



# St. Agnes Academy News

A PUBLICATION OF ST. AGNES ACADEMY, DALTON, MA

May 2019 • Issue 6

Headmaster – James Stankiewicz

## Headmaster Headlines...

### Busy Calendar for Students as End of School Year Approaches

As the end of the school year approaches, things are certainly ramping up with learning, field trips, and activities. The eighth grade final assembly will take place on June 12 at 1 p.m. in the church. The last day of school will be a full day on Thursday, June 13.

Registrations and re-enrollments are nearly complete and it looks as though we will open in September with a good number of students.

I am blessed to have the opportunity to work with your children and have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know them. They are wonderful and caring individuals and I am constantly impressed by their insight and intelligence. This is certainly a reflection of your work and support of them as their “first” teacher.

I have previously spoken of the professionalism, dedication, and caring of our teachers and staff. They are the true “heart” of St. Agnes, always putting student needs first. We could not provide what we do without the PTO and volunteers who are so faithful in helping out in so many ways. There are so many who assist with activities, classroom help, special projects, lunch, recess and serving food.

Finally, I need to re-iterate how blessed we are to have a person like Fr. Chris leading our parish and school. His boundless energy and commitment to children has allowed the school and Camp Holy Cross to stay viable. His view and support of Catholic education as a ministry has allowed us to try new things and offer your children an excellent education.

May God bless you and your families,

*-Jim Stankiewicz*

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## Calendar of Events:

- May 6 – Piano recital - 6:30
- May 8 – Girl Scouts - 6 p.m.
- May 13 – School board - 6 p.m. in library
- May 14 – Donnelly’s School uniforms – measurements 9 a.m.
- May 14 – Kindergarten orientation/parent meeting - 10 a.m. in Pastoral Center
- May 16 – DARE graduation - 1 p.m.
- May 17 – In-service release day - half day
- May 22 – Grade 8 class photos - Church at 8:15 a.m.
- May 22 – Girl Scouts - 6 p.m.
- May 27 – Memorial Day - no school
- June 5 – Girl Scouts at 6 p.m.
- June 6-7 – Grade 8 retreat at Camp Holy Cross
- June 7 – First Friday Mass at 9 a.m.
- June 12 – Kindergarten graduation - 9 a.m.
- June 12 – Pre-school graduation - 10 a.m.
- June 12 – Eighth grade graduation - 1 p.m.
- June 13 – Field day - Camp Holy Cross
- June 13 – Last day of school



## NEWS BITS...

### BRIDGES Program Unites Students and Seniors

Our annual Bridges program is in full swing! Over the course of several weeks each year, students and volunteers from the Dalton Senior center participate in a wide range of activities that help them get to know each other. As always, we are having a great deal of fun. Our final session will be a potluck luncheon held at the Senior Center on May 31.



*Fr. Chris is wrapped in Lenten chain of “Good Deeds” by the pre-kindergarten class.*

### Middle School Science Fair Winners are Announced

The 8th annual St. Agnes Academy Middle School Science Fair was held on Wednesday, April 10. Students did a wonderful job presenting their projects. Faculty and parents were all very impressed. Here is a list of award winners from our fair:



*St. Agnes Middle School science fair winners.*

**SCIENCE FAIR AWARD WINNERS 2019**

**Honorable Mention**

**Grade 6:** Thomas Celantano “Parachute Drop”  
Rachel Fleury “Under What Conditions Does Baker’s Yeast Rise Best?”

**Grade 8:** Kevin Duma “Pop Pop Popcorn”  
Krystine Jehle “Acidic Effects on Sea Life”  
Rosemary Mahoney “How Does Cloning Affect Plant Growth?”

Leena Schettini “How Does Music Affect Plant Growth?”

**Student Choice Award:** Joyce Makdisi “Left and Right Brain, Which One Are You?”

**Teacher’s Choice Award:** Mia Francesconi “MIG or TIG, Which Weld is Stronger?”

**Third Place**

**Grade 6:** Abigail Ethier, Anthony Ethier, and Marc Mularski “Can a Fruit Charge a Phone?”

**Grade 7:** Elizabeth Erwin “What’s Rising?”  
Catherine Moriarty “Break it Down”

**Grade 8:** Viola Quiles “Color Perception and Gender”

**Second Place**

**Grade 6:** Alexis Gero “Dance Shoes”

**Grade 7:** Belen Galvez “Remember Me, Remember Me Not”

**Grade 8:** Liam Looney “Protect Your Melon”  
Julia and Elizabeth Wheeler “What’s in Our Water?”

**First Place**

**Grade 6:** Helen Makdisi “Listen, Look, Learn!”  
Joyce Makdisi “Left and Right Brain, Which One Are You?”

**Grade 7:** Sydney Moriarty “Dad vs Neural Network”

**Grade 8:** Julie Alsmaan “Memories, Positive or Negative”  
Mia Francesconi “MIG or TIG, Which Weld is Stronger?”



*St. Agnes was well represented with 11 entries at the regional science fair at MCLA. Nine of the 11 placed and move on to the state competition.*

