



# The HeartBeat

A Newsletter for Alumni & Friends of St. John Eudes School

Visit us at [www.sjeschool.net](http://www.sjeschool.net)

## SJE to Kick-Off Catholic Schools Week with Open House Catholic Schools Week Celebrated Jan. 25 thru 31

The theme for Catholic Schools Week 2009 celebrates Catholic schools and community service. Catholic Schools Week is celebrated nationally the last week in January, this year Jan. 25-31.

“Civic engagement is a hallmark of Catholic education,” said Karen Ristau, president of the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA). “The majority of elementary and secondary schools participate in service projects ranging from collecting canned goods for the homeless to rebuilding schools in the hurri-



cane-torn gulf, so it was natural that we choose service as a major theme.” (From an NCEA Press Release)

St. John Eudes School will be celebrating Catholic Schools Week with a number of events and activities, beginning with an Open House on Sunday, Jan. 25, from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. All alumni and friends are invited to attend, tour the classrooms, and speak with the teachers. Student work and projects will be on display in the classrooms and Grill Hall, along with the Scholastic Book Fair. Additional information is available on the school website.

### Save the Date!

#### Summer Carnival Set for May 29-31

It may seem like summer is still a million miles away, but it'll be here before you know it. And what better way to celebrate summer than coming to the SJE Summer Carnival!

The carnival will feature great carnival games & rides, a fantastic silent auction, great international food, top-notch entertainment, a beer & margarita garden, the best bingo game in town, and a \$10,000 drawing!

Proceeds will benefit the school, as well as parish educational and community ministries. Visit the carnival website at [sjecarnival.org](http://sjecarnival.org) for more information and make sure to mark your calendar now!



### Spring Fundraiser to Celebrate “Mardi Gras”

#### Good Times to Roll on Feb. 21

All friends and alumni are invited to join in our annual spring fundraiser *Mardi Gras* to be held on Saturday, Feb. 21, 2009, at 6:30 pm in Grill Hall. This exciting event will include entertainment, casino style games, a delicious buffet dinner, silent/live auction, bingo, and a \$2,500 Cash Grand Prize Drawing!

All proceeds will benefit SJE School and will be used for expenses such as textbooks, library books, technology development and capital improvements.

We need your help to make this event a success. We are in need of donated items, services, or gift certificates for our auctions and prizes. You can also advertise in our program or make a donation and be an event sponsor. If you are able to assist us, you will be



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### Highlights:

- Catholic Schools Week to Focus on Service, Civic Engagement
- PTSO Spring Fundraiser to Celebrate Mardi Gras; Proceeds Slated for Various Programs
- Date Set for Summer Carnival; Fun Focus of Event
- Children's Choir Sings to Worship; Reflects Values and Talents to World
- Science Lab Plans Being Completed; Endowment Trustees Allocate Funds
- SJE Alumni Tutor Students, Manage Disney Animals, Help Save Heart Patients
- Committee Considers “Alumnus of the Year Candidates”; Award to Be Presented in April
- 15th Anniversary of Northridge Earthquake Rattles Memories
- Being a Room Parent Considered “A lot of Fun”; Birthday Cupcakes & Punch Just Part of Responsibilities and Purpose

## SJE Children's Choir Represents School, Parish Across Country

A wise fellow once said that there is no greater hope for the world than the sound of children singing. These words ring true all across campus as the Children's Choir of St. John Eudes gathers to practice, to prepare, and to perform for the greater glory of God. Under the direction of Mr. Richard Medrano, and his loyal assistant, Mrs. Kim Visokey, the Children's Choir is committed to sharing the love of Christ through the ministry of music. The choir includes approximately 75 students, ranging in age from Kindergarten through 8th Grade. And while the choir includes children from throughout the parish, most choir members are SJE students.

The primary purpose of the SJE Children's Choir is to worship the Lord in song especially through the leadership of Children's Liturgy each month. The middle school choir members, known as Heaven's Grace, also lead the singing at all school Masses and paraliturgies. The Children's Choir has also developed a sound reputation for their biannual concerts celebrating Christmas and the arrival of Spring.

Beyond such efforts on the homefront, the diverse talents of the Children's Choir have contributed to countless events throughout the community. In late September the choir was featured in the *Magic Music Days* celebration at Disneyland. Over the Thanksgiving holiday the choir traveled to New York to perform John

Rutter's *Mass for the Children* at Carnegie Hall. Currently, the Children's Choir is preparing to perform with the L.A. Opera in an encore presentation of *Noye's Fludde*, which was first presented in March, 2007, at the Cathedral. Such activities require a great deal of practice and dedication.

