

BISHOP BLESSES HAMMOND HIVE

n December 6, 2023, MAA excitedly welcomed Bishop Koenig to school for his annual visit, but this day was special. Not only was the Bishop celebrating Mass with the school community, he was also blessing MAA's new addition, the Hammond Hive. While the Hammond Hive opened last Spring to teachers and students, blessing this new active STREAM learning space was essential to who Mount Aviat is as a Catholic school. As students and supporters gathered in Hammond Hive, they all were attentive to the story behind the building of the Hive.

The inspiration for the Hammond Hive was provided by a *sphero*, a coding robot that develops creativity and programming skills in students and encourages them to work collaboratively. One day as Principal Sr. John Elizabeth stepped out of her office, a sphero came flying past her door. Another day, Sister was trying to walk to the library and pairs of students were spread out in the hallways actively using catapults they had designed and built to try to get a small foil ball to land on a target. As Sister looked around the library and saw all the STEM materials Mrs. Dymowski was using with students, the idea was born for a space that would accommodate this type of learning.

MAA staff and friends began the process of imagination, exploration, and perseverance that resulted in the *Continued on page 3.*



Mount Aviat Academy



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The Aviat Link

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Thank you to our staff and parents for volunteering your time and talents to photograph school events.

MISSION

The Mission of Mount Aviat Academy is threefold:

- to provide instruction in the message of Christ, according to the teachings of the Catholic Church, within the context of the gentle and caring spirit of St. Francis de Sales;
- to offer an educational environment that promotes high academic standards;
- to instill the principles of scholarship, citizenship and service in the minds and hearts of the students.

Educating students to be no more and no less than their best.



FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK:

his school year we are piloting a program that focuses on identifying and living out "Holy Moments." What exactly is a Holy Moment? A Holy Moment is a single moment in which you open yourself to God. You make yourself available to him. You set aside personal preference and self-interest, and for one moment you do what you prayerfully believe God is calling you to do. This program has truly caught hold of the Mount Aviat community as we see students daily pursuing opportunities

to make Holy Moments happen—for example, by asking someone how they can pray for them, surprise someone with a thoughtful note, or simply smiling at someone you pass in the halls. Staff members also share "shout outs" when they see their peers in the midst of a Holy Moment; sometimes these acts are so simple that we take for granted we are even doing them! Perhaps you and your family might start to recognize Holy Moments at home, too.

As tough times came to pass this Fall, the Oblate Sisters were grateful for the multitude of Holy Moments made by our staff, students, and school families as they rallied to support us during the sudden loss of Sr. Susan Louise Eder by sharing meals, covering classes, sending thoughtful messages, and so much more. We are so grateful to have such a caring community. We cherish the memories we made with Sr. Susan Louise and how she faithfully encouraged us to Live Jesus more fully, as Oblates and as educators. See pages 6-7 for more details on the beautiful life Sister lived. We also lost a dear former teacher and longtime volunteer, Mrs. Anne Slater, and appreciated the opportunity to gather with her family in late December to celebrate her life.

This Fall also brought uplifting times as well, such as the gathering of friends at the Roast Beef Dinner, fun times on the green at the annual Golf Tournament, spreading Christmas cheer at the 61st Annual Christmas Bazaar, and the long-awaited Blessing of Hammond Hive, which you can read about in the pages of this issue. If you have not had the opportunity to visit our new addition, the Hammond Hive, please come visit us at our annual Open House on February 25th from 2-4 p.m.

As always, thank you to our dedicated volunteers for supporting us through all of our special events, school activities, sports programs, and so much more. Did you realize as you do so, you are making Holy Moments?

Yours in Christ,

In John Cliyabeth, OSFS Sister John Elizabeth Callaghan, OSFS



Hammond Hive. Board member Mike Hanby, who oversees the construction of multi-million-dollar plants, said he would help. Parent Sean Crowley, who is an architect and whose wife is an alumna, said he wanted to get involved. Then others joined. Parent Colin Bradley offered to survey the land. Parent Chris Fritts, another dad married to a graduate, helped with numerous construction projects to prepare for and finish the space. Parent Lou Pettica offered to help through his idea of bringing back an annual golf tournament that raised funds for the project. And so, it continued. Alumni parents Tom and Stephanie Petrella designed and installed the Hammond Hive accent wall and donor wall.

