



Our Lady of Peace School
640 Old Fairmont Pike
Wheeling, WV 26003

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Fall 2013



Peace Pride

We hope you'll stop by to see us:

- Dec. 5** Annual Christmas Show 6:30 p.m.
- Dec. 7** Santa Breakfast 9 a.m.
- Jan. 25-26** Academic Fair and Open House after all Masses
- Jan. 25-31** Catholic Schools Week
- Feb. 14** Valentine Dinner Dance 6-11 p.m. @ The White Palace
- March 28** Living Stations (time TBA)
- April 5** Night at the Races
- April 27** First Holy Communion
- May 4** May Crowning
- May 14** Fine Arts Recital
- May 28** Graduation Liturgy for Class of 2014

Monetary Gifts Speak Volumes:

Our Lady of Peace School has proven to be good stewards of its monetary gifts. Your gifts to our school make a positive difference and lasting legacy. You are directly supporting the education and formation of our future leaders. Consider making advancement gifts to invest in our students and faculty; a gift in memory or in honor of a loved one, mentor, or teacher.



Newsletter for Alumni, Families, & Friends

Message from the Principal



Dear Alumni,

As this school year is underway the phrase "Déjà vu" repeats in my thoughts and a smile comes over my face. Several encounters bring this to mind.

We are blessed with a new gym floor and new painting in the gym space. With the new lighting it's a new wonderful environment for our students. The re-dedication was celebrated at our Family and Friends Day with his Excellency Bishop Michael Bransfield. I recall 23 years ago as we were awe struck with our new gym space and Bishop Bernard Schmitt, dedicating it during Catholic Schools Week.

Our school hosted the Area Catholic School Dance in September. As I saw Bailey Nixon, one of our seventh graders, I could only think of chaperoning her mother s Jessica Hewitt Glenn's (our Kindergarten teacher) 8th grade dances in 1994.

As principal, I'm working with alumni in their professional roles!

- Melanie Sechrest-Skrzypek, Class of 1997, with Easter Seals
- Denise Huggins Fowler on our Recruitment Committee
- Trey Dunlevy, Class of 2010, installing our new gym sound system
- Doctors Matt Morris and Joe Donzella in medical roles
- Beth Narrish, Class of 1995, in her role at IMB
- Tim Bishop with The Catholic Spirit
- Nicole Yahn who called about pre-school.

I fondly think of so many of you then and now. Along with students are parents and parishioners who have committed themselves to our place called Peace. Because of all of you we are a strong, vibrant, growing Catholic education community. My reflections are accomplished with gratitude to each of you as we advance and appreciate our faith-filled mission.

Peace be with you,

C'Ann Reilly



2013-2014 Facts

Total Enrollment - 242 students grades PK3-8

Number of Families - 170

Our Faculty:

PK3 & 4 - Marybeth Pollack

Kindergarten - Jessica Glenn and Nancy DeFazio - Aide

Grade 1 - Lorrie Schodzinski and Becky Berletch - Aide

Grade 2 - Rohnda Neer

Grade 3 - Becky Cox

Grade 4 - Stephanie King and Sue Protich - Assistant

Grade 5 - Sue Cunningham

Grade 6 - Maureen Kerr (& Grade 7&8 Reading)

Grade 6 - Sharon Flowers (Co-teacher)

Grade 7 - Lisa Schlanz (Grade 6, 8 Math & Science)

Grade 8 - Renee Schneid (Grade 6 & 7 Religion)

P.E./Health - Angela Murphy

Spanish - Debbie Zien

Technology - Von Cain

Bell Choir - Mike Oliver

Music - Josh Pietrowski

Inclusion Resource Specialist - Marian McCullough

School Board:

Greg Marquart, president Heather Schneid

Paula Chappelear Shirley Carter

Karen Rush Ray Thalman

Latrisha Whitelatch Chris Gardill

Curt Oliver Brad Hartley

OLP – A Community of Faith, Knowledge and Service!

With the generosity and commitment of individuals, foundations, parish, and diocese the continual advancement in mission, facility and program is possible!

Facility:

Gym Re-dedication celebrated the complete update of our Peace Family Center Gym floor, sound system, and walls.



School bathroom renovations, including hardware, fixtures and painting.

Evan G. Roberts Grant received for new volleyball equipment for our teams and physical education classes.

