

## LESA Students "Unify"

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also supported Operation Christmas Child, either through their congregations or schools. Several schools chose causes closer to home. **Green Park Lutheran** in south St. Louis County sent donations to the USO, while **Christ the Vine Lutheran** in Herculaneum continued its tradition of "adopting" a family through a local congregation or service organization. Students at **St. Luke's Lutheran** in south St. Louis "adopted" members of their own congregation by collect-

ing more than a thousand items for Thanksgiving and Christmas food baskets. St. Luke's students also collected gifts for Toys for Tots.

In the spring, LESA students will once again "unify" to participate in LESA's first-ever Unified Earth Day Project – Lutheran Schools Celebrate God's Earth. The project, which coincides with the celebration of Earth Day on April 22, draws inspiration from Genesis 2:15, "The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it."



### Salem-Affton Honors Veterans

*On Nov. 10, students at Salem Lutheran in Affton thanked local veterans during a ceremony that featured class presentations and a special display of pictures and other memorabilia from Salem families and the community.*



# news & notes

Spring — 2009

## School Notes — What LESA member schools are doing — and learning

### "Penny War" for Hurricane Ike Relief

Students at **Word of Life Lutheran** in south St. Louis learned the power of a penny in October when they launched a "Penny War" to collect money for Hurricane Ike relief. After just one week, the students collected an amazing \$1,635.57. The full amount will be sent to Lutheran service agencies helping the victims of Hurricane Ike in Texas.



*Word of Life secretary Brenda Haverman adds coins to the 7th grade jug for Hurricane Ike Relief.*



*Kindergarteners at Our Savior Lutheran in Fen-ton read together on the meeting rug while their teacher helps their classmates unpack for the first day of school.*

**Seven Lutheran South students** have been named 2009 National Merit Scholars. Seniors Dean Odegard and Rebecca Reed were named Semifinalists for their performances on the PSAT/NMSQT assessment, which they took last October as juniors. Seniors Rick Anderson, Tim Grev, Joanna Ryherd, Alica Tape, and Lisa Wilke were recognized as Commended Students for scoring in the top 3 percent of all the 1.4 million students who took the PSAT.



*Congratulations to Lutheran South seniors Alica Tape, oboe, and Anna Cooksey, clarinet, for being accepted as members of the St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra for the second straight year.*

### LESA Schools Sweep LSAM Volleyball Tournament

Congratulations to four LESA schools for taking the top spots in the LSAM State Volleyball Tournament in November. **Word of Life** in south St. Louis took first, followed by **St. Paul's-Des Peres**, **Immanuel-St. Charles** and **Zion-St. Charles**. **Immanuel-St. Charles** was also recognized for best sportsmanship.

### Schools Receive "Youth Service" Grants

**Hope Lutheran** and **King of Glory Lutheran** in south St. Louis have been awarded \$500 Youth Service Grants to help students build leadership skills and reach out to their communities. Both schools are putting their funds into action by baking goodies and creating relationships with the elderly. The grants are funded through the St. Louis Mental Health Board, the Incarnate Word Foundation and the Lutheran Foundation of St. Louis.

**And finally**, thank you to the Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML) for inviting LESA schools to benefit from their recent collection of arts and crafts items and school supplies.

## LESA President Chuck Conover Celebrates "Semi" Retirement



Congratulations to Chuck Conover on his decision to "semi" retire from his busy role as LESA's founding President and Chief Executive Officer. Chuck

will continue working part-time in the same capacity, offering guidance and leadership in our mission to provide quality, Christian education to nearly 8,000 St. Louis area children.

Chuck's 41 year Lutheran School ministry has always been in St. Louis. He has served in the capacity of teacher, athletic director and principal. In 2004, Chuck was called to help found the Lutheran Elementary School Association. His passion for nurturing children in the Word of God through Lutheran schools is evident in the energy and enthusiasm he uses in making certain financial aid and a quality learning environment are available to St. Louis metro children.

Today, LESA represents 37 elementary schools, four high schools and numerous agencies in the St. Louis Metro Area. We at LESA praise God for Chuck's 41 years of faithful service to the Lutheran education ministry and look forward to his continued partnership with LESA.