MAA grad David Kimura offered to make his Eagle Scout project the designing and construction of a beautiful bee education center on which the beehive could perch.

As the dream for this new learning space became a reality, Sr. John Elizabeth realized that it needed a name. The

Hammond family immediately came to mind. The family is a three-generation MAA family. Back when the Sisters needed to sell LOTS of apple pies at the Christmas bazaar to pay bills, Mrs. Hammond would sit with friends peeling apples for the pies. Mr. Hammond volunteered as a parent, but continued his service long after his daughters graduated. As a founding member of MAA's Board, he introduced new members into the spirit they needed to help us grow as a school to be no more and no less than our best.

So why HIVE? Schools have STEM Labs, Makerspaces, and other special learning spaces with cool names. However, there also is so much to learn from a bee hive that a school can replicate. We can learn about communication and collaboration, resilience and adaptability, having roles and also teamwork, and so much more. And even in Salesian tradition, St. Francis de Sales often used bees and honey to make a point about spiritual life: "When caught out in a field by a storm little bees pick up stones so they can keep their balance in the air and not be easily carried away by the wind. So too, if our souls remain resolute, firmly grasping God's love, we remain steady in the storms of life." So, of course the Hive also needed to include its own observation hive.

As we concluded the blessing of Hammond Hive, our Kindergarten class sang a special song that incorporates sign language. "One Small Voice" sends the message that one voice may be small but if we work together "soon all the world will be singing." Very similar to the bees working together, our students working together, and our community working together to help build the Hammond Hive.

SR. JOHN ELIZABETH RECEIVES HALL OF FAME HONOR



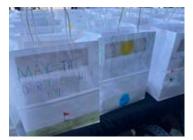
r. John Elizabeth Callaghan, OSFS, was inducted in her alma mater's Hall of Fame on November 5, 2023. Sister was chosen for this honor due to her roles as leader, teacher, and woman of faith. Sister John Elizabeth entered

the religious community immediately after graduating from St. Elizabeth High School. After further education, she became a Kindergarten teacher at Mount Aviat and has been here ever since. She became principal in 1997 and has helped the school earn the distinction of Blue Ribbon School of Excellence in 2014 and an "Innovator in Catholic Education" in 2016. Most recently, Sister John Elizabeth has put on her beekeeper suit and initiated a bee program at Mount Aviat with hives both in Hammond Hive and the Oblate Sisters' cemetery.



Te were blessed with abundant sunshine and the company of over 100 golfers and guests at the annual MAA Golf Tournament held on Monday, October 2, 2023. Our day at Newark Country Club was filled with food, fun, and of course, golf. We enjoyed spending time with our alumni, school families, and local business partners. We reminisced with old friends and made many new ones. The camaraderie was palpable as everyone came together in support of our beloved school.

Our students wanted to do something special for those



playing in the tournament this year, and decided to decorate a lunch bag for each golfer. Players received a bag upon check-in, not only filled with a tasty lunch and snacks for the day,

but also adorned with words of encouragement, thank you messages, and some original artwork. After 18 holes and a few bonus contests, everyone gathered for a delicious buffet dinner where the tournament winners were announced as Adam Vogelsong, Harshad Desai, Brett Halsey'06, and Greg Schneck. Jack Doordan'13 was our speaker during the evening program. He expressed his gratitude to those in attendance, for supporting the school that has been a part of his life since he was in preschool. He spoke of the guidance the Oblate Sisters provided and how the core values he developed here stuck with him. The Sisters taught him "to work at being no more and no less than my best, to respect others, and to contribute to my community."

