

St. Louis Secondary School

Meánscoil Lughaidh, Muineachán



December 2011 WINTER NEWSLETTER

Editorial

We are coming to the end of a very busy term and preparations are being made for Christmas at this stage. We hope you all have a nice break and a well-earned rest. As you will read in our newsletter, we have had a hectic first term and enjoyed many successes. Well done to our Transition Year students on their wonderful production of 'Hot Mikado' - it was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Our Fifth years went on a very enjoyable trip to Alton Towers and Old Trafford during the Halloween mid term. Plans are well under way for a similar trip for Sixth and Fourth Years in the New Year. Our Sixth Years attended college Open Days and are now busy completing their UCAS and CAO forms. Third and Fifth Years had enriching retreats in November and Fr. Stephen Joyce celebrated a service for the holy souls every Tuesday and Thursday mornings. There was a wonderful Evening of Carols on 4th December with many students celebrating the festive season in song under the expert guidance of Ms. Fortune Henry. Congratulations to all involved. Mrs. Martin and Ms. Devlin would like to thank everybody who helped in any way with articles, photographs and typing especially Mrs. Martin's TY class, Bronagh McCabe and Mrs. Kelly for proofreading. Have a happy and safe Christmas.



Hot Mikado!

We would like to congratulate all the Fourth year girls on the phenomenal success of the T.Y. Musical, Hot Mikado. Everyone did a great job on and off the stage. It was a great experience and we are still receiving great feedback from the public, staff and students alike.

All the girls had great fun and it's an event they will never forget. There was a great atmosphere throughout the production and the girls feel it has brought the year closer together. A special thanks to Lynn Jackson and Ms. Fortune Henry and all involved.

Bereavements

As a school community we extend our sincere sympathies to all that have been bereaved with the passing of a loved one.

We particularly offer condolence to Mrs. Anne Cuddy, member of the teaching staff in St. Louis, on the sudden and untimely death of her husband Tom. We also affectionately remember the short but inspirational time we shared with the late Caoimhe McCormick, Rang Aoife and hope that the heartache will become more tolerable with the passing of time. Go ndéana Dia trócaire ar a n-anamacha.



Leaving Cert Applied

Rang Doireann is the new group of ten students who will follow the LCA programme and will leave school in 2013.

Session one got off to an energetic start with a visit to Tanagh Outdoor Adventure Centre on 5th September. After a day of induction the students became familiar with the new terms such as 'Sessions', 'Modules' and 'Credits along with the names of new subjects such as Vocational Preparation and Social Education. At this stage the girls are well settled in and lots of new friendships have been formed. The ten students have all found interesting and varied work experience placements which they attend every Wednesday. They keep an accurate account of each of their experiences in their journal which allows them to keep track of their activities all year. Under the direction of Ms. Devlin in Health and Recreation class the girls are visiting the Gym regularly and working on a health and fitness programme. They are also in the planning stages of organising a badminton tournament for first year students which will take place in the coming weeks during lunch break. Ventures like this are at the core of the LCA programme which embraces activity based learning. The strengths of any LCA group are based on good teamwork, and as Tutor and Co-ordinator of rang Doireann, I have no worries for the success of this group of enthusiastic students. [Mrs S. Watson]

Newly-elected Coiste 2011 - 2012

Congratulations to the newly-elected Coiste. We also congratulate the newly-elected Head Girl, Maria Murphy and the Deputy Head Girl, Casey McElmeel.



Photo above - Newly elected Coiste with Ms. Graham, Staff Liaison Officer; Ms. Conlon, Deputy Principal and Ms. O'Brien, Principal.

Photo on right - Mrs. Mary Graham, Staff Liaison Officer; Maria Murphy, Head Girl, Casey McElmeel, Deputy Head Girl and Ms. O'Brien, Principal



In our school the Coiste (or School Prefects) form an important link between students and teachers. The members of the Coiste are elected by their fellow students and by the teachers. The Coiste represent students' needs and concerns to management and staff. The Coiste helps to maintain the excellent atmosphere in the school by organising activities for students and by listening to their ideas and opinions. The Staff Liaison Officer to the Student Council (The Coiste) is Mrs. Mary Graham. Coiste members also play a very important role in helping our First Years settle in to their new secondary school. They visit classes regularly and organise various activities throughout their first year in St. Louis Secondary school.

