



Irish Gazette



Faith, Knowledge, and Service

The History of Lessons in Carols



A tradition at ND that has been happening for over 2 decades

By: Serena Sestito

Every family enjoys different traditions during Advent and the Christmas season.

At Notre Dame, students look forward to a special celebration just before the holiday: Lessons in Carols. [Con. pg. 2]

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Christmas comes to ND! Deck the halls and Jessie Tree

Please keep Megan Stephenson and her family in your thoughts and prayers



Locker Contest Winners

1st place

Ashleigh, Morgan, Bailee, Antonio, Bethany and John

2nd place

Danielle Drummond

3rd place

Antony Cistaro

Honorable Mention

Christian Palmer
Jalen Miller
Julia Manley

Upcoming Boys and Girls Basketball

- Boys tip-off 7:30@home against Ravenswood 12-16
- Boys tip-off 7:30 @Parkersburg Catholic 12-21
- Girls tip-off 7:00 @home against Park. Catholic. 12-22
- Girls tip-off 6:00 @home against Madonna 12-27
- Boys tip-off 7:30@home against Hun. St. Joe 12-29



Clare Cistaro, Maya Dalton, Erin Turner, Julia Manley and not pictured Serena Sestito

**MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM
THE IRISH GAZETTE
STAFF!**

Exam Schedule

Monday-December 18

1st 8:30-10:00
2nd 10:15-11:45
3rd 12:30-2:00

Tuesday-December 19

4th 8:30-10:00
5th 10:15-11:45

Wednesday-December 20

6th 8:30-10:00
7th 10:15-11:45
Lessons in Carols @ 12:45

Continuation of Lessons in Carols...

The tradition began more than 20 years ago. Started by Stephen Pishner, Lessons in Carols is a grand Christmas celebration that recounts the Christmas story, while allowing students to take time to celebrate their own accomplishments after exams, and begin to look forward to a new year.

Lessons in Carols is very different from an ordinary mass. It is an uplifting service, with lots of music and singing and giving joy to God.

Lessons in Carols also has a way of interpreting Jesus' life in a combination of songs and a candle lighting service.

At the beginning of Lessons in Carols, people are given a packet full of each song that will be sung during the service. During these songs, we take a walk through the life of Jesus leading towards the end of the service, when the candle lighting begins. The lights in the church are slowly dimmed down, and people can start to see all the candles lighting up the whole church. Shortly after, students get up by each row and carry a candle to the altar to give to both principals of St. Marys and Notre Dame.

The entire school community is involved in this tradition in some way. Many students say they look forward to hearing boys' basketball coach Jarrod West sing "Silent Night" with the rest of his team.

Other students, like senior Lauren Smith, cherish different aspects of the service.

"I love to watch the elementary kids participate in the singing during the service," said Smith. "I think about when they get older and how they will do this at our age, and love to see such a great tradition here at Notre Dame carried out through a kid's childhood."



SPORTS

BOYS BASKETBALL

By: Clare Cistaro

The defending Class A state champion boys basketball team opened the regular season Monday night with a close victory at Liberty. The Irish pulled out the win with a final score of 76-74.

Gabe Zummo scored a game-high 35 in the victory, and Andrew Rogers made two 3-pointers in the final two minutes of the game to help the Irish seal the victory.

Next up for the Irish is a home opener against Ravenswood Class A Runner up on Saturday Dec. 16 at 7:30.



Junior Gabe Zummo shoots a jump shot in a last season game. Photo Credit: The Exponent Telegram

GIRLS BASKETBALL

By: Clare Cistaro

The Notre Dame Lady Irish have had a few games so far this season. They have a record of 3-1. On Dec. 5, the Lady Irish made a long road trip to Pocahontas County and returned home with a 55-43 victory. The team went back on the road Saturday and narrowly brought home another win with a final score of 49-48 over Trinity.

Next up for the Lady Irish is a trip to the Doddridge County tournament on the Dec. 14 and 15.

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High School on
Social Media!



WRESTLING

By: Erin Turner

The wrestling team was in action on Dec. 8 and Saturday Dec. 9 for a two-day tournament in Ritchie County. Senior Ryan LaAsmar was out for this match with a hand injury. Sophomore Jason LaAsmar went 6-2 as well as Brent Robinson who went 7-1. Michael Junkins, a freshman, went 7-1. Brody Byrd, also a freshman, went 4-4, and Stevie Hall, a sophomore, went 3-5.

