



The Blarney Stone



January 2023 New Year's & Catholic Schools Week Edition

JANUARY 2023 EDITION

Welcome to the January 2023 Issue of the Blarney Stone, the official newspaper of Bishop McNamara Catholic School! As we begin a new year, we reflect on the past year and look forward to the future. Coming up we have Catholic Schools Week, a time to celebrate and acknowledge the contributions of Catholic education to our community. This week is a time to come together to celebrate the students, faculty, and staff, and the rich history of our school. In this edition, you'll find a variety of articles that highlight the events and activities taking place in the coming weeks. These include the upcoming Winter Ball Dance, Catholic Schools Week, and much more! However, specifically we will look at those that will be taking place during the Catholic Schools Week. Additionally, you can find a look back at the past year and a glimpse into what's to come for the new year!



Written By: Grant Naese

WINTER GRADE SCHOOL NIGHT & LIGHTS OUT BASKETBALL GAME

The Bishop McNamara Fightin' Irish basketball team had a thrilling victory on Friday, January 20th, in the main gym at the BMCS Kankakee Site. The game was part of the Grade School Night event where all area grade school students were invited to join in on the fun and games before cheering on the team. The night was a huge success, with many students, parents, and community members showing up to support the Fightin' Irish.

The game was a highly anticipated matchup between the Fightin' Irish and Elmwood Park High School. From the opening tip-off, it was clear that the Fightin' Irish were determined to come out on top. They started off the game with a strong offense, which allowed them to take control of the game early on. The Fightin' Irish's solid offensive was matched a strong defense from Elmwood Park in the first quarter, allowing them to catch up to the Fightin' Irish's lead.

The crowd was fully engaged in the game, cheering on the Fightin' Irish every step of the way. The energy in the gym was electric, with the crowd's enthusiasm and excitement helping to drive the team to victory. The Grade school students were especially excited and participated in games and activities before the game, adding to the fun and excitement of the night.

The game was also special because of the theme of the night, "Lights Out." Fans were encouraged to wear black to show their support and the lights in the gym were turned off for the announcement of the players, dramatizing the entire event.

The final score of the game was 67-32, with the Fightin' Irish coming out on top against Elmwood Park High School. It was a dominant performance by the team and a great way to cap off the Grade School Night event. The school community came together to support the team and it was a great night for all involved.

Written By: Grant Naese



January 2023 Catholic Schools Week

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK ITINERARY

Get ready for a week of fun and celebration as Catholic Schools Week kicks off at Bishop McNamara Catholic School (BMCS) on Sunday, January 29th! We start off by celebrating our parishes and encouraging our students to wear their school uniforms to Mass.

On Monday, January 30th, we invite all members of our community to join us for an all-school Mass (K-12) at the Kankakee Site at 9:30 am. It's a great opportunity to come together as a school and give thanks for all the blessings in our lives.

Tuesday, January 31st, is all about our students. We're celebrating the 100th day of school by encouraging students to dress as if they were 100 years old! Get ready to see some amazing costumes and don't forget to grab a surprise treat at lunch.

Wednesday, February 1st, is a special day as we celebrate Bishop McNamara's 100th year! We're doing it in style with an "OH-YO" day, where students and staff are encouraged to wear their "OH-YO" shirts with uniform bottoms and play along with special 100-year trivia throughout the day. Junior High will have a Social Media Safety Presentation given by Illinois State Trooper Alyssa Bufford.

Thursday, February 2nd, is all about our amazing faculty and staff. We're celebrating them with a luncheon



provided by Man PAC. High school students will also work at the Catholic Charities Food Truck.

Finally, on Friday, February 3rd, we're celebrating our school spirit. BMCS students will be delivering donuts to our local police departments and we're encouraging everyone to show their "Irish Spirit" by wearing BMCS spirit wear.

Mark your calendars, and we'll see you at BMCS for a week of celebration and fun!



Written By: Grant Naese

WINTER BALL

Winter ball is one of the most highly anticipated events of the school year, and this year's theme, "Welcome to the Jungle," is sure to be a hit! The

dance will take place on February 25th, 2023, in the cafeteria from 7-10 pm. It's going to be an evening of music, dancing, and fun, and all students are encouraged to attend.

The theme of "Welcome to the Jungle" is a perfect opportunity to break out your wildest jungle-inspired dance moves. You'll see lots of leopard prints, jungle greens, and safari-inspired looks as decoration.

When it comes to tickets, they will be sold during lunch periods the week prior to the event. Each ticket is \$15, so be sure to get your tickets early!