Harry Potter Table Quiz in Halla San Lughaidh

On Friday, October 28th the Coiste transformed Halla San Lughaidh into Hogwarts for their Table Quiz.

Our First and Second Year students resembled the cast from 'Thriller'. Everybody thoroughly enjoyed this magical occasion!!!



Religion Department Events

Opening School Mass

The Mass to begin our new school year took place on the 27th September in the St. Louis Convent Chapel. The Mass, involving staff and students, was celebrated by Fr. Stephen Joyce. The chosen theme 'New Leaf, New Beginnings' was evident through the rich symbolism in the Opening Procession which encouraged all members in the school community to make the most of every opportunity to start afresh. After Communion all were encouraged to embrace the new academic year with hope. We would like to thank all who participated in the liturgy. Thanks to Mrs. Fortune-Henry for the wonderful music. The choir consisted of students from first year, second year and also students from fourth year. A number of students sang solos; these included Stacey Cooney, Tara Woods, Grainne Cunningham and Gemma Corley. The Opening School Mass is a wonderful opportunity for the whole school to come together as a community to mark the new beginning of an academic year.

First Year Mass of Welcome

The First Year Mass of Welcome was held on Tuesday 4th October in the St. Louis Convent Chapel. The Mass involved first year students together with their parents and class tutors. Rang Aoife, under the guidance of Ms. Watson, produced and starred in a dramatic performance of St. Luke's account of 'The Call of the First Disciples'. Meanwhile, Rang Áine organised the prayers and the Offertory Procession. Ms. McNulty officially welcomed the first year students to St. Louis and called each one by name to place their decorated leaves in the Sacred Space area. Well done to the first year students for their participation, it really added to the occasion.

Retreats in St. Louis

'Authentic Youth' a Christian based organisation led third and fifth year students in their day long retreat, with workshops using games, music, movie clips, art and group work. The team focused students on their relationship with God through the personal life experience of two young volunteers with the organisation. The students thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

November - A Time to Remember

Fr. Joyce offered Mass every Tuesday and Thursday morning for the Holy Souls during the month of November in the Convent Chapel. Caoimhe McCormick is very much in our thoughts and prayers during this time.

Carol Service

The St. Louis annual Carol Service took place on Thursday 1st December. Over one hundred and fifty students participated. The event was in aid of Monaghan Branch of MS and Patient Comfort Fund in Cavan General Hospital. Congratulations to all involved on a successful festive fundraiser.

St. Vincent de Paul

We would like to thank all those who gave so generously to the annual St. Vincent de Paul Christmas Hamper Appeal. Your kind response is much appreciated during these difficult times.

Retreats

Retreats were held this year in Halla San Lughaidh for all 1st, 3rd and 5th year students and were facilitated by Authentic Youth.

Themes discussed included self esteem, body image, substance abuse, bullying and relationships. Students experienced a range of different activities from discussion/debate, life testimonies to videos, artwork and games. The response from the students was very positive.

Athletics Success for Alicia

Last summer Alicia Boylan competed in the International Schools Track and Field competition in Cardiff where she achieved first place in the race-walking event.



She also took first place in both the indoor and outdoor National Track and Field Championships. She then went on to win the All Ireland Schools Track and Field in the Intermediate race-walking event. Finally Alicia won the Tailteann Games Interprovincial Track and Field race-walking competition. She will make the exciting journey to Cardiff for the international event. Well Done Alicia, we are proud of you in St. Louis!

Art Trip to Newgrange



On Friday, October 28th Ms. Mahony and Mr. Penders took their Senior Art students to visit the amazing Neolithic passage tomb at Newgrange to learn more about the ingenious artistic and creative skills used by our ancestors in prehistoric Ireland. The girls thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

John Paul II Awards

This is the third year of the John Paul II Awards here in St. Louis. This year there will be eighteen girls representing the school at the Awards ceremony on the 9th of March 2012 in the Hillgrove Hotel.

