



Champion swimmer Ann Hirsch creates first VOH gift annuity

Ann Hirsch is used to coming in first!

Age 77 and a competitive master swimmer in all four strokes, she continues to pile up first place finishes for the Walnut Creek Masters, which she joined 17 years ago. In 2001, she broke eight national master records and set two world records in the breaststroke.

She has had a *Vision of Hope* first as well: the first person to take out a charitable gift annuity for its benefit.

"I want any Catholic family that wishes to send their child to Catholic school to have that opportunity," she said. She found that the gift annuity allows her to grant that wish without ignoring her own financial needs. The annuity provides her with income tax benefits and guaranteed income for life, passing a large gift to *Vision of Hope* at death.

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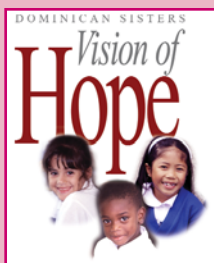
Save the Dates
Vision of Hope's - 2nd Annual
Day at the Races
 May 16, 2009
 Golden Gate Fields
 Berkeley, CA
 and
Golf Tournament
 July 20, 2009
 Wilshire Country Club
 Los Angeles, CA

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Thanks to George Kinney at Castle Press, Pasadena, for blessing us with our first full-color newsletter!

'Celebrating Service' headlines Catholic Schools Week '09

What a perfect theme for the National Catholic Schools Week of January 25 to January 31! Everyone involved in Catholic education serves others. Please join the Vision of Hope Schools in celebrating the service of their students!

During the first trimester, **Sacred Heart School** eighth graders were required to give service to their school and parish communities. Students acted as altar servers, choir members, after school tutors, and teacher helpers. They also served meals during the parish's annual Thanksgiving luncheon and distributed toys during the Christmas Toy Give-Away. In the final two trimesters, service is required in their parishes and outside community, giving 60 hours total service.



As their service project for the year, the fifth graders at **Santa Teresita School** have adopted a soldier in Iraq. In November the students met Army Specialist Steven Koch, who has served three tours of duty in Iraq. After he shared his experiences, students

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interviewed him to find out his favorite snacks and pastimes. Throughout the year each fifth grader will contribute 50 cents monthly so that their teacher, Ms. Diana Serna, can purchase items for Specialist Koch's care package. Students have also sponsored free dress days to raise funds to cover postage to send the care packages to Iraq!

With the goal of bringing together parish, school, and neighbors — **Saint Anthony-Immaculate Conception School** hosted the "First Annual Crab Bash" on November 22, 2008. Eighth grade girls and boys were happy to give up a Saturday night to pitch-in as servers for the event. This class is unique as they are collectively a group of young people eager to serve whenever and wherever needed. The crowd complimented them for the polite, efficient and engaging service during the course of the evening.



Saint Elizabeth students have provided immeasurable hours of service. The school has also been the beneficiary of service from so many volunteers. The school was blessed with perhaps the greatest volunteer of all time in Nancy McWalters, a firm believer in the nobility of service. For 25 years she came at least once a week to read with the children. She would quietly arrive on campus, then sit in the hallway with one child at a time as they shared a book. Last June, Nancy was honored with a student-crafted banner expressing thanks for her years of giving to Saint Elizabeth. Her family reported that before her death in July, the banner was still displayed in her home.



December is always a busy yet very rewarding month for **Saint Ignatius** Builders Club members. During lunchtimes, students made cards and decorations for Amberwood Convalescent Home, and collected and packaged 350 Christmas cards and 200 candy canes for

the children at the Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Detention Facility. Prior to the Christmas break, Club members packaged food, turkeys and sacks of toys. Early December 20, they assisted Santa and parish members as they distributed food and toys to local families. Wearing big smiles and Santa hats, the group finished off the day Christmas caroling and giving out cards to residents at Amberwood.



Throughout the year, children at **Saint James** are mindful of the needs of others. These past holidays, the student body "stepped up to the plate" with a Thanksgiving food drive and the fire department's Christmas "Toys for Tots." For many years during Lent, students have helped the Little Sisters of the Poor of Saint Anne's Home with a toiletries collection for the elderly residents.