We salute the fine efforts of the SJE Children's choir, their parents and instructors. The sound of these angelic voices keeps us hopeful for the future and grateful for the present. Keep up the great work, Choir Kids!



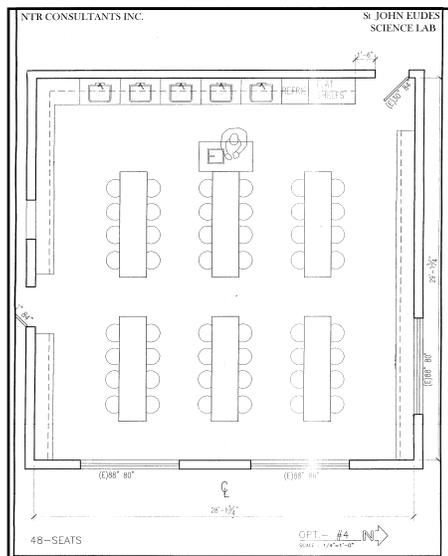
The SJE Children's Choir presented their Christmas performance of "A Star Is Born" in Grill Hall. Students participating in the program learn more than just music - they learn poise and self-confidence as they perform in front of audiences from Disneyland to Carnegie Hall. We can be proud of our singing ambassadors! (P.S. And how did they get to Carnegie Hall? By practicing of course!) (Photo courtesy of Laura Mayoral)

### Endowment Trustees Vote to Support Science Lab

At a recent meeting of the trustees of the SJE School Endowment, the trustees voted to support the Science Lab by approving the allocation of the special collection taken at Masses during the coming Catholic Schools Week for the lab in lieu of the Endowment. "The lab is an extremely important project that will directly benefit our students. It's important that we all support it," said Dan Lien, trustee. Msgr. Nugent also welcomed Mrs. Grace Hernandez as the newest trustee to the board. The trustees will meet again in April.

### Plans for Science Lab Nearing Completion

Working with the support of the PTSO, SJE Parish School Board and the school's science teachers, Mrs. Danowitz has approved the tentative floor plan for the new Science Lab. Assisting Mrs. Danowitz with the project has been Jenny Zoller, the School



Board's Buildings & Grounds Committee Chairperson. Mrs. Zoller has been working with Tony Nasr, current and alumni SJE parent, to develop the actual construction plans and obtain city approval. The lab will be located in the former Religious Education Offices adjacent to the Old Parish Hall. A special collection will be taken at Masses during Catholic Schools Week to help fund the project. If you would like to donate to make this important project a reality, please send your donation to the School Office marked "Science Lab" or use the Annual Fund donation envelopes available in the church narthex (Annual Fund donation forms are also available on the school website). Donors will receive special recognition as part of the Annual Fund Campaign.

### In a Lighter Vein . . .

#### Some Questions Teachers Hope They Never Get Asked

- Why doesn't glue stick to the inside of its bottle?
- If a cow laughed, would milk come out her nose?
- If it's zero degrees outside today and it's supposed to be twice as cold tomorrow, how cold is it going to be?
- If you're in a vehicle going the speed of light, what happens when you turn on the headlights?
- What do you plant to grow a seedless watermelon?
- You know that little indestructible black box that is used on planes - why can't they make the whole plane out of the same stuff?
- Have you ever imagined a world with no hypothetical situations?

*But there's no question you're vital to helping us maintain the important mission of St. John Eudes School. Please consider making a donation to SJE. Donations are tax deductible and help the worthy cause of providing a quality Catholic education to deserving children. Your donation to the Annual Fund, Adopt-A-Student Program, Endowment, or other general or specific gifts is greatly appreciated. To donate please contact the School Office (818) 341-1454 or visit our website at [www.sjeschool.net](http://www.sjeschool.net). Thank you!*



## The Pulse: News About SJE Alumni & Friends

**Bert Howard '86** attended Chaminade College Preparatory where he was a member of the National Honor Society. He graduated Chaminade in 1990 and then attended California State University, Northridge, where he majored in Computer Science and minored in Math. He graduated *summa cum laude* in 1994. Bert currently tutors students of all grade levels in math, including students from SJE, Chaminade, and CSUN. He cares for his parents and does extensive research in helping his father and others battle emphysema and other illnesses. Creating and designing his own greeting cards is one of his favorite activities and he loves to be with his six nephews. He is active at St. John Eudes as a lector.