The evening concluded with a record-breaking 50/50 raffle and a silent auction that saw winners take home some of the best items we have ever offered, such as a Traeger pellet grill, 76ers tickets, a Tory Burch bag, and more. Thank you to our auction item donors for the incredible lineup,

and thank you to our sponsors who make this event possible (listed below). The proceeds from this year's golf event will support our playground transformation, which our students are eagerly anticipating.

Thank you to our golfers, guests, and volunteers who were part of the tournament day. A special thanks goes to the staff at Newark Country Club for their hospitality. We are grateful for the hard work of our tournament planning committee, making this event special each year. Thank you to co-chairs Tom Petrella and Lou Peticca, Karen Novak, Kathy Keogh, Sr. Joseph Anne, Sr. Anne Elizabeth, Chris Doordan, Taylor Akers, Joan Fassano, Derek and Alexandra Arnold, and Shana Rossi.

We can't wait to see everyone again next year. Save the date for Monday, October 7, 2024!



SOCCER KICKS IT UP A NOTCH AND VOLLEYBALL SETS UP ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL SEASON



Trumbull, continues to thrive with a notable uptick in new student athletes and volunteer coaches. The soccer program supported 31 athletes across our Varsity and JV Teams and brought on 2 new volunteer coaches. The MAA Varsity Team coached by Janie Trumbull, Tim Getz, Alissa Cirillo, and Richard Lewis recorded an 8-0-1 regular season and made it to the Semifinals in the C Division Playoffs. The JV Team coached by J.R. Wikes, Mary and Brian Turbide, and Karen Novak had a bumpy start to the regular season but significantly improved as the season progressed making it all the way to the Semifinals in the JV Playoffs. We are excited to see both teams develop this season and look forward to next year.

The success of the 2023 girls' Volleyball program was driven by the commitment of our players, parents, and coaches. The Volleyball program supported 21 players across two teams that competed at the Varsity and Junior Varsity levels. All of our teams played with tremendous heart and hustle. Our Varsity



UPCOMING EVENTS:

February 25 Open House, 2-4 p.m. March 9 Dinner Auction Holy Week and Easter Vacation March 28-April 7 5K and Sister Walk April 14 May 10 Grandparents' Day & Spring Show Family Celebration 5:30-8:00 p.m. May 23 Eighth Grade Graduation June 3 Kindergarten Graduation June 5



and Junior Varsity teams were successful learning basic skills and sportsmanship under the guidance of our fantastic volunteer coaches! The Junior Varsity season included players from 4th and 5th Grades. The team was coached by Michael and Meghan Handy that led them through a successful JV volleyball season. Our Varsity team excelled into the season with new and experienced players under the coaching direction of Jennifer Fritts, Sammi Taylor, and special guidance from a Mount Aviat legend, Mr. Larry Ertle.

We look forward to growing our volleyball program with our players and coaches while wishing the very best to our 8th Graders as they move onto their high school careers.

WALK, RUN, GET A T-SHIRT, AND SWAG!

The 11th Annual Mount Aviat 5K & Sister Walk is scheduled for Sunday, April 14, 2024. This is a fun and healthy family, school, and community event with the course set in the neighborhoods next to the school. A mass is held on the morning of the race in Holy Family Hall and a rewards ceremony with refreshments after the race in St. Joseph's Hall. There are trophies for the overall female and male winners. Medals for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place are awarded for various age brackets. Registration for the race will begin in February 2024. Proceeds from this event are used for classroom enrichment which directly benefits the students. We are looking to partner with businesses for sponsorship of the race.

Please contact Janie Trumbull at janietrumbull@gmail.com





REMEMBERING SR. SUSAN LOUISE EDER, OSFS

Sister Susan Louise Eder, OSFS, entered eternal life on Friday, October 13, 2023. Upon graduation from Mount Aviat Academy (high school), Sister entered the Oblate Sisters of St. Francis de Sales and, after a time of formation in Childs and France, professed vows as an Oblate Sister in 1974. Following profession, Sister began her educational career as a teacher and administrator. Sister's long teaching ministry included Mount Aviat Academy (Childs), St. Anthony of Padua (Wilmington), and St. Bernadette School (Drexel Hill).

