



Alumni mom shares experience, inspires students

by Michelle Lenz
junior reporter

Nearly one quarter of women in the U.S. will be abused by a partner during their lifetime, according to the American Medical Association.

Susan Brauer knows all about this statistic because she is one of those women.

Brauer, a retired engineer, author, IWPA member, and mother of six Redhawk alumni, visited Marist on Oct. 13 to talk with the journalism and creative writing students about finding their voices through writing.

To help students understand what it has taken for her to find her voice, Brauer began by explaining her background and her eight-year marriage to a violent alcoholic.

"It all started when I was a senior and I was one week away from my 18th birthday, two weeks away from graduation, and three weeks away from fulfilling my destiny," Brauer said. "I was also just three weeks away from marrying my high school sweetheart."

Brauer grew up surrounded by women on TV who waited around for someone to save them when things went awry. She had no self-esteem and no voice.

"[My husband] was my authority, my voice," Brauer said. "I bet my life on him, and my future."

The next eight years were ones of total isolation for Brauer. Her husband became increasingly abusive emotionally, verbally and physically.

Then came what Brauer considers to be the defining moment of her struggle.

"I found for the first time in my life what I call a 'golden nugget,' Brauer said. "One

of those little bits of truth that we toss around to each other."

This golden nugget came to Brauer in the form of a TV show reaching out to victims of domestic abuse. Brauer began attending meetings to get the help she needed to leave her husband and change her life.

"I began to see the world and my place in it in a completely different way," Brauer said. "Each meeting was filled with words of wisdom, and these snippets of gold that allowed me to have hope. I was able to look in the mirror for the first time and believe that I was the owner of my destiny. This is where I found my voice."

With her newfound hope and collection of golden nuggets, Brauer gained the confidence to go back to school. At the age of 44, she earned her Master of Science in electrical engineering.

Brauer spent 22 years in the field, during which time she gave presentations on women in science and learned how to use her voice.

"I found my voice, and I found that it worked," Brauer said. "I had a few people tell me that my talk was the reason they stayed in engineering. That blew me over. Here was proof that with your words, with your voice, you can change someone's life."

Brauer was inspired to share her story, so that she might reach and help more people. She wrote a book, "Just Keep Dancing," detailing her difficult past.

It was in the process of writing the book that Brauer learned even more about the power of words and finding one's voice.

"I don't think many of us truly understand the incredible power we have every day with the words that we say," Brauer said. "Words are the keys to these



photo by Stephanie Lysy

Susan Brauer speaks to RedHawk journalists and creative writing students in the theatre on Oct. 13. A mother of six RedHawk alumni, Brauer talked to students about how writing about tough life experiences can heal the writer and transform others.

tiny pockets that exist in humans where we slip in love, wisdom, and truth."

To Brauer, it truly is all about the words. "Words convey beauty, fear and heartache," Brauer said. "They are the umbilical cord that connects a person in the past to a person in the future."

Brauer encourages students to use their voices to tell their own stories.

"Everything that is inside of you is important," Brauer said. "All of you have

many different kinds of experiences. Think about those and write about them."

Her secret for students struggling to find their voices is to be true to themselves.

"If you [write] because you love the words, and you do it to change the world, and your vehicle is truth, anything is possible," Brauer said.

For more information about Brauer and her book, "Just Keep Dancing," visit her website at www.susanbrauer.com.



photo by Raini Eldorado

Inspired by journalist and author John Fountain's Fathers' Day Thursday literacy program, juniors Valerie Pavilonis (l) and Daisy DiDomizio (r) led an effort to collect used books for students in public grammar schools in low income areas. The Marist community donated over 3,000 books during the campaign.

Student-led effort sends 3,000 books to schools in need

by MiKaela Dismukes
senior reporter

Inspired by a guest speaker in their English class last spring, juniors Valerie Pavilonis and Daisy DiDomizio started a book drive at Marist this fall. The girls collected over 3,000 books, which have been delivered to public grammar and high schools in need.

The girls were inspired last April when award-winning Chicago journalist John Fountain spoke to English II honors and journalism students in the RedHawk Theatre.

English teacher Mrs. Mary Cozzie invited Fountain because her class was working on a research project dealing with literacy. The project the class selected was Fountain's Fathers' Day Thursday mentoring program.

Fountain's program involves men reading to children in grades 1-3 every Thursday at Matteson Elementary School.

This mentoring program came about when Fountain's research showed that most kids who grew up without fathers are more likely to end up in prison, do drugs or become associated in a gang.

Since Fountain grew up without a father, this program allowed him to provide children with a positive male role model.

Fountain's primary goal was to show children that these male role models care about them because they show up and read to them regularly.

In addition to creating wider access to books, Pavilonis and DiDomizio wanted to raise awareness about students in low-income neighborhoods.

"We realize that donating books is just a beginning, because students might not be interested in reading them at first," Pavilonis said. "We hope that over time, the proximity of these donated books will inspire their curiosity and motivate the children to become better readers."

The 3,000 books were divided and sent to Bremen High School, Paul Revere Primary in Blue Island, Trewyn Peoria School District 150, Zapata Academy and to public grammar schools in Rockford.