We are fortunate to have six students who will be receiving their Papal Cross Awards this year as part of the group. The Papal Cross Award is the highest level of the Awards. The recipients will be Patricia Daly, Laura Feely, Niamh Maguire, Jessica McKenna, Gráinne O'Connor, and Caoimhe O'Leary. They undertook twenty six hours of parish activities and social activities as well as a weekly faith development programme with some of the sixth class in St. Louis Girls N.S. Well done to all! This year, there are over forty students undertaking the Awards in the school, at the three different award levels. They will be busy over the year completing their Award requirements here in school, in their parishes, as well as at local and community level.

The Pioneer Club

Hurrah! The St. Louis Pioneer Club has been revived. All new members are most welcome! It is simple - fill in a form and it is €5 for the pin. There will a number of events arranged throughout the year for its members. If anyone has joined previously, then please make yourself known to Miss Dooley so she can include you in the club's activities in the future.

Young Social Innovators (YSI)

This is one of the new Transition Year Monday modules. It involves eighteen of the Fourth Years as they undertake a project of their choice. There are two groups. One is working on a project with the local deaf community, the others are working on a project about the travelling community and culture. In March, all the girls will have to present their projects to the National Committee in Dublin. The aims of the projects are to get the girls involved in some local issues and bring them to the attention of the wider community. A lot of the work is self-directed and the girls have to work together as a team to get the projects finished. It is a good opportunity for the girls to research topics that they feel strongly about. On the First Year corridor, the YSI noticeboard has been set up, which will be regularly updated with information about the group and their various activities.



St. Louis visit Old Trafford

During the October mid-term break, fifty three students from Fifth year travelled to Manchester for two nights.

The trip cost a total of €199, which included the ferry, ticket to a Manchester United game in Old Trafford, entrance to Alton Towers Theme Park, bed & breakfast in the Premier Inn Hotel and transport for the whole trip in Wharton Travel luxury sixty two seat coach. On Wednesday morning the 2nd of November the girls had a very early start as they headed to Dublin Port to board the 8.05am ferry to Holyhead. On route to their hotel accommodation there was a spot of shopping in Cheshire Oaks designer outlet. Sampling the atmosphere of Old Trafford was special and the Monaghan supporters added vocally to the customary chants as Manchester United overcame the Romanian champions Otelul Galati in the UEFA champion's league.

Thursday was a trip to Alton Towers for a fun day at the exciting theme park. No doubt 'Oblivion', 'Nemesisis', 'Rita', 'Air' and 'Thirteen' will hold different memories for the St. Louis ladies but they definitely got a new dimension on velocity and inverted momentum. Following the thrills of Alton Towers there was a definite need for 'retail therapy' and The Trafford Centre with its three hundred and twenty four outlets provided the ideal setting.

Friday was the return day and with calm weather conditions the 'Swift Ferry' saw the tired but cheerful crew arrive back in Monaghan late afternoon. A very enjoyable adventure was had by one and all and the girls would especially like to express their sincere gratitude to Ms. Devlin, Mr. Brady and Louise for accompanying them on their journey. It is hoped that there will be a similar trip for Transition Year during the Easter holidays.

European Youth Parliament

The aims of the European Youth Parliament are to Raise awareness of European issues, encourage active European citizenship and motivate students to get engaged in European politics. The EYP also encourages independent thinking and socio-political initiative in young people and facilitates the learning of crucial social and professional skills.

On the weekend of 18th – 20th November seven students from the school participated in the EYP activities organised by college students and hosted by St. Macartan's College. They were presented with various topics of European concern and in groups discussed the topics and suggested resolutions to some of the problems. It proved to be a very enlightening and educational experience and the girls: Rachel Brown, Catherine Mackle, Aine Tierney, Aine Nar, Eadhne Gallagher, Shannon McGee and Hayley Graham are thankful to Mrs. Hughes who is co-ordinating the EYP in St. Louis.