In 1998 Sister became the founding principal of Holy Cross Academy, Fredericksburg, Virginia. Under Sister's leadership that spanned 21 years, the school earned Accreditation and was named a Blue Ribbon School of Excellence and a Virginia Distinguished Purple Star School. In 2019 Sister began her service as principal at Immaculate Heart of Mary in Towson, Maryland.

How did Sister Susan Louise become the devout person she was? What led her to her vocation? Sr. John Elizabeth Callaghan shared some of these details and more at Sister's service at Immaculate Heart of Mary as she paid tribute to her mentor, friend, and Sister in faith:

The person Sister became was sown and nurtured in childhood. Jim and Nancy Eder raised their six children in a faith-filled home, with much of their lives revolving around Immaculate Conception Parish and School in Elkton. Sister's childhood was forever changed when her mother was diagnosed with cancer. In spite of knowing that there was no cure for her illness, Mrs. Eder continued to be the strong, loving mother her children could count on. Sister lost her mother at the start of her 8th grade year. Time would confirm that this valiant mother and Sister's steadfast father instilled in their daughter a strength of character that would serve her well through life.

As a freshman at Mount Aviat Academy, young Susan was introduced to St. Francis de Sales. Susan's budding spirituality was nurtured under the care of the Oblate Sisters. Following a call she had felt since 2nd grade, Susan entered religious life just three months after graduation. From the first day as Sister Susan, the young postulant took to heart a verse from the Song of Songs that St. Francis de Sales frequently quoted, tenui nec dimittam: "I have hold of you and I will not let you go!"

As the years became decades, Sister was able to expand her reach. During her time at St. Bernadette Parish in Drexel Hill, Sr. Susan Louise developed what St. Francis de Sales called "holy friendships" with many who became spiritual companions on her journey. She established deep spiritual roots that strengthened her to withstand the tempests that come into our lives.

Sr. Susan Louise became an accomplished educator, so it came as no surprise that she was entrusted with the role of founding principal of Holy Cross Academy in Fredericksburg, Virginia. As contractors built the facility, Sister prepared to establish not only an educational institution, but also a vibrant faith community. Twenty-one years later, HCA was a thriving Catholic school where children and their families would learn to "Live Jesus" in the spirit of St. Francis de Sales.

Leaving Holy Cross was undeniably a heavy cross for Sister, as she had poured her heart and soul into its establishment and growth. What she wrote in her personal notebook reflects the daughter of St. Francis de Sales she had become: "We are resolved to move on in peace and gentleness of heart, asking God's blessing on the future opening before us. As we embark on our new ministry at IHM parish and school, we place our confidence in the Hearts of Jesus and Mary."

The welcome that Sister received at IHM was such a blessing in her life as at this time, Sister was diagnosed with cancer. St. Francis de Sales understood well the path Sister was being asked to walk: "Believe me, God, who has led you up till now, will go on holding you in his blessed hand. Almost everyone can manage to trust God in the sweetness and peace of prosperity, but only his children can put their trust in him when storms and tempests rage."

And trust she did. Like Sister, none of us could have known how soon she would be with the God she loved and served so faithfully. She wrote in her notebook, "God has been so good to me. My cancer is still around but I am able to keep going—by the grace of God and the goodness of our Sisters and school and parish community. 'In your hands, dear Jesus!' Whatever this year holds, dear Jesus, may I embrace it lovingly."

Let each of us reflect on how Sister's journey crossed our own.

Let us remember with affection her eye for decorating, her love of all things beautiful, her quick wit and joyful laugh. Sister had an uncanny ability to assess a situation, cut to the heart of the matter, and move definitively toward a response or solution. Let us not forget how Sister intentionally remembered the name of each person she encountered or her attentiveness when someone faced a difficulty.

If Sister were standing here now, she would say the most important thing she did in her life was to learn to Live Jesus. Whether it was a great day or a really tough day, whether she was having a big celebration at IHM and getting treatment at the hospital, she was at peace.

