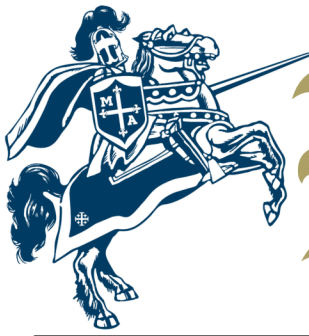




Knightly News

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 4

MAY 2026

HOW HAS 8TH GRADE CHANGED? THEN VERSE NOW

BY THOMAS MILLER

Eighth grade... the last year of middle school/junior high. The runner-up to high school. We are almost done with the year. We are almost done with the year. We have almost reached high school. We are growing up, and we have changed over the years, not just as a class but also personally. Part of it may have been the influences on our lives, and other parts may have included: readiness for the end, maturity, or lack thereof, or even our insecurities.

The 8th-grade class of 2026 (2030 for high school) has undergone many changes throughout the years; whether that be gaining or losing students, gaining maturity, friend groups, etc. We have had many teachers, and they have all had their opinions on us. There have been varying degrees of approval, annoyance, impatience, and enjoyment. One of our previous teachers, Mrs. Gammons, described us in her class as “a really diverse group, but all very nice and charismatic.” She believed that “everyone seemed to get along pretty well,” meaning we were probably more friendly with each other. These descriptions of our classes are from about four years ago, which just puts into perspective how young we were.

Another teacher who has known our class for a long time is the Spanish teacher, Mrs. Leiterez. She has taught us since second grade. She has had our class for about seven years and has watched us grow and mature. She said that, “last year you guys were way more attentive, again eager to learn, this year you guys are ready to be done and move onto high school.” She and other teachers have said that in eighth grade you develop a kind of ‘8th grade-itis’ which is mostly just a readiness to be done with school and junior high. She also says that the main things that have changed are our attention and focus.



(CONTINUE ON PAGE 28)

BEHIND THE SCENES WITH MS. PAM AND MR. DAVE

BY BRYCE HERMANN

Every morning, as kids enter classrooms, their minds are rarely on the ones who sweep hallways overnight, clear garbage bins, or check soap dispensers. Yet those quiet workers, our school custodians, hold schools together by making spaces functional and less chaotic. Their work is unseen but essential.

Custodians handle a wide range of jobs that keep spaces functional. Floors get swept and mopped by them when dirt builds up throughout the day. Classrooms are wiped down after students leave desks smudged and dirty. Spills appear without warning; someone always has to deal with them quickly. Because germs spread easily, surface cleaning is a critical step. Their presence supports nearly every school system in operation.

When something goes wrong, a wobbly chair, a flickering bulb, it's usually the janitor who shows up. Fixing things falls into their hands just as much as sweeping floors does. Most times, they're expected to tighten screws or replace simple parts without calling outside help. Knowing how to use a wrench or swap out a light bulb becomes part of the routine. Their role stretches beyond mops and brooms, quietly keeping spaces functional.

Before sunrise or after sunset, janitors are always working to keep the school working. Their presence fades into the background, yet the halls stay clear because of steady effort. Quiet moments between school hours become chances to reset spaces. Though unseen during lessons, their routine shapes each new day just the same. They stand on their feet for hours with the task.

Most people overlook janitors, yet their work keeps things running. Schools turn messy fast if they aren't around. A tidy room means fewer germs.

A janitor's role often goes unnoticed, yet they shape daily school life. Not only do they tidy spaces, but they also quietly support the flow of each day.



CONFIRMATION AND ITS EFFECTS

BY GERARD COOPER

Ever wonder what effect Confirmation has on your soul? When you get confirmed in your faith journey, it may be a big step in your faith as a Catholic when you do receive that sacrament. There are many sacraments that you may receive in your time as a Catholic, but Confirmation is different from other sacraments. Confirmation has many parts that involve many necessary things you have to do for the sacrament. When you get confirmed, it has many effects that it has on your mind and soul.

Leading up to even being able to be confirmed, you need to be baptized. Baptism gets rid of your original sin, and if you do not have original sin cleansed from you, it will block the gifts of the Holy Spirit that you receive. If you do not go to Confession and you have sins on your soul, the gifts of the Holy Spirit will also be blocked from entering you. Even if you do not go to confession and still try to receive Confirmation, there will be an indelible mark still placed on your soul. But the gifts of the Holy Spirit will not be given to you.

There are seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. Those gifts are piety, understanding, fortitude, wisdom, awe/fear of the lord, counsel, and knowledge. These gifts give you God's grace to avoid sin and continue on your journey to heaven.

When you are confirmed, you get a new name. This new name symbolizes the new mission God has given you. You pick this name before Confirmation. One thing not to do is just to pick a random saint. You want to pick a saint with whom you relate to their story, their background, and what they are patrons of. The saint you pick matters. That saint becomes a role model for you. You can pray to your saint, and they will come down and guide you in your troubles and uplift you in your time of need.

At Confirmation, you have a sponsor who will be there when you get Confirmed. They will be a witness to you receiving the sacrament. They will be there to guide you in your faith and your journey to heaven. At Confirmation, they will put their hand on your shoulder and stand there while you get Confirmed. Before you get confirmed, you need to renew your vows that were made at Baptism for you by your godparents. The Bishop will ask you if you renounce the devil and all his evil works. Which you answer "I do". You are also asked if you believe in God, the Holy Spirit, to which you respond "I do." After that has taken place, after a little while, you will be confirmed by the bishop. When you get confirmed, the bishop anoints you with chrism on your forehead in a sign of the cross. He says "your Confirmation name then be sealed with the gifts of the holy spirit." Then the recipient says "amen." Next, the bishop says "Peace be with you", after which the recipient will respond with "And with your spirit." Then the bishop and the recipient shake hands. Then you go back to your seat, and the mass goes on.

After you have received Confirmation, if you have no sin on your soul, you will have received the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which guide you to be more like God and to help you stay on the right path to heaven. The gifts also help to spread the word of God to the people around us and boldly proclaim his word. God had given this sacrament to us to make us like his apostles and speak the word just as the apostles did after Pentecost.



OUTDOOR PLAY AND THE BENEFITS

BY ANGELICA STAWIARSKI

Playing outside for preschoolers is not only fun, but also good for them. According to research, playing outside can help preschoolers relax, have better imagination, calm them down, and help them focus better. Preschoolers have a lot of energy, and most of the time, it's hard for them to focus. However, when they are outside playing, it can help them focus and do their work. Playing outside can also keep preschoolers more entertained than playing inside. Not only does the outdoors help preschoolers it also helps all different ages.



HIGH-FIVES AND GOODBYES

BY SULLIVAN AUTER

It is the end of the year in Pre-K, so when Ms. Markey was asked if they had any parties planned before the end of the year, she stated the following. Ms. Markey said, “We do! We have our high-fives and goodbyes on the last day of preschool year for just the 3-year-olds. They will come in on a regular day at 10 am. Their parents will come to the cafeteria and we will have some cookies and some juice and they will say their goodbyes and take pictures then they’ll head home for the summer.” Ms. Markey was also asked how many kids would be there and she said “theres 12 in my class and Ms. Maddie has 10 so 22 in all i believe” I then spoke with one student named Sander. He is 4 years old and in Ms. Markey’s class. I asked him what he was going to do at the party, and he said, “I think I’m getting presents, and I am going to tell some friends goodbye.”



NEXT STOP...KINDERGARTEN

BY LANEY RUDDICK

Ms.Jewett’s Preschool class has overcome a lot of challenges this school year. Their year has been very good, but there are always a few hard days. During this year, they have learned self- help skills like putting on their coats and how to zip them. They’ve also learned how to be independent and clean up after themselves. Students have made friendships and learned how to treat and talk to one another. A few of the empowered preschool students in Ms. Jewett’s class were interviewed, and they said theyre scared to go into kindergarten. Overall, they’re ready to meet new people and learn new things. They said theyre ready to learn more about God. It’s really important to keep their faith going as they grow up so they can get a better understanding of our Lord and all He’s done for us. We are so excited for the kids to experience new things as they go into Kindergarten.



