

the Serviam



Spring 2009

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Embracing Service MMS Students Learn Love CAN Change Everything

When you think of supporting a worthy cause, buying a goat likely isn't the first thing that comes to mind...unless of course you're a student at Mount Merici School this year. This past spring, students bought 46 of them, in hopes of feeding starving children in Darfur and helping their families survive in an impoverished community.



Elizabeth Hammond adds a goat to the school's Feed the Children display. Mount Merici students raised \$1,380, allowing them to buy 46 goats to help children and their families in Darfur.

At the heart of an Ursuline education is service to others. From Nursery School through sixth grade, Mount Merici students learn they have a responsibility in caring for themselves and for the world around them; so it was not surprising when they agreed to help others in need. The manner in which they embraced the idea, however, was astounding.

In early 2009, under the direction of the very talented songwriter Julia Vigue, students began preparing for its first spring music concert, appropriately named "Love Changes Everything." The lyrics heard during weeks of rehearsals were reminders of how one person's actions can make a difference. Songs like "The Power of One" and "Open Eyes, Open Hearts, Open Doors" were brought to real life when the children learned that Mount Merici had partnered with the national non-profit organization "Feed the Children" to raise money for goats.

The school became educated in how a gift of a dairy goat can supply a poor family in Darfur with up to several quarts of nutritious milk a day—a ton of milk a year. Extra milk can be sold or used to make cheese, butter or yogurt. Families learn to use goat manure to fertilize gardens. Goats can thrive in extreme climates and on poor, dry land by eating grass and leaves. And because goats often have two or three kids a year, Heifer partners can lift themselves out of poverty by starting small dairies that earn money for food, healthcare and education.

"We thought if we could raise enough money for even a few goats, it would be a wonderful lesson for the children," Vigue said of introducing the idea to the school's 190 students. It was a lesson learned, indeed. Students collected bottles, donated their savings and earned money by doing chores to contribute to the school's collection jars.

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Support For The Mount Merici Fund

Recognizing the challenges of fundraising in a difficult economic environment, Mount Merici kicked off its 2008-2009 annual appeal campaign last fall with great determination in meeting its goals. Enthusiastic division leadership helped rally Mount Merici's many loyal supporters, who successfully raised over \$40,000 in gifts and pledges in support of The Mount Merici Fund.

"The announcement that Mount Merici School has met its annual appeal goal despite the current difficult economic climate is wonderful news!" Campaign co-chairs Nelson and Dottie Megna said. "It is eloquent testimony of the confidence the community has in Mount Merici and a tribute to the dedication and hard work of the staff, which keeps the Ursuline tradition alive and makes Mount Merici such a great school."

According to Monica Wilcox Charette, director of development, an additional \$8,700 in gifts were received from donors this year for the school's scholarship program, capital improvements and endowment.

All donations received during the fiscal year will be included in the school's annual report of giving and will be published on the J. Alfred Boucher Donor Wall at Mount Merici School.

Mount Merici is grateful to all who continue to generously support our school. Thank you. ■

MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

"For if it is Jesus who directs and teaches us, we will be well taught."

Saint Angela Merici, Foundress of the Ursulines

Dear Friends,

On the first day of school, all students, faculty and staff assembled to greet each other and share in prayer, asking God to bless each member of our school community as we set forth on our year-long journey of new learning experiences.



Mrs. Cote shares Bible stories with Kindergarten students Michael Fitch and Riley Genest.

God's blessings have overflowed through the actions of enthusiastic and loving students; talented and devoted faculty and staff; committed and caring parents; dedicated and supportive Board members; involved and loyal alumni; inspirational Ursuline Sisters; faithful parish communities and generous community supporters.

May God bless each of you who help carry Mount Merici School's proud tradition into a promising future for generations of blessed students ...

Blessed are the students who attend school where a faith view of the world shapes their perspective.

Blessed are the students whose parents dedicatedly accept their responsibility as the primary educators of their children and collaboratively engage with educators in giving them a strong faith filled foundation.

Blessed are the students whose teachers are daily witnesses of the gospel message and honor the dignity of their students.