Taste of Monaghan

The Taste of Monaghan Food Festival was recently held in the Four Seasons Hotel, Monaghan Town.

Some T.Y. students went to see a cooking demonstration by Donal Skehan. The famous chef invited some lucky students up on stage to help him cook.

Transition Year students embark on the 'KEY Programme'

Twelve St. Louis TY students will be participating in the exciting cross-border enterprise initiative called the KEY Programme.

The KEY Programme (Knowledge Through Enterprise For Youth) was launched in 1999 to encourage personal development in young people through enterprise training and outdoor activities. It is an innovative, internationally recognised leader in its field. Since it began over 5000 young people aged 14-16 have graduated from the programme.

KEY is delivered by a highly dedicated and skilled training team. The hands-on and inter-active approach, works very well in helping students to realise and understand how staying on in school and getting proper training, can make their futures brighter. Students attend four residential camps during the school year, where they participate in workshops and complete modules focused on building motivation and confidence, career planning, interview skills and entrepreneurship.

This exciting initiative is being co-ordinated by Mrs Hughes.



Fundraising

Already this year we have taken part in a number of fundraising events.

- There was Rose Day which was to raise money in aid of autism.
- The YSI group (Young Social Innovators) also held a cake sale to raise money for Cancer Research.
- For St. Vincent De Paul a group of TY students went to Dunnes Stores to bag-pack for the voluntary organization. The girls gave up their own time during the Mid-Term.
- A 'Pink Day' was organized for the whole school. For a fee of €2 we could wear our own clothes with a 'touch of pink'. The money collected went towards The Children's Cancer Unit in Cavan General Hospital.

On Your Bike!

Over the course of Transition Year (2010 – 2011), Leanne McKenna and Niamh Gallagher participated in the BT Young Scientist Competition in the RDS, Dublin.

After getting highly commended with their project 'On yer Bike' which was aimed at providing bicycle shelters in County Monaghan they entered the ECO-Unesco Young Environmentalist Awards. On winning this award in April 2011 they applied to the Smarter Travel Grant Scheme in June applying for assistance in providing bicycle shelters in all the main towns of County Monaghan. By late August the two young entrepreneurs received word that their application was successful and they secured €142,000 from the grant scheme to place bicycle shelters across the county.

The shelters are now set up with a total of six in central locations in Monaghan town. This was an outstanding achievement for two young students and they are to be highly commended on their endeavours to provide this facility for people wishing to travel to and from towns in county Monaghan.



Silver Gaisce Award Winners



Rotary Youth Leadership

Eight Fifth years recently took part in the Rotary Youth Leadership interviews. Although they did not get through to the next round, the girls were commended by the judges on their efforts and were told they made the final choice a very difficult one indeed! Well done girls.



Log on and Learn

Over the past number of weeks Transition Year students have welcomed members of the local community to join them in learning some computer skills under the supervision of Mr. Halton.

Every Wednesday morning there is a mixing of generations as the visitors are brought through the latest developments in information technology. The young students are proving to be very patient and caring and have enjoyed the exchange of views and cultures.

It is hoped to continue with the worthwhile project in the New Year and anyone interested in joining the class is more than welcome to make contact with the school office.

First Year Garden Project

Rang Aoife in First year has been working on their garden over the last three weeks.

They are working with Shannon Mc Gee and Orla Treanor as their fourth year Team Leaders. They have now set bulbs, herbs and have started composting and have bird feeders. On Friday the 18th November they had a table quiz during Science week. Plans are going ahead for a busy spring season under the supervision of Mr. Mc Dermott and Ms. A. O'Brien, and it is hoped that this is the starting point for a greener school and enriched life skills for all concerned.

St. Louis First Year students and the LET Programme

The LET Programme (Learning and Educating Together) is a project jointly delivered by Young Enterprise Northern Ireland and Junior Achievement Ireland. The programme was launched in October 2004 targeting young people aged between 12-13 years old. Ten St. Louis students will be chosen to take part in this programme.

The programme combines enterprise modules and outdoor activities. It will also introduce students to the basic entrepreneurial skills, giving them a broader perspective on what is enterprise.