**St. Agnes Students Advance to State Science Fair in Worcester**

The Massachusetts Regional Fair was held at MCLA on Friday, April 26. Eleven projects that won awards at our fair were submitted to the regional fair. Out of the 11 submitted, 9 won awards. These nine students will be invited to advance to the Statewide Fair in Worcester on May 11.

**Honorable Mention:** Belen Galvez “Remember Me, Remember Me Not”

**Third Place:** Julie Alsmaan “Memories, Positive or Negative”

Elizabeth Erwin “What’s Rising?”

Mia Francesconi “MIG or TIG, Which Weld is Stronger?”

Helen Makdisi “Listen, Look, Learn!”

Julia and Elizabeth Wheeler “What’s in Our Water?”

**Second Place:** Joyce Makdisi “Left and Right Brain, Which One Are You?”

Catherine Moriarty “Break it Down”

Sydney Moriarty “Dad vs Neural Network”

Congratulations to all of our winners. We are all very proud of your accomplishments! Good luck on May 11!



**Dan McMahon is Named State Youth Soccer Administrator of the Year**

Massachusetts Youth Soccer has announced that St. Agnes physical education teacher Dan McMahon is the 2018 Administrator of the Year.

Every year Massachusetts Youth Soccer accepts nominations for awards, like Administrator of the Year, Volunteer of the Year, and Competitive Coach of the Year, to recognize people who give their time to improve the sport.

McMahon, the Director of Social Programs at the Dalton Community Recreation Association, has spent 29 years as a youth coach and the Town Coordinator for the Dalton Soccer Program.

“I’m humbled by the award,” McMahon said. “I am very fortunate to work with great people and great volunteers. I think I received this award because I am in a rich community that loves to volunteer.”

McMahon was an original board member of the Berkshire County Youth Soccer League and currently serves on its board. While in high school, McMahon worked at the youth center and has worked with youth teams in Dalton ever since.

“I appreciate the different relationships that form with the families and the kids I’ve coached,” McMahon said. “Whether it was basketball or soccer, I would coach where we needed somebody.”

He is a Berkshire County soccer official and is also the Vice President of the officiating board. McMahon spends most of the summer months teaching preseason youth clinics, however, he has spent the winter working with the Wahconah girl’s basketball team.

“I’m so fortunate to work with so many people that are willing to put in the time to volunteer,” McMahon

said. "That's why I've stayed in Dalton for the last 30-or-so years."

In his 29-year career, McMahon has coached hundreds of boys and girls, but is focused on instilling good sportsmanship and enjoyment of sports while educating athletes on skills and rules of different sports. Dan, his wife, Barbara, and their three children; Rachel, Ryan and Kelly, all live in Dalton.

"I've tried to teach [my kids] to always give back because it feels good," McMahon said. "I couldn't think of a better community I would want to live in."

We are very fortunate to have Mr. McMahon as our physical education teacher.  
Congratulations Dan!

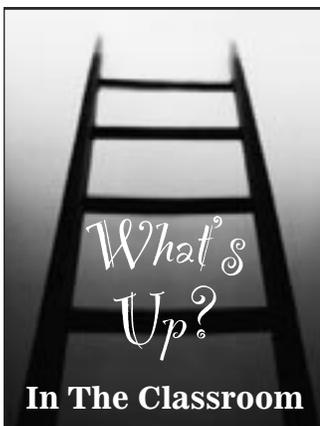


*Charlotte demonstrates her knowledge with geography expert Neal Nichols who made a special visit.*

## Geography Expert Gives Interactive Presentation

Neal Nichols, Massachusetts native and world traveler, was at St. Agnes on April 12. Neal's "Geography Gameshow" is a series of educational performances that feature the rendering of numerous world and regional maps from his own memory. Students were engaged in the programs that challenged comprehension skills and inspired learning. He worked with students from kindergarten through eighth grade for the day. We were pleased to see several parents attend some of the sessions!

Thanks to the St. Agnes PTO and to the Dalton and Hinsdale-Peru Cultural Councils for funding Neal's presentation!



