



GREENSCENE

NEWSLETTER OF THE LORETO PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

March 2011

CHAIRPERSON'S ADDRESS



Welcome to the first edition of Green Scene for 2010-11 and my first edition as Chairperson. I look forward to another successful year for the Parents' Association. Last year we held a number of events which were very well received by parents and so far in this school year we have arranged the pre debs reception for the girls, their beaus and parents prior to the festivities in the Shelbourne Hotel.

We also had a fantastic turnout at the event arranged for parents of this year's first year girls and we hope those parents managed to make connections with other parents from the year. The AGM of the Parents Association was very well attended and after the usual business we had a very humorous and enlightening talk entitled "Parenting Teenagers: Negotiating the Minefield" from Psychologist Shane Martin – I must say personally I learned something from Shane – and cried a little with laughter.

There is a lot on this year and the Parents' Association have formed a number of committees to complete all of the tasks. I won't name all of the committees here but please keep an eye on the parents association pages on www.loretothegreen.ie for all details. We hold monthly meetings of the committee so if there are items you feel should be addressed by the committee, please let us know. We would very much welcome your views on the workings of the association and also suggestions and feedback on PA events.

The Parents Association wishes to keep in closer contact with all of the parents to keep you abreast of relevant news and events. Over the past year we have been compiling an email database for all parents and would hope to communicate more and more through this medium. The database is not fully complete so if you think you haven't supplied your email address yet please fill in the contact form on www.loretothegreen.ie/page/Parents_Association/Parent_Registration or send an email to thegreenpa@gmail.com. It's easy to make your views known to us – just email us or you can post your views on the registration page of the website or contact any of the committee members directly – our email addresses and telephone numbers are listed on the website.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank Anne-Marie Taylor for chairing the Parents' Association for the last two years. Anne-Marie is now one of your elected representatives on the Board of Management along with Owen Sorenson. Thanks also to all the parents who finished their term on the committee last year and I would like to welcome the new representatives for First year: Eamonn Hughes, Noel Lynch, Nuala O'Reilly and Siobhan Comerford; and the new representatives for Fourth Year: Marianne Flood, Geraldine Keartland, Marie Williams and Mary Ryan-Kelly. I look forward to working with you all.

I hope you enjoy this issue of Green Scene. As always, we welcome your feedback and I look forward to seeing you at the next parents' event.

Ian McGuinness

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Chairperson's Address 1

Whiz Kids 2

Entrepreneurs of Tomorrow 2

Energy Action 3

And the Winner is... 3

AGM Minutes 4

Who we are... 4

Negotiating the Minefield 5

It Takes a Community 6

That's the Spirit 6

The Bully in Your Home 7

Surviving the Debs 8

“..hands-on
science....
outside the
classroom”

It was great to
see how much
each of the
companies had
learned about the
highs and lows of
working together
as a team.

WHIZ KIDS

Students from Loreto on the Green entered seven projects in the 2011 BT Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition. This was the 47th year of the competition with the highest number of entries in history. 520 projects were selected to compete in the RDS.

All from Transition year, Helen Lynch investigated sports injuries associated with hurling and camogie; Deirdre Murphy, Orla Kelly & Eimile Thornton, examined the environments students study best in; Ciara O' Hare, Caroline Kelly & Rebecca Furlong studied the leaching of aluminium from cookware into acidic food and its link to breast cancer and Alzheimer's; Isa Yu, Kate Parker & Lauren Swift investigated the effects of caffeine on driving responses and Robyn Kehoe Roche & Grainne Lowney investigated how physical activity affects academic performance.

The academic level of these projects is phenomenal and this was reflected by the awards received. Ciara Walsh, Ruth



Dargan & Kate O' Regan designed a smartphone application which calculates and gives tips on carbon footprints designed specifically for teenagers. The girls were awarded 1st place in the intermediate group Technology category, a Google Trailblazers Award and were selected for the BT Business of Science and Technology programme. Fiona O' Connor & Ailbhe Ni Mhorain were able to determine road quality around Dublin by recording the vibrations. This project received the IBM Special Award and was Highly Commended. Congratulations to all the girls on the success of their projects.