PREPARING FOR KINDERGARTEN

BY HANNAH SKELLY

Is your preschooler ready for kindergarten? If not, here are some ways for them to prepare. You can get a kindergarten workbook, and you can get them coloring supplies. What Mrs. Mac does is she makes a kinder binder for them. In the binder are name trace and letter A-Z practice sheets, number practice sheets, sight words, and more. They use a dry-erase marker and can practice over the summer. Also, there are sight words, letters, numbers, shapes, and color flash cards. Mrs Mac also plans activities that challenge them a little more every month by adding new concepts and more to the center areas. When asked about what she thinks they will miss most about preschool, she said, “They will miss their teachers and the play centers. Kindergarten is more academic and not as much play.” The next question asked was, what was their favorite thing to learn? According to their teacher, “They enjoyed learning about animals, bugs, and different things they showed an interest in, and then we went more in-depth into that.” What are they most excited about in kindergarten was the next thing discussed. Mrs. Mac states, “They are excited to play off the squishy playground and go on field trips.” Finally, the interview concluded wiht the last question, what are they most excited to learn? Mrs. Mac reports that students are, “,,excited to learn to read.”



KINDERGARTEN SHARES THOUGHTS ON LIFE

BY CAMERON MUCCI

Three kindergarten students, Vinnie Babiak, Theo Jackson, and Kane Mumma, were asked a few questions about life. Here are the questions that were asked and their answers.

What is the best part of being 5 or 6?

- **Kane:** "Fitting in different places."
- **Theo:** "Being in kindergarten."
- **Vinnie:** "Going to the Trampoline park."

Where do teachers live?

- **Kane:** "House"
- **Theo:** "Car"
- **Vinnie:** "Barn"

What makes a good person?

- **Kane:** "Doing kind stuff."
- **Theo:** "Helping people."
- **Vinnie:** "Going to church."

What makes someone old?

- **Kane:** "50"
- **Theo:** "90"
- **Vinnie:** "100"

What is the best part of recess?

- **Kane:** "Getting to play."
- **Theo:** "Bringing cards."
- **Vinnie:** "Playing Kickball"



THINKING AHEAD TO SECOND GRADE

BY DOMINIC CHERVENY

When the 1st grade class was asked if 2nd grade would be as fun as 1st grade, everyone had different ideas. Some students thought 2nd grade would be harder because the math and schoolwork might get more difficult. Other students thought it would still be fun because they could make new friends and learn new things. A few kids said they thought 2nd grade would be both fun and challenging at the same time. Some students were excited about moving to the next grade, while others were nervous about it. Even though there were many different opinions, most of the class agreed that 2nd grade probably would not be as fun as 1st grade.

SECOND GRADE LOOKS AHEAD

BY MICHAEL MILLER

Second grade is getting excited for third grade with Mrs. Zollars. When talking about what they are looking forward to, the answers were a mix. To help narrow it down, ten students were asked to write their top two or three things they are looking forward to in 3rd grade. Seven students are looking forward to a new teacher, while six students are looking forward to Zollars Dollars. Additionally, six students are looking forward to being upstairs with the older kids. Five students are looking forward to a new curriculum, and four students are looking forward to a new schedule. There was only one student who was looking forward to a new classroom. After reviewing the results, they are more excited about getting a new teacher overall, but individually, they are more excited for Zollars Dollars.

THIRD-GRADE PREDICTS THE FUTURE

BY DANIELA MELENDEZ

By the time third graders at Marquette start going to their jobs and having adult lives, a lot in the world will have changed. Technology is not that advanced yet, and people are forced to hope and believe they will have an opportunity to have a good chance at life. Our next generation has big shoes to fill while caring for their own hopes and dreams. Our third graders have a lot to say about the future. Fifteen out of twenty-two students said that in the future, artificial intelligence and robots will take over; however, with the world's current condition, it's not a far-fetched idea. A lot of the students are also expecting World War 3 to happen, but some of the others are expecting more wholesome things, such as hoping for the first female President or eternal world peace. They also have future expectations for themselves. For example, good jobs or pets. In other terms, our future is in good hands!



4TH GRADE LOOKS AHEAD TO FIFTH GRADE

BY SHANE PARKER AND MRS. BABIAK



As the school year starts coming to an end, many 4th-grade students are getting ready to move on to 5th grade. Some students are excited because they will get more responsibilities and learn new things. Others are a little nervous because they know the homework and classwork will probably be harder. Teachers have been helping students prepare by teaching them to stay organized, complete assignments on time, and work more independently. Many students are also looking forward to new activities, projects, and making new friends next year. Even though 5th grade may be more challenging, most students think it will still be fun. Moving to a new grade can be scary at first, but the 4th graders seem ready for the challenge ahead.

ADVICE FOR 5TH GRADERS AS THE MOVE ON TO JUNIOR HIGH

BY CARTER JOHNSON

Junior high can be fun sometimes, but it can also be very stressful because there is more homework, more teachers, and more classes. It might feel like a lot at first, but there are ways to make junior high easier. Being organized and getting your homework done is the first thing to always do. Do not wait until the last minute! Also, be sure to get enough sleep. This is very important because if you don't get enough sleep, you are making school harder on yourself. After all, it's harder to focus. The biggest thing is not to sit in silence. If you don't understand, the teachers are willing to help you... just ask!.



THE CHALLENGES OF SIXTH GRADE

BY MASON LYONS AND MRS. BABIAK

As the school year comes to an end, many 6th grade students are getting ready for the changes that come with the next school year. Some students are excited about having more freedom, meeting new teachers, and trying new activities. Others feel nervous because the classes will become harder and there will be more responsibility. Teachers have been encouraging students to stay organized, study more often, and manage their time wisely. Many students are also looking forward to sports, clubs, and spending time with their friends next year. Even though the work may be more challenging, most students believe they are ready to take the next step. Moving up can feel stressful, but the 6th graders are preparing themselves for a successful future.

ADVICE FOR NEXT YEAR'S 8TH GRADERS

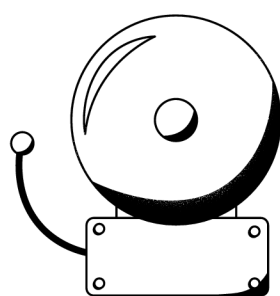
BY LOGAN SCHNEIDER

As an 8th grader, here is some advice for the upcoming 8th graders. One of the biggest things is staying organized. Staying organized can look different with different methods. The easiest method to stay organized is to use a planner and a coded binder. Using a planner can make sure you can get your homework done and on time. Having a coded binder can help you keep your assignments and graded work separate so you can stay organized. The second biggest thing is asking questions. Asking questions to teachers is the best way to retain and understand the assignments. With questions, you can learn about homework, papers, and projects. And the third piece of advice is staying out of drama. Staying out of drama will help you make and keep friends. Not being in drama will make it easier to work and complete assignments. This is the best advice for 7th graders going into 8th grade.

EIGHTH GRADERS LOOK AHEAD TO HIGH SCHOOL

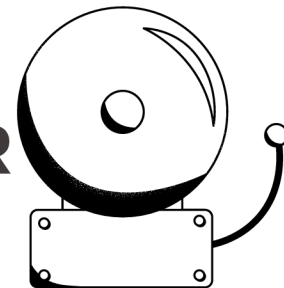
BY FIONA MCGRATH

The eighth graders have a very short amount of time left in school, and then they are off to high school in the fall. Going to high school comes with a lot of changes: The classes get bigger, there is more work, sports practices are more demanding, and there will also be longer school days. Some of the eighth graders have pretty strong opinions on whether or not they liked these changes. Though lots of the responses were just guesses on how they will feel in the upcoming year. Griffin Novotney says, "I am nervous, after a while I will be ok." Laney Ruddick says, "I'm excited for high school." Most students have a slight idea of what to do in high school. They also know what they are most excited about. Nick Grube says, "meeting new people and playing sports" are what he's most excited about. Stella Moline is most excited for "meeting new people and being in fun classes that I get to choose, and getting to learn new subjects." The eighth-grade class right now has 25 students. As we enter high school, the average class size ranges 30 to 40 students. Laney Ruddick says, "Scared because I will be nervous to present or speak in front of the larger group. I'm also excited to meet new people and make new friends." A nice thing about Marquette is the accelerated grading scale, which can make students work harder and push them further. The eighth graders will be getting more work, which will make them busy. Griffin Novotney says, "The work gets me nervous, but I will try to adjust to all of it." With all the work comes more independence and fun in high school. Good luck to all the eighth graders with the next four years in high school.



LIFE BETWEEN BELLS: THOUGHTS ON NEXT SCHOOL YEAR

BY JORDYN RIX



It's the first day of school, and you feel excited, but also nervous for school to start; A new schedule and new people. Fast forward nine months... You just got back to school from Spring Break. You go to your classes. Some teachers already have the days til summer break on the board. "20 days left", you think to yourself. Then you realize, "Oh my," twenty days left until summer. For the eighth graders, they are probably thinking "20 days left?" But that's the last thing on their minds. The 8th graders have so much coming up. They had to prepare for confirmation, one of the seven sacraments, specifically the last Sacrament of Initiation. They also have been studying for the Illinois Constitution test, while 7th grade on the other hand is busy working on the U.S. Constitution test. Eighth grade is also preparing for Graduation on May 19, 2026. The rest of the students, specifically in K-4, have ABC- Countdown going on on the last day of school.