**In Mrs. Leja's and Mrs. Kulpa's pre-Kindergarten,** our acts of kindness as a Lenten mission was a wonderful success. Both the pre-school and pre-K children participated and Father Chris came to our classroom to collect them. The children enjoyed seeing Father wrapped in our kindness chain.

It is so hard to believe that we are entering the final full month of the school year! This month we will be going on our annual "make believe" trip to Hawaii. Both classes will be flying to Hawaii during the second week of May. We will be packing our suitcases and making our cameras in preparation for our visit. We will learn about Hawaiian traditions and culture. This trip will also include a visit to the beach where we will talk about ocean life. Our trip will conclude with a Hawaiian Luau with each child contributing to our Hawaiian Friendship Fruit Salad. We are hoping for plenty of sunshine! Aloha.

**In Mrs. Patti's kindergarten,** we all came back from April vacation happy, rested, and ready to get back to work for the last few weeks of kindergarten. The first few weeks of April found us learning and celebrating spring-time and new life. We learned all about the life cycles of butterflies, frogs and lady bugs and have been doing a great deal of writing about how we know it's spring. When we returned from vacation we celebrated Earth Day, which was April 22, by sharing ways that we can help protect the earth and what we can do to make our planet better for everyone.

We are busy in Unit 5 of our Reading Street Series, with the theme being Going Places, and will introduce the last few letters of the alphabet and continue to add to our already large list of sight words. In math, we have been learning about calendars and telling time to the hour. In a few days we will begin Chapter 11, which will teach about measurement.

The month of May has us celebrating Mary and all mothers. The children will participate in the First Friday Mass with the help of our eighth grade Big Buddies as we celebrate the Crowning of Mary. Everyone will have a special job of reading or bringing gifts to the altar.

The year is truly moving along so quickly! With only a few short weeks left we have many exciting events to look forward to. Our Mothers Day Tea will be Friday, May 10, and we also have kindergarten orientation for incoming kindergarten children. Donuts for Dad will take place in June, and of course our Kindergarten Graduation.

**In Mrs. Shapiro's first grade,** the class has done a great job reading to pre-schoolers at the Dalton Public Library. The hour-long program features stories and a craft activity with a snack. Story time is held in conjunction with the Central Berkshire Community Partnership for Children. The first graders from St. Agnes assist by reading a story and offering their creative expertise to the younger children. We will have a party on May 30 to celebrate our last day. First grade readers for April /May are Andrew, Brielle, Lauren, Gemma, Sullivan, Beatrice, Thomas, and Josslyn.

In reading, we have started unit 4 named Treasures. Throughout this unit, students will learn to appreciate birthday surprises, good stories, symbols and traditions, and other exciting treasures. In math, we've moved onto geometry. Plane and solid figures, lines of symmetry, congruent shapes and patterns are some of the geometric topics we've been working on.

Religion class has focused on the fruits of the Holy Spirit: joy, peace, self-control, patience, love, kindness, and gentleness. In April, the first grade class was in



*First grade readers at the Dalton Library.*

charge of leading the school in morning prayers. Everyone has participated and did a spectacular job!

In science, the students discovered during a "Sidewalk Field Trip" that cloud watching can be fun. After reading *The Cloud Book* by Tomie de Paola, students learned about the 10 most common clouds and how they tell us about coming changes in the weather. They also wrote their own silly cloud story. We were also able to enjoy some giggles while listening to *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs* and doing a follow-up activity connecting it with the Food Groups called "Sky Food."

I can't believe how quickly the year is moving. Your children continue to be a source of wonder and inspiration. I feel truly blessed to be a part of their lives. Thank you for all your support and Happy Spring!

**In Mrs. Blefari's second grade**, April has been a busy month. We have started our final reading incentive program. This one is called Banana Splits. In this program, each child was given a paper outline of a banana split. In order to earn the pieces to fill in the outline, the children have to read a certain number of books and complete reports on their favorites. Everyone seems pretty motivated to get their puzzle completed because when everyone is finished, we'll celebrate with a banana splits party!

Most of the children have moved to the final unit of the reading series. They repeat nearly every day how small their textbooks are getting. In September, it was a struggle for some of them to lift the textbook and I'm sure it felt like they were never going to see the end of that 500+ page book! But they've done it and they are very proud second graders!

We would like to mention, also, that we have a new weekly volunteer, Mrs. Roccabrana, who has generously volunteered to come and spend Thursday mornings with us. Mrs. R. will be listening to the children read orally in small groups. Welcome and thank you, Mrs. R.!

In math, we are moving on to triple-digit numbers. We are adding and subtracting triple-digit numbers. We are doing so well on our number facts timed tests, that a few people have already gotten a week off because we've gotten five 100's in one week! Many more students are very close to achieving a week off too.