Winter ball is an event that you won't want to miss, so mark your calendars to be "Welcomed to the Jungle" this Winter Ball!



Written By: Lucy Mast



January 2023
Sports & Activities

POMS

January has been quite the month for the Bishop McNamara Poms Team. The girls have had competitions every weekend in January. The January 7th competition was at Lockport High School. The team completed their hip-hop routine in the IHSA A Division, placing 2nd. On January 13th the Poms Team competed at the MSC Conference, placing 5th. Congratulations to Lucy Mast for getting All-Conference! The following day, the girls had a competition at Clinton High School. They performed their hip-hop, jazz, and poms routine qualifying for IDTA state with their hip-hop routine, placing 2nd in poms, and 4th in jazz. The girls will be attending IDTA state on February 11, 2023 and can't wait! They would like to thank everyone who has supported them by coming to competitions! Just a reminder that Guyrish is just around the corner! Please contact Lucy Mast mastl23@bmcss.org if you're interested! To keep up-to-date with the Poms team follow their Instagram and Facebook page @bishopmacpoms.



Written By: Lucy Mast

GIRLS BASKETBALL

The Lady Irish have continued this season strong and are continuing their season with a bang. They have won a total of 13 games this season and are continuing to make waves this season. A few sophomores have made a stand this season, such as Trinity Davis, Emily Storer, and Lydia Nugent. Along with our newer members, returning juniors and seniors are also working hard to make this a great season. Join our girls in the upcoming weeks to see them face off against Elmwood Park, Palos Heights, and Ridgewood.



Written By: Isabelle Quigley

BOYS BASKETBALL

The Fighting Irish boys' basketball team has had a tremendous season with an overall 16-5 record this year. Our senior Jackson Provost has had an average of 21.3 points per game. He is ranked 10th in the IHSA for points per game and 11th for steals per game. He has also recently received an award for achieving 1000 points scored thus far. They have also had freshman Callaghan O'Connor

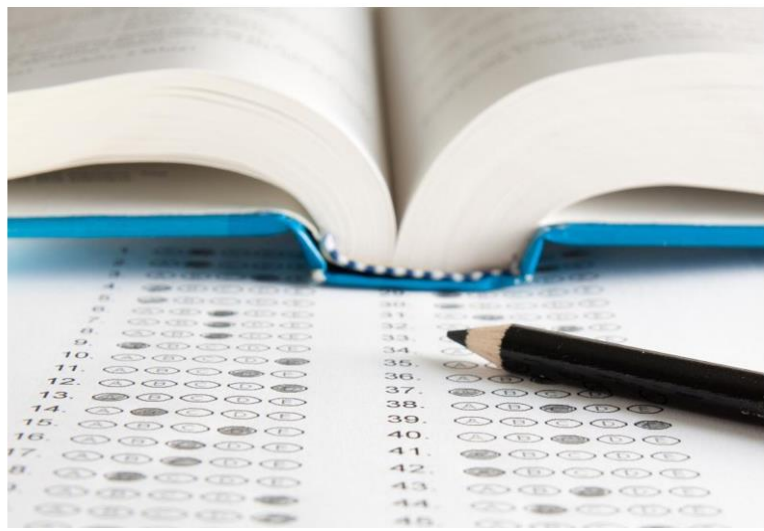
as a starter with 16 blocks in his first year of varsity basketball. The boys have a promising season extending throughout February and upcoming home games against Grant Park, Westmont, and Ridgewood. We look forward to seeing what the boys' basketball team will be able to do in the upcoming weeks as their season continues. Come support the Fighting Irish!



Written By: Isabelle Quigley

CHESS

The Bishop McNamara Chess Team is having an extraordinary season this year. The team is comprised of Braedyn Mulcahy, Kolton Hunt, Carter Heinrich, Kaiden Hunt, Oliver Heinrich, Mason Alberts, Landon Provost, Justice Provost, Sean Storer, David Quigley, and Caitlin Phillips. The coaches are Austin Earsley and Matthew Malicki. The Chess Team is currently undefeated in the pre-season and has started to participate in tournaments, including The Glenbard South Tournament and the Conference Tournament, where the team got 2nd place. In the future, the team will take part in the Sectionals Tournament on January 28th, which will hopefully advance them to the State IHSA Tournament on February 3-4th. The Chess Team has a bright



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Sports, House, & Academics

future within this season's tournaments and in the future years of the chess program.