I had a conversation with Fiona McGrath, an eighth grader at Marquette. I asked her how she feels going into high school, and she said, "I'm excited for all the new experiences, but nervous for the harder work and more responsibilities." Seventh grade is also going to be held at a higher responsibility next year as eighth graders. This can bring a sense of nervousness to those students. It's not just the two grades mentioned; it can be any grade. They can feel nervous about new teachers, harder academic pressure, and changing socially, mentally, and physically. This is completely normal because of new changes in your life, including a new school year.

In conclusion, summer is almost here. Which means it's almost back-to-school shopping and the Fourth of July. See you next year!

CURRENT EVENTS: ARTEMIS II

BY NOAH RODRIGUEZ

The Artemis II mission was an important mission by NASA that happened in 2026. It was the first mission in more than 50 years or more that astronauts went around the moon. The astronauts did not land, instead they went around the moon.

The artemis II mission lasted 10 days, with a splash down on April 10, 2026. The crew launched on April 1, 2026 to conduct a historic lunar flyby, testing the Orion spacecraft's systems for future landings. This mission was designed as a stepping stone to establish a long-term human presence on the moon and prepare for future Mars missions.

The Artemis II mission had four astronauts on board. Their names were Reid Wiseman; he was the commander and was a formal Navy pilot. The next was Victor Glover; he was the pilot, previously he piloted Space X and he was the first African American to go on this type of mission. Christina Hammock Koch was the third, and she was the mission specialist, she holds the record for the longest flight by a female, and will be the first woman to land on the moon. The last astronaut was Jeremy Hansen. He is a mission specialist, and he is the first Canadian to travel beyond low earth orbit point.

Artemis II mission is significant because it was the first 10 day crewed lunar flyby, marking the first time humans ventured beyond low Earth orbit since 1972. It tested the Orion spacecraft's crew systems and validated the rocket for deep space exploration, paving the way for future landings and maybe in the future explorations of Mars.

INSIDE JUNIOR HIGH RELIGION: GET TO KNOW MS. WONG

BY CULLEN DEMINK



Miss Wong is the religion teacher at Marquette Academy Elementary School for 5th-8th grade. She was born in 2002 in Galesburg, Illinois. When Miss Wong was growing up, she wanted to be a park ranger, but when she turned fourteen, she got her first job detasseling corn. During her time in high school, she was receiving the sacrament of confession, and whilst she was talking to the priest, she realized that she could never become a better person on her own. She realized that no matter how hard she tried on her own, she would be stuck in her old ways without God's help. At that moment,

she began relying on God to change her, instead of herself. For college, she attended Franciscan University of Steubenville, and she also studied abroad in Austria. She majored in Theology and Catechetics with a concentration in youth ministry. She is very grateful for having the opportunity to go to college due to the fact that it was a time that God used to shape her into who He created her to be. Some highlights of her experience in college were being able to serve on mission trips and having the ability to study abroad in Austria. Overall, her time in college shaped her into the person she is today.

When Miss Wong was in college, she didn't plan on teaching. But when she started her senior year of college, she felt the lord call her to teach after graduation. The more she started to pray about it, the more confident she became about it, and that it was God's calling to her. She wouldn't change anything about her life due to the fact that God has brought good out of everything, even her mistakes. Her parting words for eighth grade are remember how much god loves you and pray every day

FROM STUDENT TO SECRETARY: MRS. MCCONNAUGHAY

BY OLIVIA ENTWISTLE

In 1995, Mrs. Mindy McConnaughay, high school secretary and volleyball coach, began to attend school at Marquette Academy High School. Mrs. McConnaughay started school at Marquette when she was a freshman and attended grade school at St. Anthony Grade School in Streator. Mrs. McConnaughay attended school with Mrs. Markey and Mrs. Rick. Mrs. McConnaughay was involved in softball, basketball, volleyball, cheerleading, and track but her favorite sport out of them all was softball. Although she was involved in so many sports, she wishes she would have gotten more involved with the fine arts and other clubs. The most important thing she learned from Marquette was "I learned how to grow in my faith and in my friendship with God. Marquette helped me grow into the person I am today." If she could give one piece of advice to her younger self,



she would say, "Work hard in the classroom. Your grades matter so much more than you realize! Hit the weight room, it helps with all of your sports and your future self will thank you for investing in your health at a young age." Her favorite memory from high school is going on the senior retreat. After she graduated from high school in 1999, then went off to college at Monmouth College, where she majored in Criminal Justice. She ended up transferring from criminal justice to studying early childhood education. In 2003, Sarah Griffin approached Mrs. McConnaughey about coaching JV volleyball for Marquette. Just a few years later in 2007, Mr. Spandet interviewed her for the admissions director position. "My youngest daughter was going into Kindergarten and it was perfect timing and a great job!" In 2012, she was asked to move over and work in the main office, and was then asked to be the athletic secretary in 2020. After coaching at Marquette for 23 years and working at Marquette for 19 years, she said her favorite memory has been "Definitely working with the kids and seeing them grow into amazing adults. I have been lucky that my co-workers have become like family. I can't imagine my life without them." Without Mrs. McConnaughay our schools wouldn't be as great as they are today!

FUTURE JOBS: PHYSICAL THERAPY

BY CARTER NOONAN

In this article, you will get an up-close look at physical therapy. You will learn what the pay is, the benefits of going to physical therapy, the perks of being a physical therapist, and what the roles are in the physical therapy industry.

PT and Treatment Plans

A physical therapist's main job is to give or diagnose treatment plans, give physical and sports limitations, and come up with rehabilitation plans. They also give most patients exercises to improve their quality of life or to prevent future injuries.

Salary information

Most new or starting physical therapists make anywhere from \$65,000 to \$85,000 as a yearly salary. While the top earning \$130,000 to \$150,000 per year. Lastly, specialized, experienced therapists working for hospitals, or big sports teams make anywhere from \$170,00 to \$500,000 plus per year.

Becoming a PT

First, you have to earn a Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) from a college. Some good colleges for physical therapy include: University of Delaware, University of Pittsburgh, and University of Southern Florida (USC). The process of getting a DPT takes about 3 years, and then you have to pass the National Physical Therapy Examination (obtaining a state license). In total, the process of completing your education, including a bachelor's degree and a DPT, generally takes 6 to 8 years. If you want to become a specialist, after you complete your licensure, you can pursue a clinical residency or fellowship program.

Additional PT Roles

Other roles in physical therapy that aren't considered an actual PT are a Utilization Reviewer. A utilization reviewer's role is to check in with a patient to check on what their needs are and if medical attention is necessary. They also review medical records, make sure the plans are cost-effective, and make sure that the plans are compliant with insurance guidelines. Most utilization reviewers work between providers and plans to ensure that unnecessary costs are cut. They try to cut off unnecessary costs so that the patient can afford the treatments. The pay of a utilization reviewer can range from \$65,00 to \$100,000 per year. The beginner range is from \$65,00 to \$78,000. Once you gain experience, you could make \$85,000 to \$90,000 per year. Lastly, top earners make anywhere from \$100,000 to \$120,000 per year.

Becoming a Utilization Reviewer

To become a utilization reviewer, you need to have a background in healthcare or nursing. First, you need to be a registered nurse (RN) with 2-3 years of clinical experience and an associate's degree in nursing. If you have a BSN, you could get a higher role quickly. Some of the top schools to get your BSN from include: Duke University, University of Pennsylvania, and Emory University. Some premier schools are John Hopkins, New York University, and the University of Michigan, which specialize in nursing.

If you're interested, schooling and extending schooling help get better degrees, which can almost always bring in more opportunities and money. Getting your bachelor's or master's degree is a great step for a higher success rate of getting a high role at any job in your chosen field. If you think any of these roles are for you and you're interested in the PT field then start researching at the ATPA (American Physical Therapy Association) today.

MARQUETTE ACADEMY

GOLD SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT

BY RITA MCCLAUGHLIN

As one of Marquette’s Gold sponsors, Ottawa Children’s Dentistry has been serving its patients for over 40 years. The dentistry is run by Dr. Bobbi Laun. The team is made up of many skilled hygienists including: Angela, Emily, Alayna, Laurie, Kerry, Bridgette, Alexis, Alex, and Michelle. The Ottawa Dentistry is located in Ottawa, on 1704 Polaris Circle. According to their website, Ottawa Children’s Dentistry’s mission is to “provide specialized and comprehensive care for infants, children and adolescents, as well as patients with special needs in a friendly and safe environment with a focus on prevention and education for the families. We are committed to customizing a child’s treatment for behavior needs, age, and extent of care always with a philosophy of excellence.”