"We want to generate greater excitement for reading through these donations," DiDomizio said.

Cozzie, who is "overjoyed" at the results of the book drive, sees many other opportunities for Marist students to help.

"I think [the book drive] is just the tip of the iceberg of what Marist students have to share with the less fortunate," Cozzie said. "Tutoring, reading to students and other service opportunities can also help to improve the literacy of those who are lacking."

Meyer breaks world record, raises over \$26K for childhood hunger

by Maureen Mitchell
senior reporter

Campus minister Mr. Patrick Meyer broke the world record for the longest time swinging on Friday, Oct. 14. Meyer swung for 36 hours straight compared to the previous record, 32 hours and 2 minutes. 2016 is the year of service for the Marist communities across the country. In March, the junior class will prepare 100,000 meals to send to hungry children in Chicago. The cost of this project would require a donation of \$50 per junior class family. Meyer did not want the families to have to pay, and he thought swinging would be something that would raise the most awareness and money. Mrs. Colleen Pochyly and Ms. Bridget Hopkins were the most heavily involved in the process. The women helped Deacon Andy Neu and Meyer build the swing set. “They did most of the work,” Meyer said.

Throughout the day, teachers held class outside to keep the energy alive. “Today is centered in service, which does not always get a lot of attention,” Ms. Sarah Rakauskas said. “And it’s bringing together so many gifts and talents which is always a beautiful thing.” It is true. On the second day of swinging there was a French class playing Simon Says, an English class in a reading circle, and a religion class praying the rosary, all at the same time. Overnight Meyer’s family, some faculty and the group of girls he led on kairos gave him support. Many people were worried about Meyer’s health but Pochyly was by his side making sure he was fed and hydrated. “She’s the best and most beautiful woman in the world,” Meyer said. At the finish, Meyer felt fine, aside from sore legs, which he said was a small price to pay for what he achieved. Meyer raised over \$26,000 in donations and has brought the Marist community together in a beautiful way, through service.



photo by Jocelyn Diaz

Joined by Mrs. Alex Brown, Mr. Patrick Meyer is all smiles while swinging on Oct. 14. After 36 hours, Meyer broke the record and raised over \$26,000 to help combat childhood hunger.



photo by Hillary Jones

Marist students from Chicago and Barcelona gathered in the RedHawk cafeteria for a welcome breakfast on Monday. The visiting students will return to Spain tomorrow, following week-long tour of our school and city. Marist-Chicago students look forward to a similar experience when they travel to Barcelona this spring.

RedHawks welcome students from Barcelona

by Stephanie Kozlowski
junior reporter

Students and faculty in the world languages department welcomed 24 students from our fellow Marist school in Barcelona, Spain on Nov. 11. The visiting students will spend a week in Chicago as part of an annual exchange program between Marist-Chicago and Marist-Barcelona. Marist-Chicago students will travel to Barcelona in the spring. While in Chicago, the students will participate in different activities. There is a traditional soccer game, with one team representing the United States and the other Spain. During a scavenger hunt, visiting students will look for clues in different areas of campus. Each clue leads the students to another clue, and helps the students navigate around Marist. Last Saturday, the group attended the Chicago Bulls game.

“The students from Barcelona will take advantage of our proximity to the city,” said world language chair Ms. Erica Nathan-Gamauf. “We get them the city pass, which allows them to choose between going to the Museum of Science and Industry, the Field Museum or the Shedd Aquarium.” The students were welcomed at a breakfast on Monday morning in the RedHawk cafeteria. “We want to learn all about your daily lives because it is so different from what we are used to,” said Pilar Marin, one of the visiting students. Their hosts hope that exposure to our school and our local culture, including sports, food, music and religion during the past week will help to give the students from Barcelona an unforgettable experience. “Our students build friendships with students from another country, fellow Marist students, and then they will hopefully enjoy the same experience when they travel to Barcelona this spring,” Nathan-Gamauf said.

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Unwind your mind with yoga

by Hillary Jones
senior reporter

This fall, senior Brianna Ramos did a poll on Twitter to determine if students would be interested in a yoga club. There were 312 votes and 52% of students supported the idea. As a result, the yoga club met for the first time on Friday, September 16. The club is moderated by Ms. Teresa Coy. “I’ve always had an interest in yoga,” Ramos said. “I thought it would be good to have some type of stress-reliever and workout for the Marist community.” Yoga, which originated in India 5,000 years ago, is a Hindu practice that uses meditation and simple body postures to help control the body, mind and senses. Students can especially benefit from yoga because it helps to relieve stress. Yoga also helps to improve concentration and, according to Harvard psychologist Mary Ann Wel, can actually help students do better in school and score higher on tests.

