

REDSOKZ

Nuacht Litir Scoil Villiers

Volume VIII, Issue III

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Villiers School Newsletter

THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS FOR THE FESTIVE SEASON

EDITORIAL

Seasons Greetings to all our readers this Christmas. We presume, that just like all at Redsokz, you are looking forward to the festivities and fun of this holiday season.

In an attempt to bring you up to date with the Viillers Family we have included a variety of articles, from sports to TY activities.

We want to send you sincere Christmas greetings and hope Santa does the decent thing and fills your stockings! Some of the family may have empty stockings as they've upset Santa by misbehaving: Mr Rusk – not matching his socks to his tie; Mr Sadleir – not ordering tea with two sugars for the PTA; Mr Fennell – not accomplishing world domination with his Rugby Team and Mr Gray, with the biggest faux pas of all, constantly sporting black teamed with navy...Gosh, what were they thinking?

While you ponder those over Christmas pudding, we thank everyone who has contributed articles and look forward to seeing you in the New Year.

**Rebecca Byrne
& Claire Casey (Eds)**

The True Spirit of Christmas

by Marajo Tenderass

Lots of people
Crowds everywhere
Rushing and pushing and shoving,
Going nowhere.

It's Christmas time again
Have to get all those things done
Hustle, bustle, quickly,
We must beat the sun.

Must get this and must get that.
Maybe this nic, maybe that nak
When did it happen?

When did we lose track...
It's a race, yes it is
We are running, yes we are
But lets not forget
Before we get too far-

What is really really important
Doesn't take much to figure out
Take time to love
and love from the heart.

Advent Prayer

Lord Jesus,

Master of both the light and the darkness, send your Holy Spirit upon our preparations for Christmas.

We who have so much to do seek quiet spaces to hear your voice each day.

We who are anxious over many things look forward to your coming among us.

We who are blessed in so many ways long for the complete joy of your kingdom.

We whose hearts are heavy seek the joy of your presence.

We are your people, walking in darkness, yet seeking the light.

To you we say, "Come Lord Jesus!"

Amen.



FEATURES

STUDENT COUNCIL

3P decided to run the student council elections as part of their action project. The student council is an integral part of any school, providing students with a forum for airing their views and issues. 3P organised the nomination process, balloting and counting of votes. Some of the results were very tight. The following are the results:

FORM I, II & III: Mark Armitage, Senan Moore, Roseanne Collins, Sean Laffan, Nicholas Corcoran & Michelle McInerney

FORM IV, V & VI: Ummamah Ahmed, Ronan Moriarty, Vincent Lillis, James McMahan, Dalton Greene & Dean Wallace.

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS DINNER

Tuesday, December 16th saw the hosting of the annual Christmas Dinner attended by all boarders, day boarders, prefects, representatives of the BOM, PTA and school staff.

Everyone was thrilled with the presence of Fionn Murphy who joined us following his recent accident.

It was, as usual, a wonderful occasion with students leaving nothing to chance and making the most of the opportunity to don their 'glad rags' and make-up (girls only for the latter).

This wonderful tradition ensures that everyone is in the mood for the festive season.

THE TRANSITION TO COLLEGE

It's funny how little time seems to have passed since I was doing Term One Exams in November 2007 and yet so much has changed. Sixth years, as I'm sure they know, have a huge year ahead of them in 2009, with mocks, orals, practicals, projects and so much more.

That dreaded CAO time...exactly will I do with the rest of my life is the question that many of us asked. Thankfully, answers were found and most of us are happy in University, either in Ireland or across the water in the UK. For most of us, the college offers came, were accepted and then it was time to fly the nest.

This is the strangest thing that happens, leaving home and going into the big bad world all by yourself, moving to a city you may not know very well and to a house with people whom you may never have even met before your first day.

The expectation that you would get on with them is huge. I have the "privilege" of staying in digs (i.e. in a family's home in one of their rooms) this can be seen as a blessing or a curse. They cook and clean but as the only student in the house the first few weeks were lonely.

Having been told a million times, that the best way to survive college is to get involved in Clubs and Societies I duly did and that has been a huge success. People who don't join them are the ones who drop out, or so I'm told.

The things you hear about college are true, well some of them anyway, there are parties every night, but you'd be a fool to go to them all, you'd never get any work done. In the end it is all about balancing work and fun, so that the degree is earned.

The whole system is different from life in Villiers: you don't have to go to class if you don't want to and you don't really have to do any work (but you should go to lectures and do work as you won't do well in your exams otherwise). It's all "independent self-directed learning", placing the onus back on the student.

They say "School days are the best of your life" which I kind of understand now as you don't have to deal with rent, money, drunken neighbours, etc but college can be fun too.