Another one of Marquette’s Gold sponsors is Ottawa Catholic. Community. The community is run by Msgr. Meridian, and is located on 122 W. Washington Street, in Ottawa, IL. Two additional priests are working in this community as well - Father Nicolas Wilson and Father Patrick Wille. Ottawa Catholic Community, according to their website, is “St. Brigid Parish is a family of parishes in the city of Ottawa, IL. Saint Columba and Saint Patrick are under the care of priests of the diocese of Peoria” Mass time for the two churches are below:



Saint Columba Church

Tuesday: 8:30am
Wednesday: 5:30pm
Thursday: 8:30am
Saturday: 7:30am, 4pm
Sunday: 7am, 9am, 11:30am (Spanish)

Saint Patrick Church

Monday through Friday: 7am
Sunday: 8am and 11:30am

GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL BALL AND HOW PLAYING CITY BALL CAN HELP

BY ALIVIA ANDREONI

For girls who like softball, this time can be a great time to make your skills better for the next season. Here are two things you can do in your off season: stay active and build strength. Off-season workouts can build strength and improve fitness. A mix of strength training, cardio, and flexibility exercises will make your athleticness better. Little workouts like bodyweight squats, lunges, and push-ups can be done anywhere around your house. More activities like jogging, biking, or swimming keep your heart going and help your health. Joining a gym can be good for young athletes: Working on Your Skills, Softball is a sport that is both mental and teamwork. Make some time each week to practice throwing, catching, and batting, and if you're a pitcher, you can practice pitching. You can set up a hitting station in your backyard and even your basement during the winter. Doing local camps during the winter months that focus on certain skills are great. These moments not only improve your game but also connect you with other players who share your love of softball. You'll be ready to play when the next softball season comes up.



THE LITTLE LEAGUE WORLD SERIES

BY GRIFFIN NOVOTNEY

The Little League World Series is an annual, baseball tournament for kids that are 10-12 years old. It is held every August in South Williamsport, Pennsylvania. There is 20 teams, 10 from the U.S. and 10 International teams. The tournament is double elimination which means a team has to lose twice before they are eliminated. In the finals the U.S. champion plays the International champion to determine the overall World Series champion. The games are six innings. It is a smaller field, the pitchers mound is 46 feet from home plate, and the bases are 60 feet apart. There are also pitch counts. A player has mandatory rest days to protect their arms. The Little League World Series is a place to cheer and build community with the world.



MILES DON'T STOP: OFF-SEASON CROSS COUNTRY TRAINING, PART 2

BY ELLIOTT EDGCOMB

Cross country is a sport that many people enjoy, but you have to train hard and stay disciplined throughout the whole year to be ready for the season. There are many different ways to train, like working out to build strength and help lower the chance of injuries while running. Another way to train is by going to a local running trail and running a certain distance every day. All of that training will not help much if you do not eat healthy foods too. Eating right means having lots of protein, fruits, and vegetables to keep your body strong and full of energy. Cross country can be difficult sometimes, but it is also really fun when you improve and reach your goals. Many runners also enjoy spending time with their teammates and cheering each other on during races.



A LOOK BEHIND THE SCENES: CHEERLEADING PRACTICE

BY ANNABELLE HAIDUKE

What does cheer practice look like? To start, we all meet up in the cafeteria and put all of our phones, bags, water bottles, etc. on chairs. Then, we get our shoes on and start stretching while waiting for everyone to get there. Once everyone is here, we get into two or three rows. After that, we go over every single cheer three to five times, depending on how clean, sharp, and loud we are. Once we go over all the cheers we know, we begin to learn new ones. Then, depending on how many minutes of practice we have left, we go to the gym to practice jumps, stunts, and tumbling. Finally, practice is over! We go back to the cafeteria, grab our stuff and head home.

Before a game, we meet in the cafeteria for a couple of minutes, then we go to the hallway to work on cheers. If the game is not at home, we find a spot in the school to go over the cheers. When we are done, we go to the gym and work on tumbling and stunting before the game starts.

How do the cheerleaders feel at practice vs. at a game? In 7th grade a student, Jordyn Rix, said, “before practice you know like you’re excited cause you’re with your friends and you get to learn new stuff but like when you’re at a game, you get a bit nervous because like you’re like oh well if I mess up on this cheer, everyone will notice but you just have to remember that you’re probably the only one who knows this is it so just go on with the cheer and I think you’ll be fine.” Another student in 7th grade Clara Blood, said, “for practice. I’m kinda excited, but for games I’m somewhat nervous, but also really excited. So everyone is excited for practice, but when it comes to games, we get pretty nervous.”



A LOOK AHEAD INTO MARQUETTE BOYS BASEKTBALL IN 2026-2027

BY NOAH NOVOTNEY

Marquette basketball had a great season this year, and could do the same next year. The seventh graders lost in the regional this year and are ready to go next season. They played great, and with the summer to develop and get some potentially new kids, they will be back playing hard. The six graders are going into seventh grade, which is a big jump, but it is nothing they can't handle. A lot of them have already played for up to a year. There are a lot of players who are athletic. The upcoming 6th graders are a big class, talented, and can do really well. The upcoming 5th graders will get their first year of school basketball. They played good basketball in intramurals and will bring the same energy next year. Let's have a good season next year, boys!



PREPARING FOR NEXT SEASON: HOW TO TRAIN AND BE READY WHEN ITS TIME

BY MRS. BABIAK

Many middle school basketball players think the work starts when the season begins, but the offseason is actually one of the most important times to improve. During the offseason, players have the chance to work on their skills without the pressure of games every week. Many athletes spend time practicing shooting, dribbling, passing, and defense to prepare for next season. Some players also join camps, summer leagues, or open gyms to get extra experience against different competition.

Conditioning is another important part of offseason training. Running, lifting weights, and doing agility drills can help players become faster, stronger, and more confident on the court. Coaches often remind athletes that staying in shape during the offseason makes it easier once practices begin again. Eating healthy foods and getting enough sleep are also important because they help the body recover after workouts.

The offseason is not only about physical training, though. Many players also watch basketball games and study how skilled players move, pass, and communicate with teammates. Learning the mental side of the game can help athletes make smarter decisions during real games. Practicing good teamwork and having a positive attitude are also important parts of becoming a better basketball player.

Even though offseason training can be hard work, many players enjoy seeing themselves improve over time. The athletes who stay dedicated during the offseason often feel more prepared and confident when basketball season finally starts again.

LADY KNIGHTS 7TH AND 8TH WRAP UP HISTORY-MAKING SEASONS

BY MACKENZIE HAMM

The Seventh and Eighth Grade teams are coached by Mindy McConnaughay. She also coaches the High - School volleyball team. Both the Seventh and Eighth teams finished the season with the titles of “Conference Champions” and “State Runner - up”. With the “State Runner - up” title, they were also the first Seventh and Eighth grade Volleyball teams to go to state, while also getting second. Mrs. McConnaughay says “It’s a phenomenal feeling” to have her teams make Marquette history. I don’t think people realize how rare it is to make a state final to begin with, let alone two in one season and in the same sport is extremely rare.” She says. What makes this team so good is that they played as a team and never let personal goals outshine the team goals.”Mrs. McConnaughay can wholeheartedly say they left their legacy all on the floor.”

The seventh-grade team finished its season with a record of 26 wins and two losses. The eighth-grade team finished with a record of 22 wins and three losses. Mrs. McConnaughay says both teams are very motivated to win. I think they hate losing more than I do. He thinks what helped motivate both teams for these tournaments was that they road tripped to each others’ post season games, and to see the love that both teams have for each other is unmatched. They were also definitely motivated by the state merch. At the end of the season, they had an assembly for these teams, along with the high - school team who went to state. Over the season, the team celebrated these postseason wins with team dinners at Bianchi’s pizza and am’s pizza. Both teams have grown stronger as individuals, as well as a team, throughout this season. Mrs. McConnaughay thinks “It was so exciting to see both teams’ hard work pay off was so gratifying. It had been a goal of both teams to make it.to state so to see it happen was absolutely awesome!



A LOOK BACK AT SUMMER VACATION THEN VERSE NOW

BY ROGER FINDLEY

Let's explore the change between the 90s and the 2020s in how kids spent their summer. I spoke with my mother, Beth Findley.

