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# Inside HGA

Parent newsletter of Holy Guardian Angels Regional School

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**December 18** – Third Sunday of Advent

**December 21** – Confessions

**December 22** – Noon Dismissal

**No Lunch Served**

**December 23 - January 2 - NO SCHOOL**

**CHRISTMAS VACATION**

**January 3** - School Resumes

**January 14**– Father/Daughter Dance

**January 16 - NO SCHOOL**

Barnes & Noble Day

**January 17** - Science Fair Exhibit Set-up

**January 23** - Joe Corbi's Pizza & Dessert Sale Begins

**January 29** - Catholic Schools

Week Begins                      Mass - 10:00 AM

Open House - 10:00 AM - 1:30 PM

**January 30** - Classroom Observations

**January 31** - Winter Carnival - 5:00 - 7:30 PM

**February 3**– Joe Corbi Sale Ends

**February 7 - NOON DISMISSAL**

## Merry Christmas and Happy New Year





## Message from the Principal

Dear Parents/Guardians,

The holiday season is in full swing bringing an overwhelming emphasis on material gifts. Our custom of giving gifts to those we love is reminiscent of the Magi who brought valuable gifts to the infant Jesus. We should remember that the perfect gift which Jesus gave the world, the gift of Himself, is far more precious than anything of monetary value.

Let us remind our children that they, too, can give the gift of self to others and that such a gift may be far more meaningful than anything found in a store. Talk with your child about ways to give the precious gift of self. It may be that your child—and you, too—will find that the thoughtfulness and caring involved in this type of giving are more appreciated than any other. When we give of ourselves to others, we are also giving to Christ. For what better birthday present would He ask? May God grant each of you a Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year.

Yours in Christ,

*Mrs. Maureen Wallin*

Principal

*“When we give of ourselves to others, we are also giving to Christ.”*



## Cup Stacking

We had a record breaking year for the number of students in Cup Stacking Club. Each session was filled to capacity as students stayed after school on Wednesdays to learn about cup stacking or to improve their speeds as they stacked in many ways. They competed in individual stacking events, team relays, tag games, table top games, and cooperative stacking events. A great thank you to Miss Majeski who stayed after school to help us out. She still has her cups from when she attended HGA! Hopefully we have some students compete in the cup stacking tournament held in March at Palisades Middle School.



# Religious Ed Corner

## Sacramental News: Confirmation 2017

The Parent Meeting for the Confirmation Class of 2017 will take place on Sunday, January 8th at 6:00 PM in the school's Learning Commons

### A Prayer for Christmas

Lord, in this holy season of prayer and song and laughter, we praise you for the great wonders you have sent us: for shining star and angel's song, for infant's cry in lowly manger. We praise you for the Word made flesh in a little Child. We behold his glory, and are bathed in its radiance.

Be with us as we sing the ironies of Christmas, the incomprehensible comprehended, the poetry made hard fact, the helpless Babe who cracks the world asunder. We kneel before you shepherds, innkeepers, wise men. Help us to rise bigger than we are. Amen.



### UPCOMING FAITH-FILLED EVENTS

#### December 21

- ◆ School Advent Confessions

#### December 22

- ◆ Advent/Christmas Prayer Service

#### January 8

- ◆ Confirmation 2017 Parent Meeting - 6:00 PM



# Mathletes

Congratulations to this year's Mathletes team for doing an awesome job at the fall competition held at Berks Catholic on November 8. The team was comprised of 8th graders, Kevin Brown, Alexander Zavala, Thea Piskorski, Haley Davis, and Courtney Thompson. Our alternate was Lindsey Kroenig. The team will continue to meet weekly to prepare for the spring competition. Here are some problems from this year's competition:

- If one side of a square is increased by 8cm and an adjacent side decreased by 2cm, a rectangle is formed whose perimeter is 40cm. What is the length of the side of the square?
- Express in simplest form in terms of  $x$ : the cost in cents of one baseball if baseballs are priced at  $x$  dollars per dozen.

If you need any help solving these math problems, or any other math problems, please ask one of our Mathletes.