Program Enhancements:

New Family Life Program for Grades 3-7

New Correlated Math Practice Books for Grades K-6

New English Books – Phase II for grades 3-5

New Vocabulary Program for grades 3-8

New Online Math Assessment Program and Practice for Grades 1-6

New Online Vocabulary Assessments for Grades 3-8

Two new class sets of iPads and Think Pads – Phase II

Additional iPad and Think Pad Charging Carts

Expanded Wireless Capabilities

Gifts of time, talent and treasure from current families and alumni of our school and parish enable us to be a thriving community. Many individuals and groups from our parish and school shared their time and talents to improve our children's school environment. To name a few:

Curt Oliver	Phil Reilly	Mike Gantzer
Jeff Dougherty	Ray Thalman	Knights of Columbus
Jim Schlick	Greg Oliver	Curt Blinco
Andrew Sarcopski	Ladies Auxiliary	Patrick Malloy
Ed Yahn	Keith Bonenberger	Sean Cain
Larry Oliver	Jim McClure	Ruth Anderson
Alan Musilli	Paul Moore	Tom Burke
Nick DeFazio	Julie Anderson	

Financial Gifts from Alumni

The Alumni of our school and parish continue to invest in the future of Our Lady of Peace School, faculty and students. Special gifts toward iPad and Think Pad technology and education we would like to acknowledge were received from:

Jean Lynn Curran Moses; Susan Curran McGlaughlin; Amy Schneid Yester; Beth Narrish (and IBM); and George and Lenora Ferdinand.

Her Spirit is Always with Us



Our Lady of Peace School celebrates the memory of Mrs. Susan Thompson, who passed away ten years ago this year. Mrs. Thompson graced the halls and inspired children in her classroom for 18 years.

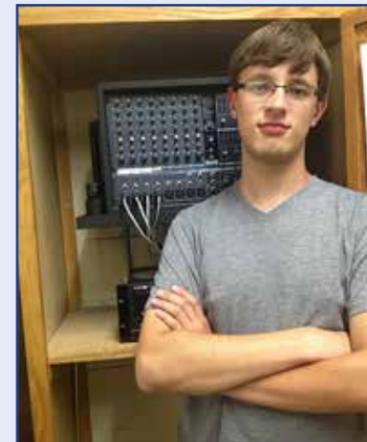
Her spirit lives on at OLP. We shared the news on our Facebook page of the 10 year anniversary of the heavens welcoming her. Within 48 hours our post and her pictured were seen by more than 2,400 people! Never has our social media outlet reached so many people. We felt privileged to share this picture with you too. It captures a glimpse of her loving and engaging soul. Soar, Mrs. Thompson. Thank you for watching over us!

Kudos to our Alumni!



Academic Excellence Continues for Filben:

Tanner Filben, Class of 2010, was announced in September as a National Merit Semifinalist! He is a senior at John Marshall High School and is the only recipient of this exceptional honor in Marshall County this year. Each year 1.5 million students enter this elite scholarship program. Only 16,000 are named semifinalists. We all wish Tanner all the best and good luck in March when they announced the winners. He is a great role model for our students. The National Merit Scholarship Program is an academic competition for recognition and scholarships. High school students enter the National Merit Program by taking the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT)—a test which serves as an initial screen of approximately 1.5 million entrants each year—and by meeting published program entry/participation requirements.



Dunlevy is Leaving his Mark – Loud and Clear:

Trey Dunlevy, Class of 2010, represented West Virginia at the National Youth Leadership Forum on National Security in Washington, D.C. this fall. The NYLF on National Security is a leadership and career exploration program. This experience is loaded with opportunities for motivated students to develop critical success skills and explore career passions outside of the traditional classroom environment. Trey was able to get a first-hand look at fields in national security, diplomacy, intelligence and defense.

Further, Trey has also been a valuable asset to our school and parish. He has installed a new sound system in the Peace Family Center /Gymnasium.

We extend our gratefulness to Trey and wish him continued success in the future.

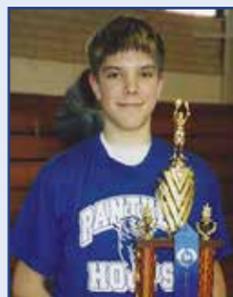


Hays Takes his Game International:

Jeremy Hays, Class of 2006 represented the USA in an international basketball tour in Italy during the summer of 2013, as part of the American International Sports Teams. Hays and his fellow teammates were selected for being ranked in the top of their collegiate division based on stats posted by the NCAA.

Hays is a senior education major at Juniata College, in Huntingdon, Pa. In 2012-2013, he was named All Landmark Conference Second Team as a Juniata Eagle. He led the conference in steals and assists in 2012-2013, and currently holds the record for career steals at Juniata. As a freshman Hays earned Landmark Conference Track Rookie of the Year honors by virtue of placing first in high-jump, and third in long jump events at the Landmark Outdoor Championships.

