



COMMUNITY *Comment*

Nurturing the Gifts of Mind, Body & Spirit

May 2010

Salute to the Class of 2010!

Inside this Issue

Class of '10.....page 1
Headlines.....page 2
**New Students.....page 4*
Karen Temporiti.....page 8
Carolyn Rhett.....page 9
Focus on Faculty.....page 10

**NOTE: The "New Students" pages have been omitted from the online edition to protect the privacy of our students and families.*



Community School's sixth graders have some wonderful memories of their time here, as well as sage advice for future classes:

I have learned that going above expectations and taking risks is who I am, and one of my best traits. *Casey Jones*

My favorite memory was at the Sixth Grade camping trip roasting Smores. *Toby Martin*

My most interesting project was doing the dodecahedron in 2nd grade. I thought this project was interesting because we got to make it in 3D. *Drew Bolster*

I have learned never to give up when the going gets tough. *Louis Werner*

My most interesting activity was Low Ropes. I loved how the people who

designed it incorporated teamwork into many mind-blowing activities. *Hannah Myers*

The single most important thing I have learned at Community is that I am creative. *Daniel Silva*

My best piece of advice for a younger student would be to smile. Smiling makes people feel calmer and attracts friends. *Kate Yee*

The most interesting project I have done was the poem book in 3rd grade. It was so fun to make the paper and sew it all together. *Lexi Smith*

Community is not only a great school academically, but it teaches you so many other things like teamwork and integrity. *Matt Trowbridge*

Continued on page 6

Volume 2009-10, Issue 4





Community Comment

The parent newsletter of

Community School

900 Lay Road
St. Louis, MO 63124
(314) 991-0005
(314) 991-1512 Fax
www.communityschool.com

Head of School

Matthew A. Gould, Ph.D.

Editor

Laura Falk

Contributors

6th Grade Students
Kathy Fitzgerald
Matthew Gould
Cathy Haines
Dana Saulsberry

2009-2010

Board of Trustees

John Lemkemeier '79, *President*
Dr. Shilpa Thornton, *Vice President*
Jim Cooper, *Treasurer*
Bill Bolster, *Secretary*
Terease Baker-Bell
Samantha Bledsoe
Steve Brackney
Peter Edison '67
Daniel Harris
Tom Helmkamp '76
Holly James '81
Suzanne Johnson
Martin Myers
Mary Otto '72
Manuel Silva
John Stroup
Michele Thomas
Nina Wuestling
Lynn Harmon, *CPA President*
Carrie Martin '78, *Alumni Board President*

Headlines:

A Message from Matthew Gould

(Excerpted from Annual Meeting Speech)

ANNUAL MEETING - MAY 5, 2010

It is impossible to talk about the accomplishments of Community School without putting them in the context of the past two years – a time of unprecedented change and economic fallout. It wasn't too long ago when we were talking about the crumbling pillars of our country's financial infrastructure. Because of this fallout, there has been an underlying sense of anxiety that has permeated much of what we have thought and done these past eighteen months. As an independent school we have faced a perfect storm – a storm that has encompassed economic collapse, shrinking demographics of school-aged children, and stringent competition. But despite this "perfect storm" and despite our challenges, Community School has persevered as we come out of this "storm" stronger than ever. The School has moved forward on two important fronts. As an institution we've moved forward with strength and stability, and our program has moved forward with excellence and effectiveness.



Just think of our strength as an institution over the past eighteen months:

- We raised \$8 million in the worst economic climate in a generation, and we are seeing the fruits of that effort come to life:
 - ▶ The new kitchen opened in the fall. Chef Mike and his team are doing an outstanding job preparing fabulous lunches for our kids.
 - ▶ The new driveway has had a huge impact on traffic flow on campus. Carpool is now organized, efficient, and safe.
 - ▶ The Leadership Wing opened in January. Our fourth graders moved mid-year out of subpar spaces into great





HeadLines, continued:

classrooms, and the Fifth and Sixth Grades have moved into the glorious new Leadership Wing. The Leadership Wing has had a huge impact on many grades as we are now able to spread out and differentiate instruction in small group settings.

