

SUMMER

IN THIS ISSUE:

Page 2

Big Trip

Big Vision

Page 3

Yes I Can Run

Relevant Sports

Page 4

Christmas Program

Pendants with Purpose

Page 5

A New Look

Field & Fun Day

Going Green

Social Status



John Paul II Center

SPECIAL CONNECTIONS

Page 6 & 7

Gala (Save the Date)

Page 8

Special Olympics

Page 9

Class of 2015

Page 10

Walk-A-Thon

Catholic Schools Week

Page 11

Hoagie Sale

Principal's Note



BIG TRIP

On May 15th, our secondary class went on an exciting, year-end excursion. It all started with a trip to the Giant Center in Hershey. Students got a full tour of the arena, from the basement kitchen (and the legendary hockey cow) up to the press boxes.

From there, they took a short trip to lake Tobias while enjoying a donated Sheetz lunch on the bus.

Upon arrival at the lake, everyone took a convertible bus tour of the grounds. The highlight was having the animals walk right up to the bus to be fed. The day ended with each student enjoying dinner and a trip to the gift shop to responsibly spend \$10.00.

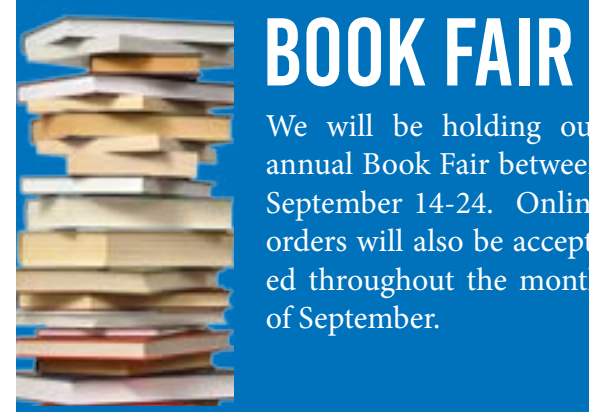


BIG VISION

We just had our "Spring Training" at Big Vision Baseball and it was a blast. The weather was great and the food was delicious.

Each class started out with stretches and warm ups. After batting practice, all of our All-Star lineups were announced over the loudspeaker, which produced a ton of smiles.

The National Anthem was played and then it was time to "PLAY BALL!"



BOOK FAIR

We will be holding our annual Book Fair between September 14-24. Online orders will also be accepted throughout the month of September.

YES I CAN RUN

On September 6th, the Geoff Penkse Buick GMC Yes I Can 5K Run/Walk was held to benefit John Paul II Center.

Over 200 people participated in support of the school and our students. The run took place along the creek at Grings Mills Park. It was a great showing, especially everyone cheering for the students at the finish line!

Thank you to Y102 and Geoff Penske for organizing a wonderful event!



RELEVANT SPORTS

Throughout the school year, our students made monthly trips to Relevant Sports, located in Temple, to get some great exercise and have some fun. Mighty Kicks - a company with the goal of developing kids through soccer - met our students at the facility to teach everyone the basics of soccer and hold a scrimmage game. A big thank you to both Relevant Sports and Mighty Kicks for treating our students to a fun learning experience.




CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

The holidays at JPII Center were full of caring, loving acts of kindness. The students enjoyed breakfast with Santa, which included a hearty meal and gifts for each student and adult. We are grateful for our friends at Knights of Columbus #8726 from St. Ignatius Loyola for hosting such a generous morning.

JPII also put on a spectacular performance for our annual Christmas program. A lot of hard work and practice went into the program from both students and teachers. In the end, the performance was a great success with a huge crowd showing up to applaud the performing artists.





Over the last year, our Secondary students have been hand-crafting some incredible pieces of artwork. “Pendants with Purpose” has grown from a small arts and crafts project to now including a wide range of pendant necklaces, pins, and keychains.

Not only has the little production grown to include a variety of designs (including those for the holidays), but the trinkets have made it into a store on Penn Avenue (West Reading) called “It’s a Gift!”. The best part is all the proceeds from Pendants with Purpose go straight to fundiing field trips, community outings, and learning materials for the students. Pendants are always available to purchase from school for \$5.00 a piece.

FIELD & FUN DAY

We joined forces with Berks Catholic again this year to give students another spectacular Field & Fun Day. Of course, they each had their Berks Catholic buddies with them for support during events like scooter sprints and three-legged races. Again this year, the fan-favorite event was the dunk tank!



