



## Gorey Community School Newsletter — Winter 2008

# Merry Christmas

### United in Protest

Hundreds of parents, teachers and students from the Gorey area joined an approximate 60 000 fellow protesters on their march on government-buildings on Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup>. Supported by their boards of management, trade unions and opposition parties, those involved in primary and secondary education expressed again their dismay and mounting frustration at the government's proposed financial cuts in the educational sector. In the case of GCS this could lead to the loss of up to 8 teachers, the termination of extra-curricular activities, and a drastic reduction in the school programme budgets, the possibility of un-

supervised classes, and as a consequence the possibility of closure of the school for health and safety reasons. Most participants in the march were delighted with the massive turnout and the way the protesters conducted themselves. There was, however some, if not totally unexpected, disappointment over the absence of government representatives, particularly minister Batt O'Keeffe. At this stage protests are bound to continue into the new year, as new financial proposals by government are falling a long way short of our actual needs.



### M.S. Readathon

20 students from several English classes took part in a Readathon in aid of M.S. Ireland. They collected a total of € 936, of which the Multiple Sclerosis Society gets € 843 and GCS keeps € 94 for extra library books. All 20 students will get certificates and prizes and are entered for a national draw. Many thanks to all students and teachers involved! **Darren Clarke** raised the highest amount — €160, but the smaller amounts all added up.



### Green Schools

Our Green Flag is up for renewal in 2009. The theme for this 5th Green Flag is Travel and Transport. Currently we are surveying all C.S.P.E. classes and T.Y. Maths classes to find out how we travel to school. Our aim is to see how we can encourage students to walk or cycle to school to relieve traffic congestion and to reduce our Carbon Footprint.

Congratulations to the school on its award from Wexford County Council for its environmental achievements. **Fergus Dixon, Patrick Poole and Chris Gethings** received the award on behalf of the school.

Remember to carry on doing your part for the environment by using the litter bins and recycling plastic bottles, paper, batteries and stamps.



**The Student Council** held its first meeting of the year early in September. Members had been elected in May to represent all year groups, except first years. First Year elections were held in October. The students lobbied for support, arranged the ballot boxes and the ballot paper and counted the votes. This was a great learning experience as it taught students about the importance of participation in the democratic process of elections. Participative democracy is an important part of CSPE and great training for adult life. Due to the number of students expressing an interest in the Student Council it was decided to set up a Junior Council. This is now in operation. First, second and third years are represented on the Junior Council. Transition Year, fifth and sixth years are represented on the Senior Council. Meetings are held every week. Students may make suggestions to the councils about matters of relevance to student life in the school. The plans for the year include: A survey on smoking, the provision of a clock in the quad, the establishment of a Student Council web-link to the school website, more seating in the quad, healthy eating options in the canteen. The smoking survey was conducted in October by the PROs. The results indicate, that: the majority of students want a smoke-free environment and would like more supervision of toilets in order to prevent smoking, more working smoke alarms in toilets would also prevent smoking, in-house education programmes, through SPHE, on the harmful effects of smoking on smokers and non-smokers alike, and respect for the right of students and staff to a non-smoking environment. The results of the survey have been given to the Principal and posted on the Student Council Notice Board.

**Congratulations,** To the following students who completed their Leaving Certificates in 2008 and who were awarded **Entrance Scholarships** by a number of Universities. **Kim Boland, Gillian Fitzgerald, Muireann Molumby** } T.C.D. **Donal Hogan, John Porter** } U.C.D. **Donal Hogan** } High Achiever Scholarship U.C.D.