▶ The office renovation is underway and the Front Entry Plaza renovation and Lay Road resurfacing will be done this summer in time for the opening of the 2010-2011 school year.

▶ And finally, this fundraising effort will put approximately \$2 million into the endowment in support of financial aid, faculty salaries, and other needs of the School.

- Community School witnessed its strongest recruiting year in recent memory. Next year, we have families coming to Community from as far east as Breese, Illinois, and as far west as Dardenne Prairie, Missouri. We have families coming from Fenton in South County to Florissant in North County, and everywhere in between. We will open our doors next year with our strongest enrollment in Community's ninety-six year history as we welcome thirty-two new families to our School.

- Another important marker of institutional strength and stability is retention. The number of current families re-enrolled for next year stands at 95%. For reference, the average retention rate for similar ISACS schools is 89%.

- Community School graduates are probably the most sought-after graduates by secondary schools — more than any other elementary school in St. Louis. This year, 33 sixth grade students submitted 74 applications to eight independent secondary schools. Of the 74, sixty-eight of them were acceptances. Members of the class of 2010 will be

represented next year at MICDS, John Burroughs, The College School and Crossroads College Prep. We will miss this fabulous class of sixth graders, and we wish them well in their future endeavors.

We know that each of our graduates will be successful and will take a tiny bit of Community School with them in their hearts as they forge out into the world.

- And finally, another marker of institutional excellence is the interaction between this institution and other great institutions. Both Washington University and Webster University have identified Community School as one of a select few independent schools they are willing to let assist in training the teachers of tomorrow. To quote the department chair at Washington University, *"This is a place where education is done right. I want our future teachers to learn from the best teachers in the business in an environment as stimulating and enriched as this one."* This year, we invited three student teachers — one from Washington University and two from Webster University — to Community. Next semester, we have two already lined up.

In addition to institutional strength, the Community School program has persevered with strength, stability, and excellence. The Community School Program is stronger than ever. Our kids are achieving at incredibly high levels,



but they are also enjoying the process of learning, loving coming to School, and finding the "life of the mind" engaging, stimulating and fun.

Our curriculum is overseen and managed by a group called the Curriculum Council. The faculty has worked harder than ever this year to differentiate their programs to meet the individual needs of students. The goal is for each child to be both challenged and supported. Many of the faculty have received specific training in differentiation and the impact on student learning has already proven to be profound.

And, of course, one way to measure our program's effectiveness is test scores. However, good test scores are not our goal. We are a school that always values process over product, the journey over the destination. Nevertheless, these scores do validate that our philosophy of education — hands on learning, creativity, group process and collaboration — works. Our most recent ERB scores demonstrate that Community School classes outscored independent school norms in 96% of the skill categories tested. Put another way, students

Continued on page 7



Sixth Grade, cont.



My favorite memories are the 6th grade “Tug of War” play and my first day of school in JK when I met my classmates who turned out to be my best friends.
Alie Hobler

At Community, the faculty is nice, and they will guide you through your problems.
Jack Sheehan

At Community School I learned I like to read. If I had never been pushed to read some books I did not like, I wouldn't be reading the books I read today.
Lauren Mullenix

My favorite memory at Community is competing in the track meets in 5th and 6th grades.
Colton Treischmann

I would tell a prospective family that Community helps you academically and physically. The faculty and staff makes you and your family part of the school on the first day.
Jackie Reeb

I have learned that if I be myself and work hard, I will thrive socially as well as academically and physically.
Lucy Hanaway

My best piece of advice for younger students is to have fun with your teachers, but work on homework when you have time between classes.
Emily McDonnell

My favorite memory at Community is the JK Dinosaur Dig because I hadn't really done an exploration in my life before and it was very exciting.
Banks Pflager