NEW WAYS TO STAY IN TOUCH

HELP US GO GREEN

At John Paul II Center, we do our best to stay connected. You may have seen newsletters in the past, but this is the first issue of “Special Connections”. You can look for another edition this winter.

If you would like monthly updates on the latest JPII news and events, consider our digital edition of Special Connections. Not only do you get the inside scoop on JPII and our students, but emails help us take better care of our planet. After all, we only have one!

You can easily sign up for our email list...

Just send your email address by text message:

Text **JOHNPALCENTER** to **22828** to get started.

Message and data rates may apply.



SOCIAL STATUS

We have gone social as well! You can always get updates on our school and our students by following us on social media.



A NEW LOOK!

We recently “renovated” our website! If you go to www.johnpauliicenter.org, you will notice the entire site has been redesigned.

Not only does the site have a fresh look, but we are sure that it will be a more useful tool for those interested in JPII. The new layout provides us with a better platform to keep everyone in-the-know with updated photo albums and a front-and-center newsfeed!

THE 5TH ANNUAL LEGACY GALA

Thank you to everyone who made this year's Gala a *huge* success. Over 550 people joined us to celebrate the achievements of our students and adults and to honor Vince & Mary Lou Parisi, the recipients of this year's Halo Award. Highlighting the evening was a speech by Gina Ciabattoni, a 2014 graduate of JPII who spoke about her employment at Freedom Auto Group. Because of the generous support from our sponsors, attendees, and a very dedicated Gala committee, we were able to raise upwards of \$250,000 to benefit the school.



SAVE THE DATE

6th Annual Legacy Gala
April 16, 2016

New Venue:
DoubleTree by Hilton



2015 LEGACY GALA SPONSORS

Diamond Sponsor

National Penn

Platinum Sponsors

East Penn
Freedom Auto Group
Stevens & Lee Griffin
Wells Fargo

Gold Sponsor

Cutrona Family Foundation

Silver Sponsors

Berks Oral Surgery
Chicco USA/Artsana USA
Dr. & Mrs. Richard Close
Robert C. Dieruff at Merrill Lynch
EnerSys
The Horrigan & Dever Families
Dan & Kathy Langdon
McGladrey LLP
Reading Health System
Reading Orthodontic Group
Reinsel Kuntz Leshner LLP
St. Joseph Regional Health Network
Tompkins VIST Bank & Tompkins Insurance
Unique Desserts by Chef Anne Louise
VA Productions
W. Bradford White Jr. @ Morgan Stanley

Bronze Sponsors

Alvernia University
Connors Investors Services
Mr & Mrs James Diffendal
Discovery Federal Credit Union
Michael & Diane Duff
Edwards Business Systems
First Priority Bank
Gulati Family Foundation
Nancy Hemmerich
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Herr
Highmark Blue Shield
Jerry & Carolyn Holleran
M.P. Butterworth & Associates
Dr. & Mrs. Vincent Moffitt
Perrotto Builders, LTD.
Craig & Sue Perrotty
Ralph & Kathy Nevel
Redner's Markets Inc.
Elizabeth Rothermel
Sacred Heart Church &
Holy Rosary Church
Santander
Peter & Josephine Smith
Mr. & Mrs. Steven Snyder
Solve IT Solutions
Jim & Turie Sotzin
St. Catharine of Siena Knights
of Columbus #14880
St. Catharine of Siena Parish
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Weik
World Electronics

It was a nearly perfect day for this year's Special Olympics. With the sun shining bright, all of our students were ready for the competition, especially since they had their Berks Catholic buddies there for support!

While our Primary students had a great showing in the 50 meter, Intermediate put on their own show in the long jump. Meanwhile, Secondary finished off with some top finishes in the 400 meter. Best of all, the sportsmanship was out of this world.



SPECIAL OLYMPICS



A LOOK AT OUR GRADUATES

This year, John Paul II Center had five students graduate! While we will miss each one of them, we are very proud of what they have accomplished in their time with us and wish them well in their post-school careers.

Here's a quick look at what each student has planned:



Lavar Bethea from Antietam, PA, will be seeking competitive part-time employment at a small local business as well as seeking volunteer opportunities within his local community.



Jereck Oliver of Leesport, PA, will be participating in Prospectus Berco's Vocational Services Program, as well as seeking volunteer opportunities within his local community.



Dereck Oliver of Leesport, PA, will be participating in Prospectus Berco's Vocational Services Program, as well as seeking volunteer opportunities within his local community.