Saint Frances X. Cabrini students are feeding the poor within the community by stocking the parish food pantry weekly. The Student Council took on this mission at Thanksgiving when more families were asking for the basic necessities. They will continue until this hardship ends. As a parent stated, "It is our Christian duty to take care of all our brothers and sisters. No one should go without a simple meal." The Student Council is planning to serve soup once a week during Lent to continue the spreading of this mission.



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She has also experienced enough hardship to make her sympathetic to others facing adversity.

For many years, she was a single mother raising three children on a Catholic elementary school teacher's salary. "I remember getting a sizeable raise," she said, adding with a laugh that "school tuition went up at the same time." All three of her children were in parochial schools.

"I'm sympathetic with inner-city families who don't have a lot of money and want a good education for their children," she said. "I know what a struggle it is, because I've struggled."

Ann's two daughters Angela ('81) and Rose ('87) were students at Immaculate Conception Academy, San Francisco, when Sister John Martin was principal. Angela later coached basketball at Saint Anthony's School in the Mission. After Ann attended some of her games, she became a supporter and has been a donor there for many

years. "I love visiting students and staff there," she said. "The atmosphere at Saint Anthony's is certainly conducive to a great educational experience."

Her son, Nicholas Stanfel, a graduate of San Francisco's Archbishop Riordan High School, died of cancer at age 26 in 1992. At the time he was a football coach and teacher at Sacred Heart High School. Ann has since established a fund in his memory at Riordan.

"Swimming helped me deal with my grief," she said. In the pool, she combined natural talent with a competitive nature from a very young age, winning her first breaststroke race at age 9. She had never practiced the stroke and, at her mother's suggestion, simply watched girls in the heat before hers.

In 2006 she set three national records in the 50-, 100-, and 200-meter breaststroke, smashing the record in the 200 by seven seconds. She also won the 200 butterfly, and

the 200 and 400 individual medlies at the same meet.

She and her husband, David, are residents of Rossmore, where she volunteers in the activities department of a nearby nursing home. She runs a weekly cooking class, brings children in to entertain, and coordinates Sunday religious services.

An active investor, she created her gift annuity after carefully reviewing its tax and payment consequences. She wishes she could have as much control over the rules that govern competitive masters swimming.

Vision of Hope is delighted to list Ann Hirsch as a member of its *Legacy Circle*.

For information on the *Legacy Circle*, gift annuities, or to request a free estate planning organizer, contact Sister John Martin Fixa, OP, at 510-533-5768 or osd@msjdominicans.org.

Holstein's leadership exemplified in 16 'Persons for Others'



Saint Frances X. Cabrini School

Aidah Al Baqir is a young lady with conviction, compassion, and dedication to learning and serving her community.

Duzhay Greene, student council president, with the drive to take on any situation, works for justice, peace and integrity.



Santa Teresita School

Genevieve Garcia is a responsible student who gives service to others through helping children in the After-school Program and participating in Girl Scouts.

With a mature disposition, **Tanya Villalobos** earns outstanding grades. She leads by her positive example.



Saint James School

A positive role model, **Andy Sandoval** has a super sense of humor, knows himself well and is a very confident student.

Miguel Villalobos is a kind, thoughtful and considerate student and an extremely hard worker who inspires others by his incredible work ethic.



Thanks to you, Vision of Hope assists 1,309 students — 75% of the children in our schools this year. The 16 Holstein Scholars featured here are but a small percentage, yet put a “face” to our students striving to work for change, as did Bob Holstein. Each eighth grader honored in his name received a \$1,500 scholarship and a beautiful “Person for Others” framed certificate. Like Bob, they will make a tremendous difference in our world. Congratulations to them and to their proud families!



Sacred Heart Elementary School

Ecology Commissioner of the Student Council, **Cierra Vega** became interested in assisting with recycling and the safety of the student body upon her entrance to junior high.

A dedicated worker against the licensing of an alcohol-serving entertainment center in Lincoln Heights, **Kimberly Ruano** attended the public meetings and spoke up on several occasions!