Written By: Oliver Heinrich

INDOOR TRACK & FIELD

As we enter the midst of winter, outdoor sports no longer become an option. Although Bishop McNamara offers some indoor sports like basketball and wrestling, other sports can only be played outside. But Bishop McNamara has just added a new indoor sport to the list, Indoor Track and Field. This is Bishop Mac's first time ever offering the sport and, although this is our first time, it is not other schools first time with this sport, so there will be competition. It is just like normal track and field except it is indoors, hence the name "Indoor Track and Field." Additionally, many of our outdoor track and field athletes will be competing indoors. Indoor track and field is coached by Jose Martinez and Bishop McNamara's very own Mr. Fryer. As it is the schools first year, there are many expectations and a lot of excitement for our indoor track and field athletes. We look forward to seeing what they will be able to accomplish this year!

Written By: Miles Serpe

HOUSE TREE DECORATING RECAP

This past month we had our annual house Christmas tree decorating contest. Each house was assigned a Disney princess theme to try to convey on their Christmas tree. The houses were given the following princesses: Dublin was given Jasmine, Donegal was given Aurora, Limerick was given Snow White, Killarney was given Belle, and finally, Waterford was given Ariel. The trees were then voted on by the teachers and faculty at Bishop McNamara Catholic High School. First place was Limerick, then following was Killarney, Dublin, Waterford, and last was Donegal. Overall, the competition went well and now that the Christmas tree decorating contest is over it is time for the annual Winter Ball. This year's winter ball theme will be Jungle and it will be taking place on February 25th.



Written By: Ethan Patel

ACT WORKSHOP

Coming up on Thursday, January 26th is the ACT Workshop! This workshop is required for Juniors to attend but is offered to all students. During this workshop, students will be taught about the layout of the ACT, the

information presented on the exam, and useful ACT strategies, and will also be introduced to resources they can use to prepare for the exam. The workshop begins at 8 am for students attending. The 26th will be a late start at 9:25 am for all other students. This workshop is a great resource for students who have never taken the ACT or those who need a refresher before taking their next exam. Reminder that the school will be offering the ACT on March 28, 2023. If you are a Sophomore and would like to take this exam, see Mrs. Nugent to register by Tuesday, January 24th. Good luck on the exam, Juniors!



Written By: Anna Dexter

COLLEGE VISITS

Juniors at Bishop McNamara Catholic School, get ready for an exciting opportunity to explore some of the top colleges in the area! This Spring, the Guidance Office will be organizing field trips to various colleges within a reasonable distance from the school. This is a great opportunity for juniors to get a feel for different colleges and help them make informed decisions about their post-secondary education. To help the Guidance Office plan these trips, a survey was posted to determine which colleges the junior class would most prefer to visit. The survey was

found on the Irish Student Hub and was until next Friday, January 20th. It included a list of major colleges within driving distance and students were asked to rank their top 5 choices. Additionally, students could provide comments about other colleges they would be interested in visiting. Some of the colleges that were included in the survey are: University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, Illinois State University, Eastern Illinois University, Bradley University, Purdue University, Notre Dame, Northwestern, DePaul, and many more!

It's important to note that the Guidance Office will take into consideration the survey results as well as other factors such as location, size, and majors offered when deciding which colleges to visit. If you have any questions or comments, please contact the Guidance Office.

Don't miss out on this exciting opportunity to explore different colleges and start thinking about your future! Additionally, be sure to keep in mind that the ACT is coming up!



Written By: Grant Naese

NEW STAFF INTERVIEW: MR. KELLY

At the start of the semester, Mr. Kelly became the newest addition to the Bishop McNamara administration. He graduated from St. Laurence High School in 2014. His next destination was Loras College, where he played football. He graduated from Loras in 2018 and began his teaching career. Now, he is not only the dean of students, but is also the new head football coach. "(McNamara) reminded me a lot of what I was used to: a traditional, Catholic High School Institution," Mr. Kelly said. "I instantly felt at home. I just thought it was a big family here, and I wanted to have the opportunity to make an impact." As the new dean, he wants to be a support system for the students. "I want students to understand that I am a resource for them, and that I want to see them succeed."

Mr. Kelly has also taken on the role of

Head Football Coach. "We're starting small," he said. The program is not fixated on the future, rather they are focusing on what they can do right now with the resources they have. "I'm someone that struggles looking any further than what is in front of my face, so my attitude is 'let's just be great now,' and whatever comes later we can deal with later." Developing a great team begins in the off season, and right now both him and the team are putting in the work. "It's the off-season, so we're just trying to get bigger, faster, stronger. Right now, I think we're getting back to recruiting some guys that have played in the past, but haven't been playing recently, and just trying to get more guys interested in playing football." Whether it is in the school or on the football field, Mr. Kelly is prepared to handle it one day at a time.