Jeremy has represented the Juniata Eagles, John Marshall Monarchs, and especially your Our Lady of Peace Panthers well. We wish him a momentous senior season and continued victories in all of his endeavors.



OUR LADY OF PEACE SCHOOL



FATHER DENNIS PROVES THE SKY'S THE LIMIT!

As alumni you know, Our Lady of Peace School is known for creating student excitement. We work hard, pray hard, and play hard. This year is proving to be no exception.

We began our year of course with a special Mass, when Fr. Dennis Schuelkens announced our theme for the year... MISSION POSSIBLE! He explained that anything is possible when you choose God, and be a leader, helping others down God's path. We truly are a community of faith, knowledge, and service. It is what happened after Mass really opened the students' eyes to the fact that the sky is the limit!

Our students in grades K-8 were surprised as they were ushered onto Marshall County School Buses while the theme music to the movie "Mission Impossible" played in the background. The students had no idea where they were headed (although their parents were in on the secret). The buses shuttled the students to the Ohio County Airport, where again the theme music blared. Once all of the students arrived they kept their eye to the sky. Just like a dramatic super hero movie plot coming to life you could hear students shouting individually, "It's a bird."

"No. It's a plane."
"No. It's a helicopter."
"It's Fr. Dennis!"

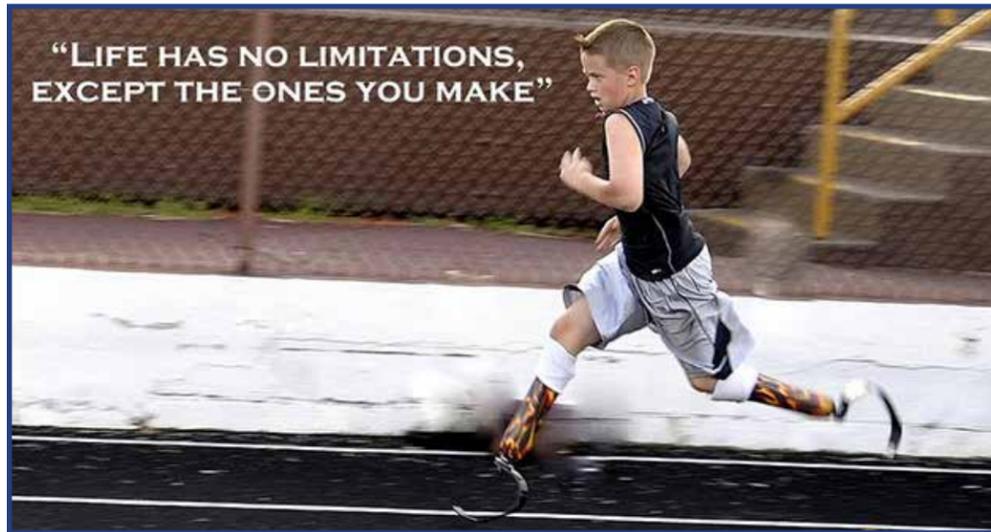


Father and Vincent DePaul Schmidt, Diocesan Superintendent, ran out of the helicopter to present our principal, Mrs. Reilly, with the special critical assignment for the 2013-2014. They asked Mrs. Reilly and the entire crowd, "Will you accept this mission?" "Yes," the school as a whole enthusiastically shouted back. The Mission... to re-commit to being the people of PEACE (Prayer; Encouragement and example; Academic excellence; Community, commitment, covenant; Esteem for ourselves and others!) Clarifying not only to follow the school's mission, but to be leaders like Fr. Dennis explained at Mass – helping others down God's path!



Fourth Grader is Following OLP Mission... Being a Leader, Sprinting Down God's Path

Cooper Blair - Four Gold Medalists



In August, fourth grader Cooper Blair and his mother Richelle were passing time on a long flight to Mississippi by talking about a variety of topics - one of them will remain vivid in Richelle's mind for the rest of her life.

The two talked about being granted three wishes. She proudly smiled when Cooper said he wished everyone would be healthy. She chuckled when he said he wished he'd have an endless supply of toys, but what was next on his list took her breath away....

"One thing I will never wish for is to have real feet," he said. "I was in shock," Richelle said. "Zach (his father) and I pray all the time that he's okay with this. Tears immediately filled my eyes. Did I just hear that? He amazes me every day."

