boosters site with information about upcoming meetings and events. There is still a need for volunteers for two events that are coming up in September: **The 23rd Annual Cougar Open Golf Tournament (September 14th) and a new event called Cougar Fest '09 (September 26th)**. Both events will help bring our community together and help raise funds for our students. Details of these two major events can be found in this newsletter as well as on our Catholic Central website. You won't want to miss either of these events.

Despite the challenges that parochial schools are facing, Catholic Central High School is increasing in enrollment! Current enrollment figures put us above the '08-'09 mark and the incoming freshmen class has exceeded 200 students. In addition, we have more registration appointments and visits scheduled in the next few weeks. These numbers are a positive sign that despite the challenges that we face in today's economy that families are placing a high value on a Catholic Central education. We thank you for your confidence and support in making a Christ-centered education for your children a priority.

In closing, I would remind all families new to Catholic Central High School of the importance of being at the **New Student Orientation on August 26th**. A detailed schedule is included in this newsletter. For all returning families I look forward to seeing the students at Orientation on September 1st and the parents at the Open House on September 9th if not sooner.

Enjoy the remainder of your summer!

Yours in Christ,

Steve Passinault

From the Assistant Principal

Dear Parents,

It is such a pleasure to be welcomed into the Catholic Central community! I bring both a commitment to integrity and Catholic education, and I'm very excited about the new school year and in continuing the strong traditions of CC. Little will change in our policies and procedures from a year ago.

Campus Safety:

The learning environment may be subject to disruptions, as the state has mandated schools to practice a series of emergency drills. Catholic Central will continue to review and assess our emergency plans, which are coordinated with local police and fire protection. The goal of emergency exercises is to test and enhance the overall capability of our school's plans, policies, and procedures. These are designed to focus on the safety and protection of students, staff, and visitors during emergencies. **All schools are required to hold two critical incident drills, in addition to their fire and tornado drills.**

Uniforms:

All students are to be in uniform attire, purchased from Sunshine, on the first day of school and throughout the school year. Sunshine Uniform shorts may be worn during the months of August, September, May, and June. A traditional **black or brown belt** must be worn with pants and shorts. Socks or nylons are to be worn at all times, and be of a solid navy, black, grey, or white color.

Assistant Principal ~ cont.

There are several practices I would ask of parents:

1. When visiting the school, please check in at the Main Office.
2. Do not send deliveries to school (lunch, flowers, balloons, etc.).
3. Cell phones are to be kept off during school hours and are encouraged to be left in the car.
4. Please notify the school by 10am if your child is absent.
5. Discuss emergency procedures and the school's guest policy with your child.

Cell phones:

Catholic Central shares your belief that cell phones can and do serve as a means of staying in touch with your children, that they provide a level of security, and are helpful in an emergency. However, they are also becoming more disruptive to the learning environment. Our policy is that students are allowed to be in possession of their phones, but they must be turned off. If confiscated, a detention will be issued and the phone will be **returned to the parent only**. If you need to get in touch with your son/daughter, please call the Main Office.

Student Parking:

Student parking is available in two different lots: the top level of the Diocesan parking ramp and the "Junior Lot" located on Maple and LeGrave. **Please note: Student parking on the Diocesan ramp is allowed in certain places only.** Students are prohibited from parking in the row closest to the Diocesan building. Mr. Passinault or I will identify these spots the first few weeks of school if there is any confusion.