## Sounds of the Season

The school choir, that sings for school Masses, sang at the HGA Parish Christmas Bazaar on December 3rd. They opened with "Alleluia! Hurry the Lord is Near", accompanied by tone chimes. Then, they sang familiar Christmas carols for everyone to enjoy. They added claves to "Stay Awake, Be Ready" for a little fun. "O Come, Emmanuel" was an anthem sang in anticipation of the birth of Jesus. They ended with "Jingle Bells" and "We Wish You a Merry Christmas". The sleigh bells added a festive touch. The school choir and Mrs. Siatkowski truly enjoyed singing for a wonderful audience in this Advent season. Hopefully, this becomes a new tradition at HGA.



# Preschool

Preschool has had a very busy fall. The children came to school on Halloween dressed in their costumes. They started their day by singing songs to their parents and grandparents. After their performance, they paraded to the rectory, the school office, and then visited each classroom in the school. They also received some treats from their friends.



HAPPY HALLOWEEN!

On November 1st, we celebrated All Saint's Day. The children made crowns to wear and we marched around the classroom to "When the Saints Come Marching In". We went on our first field trip to the Historical Society. The children learned what life was like during the time of the pilgrims. They also were able to play with toys from long ago in the hands-on room. They sat on a trolley, saw a horse drawn wagon, as well as first automobiles and bicycles.



ALL SAINTS DAY

Finally, we had a visit from Saint Nicholas. He visited the classroom and told the children about his life. He also left them gold coins in their shoes. The children were fascinated by him and were thrilled to find their chocolate treats!



ST. NICHOLAS VISIT

# First Grade

On Veteran's Day the first graders sang a beautiful song dedicated to the ladies and gentlemen serving in our military past and present. The name of the song was "Thank You Soldiers". Both classes spent weeks learning the words and music with their homeroom teachers and Mrs. Siatkowski, the music teacher. Time was also taken to learn how to line-up and walk to and from the altar. In the end, the church erupted in applause while others were seen wiping tears. Thank you first grade for all your hard work, and thank you to the women and men who stand watch and keep us safe.



## Joe Corbi's Pizza and Dessert Sale

Sale Begins: Monday, January 23, 2017

Sale Ends: Friday, February 3, 2017

Delivery Date:

Saturday, February 25, 2017



# Second Grade

## 2B Loves December!

So far, December seems to be our favorite month. Our classroom even has an elf from Santa! It is always so much fun to walk into the classroom in the morning and see what crazy thing he has done.



The month was filled with so many activities. First, we made our classroom advent



wreath. The students traced their hands on green paper and that became the evergreens for the Advent wreath. We all learned new things about the season of advent in religion class. St. Nicholas even visited us. In reading class

we listened to snowman stories. It was so much fun to write our own snowman stories; snowmen



melted by drinking hot chocolate or going in the hot tub! Then we made snowmen ornaments to hang on our Christmas trees at home. Now all that is left is to make this December perfect, is some snow.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS AND  
HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM 2B!**



# Third Grade

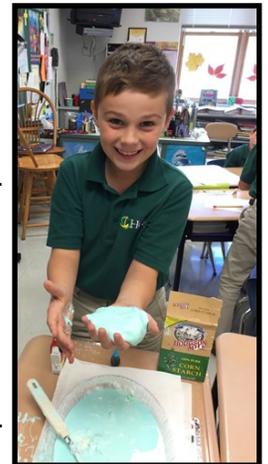
It is such a busy and special time of year. Halloween has come and gone but not without celebrating the 50th Anniversary of The Great Pumpkin together. Our homeroom moms made sure it was a special celebration, as always!

Autumn leaves were the perfect inspiration for some beautiful poetry writing. The children wrote Autumn Haikus that were really wonderful. November brought thoughts of all we are thankful for. We practiced our letter writing skills as we wrote and mailed letters of thanks to parents for Thanksgiving. The students also enjoyed their first Thanksgiving Feast with 4th grade.