In 2nd grade, we did Authors' Teas. I enjoyed these because the parents were listening to me while I read something I wrote.
Drew Lilly



My favorite project is “Where in the World” for social studies, because I learned about a country that I have always wanted to know more about.
Airyal Gauda

The single most important thing I learned at Community is self-discipline. Ever since I started attending Community in Nursery we have learned about self-discipline.
Jack Polk

There is a time for work and a time for play. It is good for

your wellbeing to distinguish the difference.
Helen Pan

To younger students: Value naptime because when there's no rest time you get very tired and stay that way the whole year.
Zack Helmkamp

My favorite memory from Community School is “Heading West,” our play in 5th grade. I got to sing a solo and had a great time!
Lizzie Lubnow

I have learned that I can be comfortable performing in front of an audience.
Lucie Baldwin

One of the most interesting projects was the Civil War play. I loved it because I did something I'd never done before - singing - and it made me feel more confident and willing to take risks.
Gaelen Joseph

My favorite part of 6th grade is being one of the oldest kids in school and being a leader.
Michael Lorberg

In JK, our class made Native American bracelets that described our personalities. Mine was “She Who Giggles.”
Samantha Felling





Community School helps kids prepare for their next school and helps with their strengths and weaknesses.

Christian Matava

My most interesting activity was the South American Street Fair in 4th grade because we had the choice to pick a country and know it like we lived there.

Bear Reisinger



I have learned that it is OK to do something different or unique without feeling ashamed to do so.

Mya Harris

My best piece of advice for a younger student is to never put off doing a long-term assignment.

Mark Rodgers

The most interesting project at

Community School was the Edible Book Report in 3rd grade, because we made treats that related to the book.

Elliott Tompras

In P.E. I love how students get the opportunity to try a variety of sports.



I also enjoy how we get to participate in a track meet.

Jenny Otto

Thanks to all the sixth graders for sharing their CS experiences and for the years you've shared with us! Good luck on your journey to secondary school and beyond!

Headlines, cont.

in Grades 3-6 were tested on 132 skills. Community School outscored independent school norms in 127 of those categories, and outscored independent schools in 100% of the math categories.

Another marker of excellence is our school's commitment to diversity, equity, and justice. This is something that we take very seriously at Community School. Last year the School took part in the extensive AIM (Assessment of Inclusivity and Multiculturalism) process. This year we have been analyzing and implementing some of the major findings and recommendations of this report. Creating inclusive policies, being transparent in decision-making,

and defining and implementing multicultural curricula are all stated goals, and we are making strong progress.

The strength of Community School doesn't just happen and it's not just a fluke. Our strength comes from the hard work, passion, intelligence, and perseverance of people. No one deserves our gratitude and appreciation more than our teachers. They do so much for the School, but, of course, their greatest impact is on the lives of children. What they do with children is magical. They know every child individually, they honor every child's natural gifts, and support every child's challenges. And this constant striving to know and meet

the needs of each child is the hallmark of a Community School education and the hallmark of excellence.

The heart of this institution lives with the notion that Community School is a wonderful place to be a child. Children certainly receive an outstanding education here. But it is so much more than that! It is a place where children are truly known and truly nurtured to be all they can be. And when children are known the way they are known here and with our mission implemented so beautifully, I can say with confidence it has, indeed, been a successful year!

Matthew



by Cathy Haines

"The Busiest Person I Know"

After a long tenure at Community School, Karen Temporiti has decided to embark on a new phase in her life to spend more time with her husband, John, and their children and families. She will be sorely missed by everyone at Community School.

Karen's love for children and learning has been evident each day as she has worked tirelessly to assist and support the students and faculty. As a learning specialist for ten years, Karen worked closely with the classroom teachers designing programs to support children's learning. Her training, experience, and insight were crucial as she thoughtfully discussed with the teachers and parents each child's learning strengths and challenges and designed programs to ensure his/her success. Karen was instrumental in assisting teachers in implementing strategies that would benefit all children. She was dogged about making sure every possible resource was given to her students, helping them to achieve their potential.