Thanks to Ms. Campbell and Ms. Whittaker for their guidance throughout the YSE experience.

ENTREPRENEURS OF TOMORROW

By Triona Culliton

The Parents' Association were invited again to be judges for the Student Enterprise Awards. It was my pleasure along with Siobhan Brady and Mary Ryan Kelly to be involved. There were 19 mini companies run by 70 young ladies who all battled to impress us with their products, business plans, innovative marketing and personalities. There was a great buzz at the market day when we visited in December and we managed to visit each stand and interview each team. We each took notes and compared our marks afterwards. At the start of January we evaluated the business presentations of the companies before making a return visit at the end of the month for the final decision. Some of the reports presented were of a very professional standard with clear marketing, business and financial plans evident. Others showed great innovative and risk management skills together with the development of their own personal skills. There were some wonderful products and services to view from Eco-Friendly Notice Boards to Emergency Beauty Kits, Candles, Jewellery, Christmas Cards and Recipe Books.

In the Junior category, the team which scored highly and impressed us to take the 1st place was **The Write Time**. This innovative company was run by Maria Farrell, Edith Cunningham, Laura Lardner and Deirbhile Kearney. They sold a pen with a useful timetable. It had a wide appeal, was adaptable, showed a super profit and had great marketing plans. They also managed to donate some of their profits to charity. 2nd place went to **The Green Swap' N' Shop**, who, with Megan O'Neill, Sinead O'Casey and Niamh Ryan, even managed to set up a website to facilitate their sales. 1st place in the Intermediate category was taken by **Charmed** run by Ciara Barry, Hannah Norgrove and Clodagh O'Regan. They had great alternative, fashionable and affordable jewellery for sale and managed to overcome their initial supply problems admirably.

Congratulations to all of the Loreto business teachers and their students who made our life difficult by setting such high standards.

ENERGY ACTION UPDATE



Following on from the launch of the 'Do not waste energy' group and the 'Kiss the Earth' Campaign, this update will focus on tangible and simple ways of improving energy usage and cost effectiveness. These are ways that we can all contribute towards changing our attitude towards energy efficiency which should be part of the ethos of the school, as well as our everyday lives. What better way is there to help globally and locally by improving all our personal carbon counts, which cumulatively could help towards making Loreto carbon neutral.

Energy conservation is important. This is old news, but have you really grasped how much of an impact it can have on your life. It affects you, your school and even your money.

Here are a few, rather surprising facts about energy conservation

- * 4kg of Bauxite, the raw material used in aluminium production, are

saved for 1kg of aluminium recycled.

- * About 80-90% of the energy used by regular light bulbs is lost as heat. CFL bulbs are designed to prevent this, using 20% of the energy while producing the same amount of light and last up to 15 times longer.
- * Also, did you know that a study in 1999 by a research group outside Sacramento, found that students who took their lessons in classrooms with more natural light scored up to 25% higher on tests than other students in the same school district.
- * Laptops use about 90% less power than desktops. If leaving your work for an extended period, switch your PC off or switch it to standby. In fact turning off your computer at the

end of the working day will decrease its annual bill by an average of 25%. There is software available to switch off entire computer networks. In testing, University College Cork saved the equivalent of over €80 annually per PC using similar software.

- * Up to 30% of heat in a room is lost up the chimney. A simple plastic balloon placed in an unused chimney can prevent this.

Energy conservation can make an overall change for our world, and preserving the planet for our children is important. It's very easy to get started saving energy and money today.

For more information and some common sense tips, check out the following websites:

- www.brighthub.com,
- www.chimneyballoons.ie,
- www.carlow.ie/environment

'...students who took their lessons in classrooms with more natural light scored up to 25 % higher..'

*In order to improve the efficiency of communications we would like to send out notices via email. Please register online if you would like to be put on our emailing list. Simply go to loretothegreen.ie; click on **Parents' Association**; then click on **Parent Registration**.*

AND THE WINNER IS...

Answer the following questions to win a €100 voucher. All the answers can be found somewhere on the schools website, so log on and read on to win!!