The LET Programme involves schools north and south of the border. It also promotes peace and reconciliation between young people from both communities in Northern Ireland and the border counties of the Republic of Ireland.

The St. Louis students who will be participating in the programme will meet with the students from other participating schools three times in the year for a residential course at the Share Centre in Lisnaskea.

During their period of residency, students participate in a series of programmes that focus on:

- Peace and reconciliation with an emphasis on creating an understanding of different cultures
- Learning communication skills
- Exploring the environment and how a respect for the environment impacts on the economy
- Business start-up and the role of small business
- Personal finance and budgeting

This is a very enticing initiative.

Mrs. Conlon is co-ordinating the LET programme in St. Louis.



Work Experience

Fourth year students will be on work experience from the 12th to the 21st of December working in the environment of their choice. This will give them an insight into the world of their desired occupation and assist them in making their future career choices. We would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all the local employers and businesses that welcomed TY students into their workplace.

For more information about life in St. Louis

Log on to www.stlouismonaghan.com

We are also on [Facebook](#)



Irish Wheelchair Association

The Irish Wheelchair Association visited the school on Tuesday 29th November and spoke with the Transition Year students.

They focused on the difficulties faced by people confined to a wheelchair and how we as a society often misread their need for assistance. After a very informative presentation the students were taken to the gym and given the opportunity to participate in a game of basketball from the seat of a wheelchair. This proved to be a challenging experience but the students were very appreciative of the visit from The Irish Wheelchair Association as it helped them gain an insight into the difficulties encountered by those depending on wheelchairs to move around.

English Department News

Fourth years are currently involved in a number of competitions and deadlines are looming for the Milkit Awards advertising competition, the Fantasy writing competition and 'My Vision for Europe' video competition.

Well done to the fourth years who produced an excellent 'TY Tribune' newsletter, outlining events from the first term. They will be working on the next edition early in the New Year.

Poetry Aloud

Third years Roberta Ceginskaite, Melissa McGuirk and Laura Vaitkaitye, and First years, Evanne McCaffrey, Meghan McKenna and Emma McAdam, took part in the 'Poetry Aloud' competition on Tuesday 15th November. This involved reciting a poem by W.B. Yeats and a poem of their choice. The girls performed very well.

Mental Health Public Speaking

Senior girls are currently preparing for the Mental Health Public Speaking competition and for the Denny's Schools Debating competition. Well done to Zoe Vance who is now in the quarter finals of the competition.

Dancing at Lughnasa & Macbeth

In January, Sixth years will be going to a production of 'Dancing at Lughnasa' in the Iontas theatre in Castleblayney, while Fifth years head to the Helix for 'Macbeth' in February.

Junior Cert Results

Again St. Louis excelled with a very high standard of Junior Certificate results distributed in September 2011. There was great jubilation for students and teachers alike as again St. Louis firmly established itself as a centre of academic excellence.



Higher Options

The 16th Sept was the date for our annual outing to the Higher Options, a careers event held in the RDS Dublin. All Irish Universities, Colleges of Education Institutes of Technology and Post Leaving Cert Colleges were there. Many Universities from the UK were also in attendance.

The event was well attended and we had fifty Fifth Years who have embarked on their quest for a career. They came back laden with prospectuses and information. All that remains is for them to read everything and make a decision!

UCAS

Our Sixth Years almost have completed their applications to UCAS this year. Some have to just press the button and it will be complete. Come on girls have courage. The applications are a backup for most students with fees as high as £9,000 in England this will not be an option for most. Luckily the fees in the North are staying as they were last year for two to three years.

Anti-Bullying Month

Anti-Bullying month was held in October. It went off well with the Cheerio's breakfast held by Cairde for the First Years. They raised €80 for Child line well done girls. We also held a poster and poem competition and there was a wonderful entry. All the entries are on display in the Arcade. Well done to all. The winners were 1st Ella Moran First Year, 2nd Evanne Mc Caffrey, First Year, Grace Haynes Second Year, 3rd Edel Kerr First Year. This month raises awareness of the issue of Bullying and as many of the posters and poems say 'it shouldn't happen' and show that the consequences for everyone are harrowing. Let's keep St. Louis a bully free zone!