So enjoy school and remember that when you get to college "independent self-directed learning" is the key to academic survival, "budgeting" is key to financial survival and "getting involved" is key to mental and social survival.

David Cowpar

LC 2008

NIALL MELLON

The township we visited in 2008 was the biggest yet, with over 1 million people. My team was working in a section of 300 acres and we had a target of 250 houses in one week. 60,000 people live in that 300 acre section. We were divided into 22 teams of 70 people. However, not all were building houses, some were involved in medicine and gardening.

The work was complicated by the fact that this particular area qualifies as being 'rough' and local security is in attendance. However, relations between locals and volunteers were good. The group managed to exceed its target by building 253 houses.

We would like to thank all at Villiers for their fundraising and general support. More information is available at irishtownship.com

T. Jones

PTA

The PTA gives parents an opportunity to be involved in the life of the school and is a vital cog in the structure of Villiers. Each year two teacher representatives are elected to partake in the Association. Meetings are held monthly and a variety of issues are discussed and worked upon in an effort to ensure that all parents, students and teachers needs are met. The PTA are very supportive of the school, raising funds for additional classroom equipment to enhance teaching and learning as well as raising funds for charity groups associated with the school, such as The Niall Mellon Foundation.

Management, staff and students are very grateful to the members of the PTA who work tirelessly on a voluntary basis to ensure that the teaching and learning environment is as good as it can be.

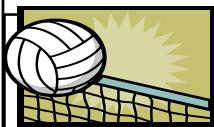
C. Casey

THE SPIRIT OF GIVING

Every year I am surprised and delighted by the spirit of giving from the students, staff and parents of Villiers School. Villiers school, since September, has been involved in loads of charity work; Lions Club glasses appeal, Operation Christmas Child and the Lions Club Food Appeal to name but a few.

During an assembly I asked the students and staff of Villiers to help me collect food for the Lions Club Food Appeal. To my delight I found that the spirit of giving in Villiers school remains extremely strong. You can imagine my surprise, when every day for a week, I found bags and boxes of food in the Duty Room donated by Villiers students, staff and parents. The food has gone to very deserving homes and it makes me proud to say that I am a part of the Villiers Family which is so caring and considerate of others. A special thanks to all those who donated food and helped me to organise the food, in particular 3N and 4th Y.S.I. Happy Christmas to you and yours.

E. Sexton



SPORT

All sports articles written by Rebecca & Claire after consultation with sports department.

BASKETBALL

U16 Boys are currently involved in the South-west League. They are at the mid-point of this competition and recently beat Dromcollogher. This promising team is captained by Kenny Sproule and coached by Stephen King of Limerick Lyons.

The Second year Girls, captained by Lizzy Hegarty, also beat a fighting Dromcollogher in outstanding fashion.

First year Girls are also playing very well and had a by in their recent match.

Bets are on that all teams will make the finals in February.

VILLIERS EQUESTRIAN NEWS

Villiers Equestrian teams made a great start to their schools campaign in Clonshire Equestrian Centre Adare. The senior team comprising of Stephanie Shine, Dominic Furnell, Kate Robson and Anthea Reidy were placed 3rd out of 52 teams from all over Ireland. They received medals and rosettes for their fantastic performances.

The Junior teams Brian Reid, Amelia Furnell, Emma White, Tara McSweeney, James Sevwright, Josephine Harty and Aisling Twoomey just narrowly missed out on the prizes but jumped well. Josephine Harty went clear in the Individuals and came 6th place overall.

Another day out was in Wallslough Co.Kilkenny. The junior team jumped very well adding an extra few points on the score board for Villiers and the senior team missed out on the prizes with only three on the team. Dominic Furnell competed in the individual and came 3rd overall. We would like to congratulate the teams on their performance. We will update you on any other following news.

Anyone interested in this sport please contact Stephanie Shine or Dominic Furnell. We would also like to thank our coach John O'Mahony for his help to date and Mr. Atkinson for keeping a watchful eye.

BOYS HOCKEY

The boys have had a very busy season thus far, traveling to Wales and hosting the All-Ireland Schools Tournament.

With three players receiving Munsters honours the boys are living up to the reputation set down by previous Villiers teams.

The seniors and minors travelled to Newtown and gained two victories. Newtown meanwhile returned the compliment and travelled to us and we gained a first year win and a junior draw. A successful finish to a long term.

We are very much up to date with our fixture list and look forward to resuming after the Christmas break.

SPIKE BALL

TY Girls have been involved in a Spike Ball Training Programme with Primary Schools which will come a close at a Blitz on January 16th. This final event in what has been a rewarding experience will raise money for the Jump For Joy Organisation. This organization funds entertainment activities for children ill in hospital.