**Kim Ault '92** moved to Hawaii with her parents after graduating SJE. She then graduated from St. Anthony High School on Maui in 1996. After high school, she received a degree in Communications from Chaminade University in Honolulu. She then went on to receive her graduate MBA degree from Stetson University in Florida and is currently op-

### "Alumnus of the Year" to be Announced During Catholic Schools Week

Nominations for the *SJE School Alumnus of the Year* were recently accepted from alumni and friends and are now being considered by the selection committee. The committee will make its determination based on how well the nominee represents a life-long learner who lives their faith in the spirit of St. Paula Montal based on the principles of "to Live, to Love, to Learn, and to Leave a Legacy." The nominees for 2009 are: **Jacqueline Beardsley '02, Dina Capra '90, Sarah Connor '81, Sandra De La Riva-Repede '73, Patricia De La Riva-Fuentes '79, Bert Howard '86, Kelly McNall-Steiner '80, Darren Ruzicka '86, Antoinette Zambetti '00, and Gina Zambetti '00.**

The recipient will be announced during Catholic Schools Week on the school website and in the parish bulletin. The award will be presented by Msgr. Nugent and Mrs. Danowitz, who head the selection committee, during a special Endowment Trustees Dinner in April.

erations manager at Animal Kingdom in Walt Disney World. Kim was married last October in Orlando.

**Jeremy Jagiello '96** graduated from Alemany High School in 2000. At Alemany he was active on the water polo and volleyball teams. He also received a number of academic achievement awards including Dean's List honors. He then attended Moorpark College (where he developed an appreciation for swing-dancing) and obtained an A.A. Degree in Biology. While at Moorpark, Jeremy worked at Mason Park in several capacities including being a coordinator for children's programs and summer activities, girl's volleyball coach, and referee and scorekeeper for various sport's activities. He then attended California State University, Northridge, (where he joined the Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity) planning to major in Health Administration, but then was accepted into the nursing program at Moorpark College and obtained a Nursing Degree in 2005. Since then he has been working at UCLA's Cardiac and Thoracic Unit (a job that he really loves – but he also does like to spend his free time with his girlfriend of three years, Tammy). Jeremy looks forward to attending California State University, Channel Islands,



*In 1994 Jeremy Jagiello '96 was jogging around the field helping raise funds for the school. Today he just might be one of those you depend on for successful heart surgery! SJE students develop and grow to operate in many important and hi-tech professions.*

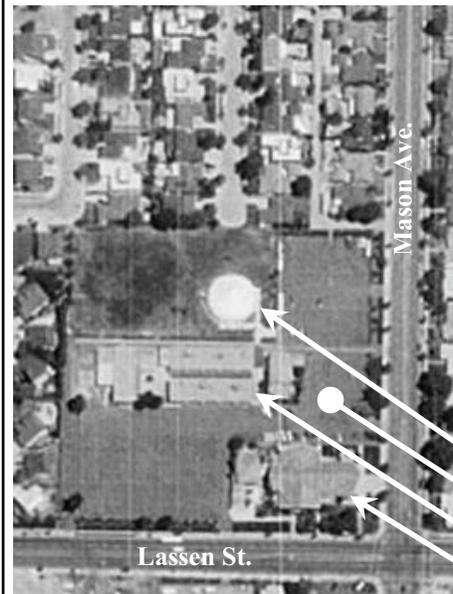
in 2009 to obtain a bachelor's degree in Nursing and then to eventually obtain a master's degree in Nursing Anesthesiology.

*SJE students on to do wonderful things and we'd like to hear what you've been doing since graduating from SJE School (or if you're a parent, now's your chance to brag a little). E-mail to [theheartbeat@sjeschool.net](mailto:theheartbeat@sjeschool.net) or send us a note to:*

Attn: The HeartBeat  
St. John Eudes School  
9925 Mason Avenue  
Chatsworth, CA 91311

### It's Been 15 Years: Remembering the Northridge Earthquake

*This aerial photograph was taken June 1, 1994, by the USGS showing the school and parish just months after the Jan. 17, 1994, Northridge Earthquake. The earthquake caused extensive damage to the church building which was "red-tagged" by city officials so that it could not be used until repaired. Luckily, the rest of the facilities, including the school, survived the quake without major damage. The Parish Planning Committee (which had already been meeting before the earthquake to discuss expansion of parish facilities) decided to erect a temporary "tent church" big enough to meet the needs of the parish.*



*It was in this tent that the school celebrated Masses, first communions, graduations, and a number of other events, until the church building was reopened in 1997. While the tent was just a temporary structure, many alumni fondly remember the tent and the sense of community it brought during a time of trial for the parish and school.*