In science, we are patiently waiting for the arrival of some butterfly larvae. As soon as it arrives, we are going to begin our unit on the life cycle of the butterfly. We have its habitat ready and waiting for the arrival. The

children will observe and monitor the butterfly's life cycle and keep documentation of the process. We can't wait to get started.

In religion, the children are nearly finished with their First Communion studies. On Saturday, May 11, the children will attend a retreat here at school. First Communion will be celebrated on Saturday, May 18. Please keep these youngsters in your prayers as they prepare for this special sacrament.

In preparation for Easter, we talked extensively about the Easter story. We were able to go to church for Stations of the Cross with Fr. Chris and Deacon Rick. We attended Mass weekly during Lent and were able to go into the "Children's Room" where we could watch the Mass more closely and I was able to explain the parts of the Mass without disturbing worshippers. As kind of a culmination to our Easter festivities, we read a book about Easter celebrations throughout the world. One photo depicting Easter bonnets seemed to be very intriguing to the students so...we created our own! The children had fun trying to recreate the fancy ones in the photo.



*Second grade students don Easter bonnets.*

**In Mrs. Todriff's third grade**, spring has sprung and students are enjoying being scientists. Each day, students examine their pinto beans and record the findings in "Bean Journals." They are learning how plants grow and make food. Just ask them to sing a photosynthesis song!

In math, students had to read, interpret, and make graphs such as pictographs, bar graphs, circle graphs, line plots, and line graphs. Then we moved to measurement. Students are learning units of length, weight, capacity, mass, and temperature.

In April, the artist Neal Nichols amazed third grade as he presented and sketched information about the history, resources, and geography of Massachusetts. What a great way to summarize part of our curriculum this year! In social studies, we continue to read about the Wampanoag people, how they used natural resources to live, and help the Pilgrims.

In reading, we are exploring *What happens when 2 ways of life come together?* Through realistic fiction stories, students understand that cultures have similarities and differences. We were lucky to have Karl's mom, Mrs. LaPointe, share Japanese culture with us. She volunteered to talk about her experience living in Japan and displayed her memorabilia.



*Mrs. LaPointe shares artifacts from Japan with the third grade.*

During Lent, we attended weekly Mass, prayed the Stations of the Cross, and reviewed the Sacraments of Healing. We also spread the joy of literacy by reading to the Pre-K classes. Each third grade student read a book to one or two preschoolers. Many smiles and friends were made that day!



*Third grade student reads to two pre-kindergarten students.*

**In Mrs. Adams' fourth grade,** our focus in religion was on learning about the Sacraments of Penance and Reconciliation. We reviewed the parts of the rite as a way to grow in God's gift of healing. An examination of conscience as a prayerful celebration of this Sacrament was also a focal pint.

In E.L.A., we are on Unit 6, "Reaching for Goals." The big question of this unit is, "What does it take to achieve our goals and dreams?" We are currently reading, *My Brother Martin*, written by his sister, Christine King Farris. The social studies correlation goal is that the students will understand that the right of equal opportunity is or was protected by the Civil Rights Act, integration and changing laws, Martin Luther King, Jr. and the U.S. Constitution.

In math, we have been studying measurement, both customary and metric, length, capacity, weight, mass, and temperature. In social studies, we have been studying the Southeast region of the United States, including its geography, culture, settlement and way of life. The

fourth grade had two major charity drives and raised over \$400. "The Triplets Company," made a donation to Antorcha de Vida, (Torch of Life), for therapy for children with special needs in Sangolq'i Ecuador. "The Holy Girls" donated money for construction of durable houses, built to withstand tropical storms and hurricanes in the Dominican Republic.



*Amanda, Sarah, and Angela (above), & Grace and Sadie (right) raised funds for charitable causes.*



**In Ms. Young's fifth grade:** In religion, the fifth grade has been discussing the Sacraments of the Anointing of the Sick and Penance and Reconciliation. The students had the opportunity to go to confession during the Lenten season, putting their learning into action. They have also learned about living the Ten Commandments in their everyday lives, the Works of Mercy, and how Jesus established the Church after his resurrection and before his ascension.

In reading, the boys and girls have been reading stories about special effects, a boy who creates his own world, and a girl whose clumsiness helps her class try square dancing. Their comprehension skills are coming along nicely. Most recently, the class made picture books and presented them to their peers. The students enjoyed completing this assignment and viewing the stories their peers created.

In math, the students completed their study of the multiplication and division of fractions. They have now been reviewing decimals as they delve into the four operations using decimals.