1990

Q: *What did you do during the summer when you were a kid?*

A: Lots of swimming in the pool in the backyard and hanging out at the creek behind my grandma's house. We liked to catch tadpoles and crawdads.

Q: *What did you do with your friends?*

A: My friends and I liked to go to shops and walk around. Paint each others' nails. Played board games.

Q *What did you do if you couldn't go outside?*

A: If stuck inside, we played cards with Grandpa, board games or watched movies. Played Super Nintendo. Played a lot of piano.

Q *Were there any popular hangout spots?*

A: Lived in the country, so there were not really any hangout spots. just different friends' houses. Wal-Mart.

2026

Middle schoolers will participate in group activities with each other, like going to a pool or a friend's house. Many kids will attend summer camps, such as STEM or outdoor camps. Others might have hobbies like coding, art, and reading. Some families will go on a vacation to places like Florida.



STUDENT COUNCIL: 2025-2026 YEAR IN REVIEW

BY KALLYN DISS

Student Council 2025-2026 is coming to a close. Student Council has worked so hard all year . They have done many fundraisers and events to help the school and some local charities. They had a bake sale, donation dance, ice cream sale, and more. All of the donations from the dance went to the Pet Project. Jordan Rix said that it was her favorite fundraiser because they “got to help the community”. They are very proud of this year and all they have accomplished. The eighth graders have done an amazing job developing and improving our student council program. With the eighth graders graduating soon, the seventh graders have been preparing to take over student council next year. Two seventh grade student council members have been interviewed to tell everyone about their student council experience this year. Here’s what they said:

Jordyn Rix

Q: What have you learned from being on student council?

A: Something I have learned is to listen to all the ideas people have because it can help add on to your idea.

Q:What was the highlight of the meetings? Why?

A: The highlight of the meetings we’re probably getting to hear other students’ visions on what they think would be best for our school.

Q: What was your favorite event/fundraiser? Why?

A: My favorite fundraiser was probably collecting things for Pet Project. It wasn’t because we got to have a dance, but because we got to help out the community.

Q:What is one new fundraiser idea that you have for next year?

A: Next year I would like to do something that went to our community like PADS or Pet Project.

Clara Blood

Q: What have you learned from being on student council?

A: I’ve learned that it is so important to help our school and our community.

Q: What was the highlight of the meetings? Why?

A: For me, the highlight of the meetings is planning and assigning tasks because it feels like you are a mini business and important.

Q: What was your favorite event/fundraiser? Why?

A: My favorite event/fundraiser was the Winter Dance because not only was it fun, but we also raised food and toys for pets.

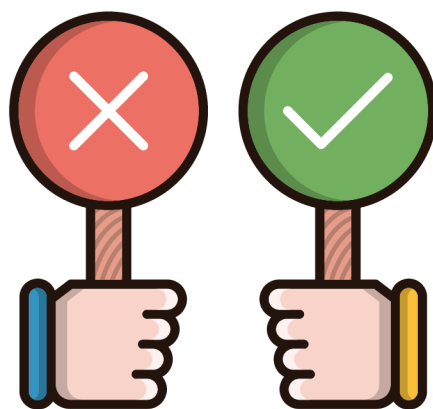
Q: What is one new fundraiser idea that you have for next year?

A: One idea that I have is a kick-start to the new year with a dance.

SHOULD STUDENTS BE ALLOWED TO WEAR SHOES WITHOUT BACKS?

BY CLARA BLOOD

Should students be able to wear shoes without backs? Believe it or not, that's quite a controversial question at Marquette Academy in grades 6th, 7th, and 8th. The overall consensus is yes, with 45 students at 65.2%. A few reasons why students picked yes is because they are more comfortable, stylish, and quick to put on. But 14.5% of students said no. Quickly saying things such as it being unsafe and a safety hazard. In between those two opinions, 14 students said maybe 20.3%. Students indicated that they're more comfortable, but also dangerous. Some of the pros of wearing shoes without backs are "More options to express your style." Eighth grader Rita McLaughlin says, "I'm a pro for wearing shoes with no backs is you can just slip them on." Seventh grader Annabelle Haiduke says. Some of the cons are "Students may trip more often." Another eighth grader, Leo Alvarez, said. "They're a tripping hazard." Sixth grader, Myles Feller, said. The overall say is yes because of many reasons.



THE BEATIFICATION OF FULTON SHEEN

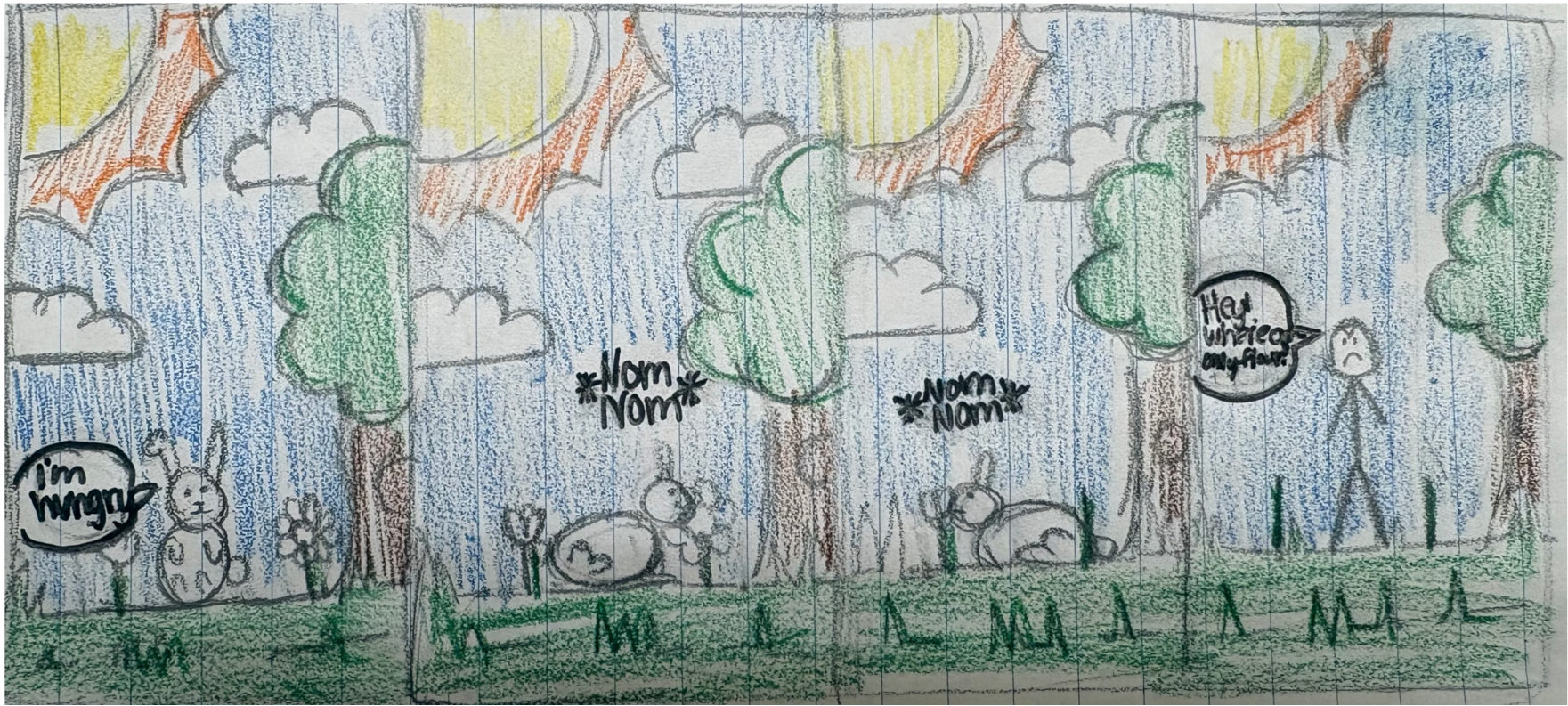
BY LIAM GRETENCORD

When someone is beatified, they are declared blessed by the Church. This is authorized by the Pope. Recently, the Vatican announced Archbishop Fulton Sheen's beatification on March 25, 2026. Beatification is the third of four major steps needed for someone to become a saint. Archbishop Fulton Sheen was born on May 8, 1895. He lived in El Paso, Illinois, and later moved to Peoria. He was Ordained a Priest on September 20, 1919. He was 24 years old at the time. He had an Emmy - winning show called "Life is worth Living." He was also the author of over sixty books. An Archbishop is someone who oversees an Archdiocese. An archdiocese is a diocese that is large or important and has been in history. Archbishop Fulton Sheen was made an Archbishop on June 11, 1951. During this time, he was appointed Archbishop of New York, then Rochester, from 1966 to 1969. Then appointed Archbishop of Newport (Wales) from 1969 to 1979. Then on December 9, 1979 Archbishop Fulton Sheen died of heart disease. He had been in declining health and had undergone open-heart surgery at Lenox Hill Hospital. He was 84 years old. He will be beatified at the dome in St. Louis, Missouri, on September 24, 2026. If you want more information, you could go to [CelebrateSheen.com](https://celebratesheen.com). In conclusion Fulton Sheen is a great person to watch, listen, or read about. So make sure to go learn about him and God Bless.