During this time, she also oversaw the testing program at Community School which she continues to this day. Karen is an expert in interpreting and understanding the ERB tests. Her attention to detail has been extremely beneficial as we review each child's results and assess our curriculum and improve our programs.

In her present role as Director of After School Programs, Karen leads Community School in beginning a new life every day at a little after three o'clock with interesting and exciting after school classes, homework club, and extended day. Karen has provided junior kindergarten through sixth grade students with a multitude of options for after school classes from fencing and chess to hip hop dancing and Young Rembrandts. She has reached out to our faculty and the St. Louis area for qualified and talented instructors to lead the classes. A testament to Karen is how the children love these classes and continue to reenroll.

Homework Club was Karen's inspiration and has become a crucial piece to our after school programs. As she worked with children and their families, she saw the need to support the students with tips for organizing, planning, and completing assignments. The students not only receive the support of Karen and other adults but Karen's homemade treats, which helps add to the sense of community and family.

Extended Day continues to fill an important need for working families by offering a warm and caring environment for children. On a recent professional faculty day, I watched the children practice their sewing skills with Mrs. Tem-



poriti. She worked from early morning to the close of day immersed in fabric and children with a sense of purpose as she shared her skill with a younger generation. What fun they all had!

Karen has been a wonderful friend to the School and faculty. If anyone ever needs anything at all, Karen will have it right now or within 24 hours. She is always ready to drop off a warm meal when one of us is feeling under the weather. If you need curtains or pillows, no problem, Karen will offer to make them. A fellow colleague recently commented, "Karen is the busiest person I know but she is willing to stop in her tracks and help you whether you are a student or teacher." We wish Karen the very best in the next leg of her busy life. Community School is a better place because of her. Safe travels, Karen!

And the children say:

"I think Extended Day is really fun. I really like how Mrs. Temporiti played Four Square with us in the gym. I wish you weren't leaving Community School because you are a very nice person."

"My favorite memory of working with Mrs. Temporiti is when she helped me memorize my poem when I was in Fourth Grade."

"Mrs. Temporiti was always there when I needed help."

"I loved when we would play Four Square and other games at Extended Day. Mrs. Temporiti is a great and hard working woman who should be proud of herself."



"A Lifelong Learner"

by Kathy Fitzgerald

Nineteen years ago, Carolyn Rhett joined the faculty of Community School and has been a wonderful example of a master teacher ever since. Her love for children is alive in all she does. She has made a difference in so many young lives.

When asked about the moments she most treasures, all involve directly working with the children. She speaks of the "aha" moments that are so gratifying. A struggling reader decodes a challenging word or makes a valid connection to a reading text. In math, a child discovers a part and a whole in a story problem and realizes he can solve it using subtraction. Carolyn also enjoys helping children become masters of telling time and applying it to their lives.

Community students have wonderful memories of and connections with Mrs. Rhett. In addition to dressing as the Tooth Fairy each Halloween, she has served as the resident tooth extraction expert, helping children of all ages lose their teeth. After each school break, she returns with "Mrs. Rhett's World Famous Cookies." Special First Grade memories also include the May Poetry Tea - where children come dressed in their best, entering a room to the strains of "Pomp and Circumstance," to share original poems with their excited, proud parents. Carolyn founded the "Friendship Circle," a program to develop inter- and intrapersonal skills with emphasis on the effects of class morale on the

learning environment. Carolyn is a special part of all these First Grade memories, and it is difficult to imagine them without her.

Carolyn has numerous additional contributions to Community School. She was the founder and original director of the Summer Play Camp. She surveyed and developed a spelling program for first grade. She wrote a safety manual for the school, and presented a workshop on multiple intelligences to the faculty. She also participated on the Strategic Planning Committee, served as chairman of the Research & Development Committee and served as co-chair for the ISACS evaluation.