## Young Scientist Competition

This year a record number of 1,616 entered the prestigious Young Scientist Competition. Only 500 positions are available in the competition and two of them will be filled by students of our school. Both successful projects entered by TY students of Gorey community school are entered in the Biological and Environmental Sciences category of the competition. The first group has decided to investigate the effect of urbanisation on flooding. They want to find out how new housing and roadworks affect this problem. When they have completed their research, they are going to examine how drainage systems might be improved. They are looking in particular at why the Arklow Road Bridge floods so badly and hope to be able to solve this problem through their research. This project is being completed by **Dylan Parry-Owen, Arcadi Procapi and Thomas Flavin** and is being supervised by **Ms Fairweather**. The second project titled 'Less packaging; good for the environment but is it good for us?' is based on packaged and loose fruit as display methods in shops. The aim of the project is to find out which contains more harmful bacteria, packaged or loose fruit. We as consumers are always being advised to purchase loose fruit as it is better for the environment, but could this be harmful to our health? This project is being completed by **Alex Muir and Connor Nolan** and is being supervised by **Ms Fitzpatrick**. The competition is running from January 6<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> 2009 in the RDS Dublin.

We wish them the best of luck



## 'Les Mis'

This year's school musical "les Miserables" which ran from October 19<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup>, was our most ambitious to date, and also our most successful, with standing ovations practically every night.

Many letters and phone calls of appreciation arrived in the office, thanking the students and staff involved in such a great production. The production-team, **Ms.Dempsey, Ms.Ceccil and Mr. Kitt** wish to thank again the parents and teachers without whose support the show could not have happened.

A special tribute should also be paid to the students involved, who worked very hard and showed great focus and maturity. Their collective performance was outstanding and will go down as one of greatest artistic achievements of G.C.S.

## GCS Chess Club

For the second year running, GCS Chess Club were crowned County Wexford Second Level Education Champions. The team of **Denise Doyle, 6<sup>th</sup> yr/ Mark Berney, 2<sup>nd</sup> yr and**

**Cathal Murphy, 6<sup>th</sup> yr**, under the tutelage of **Mr. Sweetman** won between them 8 out of 9 matches. Congratulations to all involved !

## Career Exhibition 2008

On November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2008 the Guidance Department hosted their annual Career and College Exhibition in the Ashdown Park Hotel. This year we had the largest amount of exhibitors with over 60 stands representing all 7 Universities, Institutes of Technologies, Post Leaving Cert Courses and Employers. There were courses and careers to suit everyone. The event was attended by students from 3<sup>rd</sup>, TY, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> year and the feedback from the students was very positive. Exhibitors complimented the students on their level of preparation for the event and their good manners on the day. Thanks to all students who attended and to the TY helpers who made the day such a great success.

## TY Work experience

Half of our Transition Year Students went on Work Experience between the 24<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of November while the rest of TY's participated in workshops during the week in school. Some students went as far as Dublin to gain experience working with engineers. Other students decided to stay local and work in the community in the areas of teaching, beauty therapy, accountancy, child care, physiotherapy and sports injury, law clerk and legal studies. We had two of our TY students work for the department of Justice. Students gain valuable experience going into the workplace and it may help them in their decisions on a career path for the future.

## TY Workshops

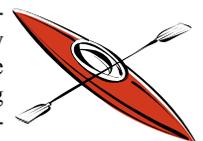
Transition year students who did work shops during the 24<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of November experience guest speakers who speak to students regarding personal development issues. The main focus of this week is to develop student's personal skills. They have speakers who approach the area of Body image, stress management, eating disorders, drug and alcohol addictions, and life skills. They participated during the week in an aromatherapy workshop giving them basic message skills which help in relaxing mind body and spirit. They were fortunate to participate in 'The Just One Life Programme', which highlights the importance of road safety especially in the run up to **Road Safety Week (1st -5<sup>th</sup> December)** Six of our TY students will speak on south east radio regarding the 'Just one Life Programme' and what they learnt from the day. This will be broadcast during road safety week. I wish to thank the Wexford Co. Council and the Rotary club for organizing this very worthwhile programme and hopefully our students will remember the importance of driving safely and responsible when they come of age to do so.