A 2012 *Washington Post* article notes that, while many people tend to view yoga as a “woman’s practice,” the physical and mental health benefits apply to both genders. Male celebrities such as singer Bon Jovi and Maroon 5 lead vocalist Adam Levine practice yoga regularly. Senior football player Abiodun Ogbebor, currently the only male RedHawk in the club, recommends yoga especially for his fellow athletes. “Yoga helps to keep athletes loose and as flexible as possible,” he said. “It’s not just a girl’s thing, it’s everyone’s thing.” Senior Mackenzie Lim enjoys the morning sessions in particular. “I enjoy yoga in the morning because I leave feeling refreshed and it gives me a good start to the day,” she said. “Yoga helps boost the metabolism, gives you more energy during the day and helps you sleep better at night.” The club meets every Wednesday from 2:30-3:30 p.m. in the small gym and on Fridays from 6:30-7:30 a.m. in room 218.



photo by Stephanie Lysy

Ms. Coy and a few students perform yoga exercises in the small gym on Nov. 4. The yoga club meets on Wednesdays from 2:30-3:30 p.m. in room 218 and on Fridays from 6:30-7:30 a.m. in the small gym.



photo by Cara Donegan

Officers (l to r) senior David O’Neil, senior Claire Stillman, junior Kylie Ross and junior Morgan Johnson look forward to welcoming new members at the next meeting of SADD on Wed., Nov. 30 in room 119 beginning at 7 a.m.

RedHawks start SADD chapter

by Sheila O’Keeffe
senior reporter

Students Against Destructive Decisions is a national organization that focuses on providing students with the best, most effective resources to take the lead on the issues that matter to them and are relevant in their lives. Drugs, suicide, depression, bullying, violence, body image and traffic safety are some of the issues that SADD focuses on. The new Marist chapter is led by senior president David O’Neil, junior vice president Morgan Johnson, junior secretary Kylie Ross and senior treasurer Claire Stillman. The club moderator is Ms. Cathaleen Novak, the school social worker. At meetings, members brainstorm new ways to get students involved and plan programs. “It’s not just a ‘don’t do drugs’ club,” Johnson said. “It’s a place where students can rely on their peers to give them advice

and help them enjoy the high school experience without potentially risking their safety and health, both physically and mentally. It’s about any destructive decisions, be they drugs, alcohol abuse or even overloading your schedule with honors and AP classes and staying up until 3 a.m. doing your homework.” The group’s next meeting is Wednesday, November 30 at 7 a.m. in room 119. At the meeting, they will finalize plans for a December 21 get together at Eagles Bowling Alley in Blue Island from 6-8 p.m. The event is open to any Marist student, not just members of SADD. Tickets are \$2 and will cover pizza, shoe rental and two hours of bowling. In June, the Marist group will attend the SADD national conference in Tampa, Florida. Students will attend sessions that focus on issues regarding personal health and safety. “We want students to know that we are here for them, we care, we understand and that we can help,” Johnson said.

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How to find your voice through writing

People go through situations in life, big or small, but not many people know what to do or how to move on. An important part of healing and inspiring others is finding your voice.

On October 13, Susan Brauer, author of "Finding Your Voice," was a guest speaker for the journalism and creative writing classes.

Brauer found herself in an abusive relationship by the time she was 16. It was not until years later when she told her story and realized she could also help change someone else's life.

According to Love is Respect, a website for teens about relationships, nearly 1.5 million high school students nationwide experience physical abuse from a significant other annually. Also, one in ten students have been physically hurt by a girlfriend or boyfriend.

The *Huffington Post* reports that 60% of women find themselves in an abusive relationship at some point in their lives.

The first step of action to help fix the problem is to spread awareness. Love is Respect states that 81% of parents do not believe teen dating violence is an issue.

People should tell someone they know and trust if they are experiencing abuse. If a friend finds themselves stuck in an abusive relationship, it is important for them that someone comes to them to help them recognize and fix the situation they are in.

What are some signs of abuse to look out for?

If someone is aggressive and violent towards their significant other, they may also be physically abusive. Putting their partner down, yelling and humiliating them are some signs of verbal and emotional abuse. Being sexually harassed and pressured is sexual abuse.

What students can do if they need help is talk to a parent, a trusted adult, a counselor or therapist, or go to the police.

Brauer also reminds us that it can be very healing for people to find their voice through writing when life gets difficult.

The first step is to just get started and it does not matter where. When telling a personal story, the writer does not have to start at the beginning. Start at the end or even in the middle, as long it starts and gets down on the page.

The next step is to tell the truth. Brauer touched lives of people who were dealing with abusive relationships because she shared her truth.

If she had not told the truth about her story, the reaction to her book would not have been the same. Many people came forward to tell her how her writing encouraged them to save themselves. People willing to share their truths can help others, just like Brauer did.

It is also helpful to remember that there is someone else out there who has gone through a similar situation that is being written or talked about. It is helpful for someone to relate to a story and can give them hope for their life.

Connecting with different people can be so rewarding, especially when it inspires a writer to share his or her experience.

Brauer got the help she needed to turn her life around. Then, she found her voice and a greater appreciaton for the power of words and of writing.

Reaching out for help and writing about it delivered Brauer. If we find our voices through writing about our experiences, we may help deliver others.

Caffeine's grande effects on teens

Anyone walking through the halls of American high schools is bound to see students rushing to class, clutching their grande iced caramel macchiatos, mocha Frappucinos or, in the fall, pumpkin-spiced lattes.