1. How much was raised for the Skipathon in December?
2. Where did the Second year students attend a one day Retreat in November?
3. What were the most popular songs sung for the orphan children in Nyumbani by the Transition year group?
4. What date was 'Good Deed Day'?
5. Who did Loreto recently beat to win a place in the Dublin Senior Gaelic Football final?

To be in with a chance, email your answers, along with your name and your daughter's to thegreenpa@gmail.com. Remember, it's not just for parents!

AGM MINUTES - OCTOBER 6, 2010

A social evening was held in September to welcome the parents of incoming First Year students. To read about the evening, check out the Parents' Association page on the Loreto website.

Please feel free to contact your class Rep directly with any concerns, comments or suggestions. We love hearing from you!

Chaired by Anne-Marie Taylor, the meeting was opened by Ms Barrett with a reflection prepared by the sixth year students for the Week of the Homeless. A simple description of home was "some place nice to put my things".

Following approval of the 2009 AGM minutes, Anne-Marie presented her report summarising the activities of the Parents' Association during the year. She noted that, while the information events such as John Waters and Dr. Martin O'Sullivan's talks were excellently attended, some purely social events were not as well supported. This would be discussed and reviewed by the PA during the coming year. The PA continues to sponsor the Memories DVD and the Green Scene Newsletter. A new initiative called KISS the Earth (Keep It Simple Save the Earth) was introduced this year. The PA carried out an evaluation and selection process to appoint a new uniform supplier. Lynch's of Marino will be supplying the uniform from Jan 2011.

The introduction of e-mail communication with parents continues. At the time of the AGM over 50% of parents had provided email addresses. Declan Chambers presented the Treasurer's Report. A decision had been made last year to reduce the annual subscription from €25 to €20. The Income/Expenditure figures were presented and explained in detail.

Ms Barrett acknowledged the work of the Parents' Association during the year, and in particular, Chairperson Anne-Marie Taylor who, along with Owen Sorensen, moves to the BOM as new parent representatives. She congratulated all the students on their terrific Junior and Leaving Cert results along with further achievements during the year. Updates of various school programmes included: the first student trip to Kenya; the recent Cardinal Newman Mass; the Saturday Folk Masses; the Kenyan Ambassador's visit; staff changes and the appointment of a new Sports Co-ordinator.

A review of the Constitution of the Parents' Association took place during the year. It involved a substantial amount of work by the subcommittee. A vote was taken, and the resolution accepting the changes and the adoption of the new Constitution was passed.

- taken from minutes by Mary Ryan-Kelly, Secretary

WHO WE ARE...

PARENTS' ASSOCIATION CLASS REPS - 2010/2011

Eamon Hughes	1B	087 753 7458	Marianne Flood	4B	086 833 9916
Noel Lynch	1G	086 243 2804	Geraldine Keartland	4G	086 837 5124
Nuala O'Reilly	1M	087 649 5023	Marie Williams	4M	087 668 4199
Siobhan Comerford	1T	086 813 5843	Mary Ryan-Kelly	4T	087 996 7438
Orla O'Kane	2B	087 769 6214	Frances Ennis	5B	086 607 1979
Orna Bacon	2G	087 860 4195	Catherine Ghose	5G	086 244 5067
Teresa Smyth	2M	086 836 3290	Denise MacCarthy	5M	086 820 1508
Mary Lynch-Griffin	2T	087 234 2984	Breda Murphy	5T	087 949 2732
Aine Bolger	3B	086 376 1753	Patricia Donnelly	6B	086 053 3615
Denis O'Brien	3G	086 243 3001	Triona Culliton	6G	086 803 0808
Lisa Stokes	3M	086 817 5040	Clare Lyons	6M	086 850 7168
Ian Mc Guinness	3T	086 243 1541	Mary Rose Stauder	6T	087 823 2557

PARENT REPS ON BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

Anne-Marie Taylor 087 820 6703

Owen Sorensen 087 940 1111

NEGOTIATING THE MINEFIELD

By Noel Lynch



Over the years, I read books by many experts, from Miriam Stoppard to Dr Spock all offering their own unique insights and pearls of wisdom, some eye-opening, some downright bizarre, into the enigma that is parenting.