TEENAGERS BY MAYLEE HAMER



THE BUNNY BY CYNTHIA ROBLES



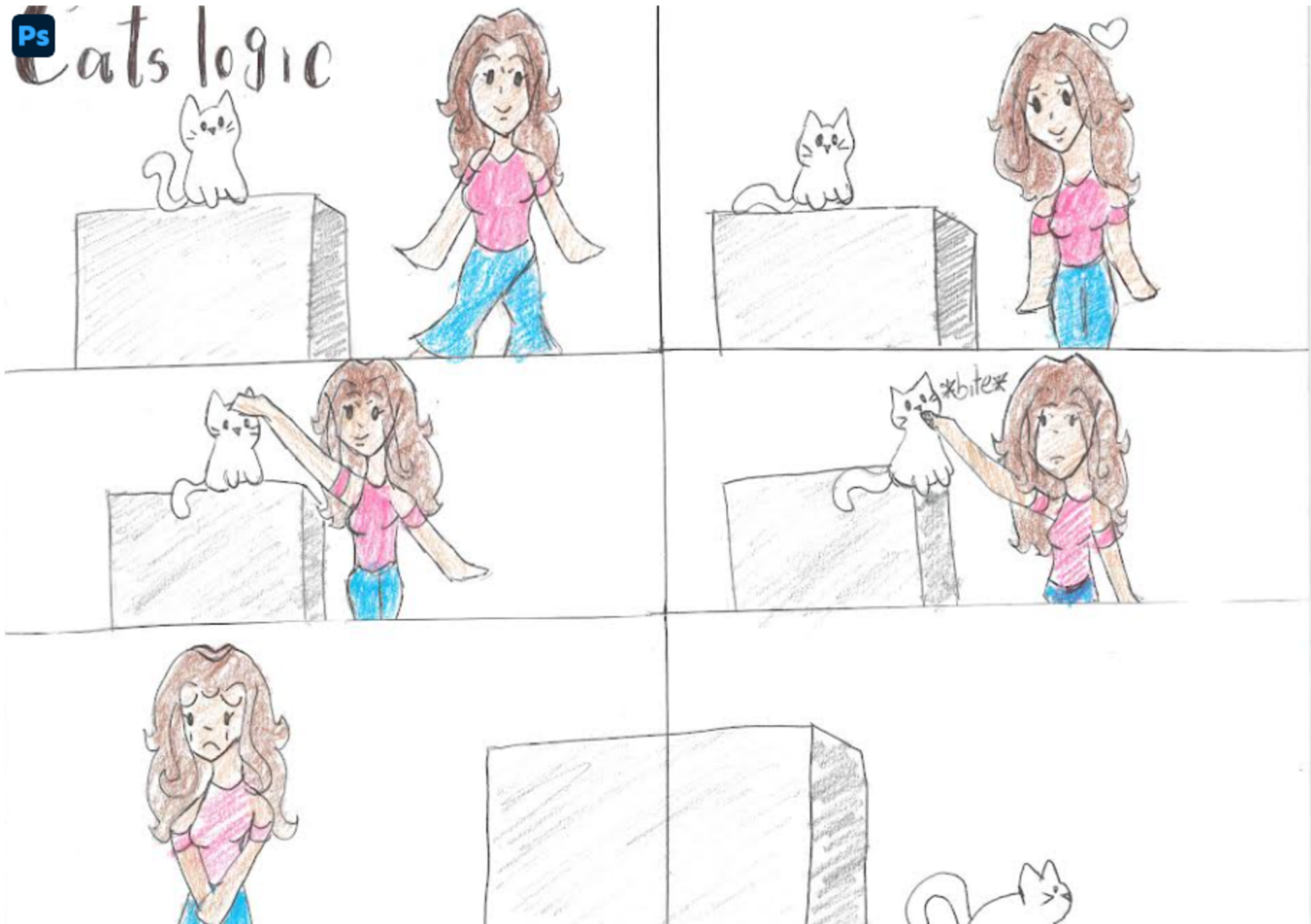
THE FISHING ACCIDENT, PART 2 BY NICK GRUBE



PRINCESS TINA BY ZAYLOR FAULL



CATS LOGIC BY MARINA RIBEIRO



BUBBLES THE DUCK, PART 1 BY CORBIN CLEM



FUN AND GAMES: WORD SEARCH

BY KOOPER RICK

Word Search

G	J	U	F	E	X	S	B	O	L	E	M	O	N	A	D	E	G
B	A	U	J	L	W	R	A	B	I	P	W	Z	F	I	I	T	H
T	Z	R	L	Y	O	A	D	N	T	C	Z	C	G	N	H	I	B
F	O	W	D	Y	X	W	T	B	D	V	E	G	J	U	N	E	A
I	B	I	G	E	B	W	E	E	O	A	Z	C	H	S	Y	L	S
R	V	E	Z	I	N	A	S	R	R	A	L	S	R	T	J	W	E
E	H	Z	G	B	B	R	U	C	H	M	T	H	H	E	A	K	B
W	O	T	N	J	G	M	N	O	C	I	E	I	Y	D	A	J	A
O	T	J	E	R	J	F	N	T	A	F	K	L	N	P	P	M	L
R	J	T	A	N	L	A	W	N	R	T	C	E	O	G	I	Z	L
K	U	P	F	W	Y	Y	L	H	U	M	I	D	H	N	U	F	J
O	Z	S	W	G	H	I	B	A	C	Q	B	E	A	C	H	B	L