All the best for the new academic year,

Greg Deja

New Student/Parent Orientation ~ August 26, 2009

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|----------------|--|
| 1:30—3:00 p.m. | Session for <u>students new to Catholic Schools (only)</u> |
| 3:00—3:15 p.m. | Check-in for <u>all</u> new students (<i>students only</i>) |
| 3:15—5:00 p.m. | Students walk-through a short version of their daily schedule (<i>Learn where each class is located; students meet their teachers; meet the students in each class; learn about the class</i>) |
| 5:00—5:30 p.m. | Dinner in the Cafeteria (<i>Learn the cafeteria procedures; enjoy dinner with the Peer Ministers</i>) |
| 5:15 p.m. | Parents arrive / Check-in at Gymnasium |
| 5:30 p.m. | Student join the parents in the Gymnasium |
| 5:30—6:45 p.m. | Becoming a part of the Catholic Central Family (<i>Welcome; Student Expectations; Faith Formation and Catholic Culture; Academics; Athletics; Parent Communications/Website and Infinite Campus</i>) |
| 6:45—7:45 p.m. | Students: "Getting to know your classmates" (<i>Led by Peer Ministers</i>)
Parents: "Parent Networking: Getting to know each other" (<i>Led by We Care Parent Org.</i>) |
| 7:45—8:30 p.m. | Mass in the Cathedral of St. Andrew |

A Message From the Guidance Office

A message from the Guidance Office -

Student schedules for returning upperclassmen will be posted to the Infinite Campus Portal by the fourth week of August. Individual schedules will not be mailed through the postal service unless specifically requested. **Freshmen and new student schedules** will receive a hard copy by mail prior to Orientation. NOTE: CCHS is not able to accommodate requests for schedule changes- please invite your student to email his/her counselor if a required course (such as Religion, English, Math, Science, and/or Social Stds) is missing. We thank you in advance for your cooperation during this very busy season.

Please review the school calendar for **parent programs** hosted throughout the academic year. Parent programs offer wonderful opportunities to connect with your student's guidance counselor as well as learn resources and tips for your student's academic success. Parents are encouraged to attend as many workshops as convenient. These workshops will be hosted in the CC Cafeteria on Monday evenings throughout the Fall semester. Topics and guest speakers will cover college planning, academic strategies, career exploration, and last but not least, financial aid for higher education. As a quick reminder, all parent workshops will be advertised in the **school announcements** at www.grcatholiccentral.com in advance to the date.

Questions? Please call Mrs. Sue Waldron, Guidance Secretary at 233-5810 OR email your student's counselor:

Tom Shangraw (A-G) tomshangraw@grcss.org

Joel Passinault (H-O) joelpassinault@grcss.org

Heidi Clark-Smitley (P-Z) heidismitley@grcss.org

Academic Boosters

Academic Boosters meet monthly with Principal Steve Passinault and Counselor Heidi Clark-Smitley to support the academic environment for ALL Catholic Central students. As your schedule allows, please feel free to attend meetings, which begin at 8:15 am in the conference room outside the main office. Dates for the 2009/2010 school year are: September 23, October 21, November 18, December 16, January 27, February 24, March 24, April 21 and May 26. For more information, contact Steve, Heidi or Nancy Kennedy.

Orientation Day ~ Tuesday, September 1, 2009

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**** Please note a change in the Orientation Day Schedule****

We have changed the Orientation Day schedule at Catholic Central this year.

Each class will report separately so that we can personalize the registration sessions and give Lifetouch Inc. enough time to efficiently run school pictures.

Seniors report to the gym at 8:00 am and will be dismissed by 9:15 am

Juniors report to the gym at 9:00 am and will be dismissed by 10:15 am

Sophomores report to the gym at 10:00 am and will be dismissed by 11:15 am

Freshmen report to the gym at 11:00 am and will be dismissed by 12:15 pm

All students must be on time and in compliance with the school uniform code, including haircuts and shaves, for these meetings. Students not in compliance will be sent home unexcused. All students need to bring a pen or pencil. Students will receive their final class schedule, locker, and handbook/planner.

Please remember to have your student bring their picture package order form (included in this mailing) and payment with them if they will be purchasing school pictures.

Bussing/transportation and food service are not available on orientation day.

Wednesday, September 2nd begins the first day of full classes.

Athletics

Welcome to Catholic Central Athletics! The athletic programs play a critical role in the educational process at Catholic Central. The impact of school sports on our community is significant to a very large percentage of our families. As we improve our facilities and expand our sports programs we need parental help to coordinate the multitude of required tasks associated with each sport. We're looking for an **adult for each team** (Varsity, JV, Freshmen) who can help the coach and the Athletic Director establish a system of team volunteers (students and adults) to make each team a positive addition to our community. These volunteers will meet with the coach and Chairperson of our Concessions, Spirit Shop and Grounds Committee to establish community service efforts directed at our athletic facilities and local community needs.