Cairde

Cairde are in full swing with the First Years. The Fourth Years are linked with three or four First Years and they are there as a mentor or big sister for them. We had an activities session for First years in Sept and this was for Cairde and First Years to meet. They now meet them on a casual basis, calling in at lunch time or break.

Caoimhe McCormick R.I.P.



On Friday November 11 2011, the sky darkened and torrential rain fell as the community of St. Louis secondary school learned of the death of Caoimhe Mc Cormick, a first year student in Rang Aoife.

A young girl with simply everything to live for, her loss was numbing by its very suddenness. The absolute silence and stillness in the church as we gathered to pray spoke of our profound sense of shock and grief that day. During her all too short time in our school, Caoimhe endeared herself to students and staff alike. The photo taken on her first day at St. Louis really seemed to capture the essence of Caoimhe; her beautiful radiant smile and laughing eyes. Caoimhe was a little anxious when she returned to school after the accident, worried that she might have missed out on making new friends, however her vivacious personality ensured she was soon in the thick of things with all the first year girls.

We all have treasured memories of a happy outgoing girl who was forever laughing chatting and smiling. Caoimhe very much enjoyed the extra-curricular activities on offer in the school. She really entered into the spirit of the Halloween table quiz, with fantastic make up and costume. She volunteered to enter the Poetry Aloud competition and was really looking forward to representing the school.

There is no doubt that Caoimhe was a girl with outstanding academic potential. In class she was always motivated and enthusiastic, a great role model for all students. She was blessed with a natural gift for creative writing Rang Aoife enjoyed listening to her stories in English class, which were always so imaginative and witty. The school year will continue as it must, but Caoimhe's death has left a void in our lives. All we can say for now is that Caoimhe will be remembered with great affection by all who knew her in St. Louis.

As we continue to pray for Orla's recovery, our heartfelt sympathies go out to Bernie, Barry and Orla. May you find comfort in her memory.

Board of Management

Trustee Nominees

Ms. Eileen Collery
Mr. Paddy Flood
Sr. Marie Byrne
Mr. Bill Duffy

Teacher Nominees

Ms. Caroline Mc Nally
Mr. Mick Halton
Ms. Vera O'Brien (principal)

Parents Association

Mr. Jim O'Reardon
Ms. Margaret Moran

Parent's Association

Parent's Association Members

Celine Neeson

[Emma, Rang Erin]

Margaret Dick

[Roisin, Rang Ciara]

Siobhan Campbell

[Eimear, Rang Brona]

Mary McElvaney

[Mary, Rang Niamh]

Helen Doherty

[Katherine, Rang Eithne]

Hugh Doherty

[Katherine, Rang Eithne]

Declan Lyden

[Rachel, Rang Tiarnan]

Delma McGirr

[Louise, Rang Aine]

Tracey Mullen Kelly

[Hannah, Rang Aoife]

Fabian Murphy

[Lauren, Rang Aine]

Geraldine McPhilips

[Laura, Rang Aoife]

Teacher Representative Margaret Conlon [Deputy Principal]

Dates for your Diary

- > *Information meeting for Third Year parents on Senior Cycle options:* 12th January 2012
- > *Open Evening for Incoming First Years:* Date to be confirmed
- > *Fifth Year Parent Teacher Meeting:* Wednesday 25th January 2012
- > *First Year Parent Teacher Meeting:* Thursday 23rd February 2012
- > *Pre Junior / Leaving Certificate Examinations* 30th Jan - 9th Mar 2012
- > *February Mid Term:* 13th - 17th February 2012
- > *Second Year Parent Teacher Meeting:* Monday 12th March 2012
- > *Leaving Certificate Oral Examinations:* 16th - 26th April 2012
- > *Easter Holidays:* 30th March - 16th April 2012
- > *Junior / Leaving Certificate Examinations:* Wednesday 6th June 2012

*The Management and Staff of St. Louis Secondary School
extend Seasons Greeting to one and all.*