Saint Elizabeth Elementary School

Ana Laura Castro is a calm, steady presence in the classroom. She has a positive relationship with everyone and brings maturity, dedication, and excellence to her role as a leader.

In every school experience, **Eduardo Lara** brings all of his best energy and effort — in the classroom, on student council, on sports teams and at recess!



Saint Michael School

Azucena Villa's friends and family consider her to be a hard-working and caring person. She always looks out for the best interest of others.

Carmen Linarez is the youngest of five and is described by her peers and teachers as a persevering, devoted and diligent student.



Saint Ignatius School

At Saint Ignatius since kindergarten, **Albert Miramontes** is a sports enthusiast and loves math; he hopes to attend USC majoring in communication and become a sports commentator.

A good student who loves math and history, **Samantha DeHaro** aspires to attend either USC or Princeton University to major in American history or fashion design.

Saint Anthony-Immaculate Conception School

Extremely proud of his school, **Lorenzo Limcaco** is the youngest of four to attend SAIC; his dedication and hard work are a natural part of his character.

Quiet, strong, compassionate and giving, **Yuritzy Rodriguez** has a big heart and a beautiful smile; she will make a difference in this world.



WINTER 2009

Bragging Writes: News from our campuses

San Francisco/Oakland

In November 2008, **Saint Anthony-Immaculate Conception** eighth grader Carina Melara packed her bags and headed to San Jose, California to a four-day leadership conference sponsored by the National Young Leaders State Conference. She was given a leadership "tool kit" to help her strengthen her skills to succeed in school and act upon her dreams of making a difference in her community. There is no doubt that she will be successful in fulfilling her dream!

On December 2, 2008 **Saint James School** community enjoyed an all-school field trip to the new California Academy of Sciences, via chartered bus thanks to a loyal friend, Irene Scully. This field trip was a once-in-a-lifetime experience that the children will never forget!



Fourth and fifth graders with Mrs. Lori Regalia, Instructional Assistant.

Saint Elizabeth Elementary School celebrated its 115th birthday last October with a gathering of Friars, friends, alumni, teachers, students and neighbors in the Garden of Learning. Each class prepared a healthy snack. Student

entertainment included a new percussion group, another tribute to the Dominican Schools Music Program! It was a tremendous success and a fitting way to celebrate so many years of service to the parish and Fruitvale area of Oakland.



"Whenever I see President Obama's face, I see hope." — Narcelito Guinto, fifth grader, posing with stand-ups of our new leaders at Saint Elizabeth's Inauguration Day celebration.

South Central Los Angeles

Saint Michael is very excited about having two music programs start this school year.

Fifteen students from the Guitar Club, started in October by Mrs. Diaz, performed at the Christmas Program with several donated guitars.

Mrs. Marisol Gaytan's school wide music program will cover all aspects of music. Students are looking forward to experiencing music and showing off their talents.

Two **Saint Frances X. Cabrini** seventh graders were invited to participate in the Junior Young Leaders Conference in Washington DC over spring break! These girls will share their experience with the student body and challenge others to strive to be Catholic leaders.

East Los Angeles

Los Angeles Councilmember José Huizar recognized **Santa Teresita School** seventh graders Mabel Rafael and Jean Chairez for excellence in education at the 5th Annual Adelante Awards Gala held at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels. Los Angeles City Council District 14 honored students in the district who demonstrate outstanding academic achievement and commitment to their community.

Saint Ignatius School's very strong Falcons team stormed the football field again this year. Leading the Falcons this season from the 8th grade were: Lionel Escajeda, Nicholas Arce, Christian Quezada, and Anthony Carrillo. The Falcons record for 2008-2009 was 9 wins, 2 losses. With all the practice, team work and enthusiasm of not just the players, but also all the Falcon supporters, the team went all the way to another division first place. Soar high, Falcons!

At **Sacred Heart School**, the Student Council creatively converted the schoolyard into a campsite where they and their moderators spent a weekend building leadership and team spirit at "Camp YAHOO" (You Always Have Other Options). In addition to planning activities, the campers practiced logical thinking tasks in teams where communication and compromising skills had to be used effectively. The Y.A.H.O.O. acronym serves as a reminder of the options for solving problems that may arise.