Blessed are the students who grow and learn in a school faith community where each member treats every other member as a unique gift from God.

Blessed are the students who are taught of the human needs of all mankind and learn to respond to the obligations of Christian service to others.

Thank you for partnering with us to provide these many blessings for our students. For it is in the daily giving of who we are that we move closer to what God asks that we become - messengers of His love.

Blessings,
Mrs. Cote, Principal

Inside Mount Merici

Enjoy a look "inside" our school at some of the many special events held the second half of our school year.

Academic Achievements

Geography

Alicia Carpenter won the school-level competition of the National Geographic Bee. **Monicah Pacquette** placed second. ■



Alicia Carpenter

Speech



Kristi Yoos

Kristi Yoos was awarded first place in the Modern Woodmen Speech Contest for her speech on Mother Theresa. Second runner up was **Mercedes Hammond**, for her speech about Harold Alfond. This year's theme was "Someone Who Has Touched Many Lives." Both Yoos and Hammond represented Mount Merici in the district level competition in Augusta. ■



Mercedes Hammond

Spelling

Monicah Pacquette won the school-level competition of the Trinity Catholic School-sponsored National Spelling Bee. Second runner up was **Mercedes Hammond**.



Monicah Pacquette

Paquette and Hammond participated in the Kennebec County competition in Lewiston. ■

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Match Point



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Sixth grader **Jesse Jacques** tries his hand at tennis taught by Mount Merici parent volunteer **Amy Hammond**. Mrs. Hammond shares her time and skills as a volunteer in Mrs. Russo's gym class, at the school's year-round athletic programs and in her childrens' fourth and sixth grade classrooms. ■

Reading Buddies

Fifth grader **Skye Collicut** enjoys reading time with her first grade buddy **Hannah DelGiudice**. Students in the two grades pair up each week to talk about their favorite books, listen to stories and share their love for reading. ■



Smile!

Pre-Kindergarten students get an up-close lesson on the importance of taking good care of their teeth from Mount Merici parent and orthodontist, **Dr. Brian Morin**.

Dr. Morin and his wife, Dr. Jacqueline Morin, a dentist, visited Mrs. Turmelle's class in recognition of National Dental Health Month. ■



Finding the Golden Ticket

Maxwell Burger-Roy plays Willy Wonka in the Fifth Grade Play "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory" while his classmate **Jacob Glaude** (as Mike Teevee) waits for his cue. Theatre is part of Mount Merici's Arts Program, taught by Jody Nichols. Ms. Nichols also offers after-school theatre and art classes at the school. ■



An Italian Experience

Brigid Mulvihill is among the Mount Merici students in Mrs. Fitzpatrick's after school Italian class who had the opportunity to experience authentic Italian gelato. After completing the six-week class, the students took a field trip to Brunswick to The Gelato Fiasco to see (and taste!) how Italian ice cream is made. ■



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"I want to help the children. They have so little, and really, we have what we need to live," says second grader Elizabeth Hammond, who graciously handed over more than \$16 from her piggy bank.

Every \$30 collected allowed a classroom to buy one goat. Within four weeks, the students had collected enough money for nearly 30 goats. Inspired by the children's commitment to this project,



Second and third grade students proudly perform "A Better Way to Be" in the spring music concert "Love Changes Everything."

donors sent in "matching goat gifts" until the total reached 46 goats! "You made the theme of our music concert come true by making sure that a large number of families would no longer starve, but would instead thrive," Vigue told the students. "All because of love sent to them all the way from Mount Merici School in Waterville, Maine."

In addition to raising money for goats, students also supported the Darfur Village Project, a collaborative effort of the Ursuline Sisters. Learning their spare change could mean providing much-needed school supplies and other necessities they take for granted every day, Mount Merici students wished to help their fellow Ursuline students across the globe. In May, the school presented a check for \$500 to the Ursuline Sisters of the Northeast Province.

Accepting the gift on behalf of the Ursulines, Sr. Theresa Pelletier said the students didn't just wear the Serviam logo, they "lived it every day through their selfless acts of kindness.