Today's teenagers are relying more and more on caffeinated beverages to give them that extra boost of energy in the morning and throughout the school day.

According to a 2014 survey done by investment firm Piper Jaffray (www.piperjaffray.com), teens spend 21% of their money on food. Coffee shops, including Dunkin' Donuts and Starbucks, have become a popular hangout for teens, which means they are purchasing more caffeinated drinks.

In fact, the number of teenagers drinking caffeinated drinks has tripled since the 1970s, according to the American Diabetic Association.

Teens need to keep caffeine and calories in mind when consuming these increasingly popular coffee drinks.

According to its website, Starbuck's grande pumpkin-spiced latte contains 150 milligrams of caffeine, while its venti contains as much as 200 milligrams.

The average teenager should consume no more than 100 milligrams per day, according to a report made by Mary Mullen, a pediatric dietician at Rush University Medical Center, to the American Diabetic Association in 2014.

The American Diabetic Association notes that too much coffee can be a gateway to eating disorders and developmental issues. Its website states that some teenage girls are using caffeinated drinks as an appetite suppressant to lose weight instead of eating a healthy, balanced diet.

In addition, too much caffeine can lead to difficulty concentrating, anxiety, headaches, dehydration and insomnia. According to the National Sleep Foundation, teens who do not get enough sleep are at an increased risk for motor vehicle accidents, depression and poor performance in school and at work.

While drinking coffee in moderation is a solution, teenagers should consider switching to alternative drinks.

Journalist John Boitnott, writing for inc.com, lists healthy alternatives, including tea, probiotic drinks such as drinkable yogurt, coconut water and flavored sparkling water.

Water is a smart alternative to coffee. According to a 2012 study done by the American Public Health Association, more than half of teenagers and children in the United States are dehydrated. Dehydration leads to fatigue. When teens drink caffeine to boost their energy, they are also dehydrating themselves. So water is the better choice to maintain energy levels.

At Marist, the policy is that students should not carry drinks other than water outside of the cafeteria.

This policy promotes health, reminding us that caffeine holds more cons than pros and that there are many alternatives with better benefits.

More Americans need to say sí to learning a foreign language

The number of Americans who learn and use a foreign language is declining. According to the Gallup Organization, only one-fourth of adult Americans can hold a conversation in a foreign language.

Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union, reported in 2012 that European students begin learning their first foreign language between the ages of six and nine.

The International Network for Language Education Policy notes that Asian students begin a second language in fifth grade. Students in Africa start as early as age three.

By contrast, American students are usually introduced to foreign language classes in middle or high school.

Gallup reports that 55% of bilingual Americans speak Spanish, yet Ethnologue, a linguistic research center cites Chinese as the most widely spoken language in the world.

These statistics clearly point out that Americans who are not bilingual are at a global disadvantage.

There are many benefits to learning a second language.

According to a study by Northwestern University in 2014, bilingual students concentrate better because they are better able to block out irrelevant sounds. Learning a foreign language can also help a person's memory, problem-solving and critical thinking skills. The study also shows that bilingual people also have a more deliberate thought process rather than an emotional thought process, which means that bilingual people tend to think more logically.

Another advantage is in the workplace when it comes to earning wages. According to Ryan McMunn, CEO of Bric Language Systems, people with foreign language skills can expect to earn 10 to 15% more than workers who only speak English.

In a study done by Lone Star College, foreign language skills give workers a competitive edge because bilingual people tend to get hired first.

Contrary to popular belief, teaching is not the only profession available for people with foreign language skills.

Many jobs in banking, marketing, business, research and government await people who are fluent in two or more languages.

Marist currently offers Spanish, French and Italian classes. These classes provide a basic understanding of the language and culture, and create a firm foundation for students to become fluent.

Graduating with a firm foundation in a foreign language is a good start, but students should continue their studies in college. Students who choose to move toward becoming bilingual set themselves up for greater success in their careers and in life.

Respecting our troops

Marina Mosquera
senior columnist

50,000 colonists died in the American Revolution. 320,518 U.S. soldiers died in World War I. 1,076,245 U.S. soldiers died in World War II.

But the count certainly does not stop there. Since World War II, tens of thousands of U.S. soldiers have died for our country in the fight for freedom in Korea, Vietnam and the Gulf Wars.

Thousands more have been killed by terrorists.

If our troops are willing to sacrifice their lives for our freedom, the least we can do is stand up and show our support for them during the National Anthem and Pledge of Allegiance.

According to an article by Christopher Klein on the History channel website, Francis Scott Key wrote the National Anthem to show the strength and commitment of the U.S. troops during the War of 1812. He was inspired by the sight of a lone U.S. flag still flying over what remained of Fort McHenry after it was demolished by the British.

Colin Kaepernick, who was recently promoted to starting quarterback for the San Francisco 49ers, refused to stand during the National Anthem on August 26. Kaepernick said, “I am not going to stand up to show pride in a flag for a country that oppresses black people and people of color.”