We are cruising right along in math class as we perfect our facts and skills. We have our first group of Fact Masters, and everyone is working very hard to reach their goals. In social studies the students have learned all about the birth of our great country as we studied the American Revolution. In science class, we studied matter and all its forms. We made Oobleck to experience this mystery matter. Is it a liquid, or is it a solid? It was fun testing our hypothesis and finding the answer together.

As we try to slow down a bit during this beautiful season of Advent, we remember all the important people and gifts God has blessed us with. The students are learning about the Jesse Tree as we decorate our own in the classroom. We are keeping Jesus close to our hearts as we prepare for Christmas Day.



3A wishes everyone a blessed Christmas. See you in the New Year!

# Fourth Grade

## 4A: Thankful Hearts

The students in 4A have been very busy this fall. In November, the students were paired with their Preschool buddies to make ornaments. They were displayed on a Christmas tree at the Pancakes and Photo with Santa Breakfast. Students also collected can goods that were donated to St. Joseph's Parish Food Pantry.

Third and Fourth grade gathered as Pilgrims and Native Americans to celebrate Thanksgiving. Everyone enjoyed delicious food provided by our families, while socializing with fellow students, faculty members and Fr. Hoffa. Of course, a meal



wouldn't be complete without yummy dessert! The students performed songs and poems as a way to thank the parents and grandparents for their help in organizing this long-standing tradition, setting up and decorating the social hall, and preparing and serving the wonderful meal. A good time was had by all.

In the classroom, we're continuing to have fun learning and sharing. Students work in cooperative groups daily to solve problems and share their thoughts. Everyone loves the writing activities that allow them to be creative with their designs. One day, they even had the opportunity to be the teacher. They were awesome leading the class.

As 4A prepares for Christmas, we hope you remember the reason for the season. Be sure to enjoy time with family and celebrate with love and grateful hearts.



Remember, it's always best enjoyed by the glow of the fire with a good book!

# Cross Country: Running Strong

Holy Guardian Angels Regional School's cross country team participated in the District III CYO Cross Country Championship at Berks Catholic and capped off an amazing second season with an impressive showing.

Congratulations!

**Girls 1/2 Mile:** Meredith Swavely, Alexa Baily, Londyn Johns, and Rileigh Martin

**Boys 1 Mile:** Gabriel Iswalt, Nate Holland, Ben Mickulik, and Gabe Martin

**Boys 2 Mile:** Cade McLaughlin, William Mickulik, Aidan Sands, and Bryon Wise



# Outpouring of Generosity

The St. Joseph Church Food Pantry and the Greater Berks Food Bank were recipients of an overwhelming donation of much needed non-perishable items this Thanksgiving. The generosity of the HGA school community help provide supplemental groceries for many. Thank you for your support!



# MIDDLE STATES *Update*

The entire Middle States Self Study Process is a group effort involving the entire HGA Regional School community of parents, students, staff, and stakeholders. We are proud to announce that the Middle States Visiting Team will be recommending us for reaccreditation! After our report passes several review committees, the reaccreditation should be finalized by the end of this school year - STAY TUNED!

Many thanks to the Middle States Visiting Team for their time, expertise, and insight. In their closing oral report, they commended us on the two words that describe HGA Regional School best: COMMUNITY and FAMILY. Our school family is such a blessing to all of us and we are so very thankful for the love and support everyone has shown, not only throughout the process, but each and every day of the year.

Thank you one and all!



*Middle States Visiting Team Members*



*The beautiful autumnal centerpieces gave the potluck gathering a family feel.*

# Health Room News

It is that time of year again with the holidays upon us and families gathering together, that I ask every family to perform a head check on each and every child that attends HGA. I have attached a picture of the life cycle appearance of head lice.

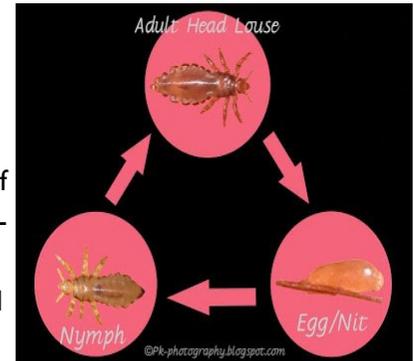
There are additional representations on the internet for you

to look at. The nits (eggs) look like tiny rain drops attached to the hair shaft close to the scalp.