Carolyn is a lifelong learner. She is driven to find new ways to reach children and impact their learning. She is always reading, searching for new information and wanting to be on the cutting edge. She has done training in One Mind at a Time, in Orton Gillingham and S.P.I.R.E. She has been active in learning more about differentiated instruction and applying it to her classroom.

As each year comes to a close and Carolyn says goodbye to yet another group of children, her wish for them is to leave



her classroom with strong, positive feelings about themselves. She wants them to give themselves permission to take risks, to be creative thinkers, to be curious, and to have an unstoppable thirst to learn.

Carolyn's work with children speaks for itself. She is an educator that will not be forgotten in any life she has touched. Although, personally, I am sad she is retiring from classroom teaching, I am grateful to know she will continue to touch young lives through tutoring work. I know children will continue to benefit from her strong knowledge about how children learn.

As Carolyn retires from Community, we wish her many new adventures and opportunities for travel to visit her children and grandchildren. Carolyn, you will be missed. Thanks for all you have given us!

And the children say:

"I have so many favorite memories of you. My most favorite memory was seeing your big smile when I walked in to First Grade North every day. Thanks for being a great teacher!"

"My favorite memory of Mrs. Rhett is when she pulled out my first tooth on the third day of the year!"

"My favorite memory of Mrs. Rhett is when she got a new pink cane with white flowers."

"I am happy for you and also sad that you are retiring. I remember when you taught me to read and write. I also remember how nice you were to me. I remember getting called to take Mr. Bear home. I hope you have a nice retirement and I thank you for giving me a great school year."



Focus on Faculty

🦋 Congratulations to this year's Lowenhaupt Award Winner, **Sandra Cirrito**. Sandra is the Early Childhood Learning Specialist. She was instrumental in implementing the Developmental Reading Assessment, as well as co-chairing the AIM Committee last year. The Lowenhaupt Award recognizes



faculty members who have furthered the education of children through excellence in program development, presenting information at conferences or workshops, or publishing works for other professionals. The award was established by the Lowenhaupt family in honor of Henry C. Lowenhaupt, a former parent and grandparent. The award is conferred by a committee consisting of the Head of School, Division Directors, and the past four Lowenhaupt Award winners.

🦋 At Community's recent Annual Meeting, several teachers and staff were recognized for their years of service. Five-year honorees included 3rd Grade Teacher **Mindy Bezdichek**, Advancement Assistant **Kim Donermeyer**, JK Teacher **Darla Ellsworth**, Director of Communications **Laura Falk**, ECC French Teacher **Joelle Goetz**, and Art Teacher **David Lang**. Ten-year honorees were Discovery Center Coordinator

Terri Kerley, and Science Teacher **Amy Kilpatric**. 15-year recipients included First Grade Teacher **Lori Branch**, Director of After School Programs & Testing Coordinator **Karen Temporiti**, SK Teacher **Ellen Watts**, and Drama & Band Teacher **Caroline Zarinelli**. A 20-year recipient was Early Childhood Music Teacher Eileen Morrison. And logging in an incredible 35 years is Technology Coordinator **Steve Culver!**

🦋 Congratulations to 6th Grade teacher **Sherea Spinner**, who is recently engaged with a wedding date set for December!

🦋 Congratulations to 5th Grade Teacher **Heather Sanders** and JKE Teacher **Kristine Majors** on their impending new bundles of joy! Both are due this summer.

Photo: Some of the Annual Meeting award recipients include (from left): Matthew Gould, Sandra Cirrito, Mindy Bezdichek, Ellen Watts, Amy Kilpatric, Terri Kerley, Joelle Goetz, Lori Branch, David Lang, Darla Ellsworth, Laura Falk, Caroline Zarinelli, Kim Donermeyer, & Steve Culver