You see the Blairs were traveling to Mississippi that day for Cooper to be fitted for a new pair of prosthetic legs. These weren't like his other prosthetics. This pair - Cheetahs - would have running blades on them, allowing him to sprint and lead him on a great adventure.

Cooper was born with a rare birth defect that cut off the circulation in his feet. He underwent 27 sets of casts and seven surgeries in an attempt to straighten his feet. When Cooper was two they met with an orthopedic surgeon at Johns Hopkins.

"He said we had two options, let him go on the way he is, but he'd never be able to walk with those feet; or amputate from the knee down and get prosthetics," she said. The Blairs immediately thought there is no way we can let them amputate our baby's feet. "There had to be an easier way."

In September of 2005, when Cooper was 26 months old, the Blairs agreed to what seemed like the most drastic measure, but after much prayer and reflection knew it was the right step in the direction of hope. After the surgery Cooper was fitted for his first

set of prosthetic walking legs. He would have these fittings every nine to 12 months during his growth years.

God winked at the Blairs again, when on

Christmas day, just three months after the surgery, Cooper took his first steps with his prosthetics. Since then he has truly taken off. He first wanted to play ice hockey. Zach and Richelle knew it would be difficult, but knew their son was a very determined boy. He learned to skate on his prosthetic legs like a lil' champ, however because the prosthetics did not have ankles that bend, it was hard to get up when he fell.

The work of guardian angels stepped in then. The "angels", better known as the Wheeling Nailers, put a nail at the top of Coopers hockey stick so when he'd fall down, he could use his stick as an ice pick to get right back up. Following hockey came baseball, flag football, basketball and even golf!

"He constantly amazes me," Richelle said. "Eight years ago we were overwhelmed with worry about what we foolishly thought our son wouldn't be able to do."

But the greatest lesson Zach and Richelle ever learned was from their son, "life has no limitations, except the ones you set for yourself."

"He doesn't see himself as being different," Richelle said. "He's perfectly happy with who he is. What more can you want as a parent?"

You can imagine if Cooper Blair had to write an essay about



"What did I do over summer vacation," he would be at no loss for words.

"I went to Oklahoma and won four gold medals for racing the 20, 60, 100, and 200 meter races," he said casually. Before Cooper went to Mississippi in August to get his special Cheetah prosthetics, he traveled to Oklahoma to the US Olympic training site in June. He arrived there two weeks before the Endeavor Games so he could train on his running blades. These blades helped him set national records for the 60 and 100 meter events. The Endeavor Games - a nationally recognized competition that allows all athletes with physical disabilities to participate in multi-sport events - is endorsed by U.S. Paralympics.

It was in Oklahoma Cooper met his role model, Schaquille Vance, a US Paralympics Gold Medalist. He introduced the Cheetah sprinting blades to Cooper.

"They are so cool," Cooper said. "They help you bound forward instead of up like other running blades. In August I actually got to design mine and I picked to have WV on them and on the sides I had them put the Mountaineer man so that when I run by people they'll see the Mountaineer!"

Cooper said God made him this way for a reason and he accepts it.

"I could be frustrated, but why?" he said. "My mom, dad and sister (Camryn, OLP sixth grader) support me and keep me motivated. They are doing everything they can for me so I can reach my goals. They are my official trainers," he said with a laugh.

His favorite bible verse: Philippians 4:13 - I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. "Even though I do not have feet, I can do anything anybody else can do. I can do this because God and Jesus help me get through it," he said.

Stay tuned, Cooper's next goal is to go to the Endeavor Games' Nationals in Minneapolis and then on to the World Endeavor Games in Italy, competing in track and a triathlon. After that he aims to become a Paralympics athlete at 15 years old (the youngest age you can qualify).



Brother's experience motivates fundraising plan

Moved by her brother's determination OLP sixth grader, Camryn Blair, aims to raise funds for the Challenged Athletes Foundation.

"I got to go see Cooper compete in the Endeavor Games and met so many amazing (athletes)," Camryn said. "It costs a lot of money to travel there. I hope to help other athletes and their families get the chance to do what Cooper did."

Before the Blairs left for the Endeavor Games hundreds of people came out to cheer him on at John Marshall High School Stadium and Track.

Camryn wants rejuvenate that same excitement and get her school and community to donate to his worthy cause.

"I don't know how much money we could raise, but it will definitely make a difference," she said.

Along with her parents and grandparents, Camryn is finalizing plans for her fundraiser. As soon as we have the details we will share them with you

Camryn's efforts are second nature to the culture of Our Lady of Peace School, as the school fosters true community of service and proudly takes on Regina Service Learning initiatives.