If your child(ren) have a had lice infestation, I ask that you do the treatment as recommended before they return to school. Again there is information on care of the child's hair, care of your home environment, on products you will purchase, as well as on the internet. You can also refer to your family physician or pediatrician for assistance over Christmas break.

If your child is positive for head lice, I ask that you send a note or email ([nurse@hgaschool.org](mailto:nurse@hgaschool.org)) to alert me when the child(ren) will return. I will follow up with my own assessment, and contact you if the infestation is not eradicated. I appreciate your cooperation and effort regarding the health and wellness of HGA's children. Have a blessed Christmas and Happy New Year in 2017!

Kathleen M. Readinger, RN





Welcome to a new feature of Inside HGA! Each month the doors of a different grade level will be open, providing you a look into their daily routine and showcasing the gifts of our students, teachers, and aides. Enjoy!

# Spotlight is on 7th & 8th Grade

A day in the life of our “middle school” students and teachers is unlike a school day for the rest of the student population. Observing the young ladies and men of 7th and 8th grade as they move from one class period to another captures a sense of independence and responsibility, not to mention comradery, friendship, and fun that is definitely welcomed and owned.



Teachers: Mr. Joseph Oros - 7A  
Mr. Thomas Dowd - 7B  
Aide: Mrs. Heidi Wilson



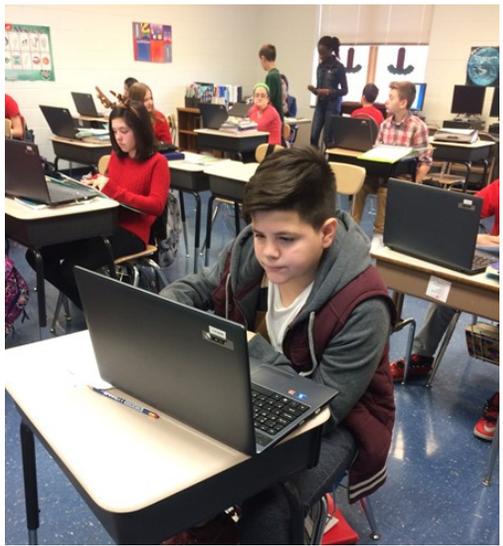
## Service

Our 7th graders were collecting not just sugar delights this past Halloween, they were collecting much needed non-perishable items and monetary donations for those in need in Berks County. From an inspiring project found on [Dosomething.org](http://Dosomething.org), both classes worked collaboratively to help others less fortunate.

Within the span of two weeks the 7th grade collected \$50 and a large basket of items for the Greater Berks Food Bank.

# Academics

In 7th grade social studies we are looking at the geography, history, economy, and politics of the African continent. We are comparing Africa's environment and customs to our own. The students also are studying current events and they took part in very spirited discussions on the election.



**VOTE**



## STEM

Constructing Parachutes for Santa

## Communicating



## Creating



## Collaborating



# o e i g h t h c e GRADE

Teachers: Mrs. Bellina Morris - 8A  
Mrs. Sondra Bard - 8B  
Aide: Mrs. Heidi Wilson

8B would like to introduce you to its newest student, Peanut Pancake, the hamster. Peanut transferred to HGA in October. Her hobbies include snacking, sleeping, running on her wheel, and zooming around the classroom floor in her hamster ball.



The students have been extremely responsible in assuming all the care of Peanut Pancake; they feed her, give her water, clean her cage, and most importantly, give her lots of love and attention. Peanut Pancake even went home for Thanksgiving with Maya Barreto and her family! Please feel free to stop by 8B to say hi to the tiniest member of our HGA family.

## Bonding



Our eighth grade students created beautiful ornaments for the Santa Breakfast Christmas

tree with their first grade buddies. Many eighth graders volunteered at this event where a delicious meal was enjoyed by all. Thank you to everyone who helped make this day wonderful! A special thank you to all who donated money to the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, the very worthy organization who was the recipient of our tree donations.