## Spanish Exchange

The Spanish Exchange is going ahead for the fourth year in a row. This year we are going to a secondary school about 50kms outside Madrid in February and the Spanish students will be visiting us in April. Students from 5th Year and TY are participating. We have planned many cultural and fun activities and the exchange will prove to be an invaluable experience for students when doing their Leaving Cert Spanish oral exam.

## TY Calendar of events:

October: Transition years travelled to Petersburg outdoor education centre in Clonbur Co. Galway. Most students were excited about the prospect of experiencing water and land based activities they had not done before and also the chance to spend time getting to know the group they travelled with. Allot of friendships were made and fears overcome. They encouraged each other to take that first step over the 63 foot sheer slope at the pigeon hole for some their very first experience abseiling. Gorge walking seems to be the highlight of the trip where students get the chance to splash about and jump from great heights into the warm plunge pools below!!!! Students got the chance to view some beautiful scenery on the hill walk near the centre some getting bogged down and only for the help of a friend would be still stuck in some bog hole. Caving, kayaking, orienteering and windsurfing are other activities the students experienced and enjoyed. Transition Year students participated in workshops during the 2 weeks of the Galway Trips. They participated in some of the following: performance poetry, song school, Dance, stone mason, team building, Matrix, Beat box, Croghan Climb.



**Forum on Europe Public Speaking.** Three students took part - **Clair Dunne, Fabian Molloy and Alex Muir** all from TY. The competition was really keen and the adjudicators were very impressed by the research they had done. The team was prepared by **Ms. Farrell**.

## GOSPEL CHOIR

Gorey Community School Gospel Choir, now boasting a 50+ membership, are currently rehearsing for their Annual School Christmas Service which will take place in December. The choir will also Carol Singing in Gorey Shopping Centre during the Festive Season, with a portion of the proceeds being donated to a charity of the students' choice.

## MUSIC OUTINGS

In October, Senior Music students from Ms.Clancy's, Ms.Cosgrave's, Ms.Dempsey's and Ms.Wemyss' Music classes travelled to Wexford at the invitation of Wexford Opera Festival to observe a dress rehearsal of one of Puccini's lesser known operas. The day was a great success and thoroughly enjoyed by all. The Music Department would like to take the opportunity to thank Wexford Opera Festival for their generosity. In early November, Ms. Clancy's 3<sup>rd</sup> yr Music students travelled to the National Concert Hall in Dublin to get up close and personal with the Irish Symphony Orchestra.

Students were treated to a wonderful selection of their Junior Certificate Music works which they will be tested on in June 2009, and gained great experience in seeing and hearing the Symphony Orchestra in action.

## MUSIC TRIPS

5<sup>th</sup> Year Music students will be heading to the bright lights of New York City in February next year to enjoy the many delights of The Big Apple. Organized by Ms.Clancy, students will have the opportunity to visit many of N.Y.C.'s unforgettable experiences – Ellis Island, the Empire State Building, a Broadway Show, Ice-skating in Central Park - to mention just a few of the activities in store for all those travelling.

## CHRISTMAS SINGATHON

The Music Departments Annual Christmas Singathon organized by Ms.Clancy with the generous help of Ms.Cosgrave, Ms.Dempsey, Ms.Doyle, Ms.O'Malley-Moore and Ms.Wemyss, and involving all Music students will be taking place again in mid-December. All proceeds go to the Music Department, who would like to take the opportunity to thank all those who supported last year's event. Last year's proceeds were put towards the purchase of Sheet Music, Storage Items for the Music Rooms, educationally-related Music DVDs and subsidizing the cost of transport to and from various Music activities. Hopefully this year's event will be just as successful and your support would be greatly appreciated.