*It's hard to believe that the students who were in the school back then have already gone on to college, gotten married, or have settled into successful careers. But the students at school today also know earthquake basics, having participated in the recent "Great California Shake-Out". Our*

**Tent Church**  
**Site of Grill Hall**  
**School**  
**Church**

*students have been trained in what to do in the event of an earthquake and the school has emergency procedures in place should such an emergency occur during school hours.*

## St. John Eudes School

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Pastor

Mrs. Barbara Danowitz  
Principal

**A Community of Faith  
is a community of learners  
who recognize and nourish  
God-given gifts.**



### The HeartBeat

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St. John Eudes School  
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### Mardi Gras

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listed in the event program as a sponsor. No donation is too small and donations are tax deductible. Tickets are available at \$40 per person or \$75 per couple (suggested

donation). Additional information is available by following the links on the school website or by calling Melissa Reyes (818) 349-9580. Make sure to join us at what is going to be the best Mardi Gras in town! Come to the Mardi Gras and **“Laissez les bon temps rouler!”**



The Room Parents help extensively at the yearly SJE Jog-a-Thon. This year the event raised over \$40,000 to help support the school.

## Really Positive Ridiculously Productive Room Parents

They are the ever-present unofficial aides of teachers; the school-wide coordinators of birthday parties; the facilitators of celebrations for Sacraments, feast days, holidays and commencements; the renegade caterers of refreshment for every conceivable school gathering; the crafters of masterpieces unique with the vestige of each student; the layout designers of class pictorial documents; the drivers of the welcome wagon for new school families; the recruiters of parent volunteers; the masters of properties for school and classroom thespians; the gallery curators of student art works; the faithful examples of Christian service; the prayerful presences at school liturgies. They wear

Room Parent “t-shirts”, aprons and buttons and know that “many hands make light work”. They have been

known to dress up as elves, and have highly competitive gift-exchanges at their annual Christmas meeting. They are the warm-hearted, smile-ready, fun-loving group of SJE parent advocates formally referred to as: The Room Parents.

Eighteen strong, two per class, plus a trio of coordinators, Room Parents were the first established organization at the school. They were called Room Mothers then, and had meetings, budgets, handbooks, a bank account, many years before 1991 and the PTSO twinkled in then-

pastor Robert McNamara’s eye. Indeed, because of their organizing and ever-positive attitudes, the Room Parents (RP) became key fundraisers for the school, spearheading yearly Jog-a-Thons, bake sales and class auction items for the PTSO spring fundraisers. Nevertheless, the RP’s primary motive for existence has remained constant.

“Being with the kids,” that’s the incentive noted by Terenia Pollock, a four-time RP who is serving in 8th Grade this year with

Theresa Niehaus. “I especially love the class birthday parties, because we get to spend time with them at school.”

Spending time with your child(ren) and his/her classmates in their daily habitat; getting to know their teachers at a closer proximity than a once yearly parent conference. This is the simple reward that draws many parents to the RP call.

Current RP Coordinator, Bonnie Andazola, shares this view. “I wanted to get involved with the kids and get to know Leilani’s classmates; see the day-to-day happenings and meet other involved parents.” She soon found that the job was bigger than handing out cupcakes and punch a few times per year.

In addition to supporting the teacher and students of their class, each pair of RPs is assigned one event to coordinate during the year.

Some of the events are: the First Penance reception, the faculty Christmas luncheon, the graduation dinner dance, a pumpkin patch for the three lowest grades. The RPs also help out at several other school activity days such as Student Appreciation Day during Catholic Schools Week – when they serve churros and hot cocoa to the student body and staff. Andazola says, “It was more involved than I had expected, more intense. But not in a bad way!”

With the advent of the Parish Carnival last year and a new School Board, there is a small shift away from fundraising responsibilities for the RPs, which Andazola sees as a plus, “It’s a good thing, a step in a preferable direction, because the Room Parents have the option to volunteer, or not, for PTSO fundraising jobs.” Her advice for parents is to seriously consider becoming a Room Parent: “Don’t be intimidated. It is A LOT of fun, and a good thing to be involved in.”

It seems it has always been that way. This, from *The SJE Eagle Yearbook* two decades ago:

*“With LOVE to the Class of ’89.  
Happiness is being your  
Room Mom four times.  
Thanks for the Memories!  
Time now to try your wings . . .  
Fly straight . . . soar high!”*

*Mary Meskell  
(Room Mom with an empty nest)*