## Faith

The 8th grade students are enjoying and benefitting from an expert theologian who is teaching their religion class on a weekly basis. Father Hoffa has introduced a new program to our religion curriculum, Theology of the Body for Teens: Middle School Edition. Based on Saint Pope John Paul II's compelling vision for love and life, the program explores questions such as:

- *Who am I?*
- *Are there consequences to my actions?*
- *What is the difference between love and lust?*
- *How do I balance family, friends, school, God, music, TV, internet, texting, etc., in my daily life?*
- *How can I discern my vocation to marriage, priesthood, or religious life?*
- *How do I deal with bullying, gossip, peer pressure, pornography, divorce, etc.?*
- *Can I live my Catholic faith no matter how I messed up in the past?*

The students are learning a great deal from this very worthwhile program. It is also a wonderful opportunity for them to be able to experience having a priest as a teacher. We thank Father Hoffa for his time and dedication in enriching the lives of our HGA students.

# Academics

Eighth grade students are enjoying using the two laptop carts and the Chromebook cart that are housed on the second floor. With three different sets of machines to choose from, we always have access to technology when we need it. All four subject teachers have incorporated this technology into their curriculum. In math, we have been using Prodigy, which is an extremely engaging game-based learning program. The prodigy math platform is aligned with the entire Common Core curriculum and allows the teacher to create customized assignments that supplement and enrich classroom instruction. Prodigy also incorporates diagnostic testing with embedded assessments and automatic differentiation that allows students to proceed at their own pace. Students can access their Prodigy accounts both at school and home. So, parents, if your 8th grader is ever bored, suggest that they log onto Prodigy and practice their math skills!



CPR training is instructed by HGA alumnus, Anthony Wiencek, class of 1999. Students are taught to recognize and respond in an emergency situation and what to do before EMS arrives. They also practice skills regarding how to perform CPR, how to use an Automated External Defibrillator, and how to perform the Heimlich Maneuver.

## Winter Moon

### by Langston Hughes

Creative oral performances! Students are memorizing the poem and must incorporate a hobby or special gift of theirs in the presentation.



## Looking Ahead to High School...





### Holy Guardian Angels Regional School

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### Our Mission Statement

*We, the community of Holy Guardian Angels Regional School, recognize that our mission, embodied in Catholic tradition, is to develop a Christian student focused on loving, respecting, and serving God, self, and others.*

*We strive to achieve high academic standards in an environment which celebrates diversity and creativity in order to nurture open-minded, faith-filled individuals who positively and responsibly contribute to the global community.*

*Christ Centered - Faith Filled*



## GAGC News for December & January

As of November 30, 2016, \$7,242.48 has been earned in Tuition Credit and several participating families have surpassed the \$150 mark which means they are not earning double back! How much did your family earn?

- A 3rd grade family has earned \$995.63
- An 8th grade family has earned \$547.50
- A 5th grade family has earned \$736.89
- A 7th grade family has earned \$496.78
- A 1st grade family has earned \$390.72



Things to note!

- **December 20th** will be the FINAL Pouch Order for 2016. **Please Note: In Stock Orders will be filled as usual on this date. However, any Special Orders sent in will not be processed until after January 1, 2017.**
- In-Stock Gift Cards (Giant, Redner's, Sheets, Weis, and Walmart) will be available at the rectory Monday-Friday from 9-5 (closed daily 12-12:30) and before and after each weekend Mass.
- There will be no GAGC sales at church on Christmas weekend 12/24-25 and New Year's weekend 12/31-1/1.
- GAGC information is always available on the school website. There you will find detailed program information, an Online Quick Start Guide, policies and procedures, a list of rebate percentages for individual gift cards, and the current Special Order Form.
- Be sure to Like our Facebook Page at [www.facebook.com/HGAGAGC](http://www.facebook.com/HGAGAGC) to stay up to date on GAGC news, bonuses, and giveaways throughout the year.