During the National Anthem, we thank the men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice and gave their lives for our freedom. The National Anthem is a salute to them and their courageousness. Not standing during the National Anthem is not the right way to protest. It is disrespectful to our troops.

Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg was interviewed on the morning of October 10 by Katie Couric and had some strong opinions on athletes protesting by sitting or kneeling during the National Anthem.

“If they want to be stupid, there’s no law that should be preventive,” Ginsburg said. “If they want to be arrogant, there’s no law that prevents them from that. What I would do is strongly take issue with the point of view that they are expressing when they do that.”

Chicago Police Officer Alejandro Cabral shared his thoughts from a combat veteran’s point of view on the controversial issue. Cabral was deployed to Afghanistan in 2008 and earned a battlefield promotion to Sergeant and a Combat Medic Badge during his deployment.

“I think Kaepernick’s message was lost and disrespectful to veterans by sitting,” said Cabral. “I do not agree with him, but I respect his right in exercising his freedom of speech. I was born in Mexico and took the oath to join the military as a way to thank this country for all the opportunities it provided my family,” said Cabral.

At Marist, we are expected to stand during the Pledge of Allegiance, National Anthem and prayer to show respect for our country and to God.

Standing up to show respect is the right thing to do.

The next time we stand for the Pledge of Allegiance or National Anthem, we should also place our hands over our hearts and think about the men and women who have sacrificed their lives to protect our freedom.



photo by Sheila O’Keeffe

The right to remain seated

MiKaela Dismukes
senior columnist

In September, an Eisenhower High School teacher was suspended for trying to physically force a student to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Over the summer, professional athletes Gabby Douglas and Colin Kaepernick were criticized for what many people felt was a show of disrespect during the National Anthem.

Douglas, a gold medalist for the USA gymnastics team, did not place her hand over her heart, but stood at attention as the Anthem was played on August 9 at the Summer Olympics in Rio.

Kaepernick, the starting quarterback for the San Francisco 49ers, remained seated during the National Anthem on August 26 as a way to protest racial inequality and injustices toward minorities in our country.

While we do not have to like it when people refuse to participate in the Pledge or Anthem, it is in within their First Amendment rights not to participate.

Our Anthem and Pledge are reminders of the many who have sacrificed to make this country great and our right as citizens to express ourselves freely, whether or not what we express is agreeable to others.

Obviously, there is no rule or law that requires a person to stand during the Pledge or Anthem. While a law does exist requiring the Pledge of Allegiance to be said in schools, there are no federal penalties if the law is broken.

An official statement released by the NFL states that the organization encourages players to participate, but they are not required to stand during the playing of the National Anthem.

Many people feel that people who refuse to participate are less of an American than those who do participate. Others feel that the refusal is disrespectful toward the military.

Yet on social media, active military personnel have posted pictures and messages in support of Kaepernick.

Following the game on August 26, Kaepernick took a knee at the final preseason game during the National Anthem. Teammate Eric Reid joined him, along with Seattle Seahawk cornerback Jeremy Lane. This was just an opportunity for these athletes to use their status to raise awareness of issues affecting minorities in the United States.

NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell has praised the players for using their voice to affect change in the communities.

This movement is sweeping the nation. During week two of the NFL season, more players have joined the cause by either kneeling or raising a fist. It has even trickled down to the college, high school, and elementary level as a peaceful form of protest.

At Marist, the administration has asked us to show respect by standing during prayer, the Pledge and the National Anthem.

That same respect should be shown to those who choose not to participate.

Meanwhile, we should focus on situations that are really affecting American citizens, such as the very issues that Kaepernick is trying to bring into the light.

No one gets hurt if someone remains seated during the Pledge or Anthem. Let us focus on those areas where people are getting hurt.

What We Stand for Here at Marist

A policy regarding prayer, the Pledge of Allegiance and the National Anthem offered by the Administrative Team of Marist High School

Recently, there has been much debate in the United States which has focused on various symbolic protests during the playing of our National Anthem. Their purpose, seemingly, is to bring focus to societal issues which illustrate perceived and real flaws related to the way we treat each other. The Marist Brothers and laity have preached throughout the years a consistent pathway to create peace and harmony in our world. This pathway lies in the messages of Jesus who urges us all to be people of action, people who stand for something and people who show love towards each other. During tumultuous times like this we are encouraged to reaffirm who we are as Marist and as a nation. First, we are a community that believes it is important to make Jesus known and loved. Standing during prayer and respecting those who pray is who we are and what we stand for. Second, we are a community that respects each other and the sacrifices all ethnic groups and races have made for basic freedoms. Americans have fought and died for these freedoms. Standing for our National Anthem out of respect for those who fought is important in this community. It is who we are as Marist and it is what we stand for. Third, we are a community that loves our country, regardless of how flawed it may be. We stand for the pledge because it is respectful and through our actions of reciting the pledge we inspire unity and collaboration with each other. Therefore, the playing of the National Anthem and the reciting of our pledge is not a time for politics. The playing of the National Anthem and the reciting of our pledge should be a time for reflection on the men and women of our great country who have given their lives for our freedom. The expectation is that our administration, faculty, staff and students will show respect during prayer, the Pledge and the playing of the National Anthem.