The Spikeball programme aims to encourage female sports coaches and Villiers students enjoyed partaking in it.

They wish to thank all those who supported their recent fundraising bake-sale.

GIRLS HOCKEY

All Villiers Girls teams have had a very successful season and have shown real commitment on and off the pitch, whether at training, for which there is always a full turnout, or on the pitch for a competitive match.

The Under 15s recently played Ursulines in an away game and were deserving of the 1-0 scoreline.

This was followed by the Minors, also playing Ursulines, and again Villiers girls dominated the scoreline with a 2-0 victory.

The Under 15s were in action at home against Laurel Hill and yet again produced another fine performance with a final scoreline of 2-0

The Minors were not as successful in their match against Laurel Hill but they put in a committed performance.

More of the same is expected when the girls play C.C.C and Ursuline 1s in 2009. Well done to all players for your commitment.

BOYS RUGBY

Mr Fennell is working tirelessly at maintaining the strong Villiers rugby tradition and has had some successes this year.

However, the first and second year boys have not yet shown the commitment required from a schools team and a serious rethink is needed if they are to achieve their potential. An improved turnout at training is required for the New Year.

Current Villiers boys are more than capable of following in the footsteps of Stephen Harvey (LC 2008), Denis Murphy, Robert O'Donoghue & Cathal Reynolds in achieving Munster caps.

Well done to the juniors who have fought some very tight matches...much is expected from you in 2009.



TRANSITION YEAR UPDATE

GREEN SCHOOLS UPDATE

We have met with representatives from Mr. Binman to investigate ways of increasing our recycling within school and reducing our waste disposal costs.

A pilot scheme to increase our paper recycling within the classroom environment will commence in the 'old block' after Christmas. Cardboard paper recycling boxes will be installed in all classrooms. We ask for your help and assistance to get this off the ground.

Green Schools Art Competition - can entries please be handed in to Mr. Atkinson, Danielle O'Sullivan or Lisa McCullagh as soon as possible.

Damian Shorten

TY OUTDOOR PURSUITS

TY's have been taking part in outdoor pursuits since the beginning of term. Students were provided with the opportunity of partaking in a variety of activities, from caving and rock climbing in the Burren to pony trekking in the Slieve Bloom Mountains.

The lucky TY's also got to go horse-riding and orienteering in addition to sailing in Dromineer Yacht Club and hiking on Keeper Hill. All of these activities are geared towards team building and character building.

Our final Outdoor pursuits trip of the term takes us to Curraghchase Forest Park, situated between Adare and Askeaton on Monday December 22nd. This is the annual Orienteering Transition Year competition, so get out your raingear, compasses and sturdy walking shoes to see which TYs are Orienteering Kings/Queens.

Thanks to all the teachers who have accompanied us on these excursions. All in all a very busy, enjoyable and successful terms activities.

Mr. N. Atkinson

SANTA VISITS THOMOND PARK

The new Thomond Park stadium played host to Santa on Sunday 12th of December. So close to that special day and travelling from the North Pole, he was unable to bring Mrs Claus, his reindeers or elves with him.

The students and teachers of Villiers were called on to help: Ms O'Sullivan and her heavenly choir entertained splendidly, producing a sound that Santa wanted to take back to the North Pole.

An unknown teacher donned a red guna, grey hair dye and a basket of lollies fulfilling the role of Mrs Claus, so that Santa didn't feel to alone!

The TY's were very able elves, providing entertainment, such as face-painting, colouring and general child friendly activities. Three junior students also ably assisted with tours of the park and museum.

Once again, Villiers came to the rescue and helped to recreate the magic of Christmas for many families.

Rebecca & Claire

ENTERPRISE

On Monday 15th December, judges from Limerick Enterprise Board came view the Enterprise projects that TY students are currently working on.

Students have been hard at work since September and this was evident in the displays they set up to demonstrate their products and services.

The day went well and the Enterprise Board showed great interest in the mini-projects. Some budding Entrepreneurs are in the making!

R. Byrne



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Parent Teacher Meetings:

Please note that PTMs start at 3.45 and finish at 6.45. Please come early if you wish to meet all teachers.

Form I -26th January

Forms II & V -5th February

PRE Junior/Leaving Cert:

Monday 2nd February to Friday 13th inclusive.



Nollaig Shona Dhuit

TY MUSICAL—Anything Goes

January 28th & 29th
Book your tickets now!

TY Work Experience

Commencing Monday 2nd Feb

Mid-term break:

Monday 16th —Friday 20th Feb