But in all my life, I have never come across as much common sense and down to earth advice as I did at the address by Shane Martin (pictured above) following the 2010 Parents' Association AGM. Shane runs a programme called Moodwatchers, which sets out to teach essential life skills which can empower people to attain a better quality of life and greater happiness. If we want our children and ourselves to be happier and healthier, we should consider taking on some proven strategies and techniques.

The following highlights are taken from Dr Martin's presentation at the AGM in October.

We are in a new Ireland, in the grips of a media information revolution fuelled mainly by teenagers. Courtesy of the Internet, mobile phones, social networking sites such as Bebo, My Space, Facebook and YouTube, there is exposure to an ever increasing amount of information that includes more pornography, violence, disturbing news, all at the touch of a button.

Nowadays, social networking can mean constant contact with peers and strangers, often not negotiated or monitored, coupled with media representations of relationships and sex.

The Celtic Tiger meant

that money became oxygen meaning that teenagers are now very often employed, with financial independence. Having the ability to have their own cars, holidays, with constant designer label and friendship wars are just another facet to this 'minefield'. And just in case you've forgotten, normal teenage issues such as hormones, the struggle for independence, peer pressure, emerging identity and academic pressure are fighting for their place.

As parents of teenagers, every day we need to make such decisions as how much 'autonomy' to grant, 'attitude' to take, what type and amount of discipline to apply and how to talk to that alien that once was your offspring. Communication is king but oftentimes, what we say is not always quite what we mean. 'I leave them to find their own way and learn from their mistakes' can very often mean I have no input or am too busy. 'Watching them like a hawk' can be interpreted as intrusion, intimidation, interfering and spying by a teenager. Parenting is challenging and we need to invest time for the commitment required.

Teenagers do a lot of thinking, about themselves, others and the world, their life, loves and problems. They do not always have the 'voice of reason' and need someone to approach. They are very often internalized, watching and listening to us, how we relate to others, our habits, behaviour and how we handle crises.

Watching and listening

to outside influences, peers, TV, media, and social networks. Through home, school and social life, they evolve into unique adults.

As parents, it behoves us to provide a consistent positive environment of warmth, love and stability. Making genuine two way connections and investing time so as to give them a sense of belonging. Having fun, (without being too trendy!), Being aware of and monitoring what they are thinking, watching and listening to. Agreeing boundaries and rules and maintaining consistency in applying these rules. There are 'consequences'. You may have to say 'no' a few times. Finding appropriate autonomy, respecting ideas, encouraging independent thinking and validating feelings all will allow them to grow, while fostering trust and a sense of belonging within the family.

We must be aware of any warning signs such as significant changes in behaviour or moods that may indicate problems such as alcohol or drug abuse, or being bullied or bullying and the problems that exam pressure can cause.

Finding the balance as Shane rightly describes it, is negotiating a minefield. With a positive home environment of warmth, love and stability balanced with school and an appropriate social life, we can negotiate the minefield together and watch our beautiful jewels mature into adulthood.

For more information:
www.moodwatchers.com

Leaving the Rotunda Hospital with a screaming child, thirteen short years ago, I completely forgot to ask for the instruction manual. I decided not to bother looking for our complementary copy, after all, how hard could it be?

IT TAKES A COMMUNITY



In October 2010, a group of Fifth Year students, accompanied by Ms Smith, Ms Barton, Mr Mangan and Mr Mulligan, visited Kenya. Based in Nairobi and Nyumbani village, they visited and worked in the Nyumbani orphanage, founded by Fr. D'Agostino and Sr. Mary Owens, a Loreto sister, to care for children orphaned by HIV Aids. Two of the students, Kate O'Brien and Eleanor Buggy wrote beautiful accounts of their experiences in Kenya. To read their full reports, see the schools website on the latest news section. www.loretothegreen.ie

An experience such as this is a milestone in a student's life. As a parent, watching your daughter prepare for and embark on a trip such as this, would be as big, if not a bigger deal. Eleanor's father Donal writes of the experience from his perspective:

From a parents' perspective, Eleanor's involvement in the Kenya Immersion trip was a tremendous opportunity and experience for her and the girls in multiple ways. There was the challenging application process, including interviews and selection by an external expert in International Development Aid. There was the preparation requiring knowledge and

culture-based project work on Kenya, and of course the terrifying immunisation programme. Then we had to "let go" and trust her and her peers to the outstanding supervision of the four teachers, Ms Smith, Ms Barton, Mr Mangan and Mr Mulligan, and the friendship of the African people. In one case, due to a mobile phone fault, there was a total communication blackout for the 17 days, lightened only by the occasional contact from fellow parents, that all was well with the group.