Great options available for senior year religion

by Cara Donegan
and Emily Reynolds
senior reporters

While juniors are preparing for the excitement of senior year, they are given more freedom when it comes time to pick their classes. One choice juniors have is the type of religion class they will take senior year. Juniors can pick between a traditional religion class, seniors service or peer leadership.

Peer leadership is a class which allows seniors to sit in with Marcellin level classes to provide help for teachers and students. Peer leaders are available in English, algebra, geometry, reading, U.S. and world history, biology, chemistry, Spanish and study halls.

This year there are 134 seniors involved in peer leadership and 20 teachers that teach Marcellin classes with the help of peer leaders.

In the assigned classes peer leaders can help plan and lead reviews, run small groups, work one-on-one with students, work through problems on the board, lead class discussions and plan daily class activities.

“The support and encouragement of peer leaders help Marcellin students focus and more clearly understand their assignments and objectives,” peer leadership coordinator Ms. Sarah Rakauskas said. “Peer leaders allow for individualized instruction, both in one-on-one help from a peer leader and in allowing the teacher to spend time with each student.”

Senior Isabel Gainer spends Mod A in a freshman Marcellin algebra class. She helps grade homework, leads small group work and helps keep the freshmen focused on their assignments.

“I think that having peer leaders in a class is less intimidating for the students because not all students are comfortable asking questions in front of the whole class,” Gainer said. “Students receive the individualized attention they need to do better in their classes.”

Part of the Marist mission is to go out and be servant leaders in the community.

“Peer leadership helps seniors understand what it means to be a servant leader,” Rakauskas said. “The peer leaders focus and grow a sense of empathy, a sense of meeting other people wherever they may be on their journeys.”

Rakauskas plans to improve the program as the curriculum and students continue to grow throughout the year. The goal of peer leadership is to create better classrooms for Marcellin students and to help seniors gain life skills that will help them outside of Marist such as active listening, self-care, accountability and empathy.

“The peer leaders are an extra set of eyes to help the teachers watch over the students that might be struggling,” Marcellin program director Mrs. Margie Sweeney said. “The seniors bring their experience and expertise to the classrooms and are able to explain things in a way teachers might not be able to for the students.”

Another option is senior service. Senior service gives students the opportunity to leave school and go help out in the community. Students are able to use what they have learned in the classroom and apply it in the real world.

Students can choose to volunteer at one of 19 different sites, which include nursing homes, hospitals, facilities for the mentally disabled and grammar schools. Students go in groups of two or three to their assigned site every day.

Senior service takes up two mods during each school day. The daily routine would be to go sign out on a sheet of paper right outside the chapel and then the seniors drive to their site.

There are 120 students involved in senior service this year.

“Senior service gives students a chance to put their faith into practice with people and in places one might not normally find himself/herself,” senior service coordinator Mr. John Hyland said.

A big part of senior service is gaining personal growth. Students grow in not only their faith, but in personal ways too.

“If students are truly open to the experience, there is a good chance for growth as a person of faith and as a human being,” Hyland said. “Our students often



photo by Emily Reynolds

Seniors Patrick Dillon (l) and Ginnai Wheeler (r) work with freshmen in the college prep reading class. Wheeler and Dillon are two of 134 seniors involved in peer leadership this year, while 120 senior chose to participate in senior service this year. Both programs are offered as alternatives to a formal senior religion class.

develop relationships with the patients or clients, which makes them become more accepting, compassionate and less judgemental.”

Each site has different work for the Marist students to do. Examples of what students do every day include helping the mentally disabled patients do simple tasks like puzzles or helping a preschool teacher by opening the kids’ lunches.

Doing the littlest things to help people in the community does more than people think.

“You don’t need to look far to find someone in need,” Hyland said. “Providing another person, hand and heart makes a huge difference.”

The Marist name is known throughout the community because of the senior service program.. The volunteer work by

all the students is very much appreciated from all the sites Marist helps out.

“Marist is well known in the community for our senior service program and we have been recognized with several awards,” Hyland said. “The program was inspired by St. Marcellin Champagnat and his commitment to serve the least favored.”

Senior service seems to be a very popular class at Marist considering the large amount of students involved.

“Senior service is one of the best decisions I have made,” senior Jill Zwierz said. “I think it challenges students in a way a quiz or test could not because students are faced with real world problems happening right in front of them.”

Junior registration for senior year begins in February, so there is plenty of time for students to make their decisions.

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Soccer players looking ahead

by Marina Mosquera
senior reporter

The RedHawk varsity soccer team came up short in the regionals on Oct. 19 in a 3-1 loss to Sandburg. Senior John Ciszewski (forward) scored the goal in the first half and senior John Kruse (goalie) had 6 saves. While the team hoped to advance, head coach Mr. Sean Maxwell plans to make adjustments with his returning players for next season. “I feel that our challenge this year was inconsistency,” said Maxwell. “We played some days very well, even in some of our tough losses, but we did not play well consistently.” Maxwell pointed to leadership from this year’s seniors as a strength. “They proved to be great teammates to all and were attentive in training sessions,” he said. Coach Maxwell plans to encourage the young team to practice and play harder in the off-season and emphasize weight training and conditioning.

