



ST. VINCENT DE PAUL
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Faith • Academics • Service

Connections

Volume I: Fall 2012

A note from our Principal Susan Roffmann

Welcome to the second issue of *Connections*. As we gear up for another great year at SVES we have a great deal to look forward to.

Next year marks our 125th Anniversary, so look for exciting announcements as this milestone approaches.

The 2012-13 school year will be one of thorough self-evaluation as we prepare to continue our tradition of outstanding accreditation assessments by NCEA/WASC.

Our kids will enjoy remodeled restrooms this year, with shiny new tile, fixtures and paint.



There's much more to read about in this issue, including our gratitude to those who contributed to the Annual Fund, an alumnus feature on Ryan Atkinson and details on which high schools will greet members of the SVES Class of 2012 this fall.

Thank you so much for your continued support. Enjoy.

The whole purpose of education is to turn mirrors into windows.
- Sydney J. Harris

We're on
facebook

Editor's Note: The response to our debut *Connections* newsletter was so positive, we have opted to produce another issue instead of a solicitation letter for the Annual Fund. Thank you for responding accordingly with your generosity to the Fund. We love hearing your feedback. *- S. Rawson*



This newsletter is printed on recycled paper using soy inks.

Let's go back to school!



Our story is you! Please share...

Next year is our 125th anniversary serving the youth of our parish community. We would love to hear your best memories and possibly feature them in a future issue of *Connections* newsletter.

- ◆ What did you learn in academics or life lessons while here?
- ◆ What teacher changed your life? What makes a teacher great?
- ◆ How did SVES help form your character in your time here?
- ◆ Other stories?
- ◆ Photos of special times. We can copy and return.

Email Stacy at SRawson@StVincentElementary.org or call directly (707)304-2062.

Inside...

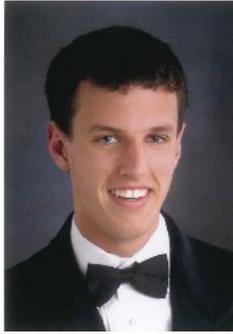
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You are the best advertising we have as ambassadors for our school. Thank you for encouraging families to come on a tour!

Alumnus Feature

Name: Ryan Atkinson

SVES graduation year: 2008



Best SVES memories: I always enjoyed seeing how much the faculty and staff at the school cared about the students. They worked so hard to make sure that a positive environment was created for all students, and many have stayed in contact with me and offered support to my family and me. I also liked how the school fostered contact between students of all grades through traditions such as P.E.A.K. Pals, which is a tremendous experience for both the younger students who receive a mentor and the older students who have the opportunity to lead in a certain capacity.

Most important things learned at SVES: I learned many very important academic facts or habits from the elementary school. I truly believe that the preparation I received from my education at this school has allowed me to be successful and has given me certain tools which will help me in achieving my professional dreams. But just as importantly, I learned the importance of community through this school. With its small school environment and compassionate teachers, I was taught the importance of supporting others in need and the value of friendship.

School now attending: University of California, Berkeley

Major field of study: I hope to major in applied mathematics with a specialization in biological mathematics.

Active outside of studies: I love sports, having participated in three in high school and following several others very closely. I also enjoy reading or watching movies, as well as being with my family.

Siblings: **Daniel Atkinson** (SVES class of 2004), recently graduated from San Francisco State University and has begun a job at the Hanna Boys Center in Sonoma. **Jonathon Atkinson** (SVES class of 2002) is a graduate from UC Berkeley and has also studied at Humboldt University in Berlin. He will soon begin work as an assistant teacher at the Baltimore Public Charter Montessori School in Maryland.

Remember to sign in to our Alumni list on our web site and you may be our next feature.

Are you a SVES alumni? Stay in touch!
Sign in and keep us up to date on what you're doing! Click on the "Support" menu on our web site, then select "Alumni Newsletter" and complete the simple questions there. 25 people have checked in so far. Are they your friends?? *Help spread the word!*

Saving trees and going digital!

One of the rites of passage each August has always been the homework for parents. We're talking about the many forms that



were required to fill in to cover each student's emergency contact information, current mailing address, any medical concerns, and more. This year our school is offering

this option online so parents enter the information one time from their home computer and will then update it each term as needed. Having to enter it only one time makes the process a pleasure!



The vital Tuesday newsletter will now come electronically to all, saving reams and reams of paper each year.