Find the following words in the puzzle.
Words are hidden → and ↓ and ↘

WATERMELON
FIREWORK
ICE CREAM
BASEBALL
LEMONADE
BOATING
GARDEN

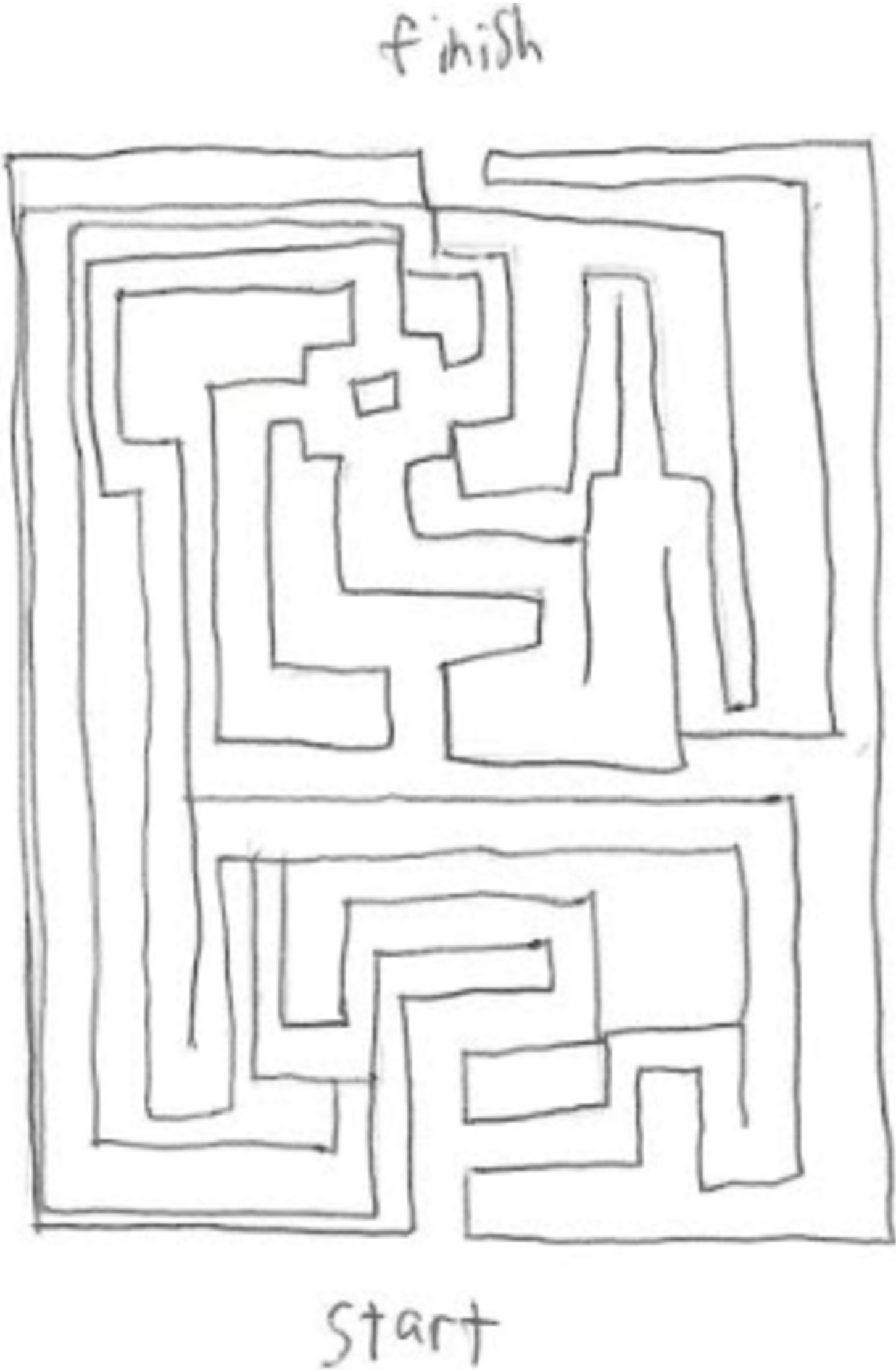
FLOWER
SANDAL
BEACH
HUMID
WARM
JULY
JUNE

LAWN
HIKE
SUN
HOT
TAN

G	J	U	F	E	X	S	B	O	L	E	M	O	N	A	D	E	G
B	A	U	J	L	W	R	A	B	I	P	W	Z	F	I	I	T	H
T	Z	R	L	Y	O	A	D	N	T	C	Z	C	G	N	H	I	B
F	O	W	D	Y	X	W	T	B	D	V	E	G	J	U	N	E	A
I	B	I	G	E	B	W	E	E	O	A	Z	C	H	S	Y	L	S
R	V	E	Z	I	N	A	S	R	R	A	L	S	R	T	J	W	E
E	H	Z	G	B	B	R	U	C	H	M	T	H	H	E	A	K	B
W	O	T	N	J	G	M	N	O	C	I	E	I	Y	D	A	J	A
O	T	J	E	R	J	F	N	T	A	F	K	L	N	P	P	M	L
R	J	T	A	N	L	A	W	N	R	T	C	E	O	G	I	Z	L
K	U	P	F	W	Y	Y	L	H	U	M	I	D	H	N	U	F	J
O	Z	S	W	G	H	I	B	A	C	Q	B	E	A	C	H	B	L

FUN AND GAMES: MAZE

BY KYLAH GALLEGOS



FUN AND GAMES: CROSSWORD

BY PARKER FUCHS

May Crowning



FUN AND GAMES: WOULD YOU RATHER?

BY EMILY DRAKE

TIME TRAVEL OR GO IN THE FUTURE

PERFECT MEMORY OR BE ABLE TO FORGET

MORE TIME OR MORE MONEY

LIVE LONG OR LIVE SHORT

SEE JESUS OR SEE THE 12 APOSTLES

WALK ON WATER WITH JESUS OR FIGHT GOLIATH

BE SWALLOWED BY A WHALE OR PROTECT LIONS

BE A SERVANT OR PUBLIC SPEAKER

PERFECT WORLD WITH NO SINS OR NEVER DIE

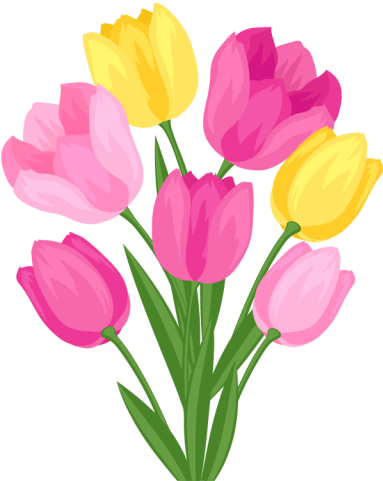


UPCOMING EVENTS

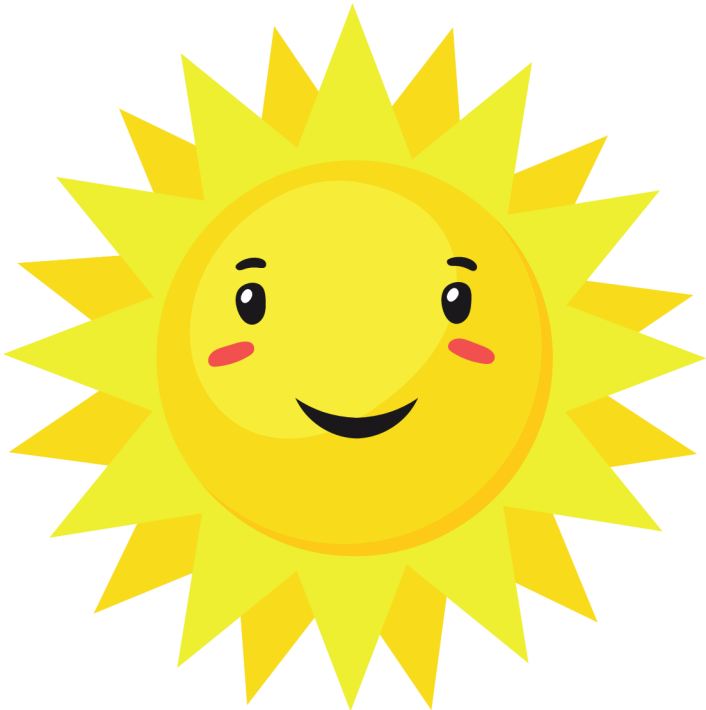
BY STELLA MOLINE

MAY

May 15	8th Grade Awards after Mass PS-Last Day
May 19	8th Grade Graduation 5:30 PM at St. Columba Church
May 21	GS-Last Day/ Park day right after Mass NO aftercare



JUNE



June 21	Totos Tuus • Grades 1-6 9am-2:30pm • Grades 7-12 6:30pm-8:15pm
June 22	Totos Tuus • Grades 1-6 9am-2:30pm • Grades 7-12 6:30pm-8:15pm
June 23	Totos Tuus • Grades 1-6 9am-2:30pm Grades 7-12 6:30pm-8:15pm
June 24	Totos Tuus • Grades 1-6 9am-2:30pm • Grades 7-12 6:30pm-8:15pm
June 25	Totos Tuus • Grades 1-6 9am-2:30pm • Grades 7-12 6:30pm-8:15pm
June 26	Totos Tuus • Grades 1-6 9am-2:30pm • Grades 7-12 6:30pm-8:15pm

AUGUST

August 12	First day for K-8 and Freshman
August 17	First day of PRE-K



8TH GRADE OVER THE YEARS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Mr. McNally is another teacher who can give a good picture of how 8th grade has changed. Mr. McNally was our 5th-grade teacher and is now our Social Studies teacher. He said that our “self will ... has gotten stronger,” showing how he believes that we are more sure of ourselves and more confident. He believes as well that our (personality) traits and characteristics have become stronger and more defined. He also mentioned changing his teaching style to make it better suited for junior high.

Mrs. Babiak, our English teacher, has had us in her class for two years now. She has mentioned that a significant change in 8th grade is how our conversations flow and how we interact with each other, and with her as well. Mostly saying that last year, we were still getting to know each other, and now that we do, we have gotten a lot more comfortable with each other. She states, “The conversations we are having are also a lot more meaningful, which allows us to build our relationship stronger.” She also spoke highly not only of our relationship, but also about how we acted last year, saying “7A would always come in prepared, answering questions, asking questions, the tendency to go off topic a lot, but we were still able to get all of our stuff done (which is just crazy).” Overall, our main change has been from testing the waters to getting more comfortable with how we are.

All in all, our 8th-grade class is ready for the end of the year. We have gotten comfortable enough with our teachers to act a bit more freely. Mostly just a classic case of 8th-grade-itis.