“We have some real talent coming up, but the size and fitness may not be where I’d like it to be,” said Maxwell. “I hope that the boys will work hard to overcome this.” Senior captain and defender David Regan, who will be playing soccer in college, believed the team gave ‘110%’ in every game and practice. “In the last game we gave it our all,” said Regan. “No one left anything out on the field. We came into the season with nearly a whole new roster from last year, so many of us had to adjust and figure out how to be a varsity athlete very quickly.” Coach Maxwell’s take away from this season was that team members grew and learned several life lessons. “I think back to our senior leaders from the beginning to the end and how they encouraged teammates, helped each other through the down times, and celebrated the good days with great energy,” Maxwell said. “I feel like these are the things that are important to embrace, not only when playing a game you love, but during each and every day of our lives,” he said.



photo by Larry Tucker

The 13 senior members of the varsity soccer team pose with their parents, coaches and supporters on Oct. 3, when the RedHawks faced Shepard at Red and White Stadium in a game that went scoreless. The RedHawks went 12-10-2 this season, with shutouts against Providence on Oct. 6 and St. Patrick on Oct. 8.



photo by Stephanie Lysy

Sophomore Nora McKeough competes during the Richards High School Invitational on Oct. 3, where the RedHawks came in second place.

Swimming season ends at sectionals

by Cara Donegan
senior reporter

The RedHawk varsity girls’ swim team season ended on Sat., Nov. 12 at the IHSA sectional meet at Sandburg High School. While the RedHawks did not advance to state, the relay team of senior Leah Hood, sophomores Nora McKeough and Molly Sullivan and freshman Emma Shea placed 6th. Senior team captain Megan Costello finished the 500 freestyle race with a new personal best time of 7:20:75. Co-captain Hood finished the 100 freestyle with a new best time of 1:03:15. “This was definitely the best season of my four years at Marist,” Costello said. “The team got better at swimming and we formed a strong bond during the season. I have never been a part of a team that got along as well as we did.”

The team is coached by Mrs. Kelly Sullivan, assisted by Ms. Maura Michaels. Sullivan laid out some goals for the team at the beginning of the season, challenging the swimmers to improve their personal times and work together as a team. “The girls definitely achieved those goals this season,” Sullivan said. “Many girls set new personal best times and they all bonded so well. This made the season even better.” Team bonding rituals this season included warm ups, prayer and singing the Marist Fight Song before each meet. One of the challenges faced by the team this year was the loss of many of last year’s seniors. Coach Sullivan notes that over time, the girls turned this to their advantage. “Last year was so different because we had more seniors and this year we only had two,” Sullivan said. “But Megan and Leah provided great leadership and effort and helped make this season fun for everyone.”

Leonard, Murphy advance to state

by Faith Laughran
and Meagan Loranger

The RedHawk girls’ cross country team enjoyed a very strong season that sent two of their key runners to state. The team’s focus this year was its legacy, as the runners worked to improve this season to set an example for years to come. The team made it to the ESCC Championships on Oct. 15 and placed second. On Oct. 22 the girls headed to regionals and placed first as a team. Sectionals were held the next week on Oct. 29 and the girls finished in seventh as a team, with senior Maryclare Leonard and sophomore Colleen Murphy advancing to state. “To qualify for state you have to be very competitive at sectionals,” Murphy said. “You have to run your best race because there are so many teams and individuals all competing for the chance to run at state. We all ran our best this year I think our legacy will live on after this year.”

Leonard was the only runner to qualify for state all four years of her high school career. “I plan to run in college, but I am going to miss the Marist program, especially my teammates and coaches,” Leonard said. “These four years flew by and I have made so many bonds with such wonderful people.” The boys’ cross country team also had a very competitive season. The team placed fourth at the ESCC conference championship on Oct. 15. The season ended at regionals on Oct. 22 where the team placed fifth. The boys’ team was small but motivated this season. “Our goal this season was to succeed with the younger guys on our team and prove that we could race competitively against most of the bigger teams in our conference,” junior Dennis Carroll said. “Five out of our top seven are underclassmen,” said senior Matt Wagner. “Next year’s team will definitely have a shot to win some big meets and qualify for state.”



photo by Stephanie Lysy

Senior Maryclare Leonard and sophomore Colleen Murphy and members of the girls’ cross country team were led through the halls by the marching band on Nov. 4, the day before Leonard and Murphy competed in the IHSA state final meet. Leonard is the only cross country team member to qualify for state for four years in a row.

RedHawk hockey players skating after the elusive win

by Raini Eldorado
junior reporter

The RedHawk varsity hockey team still has plenty of time in the regular season to improve on its current 0-8 record.

Last Friday, the team came away with a 0-3 loss to Fenwick, followed by a 6-1 loss to St. Ignatius on Saturday.

“We put up a great fight against Fenwick, but we need to develop greater confidence in ourselves to make the right plays,” said junior defense Tristan Duszynski. “I feel that as the season continues, we will improve in that aspect.”