Eleanor's homecoming, marked by a jubilant, impromptu flag-waving ceremony at the airport, confirmed that she had absorbed a core value of social justice, particularly regarding Development Aid; that she was happiest and most engaged when committed to a caring project, in conjunction with her greatly-treasured friends. In short, this trip was a defining moment in her education in the broadest sense, a quantum leap in her maturation as a young adult.



THAT'S THE SPIRIT

By Mark Cunningham

HOCKEY After a very frustrating weather-enforced break hockey is back up and running and in full swing this January. Ms Amy Green has taken over the 'Sports Master' role this year and has assembled an excellent set of coaches throughout the different teams. A special thank you is extended to Ms Crinion for her tireless work. Parent-managers have also now been appointed and are playing a key role in helping to bring a bit of order to the waiting teams on the sidelines and helping the busy schedule of Saturday morning matches to run a bit easier.

The Junior and Senior teams have had some excellent performances in the leagues so far and recent wins by the Minor A in Alex and Junior B in The High School clearly indicate that the future looks bright at all levels. One of the consequences of the earlier disruption is that friendly matches have to take a back seat and nearly every weekend the school is involved in league playoffs, cup matches or Loreto League fixtures.

So, please do consider attending and cheering on your daughter. Despite suggestions to the contrary, you will not be the only one there!

SENIOR A BASKETBALL This year has been a great year for Senior A basketball. In October we traveled to Belfast to play a S.B.A.I cup match which after a very tough match, a great team effort and extra time we won. In December we played in the S.B.A.I cup final against Mercy Coolock held in Dublin. This made it the second year in a row that the Senior A's made it to the S.B.A.I final. We had played Mercy Coolock in the league at the start of the school year, from that match we knew that they were a very good team and would put on a great performance in the final. We lost to them the first time we played them so we went into this match wanting to win and wanting to prove that we can beat Mercy. It was a very close game which we led for the most part and we were unfortunate to lose on a score of 44-38.

Report by Elaine Mongan, Senior A-team member

"There was a mass whisper of 'Oh My God' and genuine shock as we stared at the sea of corrugated steel roofing."

- Kate O'Brien

The girls play immeasurably better when they have vocal encouragement from the sidelines and the numbers of parents attending is creeping up every week.

THE BULLY IN YOUR HOME

Bullying is not a new phenomenon. However the ways in which it happens is changing. Technologies are being used by young people for a wide range of activities that annoy, harass, and intimidate each other. Depending on the context, these behaviours can be considered anywhere on a spectrum from relatively harmless to very damaging. We need to be mindful that posting nasty comments on someone's profile or uploading photographs intended to embarrass someone do not, by itself, constitute bullying.

Bullying can reasonably be regarded as behaviour that is sustained or repeated over time and which characteristically involves a disparity between the power of the perpetrator and the victim. Children in Ireland are less likely to be bullied online than their European counterparts according to EU Kids Online 2010 research. About 4 per cent of Irish children say they have been bullied on the internet sometime in the past 12 months. The EU average for online bullying is 5%.

Types of online harassment:

PERSONAL INTIMIDATION

This behaviour includes receiving threatening SMS messages, posting abusive and threatening comments on the victim's profile or other websites, or sending threatening messages via instant messaging.

IMPERSONATION

This behaviour involves setting up fake profiles and web pages that are attributed to the victim. It can also involve gaining access to someone's profile or instant messaging account and using it to contact others while impersonating the account or profile owner.

EXCLUSION

This behaviour involves blocking an individual from a popular group or community such as a school or class group in Bebo, deleting them from friendship lists, and/or using 'ignore functions'.