FAREWELL FROM THE GRADUATING 8TH GRADE CLASS OF 2026

BY LEO ALVAREZ

As my fellow classmates and I look forward to summer break, our minds rest upon the memories made here at Marquette Academy. We’ve made it to 8th grade, and the beginning of high school is in the near future. We remember the many good times we shared: talking at lunch, enjoying recesses, participating in sports, laughing in homeroom when we had nothing else to do, and watching Phineas and Ferb before Easter break. Our time spent at Marquette has shaped us into the people we are today.

We started as nervous sixth-graders, learning to switch classes, managing an increased work load. We began to change, adapt, and excel. By seventh grade, we no longer asked questions relating to junior high that now seem obvious. We are now eighth-graders, soon to be moving on to high school, ready to make another big change. We look forward to high school and the new memories to be made, and we hope the now-seventh-graders, soon to be eighth-graders, will lead the school well in our absence. On behalf of the 8th grade class, I would like to thank everyone of the teachers and staff for their fidelity and support. I would also like to thank my fellow classmates for the memories made during our grade school experience. With that being said, we leave 8th grade with a bittersweet goodbye.

SUMMER BREAK: HOW TO STAY MENTALLY ACTIVE

BY LEAH MICHELINI

When you think of summer break, you surely don't think of school or learning. Indeed, summer isn't meant for learning. It's meant for spending time with family, relaxing, and enjoying free time and a long break from school. Even though going on summer break is fun, you can also experience something called the "Summer Slide" or summer learning loss. In this article, you will learn about the "Summer Slide", ways to prevent it, and what students at Marquette do to stay mentally active during summer break.

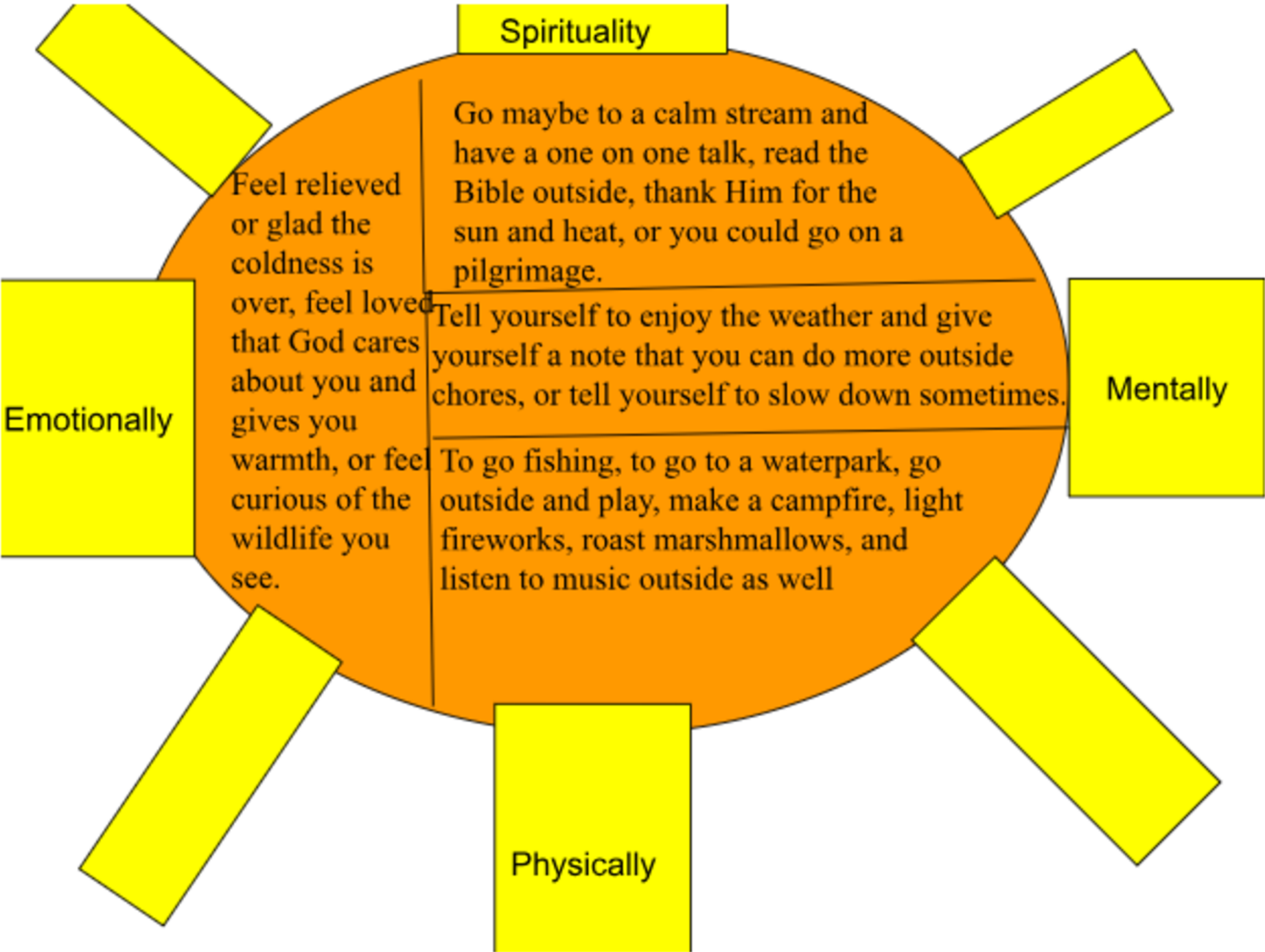
The "Summer Slide" is something you can experience when you have been away from learning for too long, causing you to forget things from the previous year. Ashley Austrew from Scholastic states, "Younger children are prone to the most learning loss because they are at a crucial stage in their development "in general, kids learn a lot more in kindergarten, first grade, and second grade...says James Kim, ED.D., an assistant professor of education at Harvard University things like decoding, letter knowledge, and word reading skills are very susceptible to decay without frequent practice as are math facts like addition and subtraction." The "Summer Slide" mainly happens in math and reading subjects. Think of it this way: if you learn a new skill and master it in 2 weeks, but after you master it, you don't think of or do that skill for 3 weeks, when you finally go back to that skill, you won't be able to remember or do that skill perfectly. However, if you practice that skill every day, once or twice a week, you will be able to perform it really well.

There are many ways to prevent the "Summer Slide". Some things include reading books over the summer or practicing your math facts for a short period of time every day or twice a week. Even just reading road signs on a road trip or making something with a recipe and figuring out the measurements can prevent the "Summer Slide". Another easy way to prevent the "Summer Slide" is to keep a schedule every day. Cleveland Clinic states, "Children thrive on routine (Adults do, too). A relatively stable summer routine can help them feel safer and give them a sense of normalcy." A predictable structure can help support your child's emotional well-being and learning. Dr Mudd encourages." This doesn't necessarily mean you always have to have a strict schedule. You should do simple things every day, such as taking a 10-minute walk around your neighborhood or waking up at the same time every day and developing a morning and nightly routine that you stick to.

Some students at Marquette were asked how they stay mentally active over the summer. One seventh grader, Jordyn Rix, says, "I try to still kind of stay in a routine and to make sure I am doing everything I need to in a day. Eighth grader Olivia Enwistle states, "Over summer break, I stay mentally active by reading a little bit from my book each night. Some nights it's only a few chapters, other nights it's a lot of chapters, but no matter what, I always read. That's what keeps me mentally active. Teddie Bullock, a sixth grader, said: " I read my books, I also do crafty hobbies such as bedazzling, hair wraps, bracelets, coloring, etc." There are many ways to stay productive during the summer

STRONG MIND, HEALTHY BODY, PEACEFUL SPIRIT

BY BO NERI



Meet the MA Knightly News Staff



Eighth Grade

Leo Alvarez	Mason Lyons
Gerard Cooper	Fiona McGrath
Cullen DeMink	Tommy Miller
Kallyn Diss	Stella Moline
Emily Drake	Carter Noonan
Olivia Entwistle	Griffin Novotney
Zaylor Faull	Noah Novotney
Kylah Gallegos	Shane Parker
Nick Grube	Marina Ribeiro
Maylee Hamer	Noah Rodriguez
Mackenzie Hamm	Laney Ruddick
Carter Johnson	Logan Schneider

Seventh Grade

Alivia Andreoni	Daniela Melendez
Sullivan Auter	Leah Micheline
Clara Blood	Michael Miller
Dominic Cherveney	Cameron Mucci
Corbin Clem	Bo Neri
Elliott Edgcomb	Kooper Rick
Roger Findley	Jordyn Rix
Parker Fuchs	Cynthia Robles
Liam Gretencord	Hannah Skelley
Annabelle Haiduke	Angelica Stawiarski
Bryce Hermann	Cashylon Woodin