The Guidance Department held a very successful Careers Exhibition in The Ashdown Park Hotel on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2008. We had 60 exhibitors. Universities, Institutes of Technology, The Army, Navy and The Air Corps, FAS, Post Leaving Certificate Colleges offering a wide and varied selection of courses to encourage students to continue on to Third Level after the Leaving Certificate. The exhibitors were really impressed by the level of interest the students displayed in the courses and opportunities on offer. The Exhibition was sponsored by the Parents' Association, BOI, permanent TSB, AIB, and Post Bank.

## Vice-Principal

In 1997 I left Gorey Community School to take up a position as Principal of C.B.S. Wexford. This summer I was privileged to be appointed as Deputy Principal of this school and therefore afforded the opportunity to return to the school in a management position. I am delighted to be back and am looking forward to assisting in the fantastic work that many people do in the school each day. This school has an abundance of talent in the staff and in the student body. I wish to thank all those who have assisted me since my return and wish everyone a happy Christmas and every success in the new year. Frank Duke

## Cold Start for Italian Exchange

This piece is being written long after all teachers have gone home and no doubt are sitting comfortably at their firesides. Those of us involved in this exchange are waiting patiently for the arrival of our friends from **Castiglion Fiorentino**, Tuscany. The group who were up and about since three this morning are still making their way here and it is now nearing mid night. Snow in Italy and delayed flights are to blame. But, no doubt they will get a real warm Irish welcome when they arrive. This is the eighth year of this exceptionally successful exchange. While here, the Italian students will learn a little bit about their partner's lifestyle, Irish family life and of course will experience some of our Christmas spirit and customs.

In turn, the Irish students will learn a lot about their Italian friends and will look forward to their return visit next May. The transition year students are being ably guided and supported by two veterans of the exchange (now in fifth year) **Amy** and **Niamh**. And, speaking of veterans, we must pay tribute to the two Italian teachers. **Daniela Calzoni** and **Giuliana Carbone** first came to Ireland eight years ago and have since made many friends here. The special avenues to learning they have opened up both for the Irish and Italian students are really appreciated.

## School Orchestra

The school orchestra has recently been reformed under the baton of Ms Cosgrave. We are still looking for new players of all grades and standards.

## Rhythm and Shakes

Ms Cosgrave's first year music class are looking forward to taking part in a percussion workshop on the **18th December** with local performers and composers.

## First Year Carol Service

The first year music and choir classes of Ms Cosgrave are currently rehearsing for their carol service which will take place on Monday **15th December** in Christ Church, Gorey at 8pm.

We really would love to see as many parents and friends there as possible.

## R.E.-Department

**President's Awards** — Seventy T.Y. students are participating in the awards scheme this year. 'The best of luck to all of them!'

**Gambia** — Twenty T.Y. students are currently preparing for their trip to the Gambia in February. Many thanks to all for their support.

**Retreat** — On Sunday, November 30<sup>th</sup> we had the 6<sup>th</sup> year retreat in Galway. It was a great success and everyone really enjoyed it.

**Prayer Service** — On Monday, December 15<sup>th</sup> a special carol service was held in Christ Church, Gorey for all the 1<sup>st</sup> years and their parents. **Talks** — 6th year students have had separate workshops on bereavement and depression. These were very beneficial and informative. **Carol Service** — At the time of going to Press, students are actively preparing for their Christmas carol service.

**Team Building** — On Monday and Tuesday, December 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> the 1<sup>st</sup> years along with their mentors are preparing for a day of team building exercises in Tinahealy.

This year's **Christmas House-Exams** were held over a mere 3-day period, cutting away 'slack time' and un-necessary supervision. Things worked like clock-work and students as well as staff expressed complete satisfaction with proceedings. Congrats to **Mr.Duke**, **Mr.Cleary** and everybody else involved, on a job well done.