## LESA Students "Unify" to Help Children in Need

When students at **Abiding Savior Lutheran School** in south St. Louis County decided to participate in LESA's annual Unified Giving Project, Operation Christmas Child, they started with an ambitious goal: Fill 50 shoeboxes with gifts and goodies for children living in desperate circumstances around the world. They never imagined that a few months later, they would dedicate nearly double that amount - 95 boxes - along with \$700 in shipping funds, to create a special Christmas for children in need.

That same spirit of giving is soaring through other LESA schools in the St. Louis Metro Area. Some, like **Hope Lutheran** in south St. Louis and **St. John's Lutheran** in Arnold

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## LESA School, Principal Earn National Recognition



**St. John Lutheran** in Ellisville recently received one of the highest honors ever bestowed on a school: the prestigious No Child Left Behind — Blue Ribbon School award from

the U.S. Department of Education. Nationwide, only 3.9 percent of all eligible schools ever achieve "Blue Ribbon" status.

In October, the Lutheran Education Association honored Janet Leet, principal of **Christ Community Lutheran School's** elementary campus in Webster Groves, as their 2008 Distinguished Lutheran Elementary Administrator.

Congratulations to St. John and CCLS for showing the nation why Lutheran schools are an exceptional place to learn and grow.

**Save the Date — Sunday, Feb. 8, 2009**

**All LESA Open House**

Call (314) 268-1520 or visit [www.metrolutheranschools.org](http://www.metrolutheranschools.org)

For more information, visit [www.metrolutheranschools.org](http://www.metrolutheranschools.org)

# The Teachers' Turn to Learn

## LESA Teachers Enjoy Day of Professional Development

LESA teachers from all over the St. Louis Metro Area gathered Friday, Oct. 10 at **Zion Lutheran** in St. Charles for a fun and rewarding day of professional development. More than 430 teachers attended the day-long learning event, which began with an inspiring opening worship led by Pastor Mark Rouland of Zion Lutheran Church. After the service, teachers were invited to choose from more than 20 workshop topics, which included "reaching and teaching" struggling students, improving parent-teacher communica-

Ready for his Close Up!  
*Teacher Tom Ernst of St. Paul's Lutheran in Des Peres scopes out a plant specimen during LESA's fall in-service event.*



tion and tips for recruiting and retaining students. The teachers also enjoyed hands-on presentations from The Magic House and the Missouri Botanical Garden.

LESA teachers meet twice a year to polish their skills through professional development. "Our teachers love to learn as much as they love to teach," said Deb Schmich, Director, LESA's Educational Administrators Division/Student Services. "This gives them a chance to do that in a fun, creative setting."



Stack 'Em Up!  
*Carol Rudsinski, from Salem Lutheran in Affton, tries her hand at speed stacking during a P.E. workshop.*

## Colonial Williamsburg Brings History to Life for Students, Teachers

Two LESA teachers will experience "living history" this summer when they travel to Virginia to attend the Colonial Williamsburg Teacher Institute. Jeanine Consolino of **Hope Lutheran** in south St. Louis and Ed Cook of **Trinity Lutheran** in Edwardsville will join teachers from all over the country to learn about the daily life of eighteenth century Virginia - including the economic and social events that led to the American Revolution.

LESA's participation is made possible through a grant from Bob and Lori Duesenberg, two long-time Lutheran school supporters who developed an enthusiasm for Colonial Williamsburg while living in Virginia. The goal of the grant - and the Institute - is to help teachers bring history to life for their students. "Some of those students...will retain that excitement [throughout] their



*Past participant Carol Brannan, Christ Community Lutheran, poses with a historic re-enactor at Colonial Williamsburg.*

lives," said Bob, who attended St. Luke's Lutheran and Hope Lutheran in south St. Louis as a child. The Duesenberg's children also attended Lutheran schools in St. Louis.

The grant also invites LESA schools to use the Colonial Williamsburg Electronic Field Trip Series, an interactive, web-based program that allows LESA students to watch historical reenactments and then participate in lessons web-cast from Colonial Williamsburg. Seventeen LESA schools are participating in the series this year including **Atonement Lutheran** in Florissant, **Salem Lutheran** in Florissant and **Immanuel Lutheran** in Washington.