PERSONAL HUMILIATION

This behaviour involves posting images or videos intended to embarrass someone, it can involve users sharing and posting images or videos of victims being abused or humiliated offline, or users sharing personal communica-

tions such as e-mails or text messages with a wider audience than was intended by the sender.

FALSE REPORTING

This behaviour involves making false reports to the service provider or reporting other users for a range of behaviours with a view to having the user's account or website deleted.

Key Advice for Children:

1. Don't Reply to messages that harass or annoy you. Even though you may really want to, this is exactly what the sender wants. They want to know that they've got you worried and upset. If you respond with an even nastier message it makes them think that they really got to you, and that's just what they want. They might even complain about you!

2. Keep the Message you don't have to read it, but keep it. If you keep getting messages that upset you, you will need to have evidence in order to get help. Website owners, mobile phone companies and the Gardaí will all look for evidence before they will be able to take any action to help you.

3. Block the Sender You don't need to put up with someone harassing you. If you are getting messages that upset you can block the person simply by clicking the block button. On some mobile phones you can block a caller's number.

4. Tell Someone You Trust Talking to your parents, friends, or someone you trust is usually the first step in dealing with any issue. In the case of school related bullying messages you should also talk to a teacher you trust or guidance counsellor about it. You can!

If you need to speak to someone straight away please call **CHILDLINE** on 1800 66 66 66.

Simon Grehan.
National Centre for
Technology in Education,
Dublin City University, Dublin 9
Tel: 01-7008200
www.ncte.ie

For more information and tips:



Encourage good

Netiquette.

As in everyday

life, there are

informal ethical

rules for how to

behave when

relating to other

people on the

Internet.

Remember

that the

positive

aspects of the

Internet

outweigh the

negatives.

SURVIVING THE DEBS!

By Orlaith Mccarthy

As the mother of five daughters, I've experienced more than my fair share of debs debacles! This year, as I approach my youngest debs (my grand finale) I have been invited to share my thoughts with the world on surviving the momentous occasion. After a decade of Debs, I have seen it all. Dieting for the dress, highlights for the hair, spray tan the day before, full body exfoliation, acquiring the right accessories, discovering the dress and the list goes on and on!

The lead up to this landmark event is little more than a series of obstacles with the glittering night of debutant glamour marking the finishing line. The cornerstone challenge is buying the dress. Akin to the procurement of the bridal gown, this is not an easy task. It can take a month of Sundays or it can fall into your hands unexpectedly when you walk into the first shop. If you're lucky, it's the latter but even then, despite the apparent trouble-free triumph, lies a hidden danger. That 'perfect' dress may not be so perfect in a few months or even weeks time when the event approaches. It's a classic love-hate relationship that can see a mother spend significant amounts of time and energy convincing her debutant of its worth. Sometimes to no avail!

Following the dress fiasco, there arises another monster. Finding a date. This process involves careful consideration of every male acquaintance your daughter has come across within her short 18 years



and sorting out the potential from the hopeless! From the boy around the corner to the fella I met in the pub last night – everyone's a candidate! Then comes the nitty gritty. Checking out what all the friends are doing and trying to keep up! At the beginning it was just getting the hair done. But year on year, the pruning became ever more extensive as eye lashes, fake tan, highlights, nails and make up all got added to the list.

Finally, when all the preparation is done and the big day dawns, all the hard work comes to fruition the moment you see you daughter descending down the stairs and yet it only seems like yesterday since she wore that iconic uniform for the first time. Another big thrill is gathering at the Green again for the last time. The previous occasion when the students were all together at the school was at the emotional graduation day. A day that inevitably brings tears as the Mass marks the end of an era at the Green.

It always makes me smile to see the girls return to the school under much happier circumstances. After sitting the tough ex-



ams, surviving the leaving cert holiday and making it through fresher's week in one piece, each girl has climbed mountains since the last time they were in the school I and before your eyes they have grown into beautiful elegant young adults. And this is the night to celebrate making it to the top! I'll toast to that!

"..a full supply of patience, a secret stash of energy bars and your cheque book!"



TOP: Catherine King & Claire Pender
 ABOVE: Nella Maguire
 RIGHT: Maeve Hennessy & Hannah Lucey