**TY Drama Club** is currently on each Tuesday after school in the balcony. Students will be performing in the TY drama festival and will also make a few trips to Dublin during the year to see plays in the Abby and Gaiety. All TY students very welcome

**Night classes** will start again on January 19<sup>th</sup>. Next term we have new classes in hill walking, genealogy, origami and family law. We also have a touch typing course which is suitable for any age. A full listing of our courses is available on our website [www.goreyadulced.ie](http://www.goreyadulced.ie). Stonework was very popular last term and is also available in the spring. You can register for any of our courses online as well as pay for it using a debit or laser card. Courses are open to anyone over sixteen so students attending GCS

**Badminton** is held every Tuesday after school. **Ms. Farrell** and **Mr. Quinlan** put the students through their paces. U19 could not take part this year, in the Wexford competition as they had House Exams. Boys U16 will take part in the County Competition in December 2008. Girls will compete in 2009. It is our intention to have a friendly competition, with a school in the area, in the near future. We have about 24 enthusiastic players. Some TY students use it to become proficient in a skill as part of the TY Program. Many continue to play badminton in their 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> year.



### Cross Country Club

This year the GCS Athletic Club began the year with a record number of members. With over 40 members not only is training more enjoyable but GCS is being placed in medal positions more frequently. Our first day out was the Wicklow Invitational League, in Avondale on the 13<sup>th</sup> of October. The club returned with over 20 medals including individual and team prizes **Individual: 1<sup>st</sup> year (Kate O'Donnell Sheridan 2<sup>nd</sup>, Sean Kelly 5<sup>th</sup>, Peter Byrne 7<sup>th</sup>) 2<sup>nd</sup> Year (Ciara Roche 2<sup>nd</sup>, Orla Furney 5<sup>th</sup>, Jessica Creane 6<sup>th</sup>) 3<sup>rd</sup> Year (Simon Taylor 5<sup>th</sup>), Teams: 2<sup>nd</sup> Year girls: 1<sup>st</sup> team, (Ciara Roche, Orla Furney, Lauren Farrell McCabe, Molly McGuckin, Clodagh Dunne) 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Boys: 2<sup>nd</sup> team: (Jack McEvoy, Robert Thompson, Larry Miley, Eoin Whelan, Jack Cleary, Jamie Cleary, Mark Bernie, Gavin Stamp, JJ Doyle, Edward McGrath). 3<sup>rd</sup> Year Boys: 3<sup>rd</sup> team: (Simon Taylor, Brian Timmons, Colm Stafford, Killian Leonard). Snr Boys: 3<sup>rd</sup> Team: (Myles Roche, Richard O'Neill, Brian O'Leary, Evin Fitzpatrick). The Community Schools Cross Country in the Phoneix Park on the 16<sup>th</sup> of November was equally a success. **Individual: 2<sup>nd</sup> year: (Orla Furney 3<sup>rd</sup>, Dylan Moore 3<sup>rd</sup>, Jack Mc Evoy 4<sup>th</sup>). 3<sup>rd</sup> year: (Shannon Byrne 5<sup>th</sup>). Team: 2<sup>nd</sup> year Boys 3<sup>rd</sup> team: (Dylan Moore, Jack McEvoy, Robert Thompson, Mark Walsh, Eoin Whelan, Robert Harrington). Senior Girls: 4<sup>th</sup> team: (Riona Ni Shuilleabhain, Rachel Murphy, Rachel Redmond, Lorraine Brennan, Ashling Twamley). Senior Boys: 4<sup>th</sup> team: (Myles Redmond, Richard O'Neill, Thomas O'Reilly, Evin Fitzpatrick, Brian Kelly, Christian O'Connor)** Our next outing is the most important of the School CC Calendar, the South Leinster Schools Cross Country Championships in the beginning of February. So Between now and then keep up the good work and train hard and we'll bring more glory and pride to GCS Athletics Club as it grows from strength to strength. All new athletes welcome anytime, training is every Wednesday at 3.50. A big thanks to **Mr Hayes, Ms O'Leary, Ms Codd and Mr Finn** for all their help and support since Sep-**

### Gaelic Football

**U.18** After a number of challenge games at the beginning of the season, the Senior Football squad had their first championship match on November 28<sup>th</sup> against Enniscorthy CBS. Following a shaky start Gorey managed to run out convincing winners on a score line of Gorey 2 – 15 Enniscorthy CBS 1 – 10. Best performers on the day were "Captain Fantastic" **Conor Carty, Aaron McCann, Dara McDonald and Donnacha Holmes**. The panel are now preparing for the South Leinster semi-final, which will be played in January.