We entrust her soul to God knowing that she is experiencing a boundless peace that we cannot understand and we commit ourselves to a life of love, as we both imitate and honor our dearly loved, Sr. Susan Louise.





1. Excited for a new school year to begin, Preschoolers Isabella Hilaman and Bryan Andrews warmly greet Sr. Joseph Anne at the Friends' Ice Cream Social. 2. Ms. O'Connor along with her second-grade class pray the rosary together during the annual Living Rosary, 3. Sr. Anne Elizabeth and the 8th graders gather the large-scale rosary used for the annual schoolwide Living Rosary prayer. 4. Seventh grader Mason Roe enjoys a visit from Mrs. Racine's friendly Sheltie McGee before the Pet Parade. 5. Students enjoy meeting a Norwegian Fjord at this year's Pet Parade. 6. Eighth graders enjoy time with their Kindergarten buddies and proudly showcase their carved pumpkins. 7. PreK4 student Gabriella Workman picks out the perfect book from the Cecil County Public Library book mobile. 8. Kindergarten participates enthusiastically during a musical story time with former teacher and librarian, Dawn Preske. 9. Kindergarten takes their first MAA field trip to Milburn Orchards on a beautiful Fall day. 10. Spanish teacher Senora Cook helps her classes prepare an ofrenda for the Day of the Dead so the entire school can remember all of our loved ones who have passed away. 11. Singerly Fire Company mascot Sparky makes a new friend with Kindergartner Dudley Pratt during a fire safety assembly, 12. Kindergartner Gregory Dickson and PK4 student Daniel Binoy share a delicious Thanksgiving meal together during the annual gathering among the early grades. 13. Fourth-grade students take a field trip to Mount Harmon to learn about Colonial life. 14. Mrs. Russell is all smiles with her first-grade friendly beasts as they prepare to take the stage at the annual lower school Christmas show. 15. Elizabeth, played by Emily Fritts, and Mary, played by Kelyn Arnold, share an embrace as they prepare for the coming of Jesus. 16. Sixth graders Lily Moore and Payton Whiteman prepare to share with guests their knowledge of mummification at the 6th Grade Egyptian Museum. 17. Under the direction of Mr. John Spangenber, MAA's band performs a medley of tunes from "Mary Had a Little Lamb" to "Jolly Old St. Nick." 18. Seventh graders Khloe Proctor, Claudia Bradley, Abigail Bunner, and Olivia Hansen enjoy caroling with their classmates at the annual Crib Ceremony. 19. MAA's talented band gets the student audience singing with their spirited rendition of "Jingle Bells." 20. Kindergarten showcases their wonderful talents as they take the stage in their first Christmas show. 21. Fifth graders Gloria Clinton, Ella Dunlap, and Lucas Magaw pack up an abundance of baby supplies collected as a 5th Grade service project to donate to the Cecil County Pregnancy Center. 22. Hunter Vible shows off his master building skills during free play time in PK4.



1. Guests enjoy good company and a great meal at the annual Roast Beef Dinner in September. 2. Dedicated alumni Sienna Trumbull, Jack Dymowski, and Michael Besancon volunteer their time, talents, and smiles at the Roast Beef Dinner. 3. Alumni and father and son duo Philip Kimura and David Kimura know well how to fill cream puffs and keep the supply going at the annual Christmas bazaar. 4. Performing service with a smile, fifth graders Ava Turbide, Olivia Ondrik, and Natalie Smith greet diners and clear tables at the annual Christmas bazaar.





REMEMBERING FORMER TEACHER, MRS. ANNE SLATER

Pormer teacher Mrs. Anne Slater passed away on October 4, 2023. Mrs. Slater taught 2nd Grade at Mount Aviat for 20 years and volunteered at Mount Aviat after her retirement for more than 10 years! Her sincere and unwavering dedication to Mount Aviat and the Oblate Sisters was remarkable. A memorial service was held for Mrs. Slater at Mount Aviat on December 29, 2023 where her husband of 65 years, Sheldon, shared farewell letters MAA students and staff had written to Mrs. Slater back in 1997. Current parent and alumna Kristine (Crawford) Crowley was among those who had written a farewell letter to Mrs. Slater: "When I was in second grade you were my favorite teacher and always will be. You taught me to write in cursive and times tables and many other things.... You bring out the color in us."