Written By: Sarah Berg

ALUMNI INTERVIEW: JIM GIACCHINO



In the first Alumni Interview of 2023, I spoke with Mr. Jim Giacchino. His life has been uniquely intertwined with Bishop McNamara. He graduated high school in 1980. While in college, he student taught at McNamara, and later accepted a job here. During his first time here, he helped coach the JV girls' softball team. After his first tenure at McNamara, Mr. Giacchino went to teach at Reddick High School, which later merged with Herscher. He then went to Momence, then Manteno, and finally back to McNamara. Some of Mr. G's favorite memories of McNamara

include Homecoming, Spring games, and being able to initiate the freshmen class as a senior. His memories are not the only things that have stuck with him throughout the years, but so have the things he learned. "I think the rigor and the time management helped me to budget my time in college accordingly" he said. "I remember as a freshman in religion class my teacher taught me how to interpret Bible passages, which led to better writing. In sophomore year religion with Mr. Hickey, he challenged me when writing. He handed me back my paper and said 'No, you can do a little more here. This is where you need to go.' It's stuff like that that helped me when I got to college and prepping first semester finals, it was like I've done this before. I had done it all through high school." While Mr. Giacchino was prepared academically, McNamara also prepared him for life. "In life, my parents always taught me to roll up my sleeves and work, which McNamara heavily reinforced." After many years of teaching at other schools, Mr. Giacchino came back to McNamara at the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year. "It was surreal. It was like I never left, and I mean that in a positive way. Walking up that sidewalk into the same doors of the school that you graduated from, there is such a sense of ownership of the mission of the school." One of the main goals that he had upon his return was to exemplify the teaching standard that he experienced during his time as a student here. "I was taught by some really great teachers there. It really prepared me for college, and I felt like I had to live up to what they did. I'm glad I got to end my career here. It's a special place when you walk in that building and you understand the tradition of academic excellence that you have to uphold." There is no doubt that he accomplished that in his last tenure here. Mr. G's advice to current students is to cherish it. "Next to college, McNamara was the best 4 years."



Written By: Sarah Berg

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Interviews & Seasonal

‘ARTIE’ AND MS. G



Meet the fluffiest new member of the Bishop McNamara Family, Artie. Artie was the 2022 Auction dog, who was adopted by Ms. Gocken. Ms. Gocken teaches High School and Jr. High Art classes with her new companion Artie. Ms. Gocken also teaches a graphic design class at Kankakee Community College. She started her education at Kankakee Community College and transferred to Governors State University where she graduated with Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Fine Arts. She enjoys traveling and shopping. "I enjoy shopping. Finding a good bargain is my passion". She is the pet parent of Artie and Sulley, who are both golden retrievers. Ms. Gocken knew she wanted to adopt Artie the week before the auction when the students made a donation box called "the pup fund" and raised \$63 in donations. She says "It tore at my heart how much everyone loved him. He was everyone's pup as well as mine". Ms. Gocken placed the winning bid at the 2022 Bishop McNamara Auction and the rest is history. Artie may not be an official staff member of the school, but he loves to greet everyone. He says hello to all the Jr. High students as they arrive in the morning and welcomes everyone who enters the art classroom. Artie also loves long naps, playing with dog toys, and giving wet kisses. He loves the

color green as evidenced by stealing green colored pencils. Artie is a student himself and recently graduated from puppy school. His next class is basic manners. Artie's long-term goal is to be trained as a professional therapy dog, so he can continue making people happy. The only payment he will accept is extra belly rubs and treats. The Bishop McNamara students are so lucky to have Ms. Gocken and Artie at the school.



Written By: Hailey Neill

WINTER FLOWERPOT CRAFT



Materials:

- Small Ceramic Pot
- White Clay
- Fake Poinsettia
- Acrylic Paints
- Paint
- Tinsel (optional)

Steps:

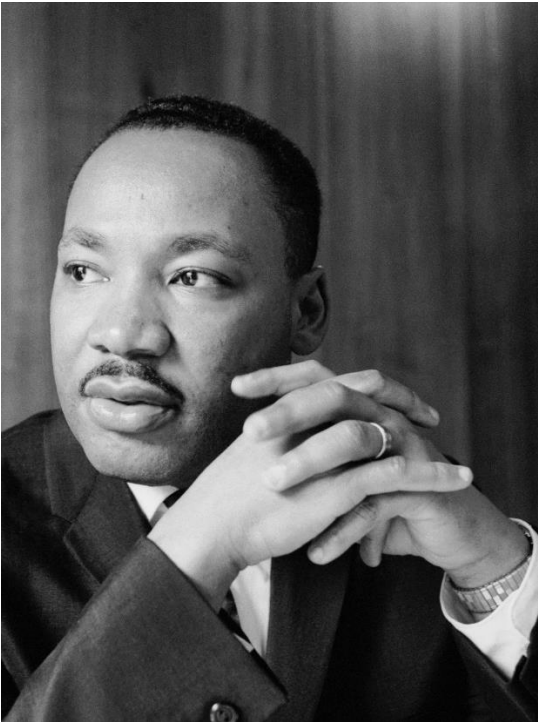
- Step 1:** Using colors of your choice, paint a winter scene on your ceramic pot.
- Step 2:** After the paint has dried, place white clay into the interior of the pot.
- Step 3:** Stick your fake poinsettia flower into the clay.
- Step 4:** If desired, adhere some tinsel to the clay to add some sparkle and spruce up your flower pot.
- Step 5:** Use as a cute decoration

during the entire winter season!



Written By: Sarah Hoehn

MARTIN LUTHER KING JUNIOR DAY



Martin Luther King Jr. was an activist who was one of the most prominent members in the civil rights movements from 1955 until he was assassinated in 1968. He is most known for his "I Have a Dream" speech that he gave on the Lincoln Memorial. This speech led him to be named "Man of the Year" by TIME magazine and become the youngest person to ever receive the Nobel Peace Prize. Just a few years later when he was preparing a speech on the balcony of his motel in Memphis, Tennessee, he was assassinated. When the news broke out to the public, riots swept the major cities across the country. While this was taking place, President Lyndon Johnson declared the day as a National Day of Mourning. Years of activists, congress, and other campaigners crying out led to Ronald Reagan signing a bill that declared a federal holiday in honor of Martin Luther King. Since then, we have celebrated Martin Luther King Junior Day in honor of his contributions to civil rights and the forwarding of our progress as a nation.



Written By: Riley Piazza



January 2023
Extras

AVATAR: THE WAY OF WATER
REVIEW



"Avatar: The Way of Water" is a highly-anticipated sequel to the original "Avatar" movie that premiered in theaters in 2009. The movie takes place in the fictional world of Pandora and the familiar protagonist, Jake Sully, and antagonist, Colonel Miles Rick Quaritch both reappear in this film. The story begins about 10 years after the original "Pandora" and Jake Sully and Ney'tiri form a family and have 4 kids. The family lives in peace but is always on guard for when the sky people come back. When the sky people come back, the family is forced to leave their home and travel to new lands in Pandora in order to keep their village safe. The family must learn new customs to adapt to their new environment. The film also features new characters and new creatures, adding to the richness of the story and the world. The 3D

effects and the special effects in the movie are top-notch and truly immerses the audience into the world of Pandora. Additionally, the film explores themes of family, tradition, and the impact of human's actions on the environment. Overall, "Avatar: The Way of Water" is a must-see film and is a great continuation of the original "Avatar" that will impress both fans of the original and newcomers alike.



Written By: Kolton Hunt

MOTIVATION

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

– John 3:16

"The pain that you've been feeling, can't compare to the joy that's coming."

– Romans 8:18

"But the Lord stood with me and gave me strength."

– 2 Timothy 4:17

"Everything should be done in love."

– 1 Corinthians 16:14

"Glory to God, who is able to do far beyond all that we could ask or imagine by his power at work within us."

– Ephesians 3:20

"Celebrate endings- for they precede new beginnings."

– Jonathan Lockwood Huie

"All our dreams can come true, if we have the courage to pursue them."

– Walt Disney

"The secret of getting ahead is getting started."

– Mark Twain

"If people are doubting how far you can go, go so far that you can't hear them anymore."

– Michele Ruiz

"We need to accept that we won't always make the right decisions, that we'll screw up royally sometimes understanding that failure is not the opposite of success, it's part of success."

– Arianna Huffington

"Everything you can imagine is real."

– Pablo Picasso



Compiled By: Lucy Mast

January 2023
Extras & Credits

WORD SEARCH & SUDOKU

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CALENDAR
CELEBRATION
COLD
GOALS

HAPPY
MIDNIGHT
NEWYEAR
RESOLUTION

SNOW

CREDITS



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