Junior Ryan Butt notes that head coach Brian Black is ‘switching things up’ and working hard to develop the team.

“We will continue to improve as the season goes on,” Butt said. “We started out rough but we are bonding and hoping to bring some wins to the organization.”

This year’s team includes many first-year varsity players, including six freshmen and two sophomores.

“We are a younger and smaller team,” said team captain senior Joe Prkut, “which has made it harder for us to compete with bigger teams in the leagues. But we have potential and work well together.”

Coach Black is grateful for the contributions made by seniors on the team this year, including Prkut, Frank Micetich, Tom Scurek, Zach Meeker, Mike Principe and Andrew Reif.

“The senior leadership in our program has been great,” Black said.

Last Sunday, the team held its first annual fundraiser at Bourbon Street, which brought back former students and players to show their support for RedHawk hockey.

“It was nice to see the alumni and talk to them about their years with Marist hockey,” said junior defense Tim Evoy. “It made me realize that high school flies by and you might as well enjoy each moment while it lasts before you wake up and see it’s over.”

The RedHawks face St. Viator tonight at Mt. Prospect Ice Arena. The puck drops at 7:35 p.m.



photo by Ashley Spears

RedHawk hockey players (l to r) Tom Scurek, Jack Rochford and Joey Prkut work together to take a shot on the Notre Dame goalie on Nov. 7. The RedHawks came away with a 8-2 loss. The teams faces St. Viator tonight at Mt. Prospect Ice Arena at 7:35 p.m.



photo by Stephanie Lysy

Junior Molly Murrihy (#1) and sophomore Abby Callahan (#5) blocks a hit against their McAuley opponent at sectionals on Nov. 3 in the Red and White Gym. The Redhawks lost in two, 25-20 and 25-22, ending their season.

Regional champs fight to the end

by Emily Reynolds
senior reporter

The RedHawk girls’ varsity volleyball team won the IHSA Class 4A regional final against Downers Grove North (27-25, 25-14) at Stagg High School on Oct. 27.

In the first sectional game on Nov. 1, the RedHawks also beat Benet (25-13, 25-22) in the Red and White Gym.

The team was led by senior Megan Krasowski with eight kills, seven digs and four blocks, junior Maggie Meyer with seven kills, junior Molly Murrihy with 24 assists, and junior Savannah Thompson with three aces.

Sectionals continued in the Red and White Gym on Nov. 3, where the RedHawks fell to eventual state champions Mother McAuley (25-20, 25-22) and brought an end to their season.

Thompson led the RedHawk sectional effort with 12 kills and nine digs, Murrihy had 23 assists, Grace Green had 10 digs, Meyer added eight blocks and eight digs and Krasowski had four blocks at the net.

“This year’s team had a great chemistry since day one of practice,” head coach Jordan Vidovic said. “We were a very intense and competitive group on the practice court, but we got along great off the court as well.”

While advancing to state was a goal this season, the RedHawks main goal was to steadily improve over the course of the season and gain valuable experience heading into the playoffs.

“We saw great improvement as the season went on and the playoff games showed how far we came as a team and as individuals,” Krasowski said.

“Even though we did not meet our state goal, the McAuley game was a fun end to my Marist volleyball career,” she said.

Other RedHawks ending their volleyball careers this season include senior Maddie Dunterman (middle) and Ryann Horkavy (outside hitter).

“I am extremely thankful to have played with the seniors because they are some of the most positive, influential people I know,” Meyer said. “They were the best teammates.”

Varsity Football

A season of tradition, brotherhood

by Stephanie Kozlowski
junior reporter

The RedHawk varsity football team lost in the first round of the playoffs on Oct. 28, with a hard-fought game against New Trier, 31-24.

Although the playoff run ended early, the RedHawks are proud of their 8-1 regular season record and their accomplishments on and off the field.

The team also earned the first conference championship in school history this season.

“Going undefeated in conference was a blast,” said senior offensive lineman Tom O’Mara. “It was fun for us and we are proud to have done it for Coach Dunne. He’s a selfless guy who puts all of his time into football and really cares about his players.”

The friendships and bonds the team made throughout their years as RedHawks is what helped them to come together as a cohesive group.

“We spend a lot of time together every day, so naturally a bond begins to form and we get closer,” said junior linebacker Danny Hughes.

The team is already focusing on how to improve for next season.

“We need to be prepared for every game,” junior quarterback Morgan Taylor said. “We have to pick it up and develop even greater intensity.”

Head coach Pat Dunne also looks forward to the team’s improvement for next season.

“The juniors and sophomores are going to continue to work hard in the off-season,” Dunne said. “I think this year’s seniors really set the tone in terms of work ethic and that the returning players will work extremely hard and try to go farther next year.”

The legacy that the seniors leave behind is one they hope future RedHawks will build on.

“That’s what it’s all about, tradition and brotherhood,” Taylor said.



photo by Patti Arvesen

Junior quarterback Morgan Taylor (#1) starts the play against New Trier on Oct. 28 in the first round of the playoffs at Red and White Stadium, one of many passes completed that night. Marist lost by one touchdown, 31-24.