Current school aide, alumni parent, and grandparent, Denise Warrington, attended Mrs. Slater's service. Mrs. Slater had taught Denise's daughters Amy and Jennifer in the mid-1990s. Denise remembers well the creative units that Mrs. Slater incorporated in her program, such as the ice castle unit in math but especially the dinosaur unit where Mrs. Slater supplied the class with chocolate chip cookies, toothpicks, and paint brushes and students would excavate for chocolate chips! Many alumni probably have similar memories of Mrs. Slater along with beautiful cursive which was a staple of her program, too. We are grateful for Mrs. Slater and her legacy will continue to live on at Mount Aviat.



KNIGHTLY NEWS



Congratulations to
the following Mount
Aviat grads who
were inducted into
the National Honor
Society at St. Mark's
High School on
October 10, 2023:
Ava Poch, Emma
Fausnaugh, Erica



Poch, Aidan Venters, Peyton Wilkes, Sienna Trumbull, Charley Fockler, and Ashley Strohmeier (not pictured)

Caylee Moore '22 received 3rd place in the VFW's Voice of Democracy audio-essay contest.





An impromptu mini reunion of Camp Aviat attendees took place at the 61st annual Christmas Bazaar and included Sr. Mary Vincent, Lauri Witte, Sr. Michele Elizabeth, Sr. Lawrence Therese, Sr. Joseph Margaret, Pat McCorkle, Sr. John Elizabeth, Lori Jezyk, Michelle Poole, Florence Szczerba, Mary Epstein, Sr. Frances Carol, and Sr. Anne Elizabeth.

Katrina Anne Steenkamer '07 married Alex Borucki on May 27, 2023, at Bellevue Hall in Wilmington, DE. They will be living in Marlton, NJ.

Don't forget to like our Facebook page (Mount Aviat Academy Alumni Association) and follow MAA on Twitter and Instagram @MountAviat. If you have alumni news you would like to share, please contact Mrs. Charlene Nichols, Admissions Director, at Admissions@MountAviat.org.







THE FUND FOR MOUNT AVIAT

The Fund for Mount Aviat continues to be one of the main sources of funding in the school's operating budget. The Fund helps us to manage the increasing costs of educating a student, which tuition alone does not cover. It also supports our efforts to consistently enhance our curriculum and technology, facilities and infrastructure, and campus security. To make a gift to the Fund for Mount Aviat, please scan the QR code below or send a check to MAA at P.O. Box 85, Childs, MD 21916. For more information, please contact Karen Novak at advancement @mountaviat.org or (410) 398-2206 ext. 218.

Thank you to those who have already donated to the Fund this year. We are grateful for your generosity.

We are in the process of updating our records as we begin working in our new database and communication software. Do we have your correct mailing address and email? Please send us your updates to Info@MountAviat.org.



Scan me!



PATRIOT'S PEN ESSAY CONTEST WINNERS

Conducted nationwide, this VFW-sponsored youth essay competition encourages students to use their minds and knowledge of America's history and their experience of today's American society to write essays expressing their views on an annual patriotic theme. This year's theme was, "How are you inspired by America?"

Post 6027: Eliza Rollins, John Drost, Post 7687: Kathryn Cicero, Maximus Morrison, Post 8175: Maria Elena Fuentes Galan, Peyton McIntire, Elliot Cohn, Shea Davis, Post 8185: Laney Tyler, Owen Nesnow, District Winners: Eliza Rollins, 1st Place; Kathryn Cicero, 3rd Place



If you no longer wish to receive the Link, please let us know by telephoning the school at 410.398.2206, ext. 214. Thank you.



PK4 Expands to Two Classes!

Daniel Binoy, Gabriella Workman, Aayla Modaressi, Sophie McCallister, and Hunter Vible are all smiles as they arrive for their first day of school in PK4, which now offers two full-day classes.

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