Although Ryan LaAsmar didn't wrestle in this match, he says he's proud of his team. The wrestling team will be in action again on Saturday, Dec. 16 at Tyler Consolidated.

SWIM

By: Erin Turner

The swim team was in action at the Jingle Bell Invitational in Wheeling on Dec. 10. Senior Jacob Coole place second in the 50 freestyle race and third in the 100 backstroke. Senior Lauren Smith placed eighth in the 100 backstroke. No other swimmers placed.

"We are going to have a great season , a great season for the seniors," said Smith. "We can't wait to go all the way to states and make a good name for ourselves."



ION is looking for volunteers to help with basketball broadcasts. Any student interested should email Nick Farrell at nfarrell@wboy.com.

Check Out The Irish Online Network for games, info and more!

Go to notredamewv.org and click on the ION link.

Teacher Feature:

By: Julia Manley

Over the last decade, Ian McAra has made a difference at Notre Dame in a number of ways, either as a coach, a teacher or as the school's advancement director.

McAra was born across the pond in Derby, England. In 1994, he came to West Virginia to attend Alderson Broaddus University on a soccer scholarship. He spent the next four years in the positions of defense and midfield for the Battlers.

In 2003, McAra associated himself with Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Clarksburg, where he completed the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults program.

Before, Notre Dame McAra worked at Mylan Park as a Event Supervisor for three years. Travel 45 miles away from home to go to work everyday was a bit tiring and costly, so in 2006, McAra applied for a position at Notre Dame as the advancement director because of the similar duties between the two jobs.

McAra first became the head soccer coach at Notre Dame, then two years later, in 2008, he became the school's advancement director.

McAra still works as both the advancement director and soccer coach nearly ten years later. He enjoys both positions and stays involved with the students, alumni and faculty.

"An attribute I love is how friendly everyone is," said McAra.



Ian McAra

Students who have played for McAra appreciate the experience and knowledge he brings to the soccer team.

"Coach McAra is smarter and has more experience than most of the coaches around the state," said senior Anthony Cistaro, who played soccer for McAra and was an all-state forward.

"I'm not just lucky to work here but the students are lucky to attend such a great school."

McAra's family is exceedingly involved in the school community. His three sons attend Notre Dame and St. Mary's, and his wife is the middle school religion teacher.

"I'm very lucky to have my family here," said McAra. "We come and leave together as family. Notre Dame has a good environment. I'm not just lucky to work here but the students are lucky to attend such a great school."



DECK THE HALLS

Christmas at ND



Jesse Tree

By: Maya Dalton

Advent is a time of anticipation and preparation for the coming of Jesus.

There are many ways to get ready for Christmas. One way is through a Jesse Tree, which is an annual tradition here at Notre Dame.

What is a Jesse Tree, exactly?

Isaiah 11:1 says, "A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots." Jesse was the father of David, Israel's greatest king, and it was from David's lineage that Jesus came. Therefore, the tree is traditionally decorated with symbols representing the stories of people in Jesus' family tree. Each religion class takes a day to create ornaments alluding to certain Old Testament Biblical stories. Some examples, which are commonly seen adorning the tree in the school's front foyer include:

- The Burning Bush
- A Lion and A Lamb
- Noah's Ark



Locker Decorating

By: Maya Dalton

This year, to add some

Christmas spirit to the hallways of Notre Dame and ignite friendly competition between each grade, the Student Council initiated a locker decorating contest. Students took Homeroom last week to decorate their lockers in creative and festive ways. Between a locker with a tree tied to it, adorning the faculty and staff of ND as ornaments and a fireplace made of five different lockers, students brought their A-game to this new tradition for our school. The grand prize: a \$25 Chick-fil-A gift card. As you walked down the hallways, it is evident that the Irish Student Body put time and effort into decorating their lockers. It also makes going to and from classes more interesting.



Door Decorating

By: Maya Dalton

Along with the lockers, the Notre Dame Key Club decided to bring some holiday cheer to the teacher's rooms as well. Members have worked during lunch and after school to make each door as festive as the last. On Mrs. DuPont, the high school religion teacher's door, you'll find an Advent wreath lit to the correct weeks in the season. Downstairs, the office door is adorned with the phrase "Deck the Halls". While some are Christmas themed, and others centered around the religious season, they all bring energy and happiness to the halls of the school. The joyful decorations are just in time for midterm exam preparations to begin!