It is our collective responsibility to be good stewards of the facilities we enjoy.

Your students will be issued the **2009-2010 Handbook** when school starts. Please review the Athletic Code and the "Policy on Student Dignity". The choices your student makes must reflect the spirit and intent of these policies. A behavior of *absolute respect for each other* will serve them well regardless of what they see in the media. Hazing or the appearance of hazing will not be tolerated. Performance enhancing substances, such as steroids, are absolutely inappropriate and a violation of the athletic code. Please make sure that the Academic Eligibility Criteria is reviewed. All of our students are pulled in many directions with athletics, activities, clubs and service groups and that is what makes Catholic Central special. Our students can do everything they want to. It just takes communication and focus.

Athletic Boosters:

We have started an Athletic Booster Club that meets on the first Monday of every month. Please join us at Notos Restaurant on 28th Street and take part in this exciting group! We will have a new addition to the website soon with a calendar of events and scheduled meetings. We are entering a new phase in Cougar Athletics and everyone can show their support by taking part in this community organization.

The **Cougar Golf Open**, a Booster Club fundraiser, is Monday, September 14 at Boulder Creek and Quail Ridge, with a steak dinner included at the CAT immediately following the golf. Go to the school website to link to the Booster Golf website, or email Mike Braun at mbraun@rwbaird.com if you would like to participate in any way at this annual Cougar community day of fun.

Football at 5/3rd Ball Park 2009:

Tickets will go on sale for the Homecoming football game, at the Ball Park, on September 7th, 2009 in the main office. No Passes will be accepted at this game.

Fall Sport Tickets/Passes:

Catholic Central will offer a COUGAR ALL SPORT PASS for the school year 2009-2010.

This pass will admit you to ALL **HOME** ATHLETIC CONTESTS during the 2009-10 school year. This pass will not be accepted at AWAY contests, the 5/3rd Football Game, or at any MHSAA sponsored tournament, playoff games, etc. The cost of the COUGAR ALL SPORT PASS for the 2009-10 school year, will be \$50 per student, \$100 per adult and \$250 for a family pass.

Individual tickets to athletic contests will be \$5.00 each, for both adults and students. We will not offer pre-game sales of tickets for regular season contests, but we will offer them for special event games (Varsity Football @ 5/3rd Ballpark on 10/16) and playoff games.

First Practice For Fall 2009 Sports

Physical Exam Form must be on file in the Athletic Office to begin practice for all teams, including Club sports.
Please call the coach if you have a particular question regarding that sport..

Boys Cross-Country: August 12, Wednesday, 9am, at The CAT, 2770 Knapp NE, wear running gear. Coach Jackson Fox, 328-2875.

Girls Cross-Country: August 12, Wednesday, 9am, at the CAT, 2770 Knapp NE, wear running gear. Coach Kelly Schipper, 890-9401.

Football: August 10, Monday, 1st session, Grade 9-12. 8:00am - 1:00pm. 2nd session, Varsity only. 6:30-8:30pm. The CAT, 2770 Knapp. Bring combination lock, T-shirt, shorts, cleats. Coach Tim Rogers, 916-5162.

Girls Golf: JV & Varsity--August 12, Wednesday, at the Mines, 12:00-2:00, Coach: Melanie Loughlin, 780-3185.

Boys Soccer: First tryout--August 12, Wednesday, 6:00-8:30pm, The CAT, 2770 Knapp. Bring own ball, shin guards, water, shoes. Coach John Matlak, 364-1128.

Girls Swimming: August 12, Wednesday, 3:20-5:30pm, Hunting YMCA Swimming Pool, 475 Lake Michigan Dr. NW, Coach Adam Vera, 460-7302.

Boys Tennis: August 12, Wednesday, 7:30am-1:00pm, The CAT, 2770 Knapp. Bring own racquet, jump rope, water bottle, and a light snack/lunch. Wear appropriate tennis clothing, including pockets. Coach Pat Williams, 456-9059. Inclement weather - report to Field house lobby at 7:30.