Oliver Reber of West Lawn, PA, will be assisting in volunteer opportunities within his local community at Columbia Cottage, Berks Encore, and his local library.



Zak Steiner of Stevens, PA, will be spending time with his family and participating in an adult day program after graduation.



(HIGH FIVES)



WALK-A-THON

Another great way we raise funds for our students and programming is through our Walk-A-Thon. This past fall, we had a great turnout on a rather chilly day.



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

Events during this year's Catholic Schools Week included a special Mass, making ice cream and home made instruments, group music sessions, and even Zumba, which was hosted by Full Throttle Fitness Factory.



HOAGIE SALE

In December, we conducted a hoagie sale to raise funds for the school. Even better, our students helped make each and every sub. From laying out the bread to wrapping the finished sandwich, it was a real team effort!

JPII will be holding another hoagie sale again this year, so mark your calendars!

December 4, 2016



PRINCIPAL'S NOTE

Dear Friends,

The end of the school year is always bitter sweet. This June, five students graduated from John Paul II. They have been under our wing for many years and have accomplished so much but it's time to send them off so they can make their mark in the world. It may not be the traditional track of college and then a job, but a path that will be true to them. They will take the skills they learned and integrate them into their everyday lives. It will be a route only they can take and will unknowingly touch many lives as they navigate the world. They have so much to offer and we only hope others will see the gifts they have to contribute to make this world a better place. Many people will be fortunate to have them cross their path in life. It has always been our goal to prepare them for the time after graduation when they start a new chapter in their lives; a life they and their parents can be proud of.

There will be time this summer to assess, rejuvenate, and plan for it all to begin again in September. We have many exciting plans to continue God's work and take our current students to the future where one day they will graduate and be able to become contributing members of society. Your prayers and support help us to provide a path for every individual to reach independence and their God given potential. Our newsletter is one way we can share with you all the good work you are helping us to accomplish on a daily basis. Thank you for believing in our mission. We couldn't do it without you!

Yours in Christ,
Mary Adams

John Paul II Center for Special Learning, Inc.
1092 Welsh Road
Shillington, PA 19607
www.johnpauliicenter.org



Non-Profit Org.
US Postage Paid
Reading, PA
Permit No. 716

OUR MISSION

To provide a quality individualized academic, social and religious program for children and young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities in a safe, nurturing, Christian environment that acknowledges the dignity of all learners while challenging them on a daily basis to develop their talents and reach their God-given potential.

The mission of the John Paul II Center for Special Learning is an expression and extension of the Catholic church's teaching on the sanctity of every human life.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

John Dever, Jr. (Board Chairman) *President/COO
Bills Khakis*
Kathy Nevel, PhD (Board Vice Chairman) *Adjunct
Faculty, Alvernia University*
Ted Bassano (Board Treasurer) *VP Emeritus, RACC*
Ginny Close (Board Secretary)
Virginia Dodge *Executive Producer,
VA Productions, Inc.*
Michael Duff *Senior VP and General Counsel,
Penske Truck*
Greg Eichhorn *VP for Enrollment Management &
Dean of Admission, Albright College*
Eleni Dimitriou Geishouser, Esq. *Dimitriou
Geishouser, P.C.*
Michael Herr *Managing Director, Tompkins
Insurance*
Jackie Hoffman-Wenrich *Director of Marketing/
Promotions, Yuengling's Ice Cream*
Laramie Jung *VP of Institutional Advancement,
Alvernia University*

Fr. Patrick Lamb *Asst., St. Catharine of Siena Parish*
Daniel Langdon *CEO, East Penn MFG.*
Dr. Vincent Moffitt *Pediatric Hospitalist, Reading
Health System*
Kathleen O'Brien Ellis, PhD *Secondary special
education teacher, Twin Valley School Dist.*
Craig Perrotty *SVP Fixed Income Sales,
Vining Sparks IBG*
Craig Poole *General Manager, DoubleTree Hotel*
Eric Savage *President, Freedom Auto Group*
Meg Shields *Owner, Fromuth Tennis*
W. Bradford White, Jr. *Sr. VP, Senior Wealth Manager,
Morgan Stanley*
Chester Winters *Dir. of Information Technology,
RACC*
Mary Adams *Principal*
Becky Burton *Director of Advancement*
Brooke Cortese Tesche, Ed.D. *Deputy Superintendent
of Secondary Education and Special Education*
Mike Mizak, *Business Manager*