In science, we have been learning about the circulatory and respiratory systems, including the function of each heart chamber, the path that air takes once it enters your body, and what happens at the site where oxygen and carbon dioxide need to be exchanged.

The fifth grade has also been participating in two external programs. Mrs. Mulcahy and Mrs. Penna from the District Attorney's Office have taught the Life Skills curriculum class, and Police Officer Deanna Strout has



*As part of their DARE program, fifth grade students learn about mounted policing from the Berkshire County Sheriff's Department.*



*Sixth grade class meets with their senior partners in the "Bridges" program.*

come in weekly to teach DARE to the students. Some of the opportunities provided by these programs include learning ways to cope with factors such as peer pressure and stress, and resistance of the use and abuse of drugs and alcohol. During DARE, the students were able to use fatal vision goggles to experience how an intoxicated driver's vision is impaired, as well as see and touch a horse used by the mounted police units.

**In Mr. Lange's sixth grade:**

**Math:** Sixth graders are currently working on rates, ratios, and proportions. They are doing very well with it, considering it is very similar to their work with fractions. They will begin learning about percentages next, which will include a range of every day problems involving percentages.

**Science:** Sixth graders are learning about cells, specifically their structure and parts, and how they function. They are excited to use microscopes in an upcoming lab activity. The next unit will begin their studies on physical science. More specifically they will learn about matter and its interactions.

**Social Studies:** Our class is in the process of learning all about the culture and achievements of ancient Rome. Our culminating project for the unit will be the ever popular Roman city project in which students are asked to build their own Roman city using recyclable materials. This is always a favorite assignment!

**Literature:** We are in the final stages of our annual Holocaust unit in honor of Holocaust Remembrance Month which was in April. Students are reading two eyewitness accounts of survival and will write an essay comparing the two for their final evaluation.

**In Mrs. Dudziak's seventh grade:**

**Math:** Seventh graders have finished their work on rates, ratios, proportions, and percentages. Right now they are focusing on problems involving consumer math (discounts, taxes, etc.) to finish up the unit. The next unit will be focusing on geometry: angles, lines, two-dimensional and three-dimensional figures.

**Science:** Students in grade 7 have been working on a unit about Biology. They finished their work on reproduction and development. Now they are learning about

ecology and habitats. Coming up next will be a unit about physical science, starting with potential and kinetic energy.

**Language Arts:** We just finished writing compare-contrast essays, remembering to include a clear thesis, specific facts and details, precise language, and a formal style and tone.

**Literature:** We finished our unit on *The Adventure of Tom Sawyer*. Our next unit is poetry.

**Social Studies:** Our class is in the process of learning all about the culture and achievements of ancient Rome. Our culminating project for the unit will be the ever popular Roman city project in which students are asked to build their own Roman city using recyclable materials. This is always a favorite assignment!

**In Mrs. Jamross' eighth grade:**

**Science:** The 8th graders are focused on genetics and heredity. It is one of the more interesting and fun units they work on. There will be a few lab activities to really see how genetics and DNA plays a role in characteristics and traits. After this unit, there will be a unit on Chemistry and the states of matter.

**Math:** We finished our unit on linear functions and inequalities and have begun the next unit on ratio and proportion.

**Religion:** We have been learning about Christian service and how every person has something important to contribute to help others. We also learned that we imitate Christ when we serve others with humility and love.

**Language Arts:** We have been learning how to use nouns and pronouns to make our writing more precise. Soon we will be writing a literary analysis to put our skills to the test.

**Literature:** We are wrapping up our unit on *The Outsiders*, and have been discussing how the book is as timely now as it was when it was written 50 years ago.

**Social Studies:** Our final unit of the school year is on the Age of Exploration. As we learn all about the exploration and colonization of the New World, students have their eyes on their final project, in which they will research a topic of their choice that is related to that time period. Once the research is done, they will need to share their information in a creative way. We're looking forward to learning more about pirates, Spanish galleons, shipwrecks, smallpox, the culture of the native populations, and individual explorers!



## Letter from Burkina Faso

*Sr. Linda Answers the Call*

May 2019



## *Kimini Secondary School Opens*

We are so thankful to the Lord that we were able to be in the village to celebrate the official opening of our secondary school.

Although this type of ceremony is not extremely important to us, it is very important to our local friends. They planned and prepared well and the entire village celebrated that their children can now stay in the village and continue their secondary school education.

This year we are running 7th and 8th grade classes and next year we will add the 9th grade. We will add one grade each year until we have a complete school through the 13th grade.

The final phase of the school project is well underway. This is a four-classroom building which will hold grades 10, 11, 12, and 13.

- Sr. Linda and Ruth Cox