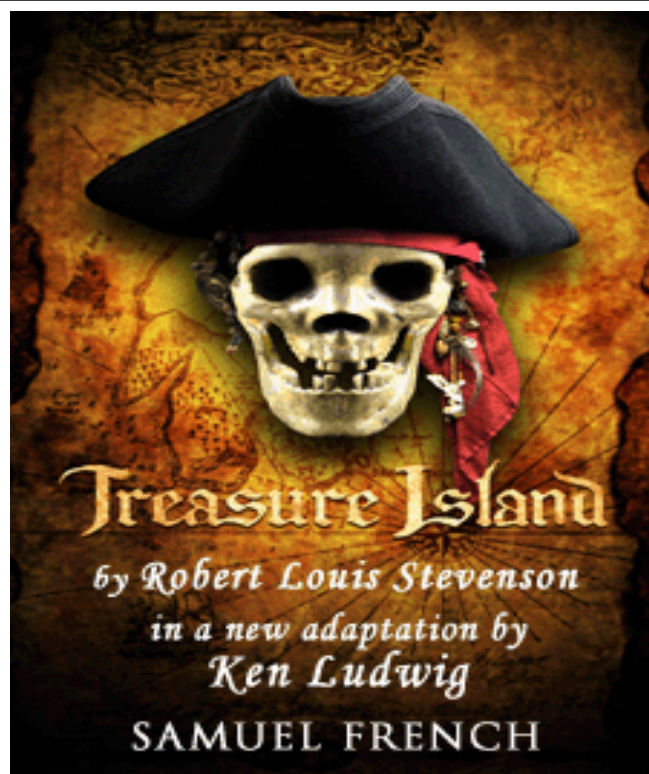
Volleyball: Tryouts—August 12, Wednesday, CAT Gym, Freshmen 5:00pm, August 13, Thursday, CC Gym, JV/Varsity 7:00pm, Coach Michelle Gary, 481-0365.

Catholic Central Fall Play—Treasure Island

Avast, Mates!

The Drama department proudly announces its fall production, the AATE Award winning, *Treasure Island* by Ken Ludwig. Show dates are October 29 and 31 and November 1. Based on the novel by Robert Louis Stevenson, the play adapts the classic tale of pirates and action set in the Caribbean Sea DURING the 18th century and follows the deep friendship that develops between the young Jim Hawkins and the pirate Long John Silver. Mark the performance dates on your calendars now and look for further information in the September newsletter.

Students, auditions for *Treasure Island* will be held on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, September 8, 9, and 10. A brief informational meeting about the show will be held in the Music Room on Wednesday, September 2 at 3:10pm. Bring any questions with you to the meeting.



We Care News

It's not always easy to be a parent of a teenager. All of the sudden they have cars and friends that live across town and a lot more freedom. How do we keep them safe? WE CARE (**W**ith **E**ducation **C**hemical **A**buse **R**eally **E**nds) is here to help.

WE CARE is an organization that every parent at Catholic Central is an automatic member of. Our goal is to provide safe experiences for the students of CC and to encourage networking between parents. Experience has taught us that when parents know each other, our kids are safer. Plus, the parents have fun, too.

WE CARE, with the dedicated parents of the football team, host the after game junior/senior events at the CAT. There will also be some events for freshman/sophomore in the CC cafeteria. Additional student socials will be scheduled throughout the year.

WE CARE is hosting parties for the parents of each grade level. We encourage all parents to attend. It is so nice to be able to put names and faces together so that when your child says he is going to someone's house, you can make a connection to that family. Many times parents of seniors have lamented that they didn't get to know each other sooner. These parties are the perfect remedy. It is a nice adult evening. Our kids bring us together, they are not the focus of our evening. The additional bonus is that, although they are not fund-raisers, any money raised is saved for that class's Senior All-Night Party. (Watch for "save the dates", or contact We Care if you would like to help).