Bob Duesenberg says he hopes the programs help LESA students gain a better understanding of their democracy. After all, "Responsible citizenship is informed citizenship."

A Night for Kids™

6th Annual Building Blocks Scholarship Fund Dinner/Auction

Friday, April 17, 2009  
5:00 - 10:00 p.m.

The Royale Orleans  
2801 Telegraph Road  
St. Louis, MO 63125

Tickets - \$50 per person  
(Tables of 8)

For tickets, contact:  
Melissa Maxfield  
314-268-1520  
[mmaxfield@lesastl.org](mailto:mmaxfield@lesastl.org)

## Building Blocks Scholarship Fund – A "Miracle" to Many

Your support of LESA's Building Blocks Scholarship Fund has been a "miracle" to 3,923 Lutheran school students who have received more than \$2.9 million in need-based tuition scholarships over the past five years. Today, one out of every six students in our schools receives financial assistance through a Building Blocks' program.

God has richly blessed the Building Blocks' ministry, and His guidance is evidenced by one recipient family: "Finding out about Building Blocks Scholarship Fund was a bit of a miracle I'd like to share with you. I had been praying about how to continue to afford my son's schooling. After seeing a bumper sticker on a car for JOY FM, I tuned in one day. I heard a commercial about Lutheran elementary schools in St. Louis and how Building Blocks provides financial assistance to students. I looked up the LESA web site and got the application form turned in, just in the nick of time. And here we are! You are a miracle answer to prayer. There are just too many timely "coincidences" to say otherwise. So thank you for helping me provide my child with the Christian base that is so imperative in today's world. You are appreciated!!!"

Your partnership is even more important to the children we serve as the number of scholarship applications increase each year. With your help and God's blessing, we know we can help even more children in the future.

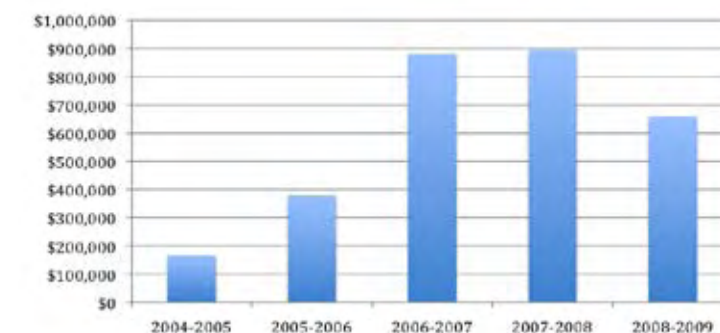
## High School Students Put "Faith into Action"



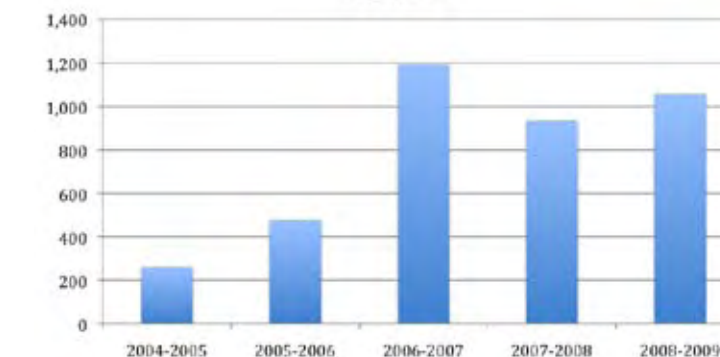
In October, about 650 students and faculty at **Lutheran High North** (photo, left) and **Lutheran High South** participated in their schools' "Faith in Action" days, which connect students with local service organizations, such as the Salvation Army, Operation Food Search, the Judevine Center, and Orphan Grain Train. In August, students at **Lutheran High St. Charles** (photo, below) stopped to pray before volunteering at a Thrivent-sponsored "Habitat for Humanity" work site in Wentzville. The school's Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) chapter also pitched in by helping the city of St. Peter's Operation Clean Stream during National Make a Difference Day.



Scholarship Dollars Awarded



Number of Students Served with a Building Blocks Scholarship



*Building Blocks Scholarship Fund's goal is to make Lutheran elementary school education available to every child, regardless of family financial circumstances.*