"You are true followers of the Ursuline tradition." ■



Madeline Firnkes (left) and **Caitlin Parks** are among Mount Merici students K- 6 who will remember the day President Barack Obama took the oath of office. Donning colorful Hawaii lei (for the President's home state) and sitting attentively in the school gymnasium, the children experienced the live event through an internet newscast projected onto a big screen. Following the inauguration, the students joined hands in prayer for the country's 44th President. ■

Bishop Malone Visits Mount Merici Students

Bishop Richard Malone chats with a very inquisitive **Ava Ardito** and her first grade classmates. Bishop Malone's visit on March 31 marked his fifth anniversary as Bishop of Maine. In addition to visiting classrooms, Nursery School through Grade 5, he lead a mini-retreat with sixth grade students before enjoying a school-wide performance from Mount Merici's spring musical "Love Changes Everything." To thank the



Bishop for his visit, students presented him with a donation of a goat, in his name, in support of the national non-profit relief organization "Feed the Children." ■

Mrs. Laplante Is Credentialed

Mount Merici Nursery School Teacher **Debra Laplante** has been awarded a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential in recognition of outstanding work with young children. As part of her credentialing, Laplante was observed working with students and families by an independent early childhood professional. She met all credentialing requirements and clearly demonstrated her skills in the development of students' physical and intellectual capabilities in a safe and healthy learning environment. CDA is the only major national effort to improve early childhood education and care



through evaluation. Mount Merici Nursery School provides a daily, two-hour program for children ages 3 and 4. ■

Ways to Give

The ways in which people give to Mount Merici are nearly as numerous as the reasons they choose to do so. Here are some of the ways you can support our school.

Annual Giving: School tuition at Mount Merici pays for only about one-third of the total cost of educating a child.

Annual gifts make up a majority of the remaining two-thirds of the operating budget. You can make a one-time gift, or a multiple month/year pledge.

Memorial Gifts honor the memory of someone who has passed away and provide a way to express sympathy to a family. Many alumni make gifts in memory of former classmates. Families are notified of gifts made in memory of a loved one, and individuals are remembered at our annual Memorial Mass.

Celebration and Tribute Gifts honor living individuals and are a perfect way to send birthday greetings, congratulate weddings, anniversaries and births or acknowledge another special occasion. Increasingly, businesses and individuals are making charitable gifts in students' names in lieu of traditional holiday gifts.

Matching Gifts: Many organizations and companies have programs in place that will match your gift, maximizing your support. Check with your company about this option.

Bequests: Leaving a gift of real estate, personal property, or cash is a wonderful way to create a legacy of caring and support for Christian education at Mount Merici. There are many benefits to both the school and the donor.

Sponsorship: Community businesses and other corporations have been instrumental in the growth and improvement at Mount Merici School. There are numerous ways companies and organizations can sponsor programs and services such as our athletic programs, music, the MMS Library, The Arts, technology and other areas of interest.

You Can Help

Mount Merici School is ready to assist you or your organization in support of our school. We invite you to visit our school and learn how you can help. For more information about giving opportunities, please contact us at info@mountmerici.org or call Monica Wilcox Charette, Development Director, at 207-873-3773. ■



The Serviam is published twice annually by the Mount Merici School Development Office. We hope you enjoy receiving this newsletter. Kindly let us know of any name or address changes, or if you are getting this newsletter in error.

Information and comments regarding *The Serviam* may be directed to Monica Wilcox Charette, Director of Development, Mount Merici School, 152 Western Ave., Waterville, ME 04901. Email: info@mountmerici.org.

Alumni Aspirations

Discovering Your Spontaneous Service

Margaret "Meg" Kruithoff, (Mount Merici Class of '02) has discovered the art of what she calls "spontaneous service." In addition to maintaining her 3.84 grade point average as an American Studies freshman at Colby College this year, she makes time to nurture her passion for gardening, Nordic skiing, biking, tennis and...service to her community.

"I volunteer for causes that I truly feel passionate about, rather than doing service to rack up hours for college applications," Meg says. "I like to speak about and raise awareness for causes that I deem worthy, like education, especially for healthy, physical activity practices and programs."