Educational speakers are another outreach that is offered to parents throughout the year. We have surveyed to choose topics that you want information on and in a forum that you would enjoy. Please make it a priority to attend. We are especially reaching out to more experienced parents. Your attendance at these meeting offers a wealth of first-hand knowledge and support to newer parents at Catholic. It is one more way to make high school a positive experience for both you and your child.

Please return the volunteer form you received with this newsletter. If you would like to be involved with the social events, or WE CARE please let me know.

Russ Armock
We Care President



Art Prize—What an exciting time to be in Grand Rapids! Did you know that Catholic Central will be a part of the first Artprize competition? Artprize is an international art competition that is happening right here in our heartside area. Our group of CC art alumni have been working throughout this past summer on a sculpture that will be displayed on the sculpture pad in front of our school at the corner of Division and Goodrich. All artwork will be on display from Sept. 23 through October 10. We hope you'll come support our adventure! Artists: Sara Wisnewski-Olson, Art Teacher class of 1988, Renee Therriault c/o 1976 & from the class of 2009—Chris Avallone, Sara Buzzitta, Jake Evers, & Donna Karadsheh.

Library Media Center

If you enjoy books and libraries, please consider volunteering in the Catholic Central Library Media Center. Any amount of time you can give is welcome and hours are always flexible. Please contact Ann Wheeler, Library Media Specialist, at 616-233-5859 or annwheeler@grcss.org.

Capella Choir trip to Ireland

The Capella Choir returned to Ireland for their second tour in June.

During the ten days of their tour, they visited many historic sites and sang in the majestic cathedrals of Galway, Killarney and Dublin.

The choir received many accolades for their beautiful singing which accompanied the masses in these cathedrals. The entire Choral Department is excited about their upcoming third tour to Italy and Vatican City in the summer of 2010.

Dennis Rybicki & Tim Schrems



Catholic Central Students Post Outstanding Test Score Results!

School effectiveness is often measured by the student's scores on standardized tests. We are blessed to have a student body and teaching staff that works hard and understands the importance of learning. The combination of these factors is what prepares our students well for academic success in college and beyond.

On a national level CC students took 359 Advanced Placement Tests in 15 different subject areas and 271 or 75% had scores of 3 or higher which at most schools earns college credit. In the subjects of Spanish Language, Physics C-Mech, English Language and Composition, English Lit and Composition, Statistics, Calculus and United States History over 80% of the students that sat for those exams scored at a level 3 or higher.

In the state of Michigan high school students are measured on the Michigan Merit Exam which includes the ACT test. Catholic Central was one of only 8 schools out of 59 private, charter, and public high schools to average 23 or above on the ACT in Kent and Ottawa Counties. Catholic Central ranked 8th at 23.0. In addition, on average 84% of the CC students scored at the levels of Proficient (Level II) or Advanced (Level I) on the Michigan Merit Exam in the areas of Reading, Writing, English Language, Math, Science, and Social Studies. These scores put us near the top in West Michigan as well.

Congratulations to the students and faculty.

A Note from the CC Earth Club

The next time you are at school, we hope you will notice the brand new motion sensing light switches that we have installed in all of the bathrooms in the main building and the faculty lounge. This will save the school money and the Earth's energy. While this was an expensive project for us, it was fully funded by our cell phone, laser & inkjet cartridge recycle program! Isn't that awesome? Please be a part of future Earth sustaining projects by dropping off your used cell phones, inkjet and laser cartridges to Room 101. Thank you very much.

All A's Walk

The All A's Walkathon is a fundraiser held annually to raise money for tuition assistance for all those who attend our Catholic high schools. It is a fact, that without the tuition assistance that is offered to our school families, nearly one fourth of our students would not be able to attend our Catholic high schools. With the difficult economy that we have here in Michigan, many of our own school families have been affected through downsizing and corporate pullouts. Our tuition assistance program disperses nearly one million dollars in grants and aid to help make a Catholic high education affordable to parents who desire a Catholic high school education for their children. The Walkathon is one piece of that fundraising pie. This year the Walkathon will take place on the morning of Wednesday, October 7th.