Class of 2012: Where are they now?

| | |
|---------------------------------|----|
| St. Vincent de Paul High School | 26 |
| Branson High School | 1 |
| Cardinal Newman | 1 |
| Casa Grande High School | 2 |
| Marin Catholic High School | 1 |
| Notre Dame High School | 1 |
| Petaluma High School | 1 |
| Sacred Heart High School | 1 |
| Technology High School | 1 |

Best of luck to all of you!

Thanks to the class of 2012

In keeping with tradition, the 8th grade class of 2012 offered a gift to our school upon graduation. The art shown is of the new Christmas banner to be used in the school's chapel during the Advent season.



Service Work Feature

Whether the focus is here in Petaluma or with more of a global reach, these two SVES students make a difference in our world.



Faith • Academics • Service



Emily Seaman, Class of 2014

I am 11 years old and will be entering 7th grade. The group I have done my service hours with is called the Petaluma Senior Center. I have been volunteering for them since the beginning of my 6th grade year.

I chose this organization because two of my new friends at the school, Maddie King and Olivia Dadalt were serving there. I was new to the school, so thought I would go along with them, and I really liked it. I serve lunch to the seniors as well as visit with them. I like the Petaluma Senior Center because of the new people I meet every day and the lovely conversations I have with the seniors as well as the staff. I am inspired by the people who volunteer there because in their own free time they choose to help others.

In all aspects of my life, whether in school, on the soccer field, or at the senior center, I will carry with me the idea that above all things, I will always help and respect people. We are all God's children. I think that Service is included in the (SVES) tag line, because no matter what is happening in our lives, it is always important to help others.

"Service has taught me that I can be a leader."

Matt Ostheimer

Matthew Ostheimer, Class of 2012

I am 13 and entering Cardinal Newman as a Freshman. I have been volunteering for the Valentino Achack Deng Foundation for the past two years. I chose them after reading the inspiring book, *What is the What* by Valentino Achack Deng. I have held two multi-day bake sales at St. Vincent's Church, each raising over \$1,500 for the Foundation. (VADF is a nonprofit organization working to increase access to education in post-conflict South Sudan by building schools, libraries, teacher-training institutes, and community centers.)



I believe in the mission of this foundation and have met Ms. Molly Stack, who has been unbelievably helpful at the VADF (www.valentinoachackdeng.org). She has guided me in the best ways to help and where the funds will go. She has also supplied pamphlets, raffle items, and more to show and give away at the sales. I love seeing that I can make a change, and it isn't hard. I love being part of something that is bigger than I am. Service has taught me that I can be a leader. I have had to lead others in a way I never thought I could. It has also helped me become a better public speaker.

I think Service is part of SVES's program for a few reasons. It teaches kids to get out in the world around them. It also teaches people to give back to the community. Lastly, it teaches people to do things that may not be important to just themselves, but are very important to others.

Did you know?

That clunker that may not be worth much as a trade-in is worth a lot as a donation to SVES's Annual Fund! **Donate** your car, truck, RV or boat to our school. It's very easy to do, either online or on the phone. You will be given a receipt for taxes. Visit our web site or call toll free (855) 500 - RIDE (7433).



This past year boasted 74 donors. One was from a matching corporate fund at Boeing. One was given in honor of a special someone who passed away this year and had a strong belief in the importance of a good education. The funds themselves were used to assist 26 students with financial aid for tuition (8% of our students received aid to attend our school). Your donations also went to fund the purchase of networking systems and software for the student computer lab and remodeling the restrooms. Thank you for your generosity. Let's help the Annual Fund grow as we prepare for our 125th anniversary of serving children in 2013. *Will you give \$125.00?*

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

ANNUAL FUND

Fiscal Year 7-1-2011 through 6-30-2012: Received = \$20,161 from 74 donors

Sponsor Level (\$1-\$99)

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Chu and Yuan Chang
Richard Stefani and Tracy Otsuka
Jason and Nikki Sullivan

Patron of St. Vincent de Paul (\$2,500 - \$4,999)

Anonymous

BVM Legacy* (\$5,000 +)

Will your name be here this year?

**honoring the Sisters of Charity, Blessed Virgin Mary, our school's first teachers*

Why do you give to the Annual Fund?



Share your thoughts and you may be published in the next newsletter.

Email:

SRawson@

StVincentElementary.org

Our Mission Statement

As a Catholic elementary school, our mission is to provide an education within a faith-filled community in which all students develop skills as caring and compassionate Christians, critical and creative thinkers, responsible citizens, and lifelong learners.

Please Give