**U.14** The U.14 team began and ended their season with victories over Carnew and CJ Bunclody respectively. Unfortunately they were defeated by Tullow CS and Enniscorthy CBS, the latter game being an excellent one, played on a difficult pitch. In the end Gorey only went down narrowly by a goal, despite the best efforts of **Dylan O'Sullivan, Mr.Kinsella and Mr.Wickham** would like to thank all players who trained diligently **Moore and Kevin Molloy**, who scored for Gorey.

Mr for the last 3 month. **U.16 Hurling** The U-16 Hurling team had a very successful year in which they reached the South Leinster Final, via wins over Colaiste Eoin, Wicklow Combined Schools and Ferrybank CS. In the final they were beaten by champions Callan CC on a score line of 5-7 to 1-8. Top performers for Gorey for the championship were **Conor Hughes** at centre back, **Eddie Hughes** and **Padraig Byrne** in the full back line, Jack Hobbs in midfield and **Conor Devitt, Michael Murphy and Conor McDonald** (1<sup>st</sup> year!) in the forwards.

Our Games Master **Mr.O'Brien** and Head Coach **Mr.McCarthy** would like to thank all the panel for their fantastic effort and commitment throughout the campaign.

### U-19 Soccer

Having come through the group stages in the league with full points, Gorey C.S. took on a very defensive and well drilled Wexford CBS in the quarter final. Despite dominating play for the entire match and missing easy scoring chances, including a penalty, Gorey conceded a corner with six minutes left from which Wexford scored. Despite missing a number of players on the day, the team still played very good football on a difficult pitch without getting their reward. Team mentors: **Mr. Burke** and **Mr. Hendrick**

### Boys U 19 basketball

It has been a very successful season for Boys senior basketball in the school. The u 19 boys have won 5 out of their 6 matches losing marginally their last match to St. Peters Wexford by one basket. This team are through to the semi- finals and will play Rockwell College, Cashel. If they beat this team they will go through to the all Ireland Quarterfinals. We wish them good luck. Team: **Cahel Murphy, Ruairi O'Donoghoe, David Cline, Chris Hughes, Gary Walsh, Brian O'Leary, Evin Fitzpatrick, James Freaney, Emmet Travers, Jack Longmire, Barry Nolan.**

### Rugby

The Rugby season has come and gone. Unfortunately the senior rugby team was knocked out in the first round of the Mac Mullen Cup. Such was price of being elevated from the development section of the Leinster league to section A. Marion college have continued to progress in this section, having narrowly stolen a victory late in the second half. The junior team had two bites of the cherry this year. Unfortunately we were unsuccessful in both competitions. We lost five, three to Sandford Park in the Duff Cup, again falling victim to our elevated status in section A. Further to this opportunity we engaged in the Leinster Plate, but were unsuccessful having been narrowly beaten twelve points to six. However, in the New Year we will begin with an in house blitz. This will help us to identify new talent in first year and provide us with a platform go-



ing forward. The Coaches **Mr. O Toole** and **Mr. Forrest** wish to thank the support of **Simon John** from Gorey Youth

### Coming up in TY 09

**Ski Trip** in February. 52 TY students and five teachers will brave the slopes in Austria. We wish them luck in their preparation of the up- coming trip.

**Gambia Trip:** Students are busy fundraising for the trip. Some parents and former students have obliged very persuasive TY students to shave their locks all in aid of the Gambia and the great work that has been done over the years to support the poor communities in the Gambia.