Among her most recent "spontaneities" is working extensively with Hardy Girls Healthy Woman, a non-profit organization in Waterville that works to empower women and girls to defy gender stereotypes and be the best they can be. She

became involved while still a high school student at Erskine Academy. Over the past five years, Meg has volunteered at the organization's girls' conferences, their Father-Daughter golf tournament and Adventure Girls programs. This past spring, she co-organized a 5K fun run/walk and hosted activities at a Girls Rock! conference to help educate over 100 girls in healthy and fun athletic training practices.

Her commitment to service work, she says,



Meg Kruithoff, '02, an American Studies major at Colby College, enjoys the sights in Paris this year as part of her literature studies abroad in France.

comes from family-taught values and early influences as a student at Mount Merici School. "The teachers at Mount Merici made me a better student, a happier kid, a more mature citizen and a caring compassionate human being."

Looking back seven years since graduating from Mount Merici, Meg says she now has a better appreciation for her early education.

"I think among many things, acceptance and awareness were solid values instilled at Mount Merici. I saw poverty and disability at an early age and learned to look past one's circumstances and into their hearts," Meg says. "I also now see that uniforms were an excellent tool against peer discrimination, because we all looked the same. I really feel free to just be myself and learn."

For these reason, and many others, she says her recent "spontaneous service" has

"Alumni Aspirations" continued on last page

Alumni Spotlight

The Serviam is proud to recognize and celebrate all of our Mount Merici graduates through "Alumni Spotlight."

--**Alice Hofgren, '03**, earned second place in the Maine State Poetry Out Loud contest. Alice, a senior at Waterville Senior High School this year, recited "Sonnet CXVI: Let Me No to the Marriage of True Minds" by William Shakespeare.

--**Erin Saveall, '88**, returned to MMS to perform in the school's spring music concert "Love Changes Everything." Erin did a beautifully choreographed dance as part of the sixth grader's performance of "One Dance."



--**Evan Vashon, '07**, made the honor roll at Maine Maritime Academy. Evan recently completed his freshman year at the Castine school.

--**Sage Duguay, '07**, was a soloist in the Mount Merici spring musical "Love Changes Everything." Sage led first graders in their performance of "Walk the Walk."



--**Jennifer Hale, '03**, a senior at Waterville Senior High School, was awarded the Maine High School Philanthropist of the Year Award. The award, presented by Colby College, was given to recognize individuals who have made an extraordinary contribution to the service of others.

We want to hear from you! Alumni (parents and grandparents too!) please submit information for "Alumni Spotlight" in writing or by emailing us at info@mountmerici.org. Also kindly let us know any name or address changes!



Meet a Future Honor Student

Eighty percent of Mount Merici School graduates are listed among honor roll students in area junior high and high schools.

Share the good news about a Mount Merici education. Openings are still available in our Nursery School, Kindergarten and in Grades 1 - 6.

MOUNT MERICI SCHOOL



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Where a proud tradition embraces a promising future

been giving back to her alma mater by volunteering in Mrs. Fitzpatrick's French Class. She thoroughly engages students in presentations about her recent January term studying literature and taking French cooking classes in Paris.

"Mount Merici was where I started learning French," she says. "I think it is great when kids can see where this language can take them if they continue to study it. Coming back reminded me where education starts and where confidence in the classroom, and beyond, is cultivated."

This summer, Meg's service work will focus on her passion for gardening by caring for the Colby Organic Farmers and Garden Association's new organic garden "2 Feet 2 Bedrock" to benefit local food pantries.

"A sense of community was very prevalent during my years at the Mount and I believe this instilled in me a commitment to serving others in and outside of this community," she says humbly of her volunteerism.

"Whether literally through community service or just by being a loyal friend or a hardworking student, the messages of community and togetherness that were ingrained at Mount Merici remain strong inside me today." ■

Where a proud tradition embraces a promising future.

2009 Harvest Fair: October 16, 17
Mount Merici Gym

Opening School Day: August 26

Grade 6 Graduation: June 12,
Mount Merici Gym



UPCOMING EVENTS AT MOUNT MERICI SCHOOL

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