

# St. Mary Technology

## NEWS

### Technology Vision

The St. Mary School community is committed to providing an academic environment that leverages technology to prepare our students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We believe in providing quality instruction that promotes academic excellence by challenging students to think critically, to solve problems creatively and collaboratively, and to communicate effectively through the integration of technology, as well as through the written word. To realize this goal it is essential that technology be current and innovative.

## Technology Committee Update

I wish to extend my sincerest thanks to the St. Mary Technology Committee for their endless support and dedication to the mission of helping to bring forth technology into the school. It is the goal of this committee to support the implementation of the Instructional Technology Plan and we do this by

- Providing on-going staff training opportunities for all school personnel in becoming proficient in the use of core technology skills
- Integrating technology throughout the curriculum at all grade levels
- Evaluating the technology plan's impact on the student's educational progress
- Reviewing and asses the plan annually

The committee is hard at work mapping out the technology plan for the next 5 years to determine which initiatives will best support the technology plan and the community.

Thank you to the committee, the St. Mary staff and the community for the continued support of this mission.

Jesse Luna  
Teechnology Chairperson

## Technology Committee 2010-2011

Jesse Luna – Technology  
Chairperson  
Peg Donnelly  
Christina Kallenborn  
Dan Murphy  
Beverly Atwood  
Frank Valderrama  
Donna Veverka  
Tom Cervenka –  
Member at Large

## Smart Board Kudos

St. Mary School moves forward with a new type of classroom design, often called the classroom of the future. Grades k-8, Art and Spanish have added mounted Smart Boards and speakers in each classroom. Smart Boards are large interactive white boards that are connected to a computer providing teachers and students touch control of computer applications. In this new environment activities are structured to emphasize collaborative, active, student-based learning. The teachers have been very dedicated to their Professional Development training and are using this new technology to challenge their students. SMART training provided by Chicago Office Technology Group Education Team has given St. Mary school a year of training that is still on going to ensure efficient and effective use of their product and to improve and transform the teaching and learning in the classroom. The students are very excited about the Smart Boards and can't wait for their chance to interact with the boards. We have just learned from Chicago Office Technology Group we are the only school in the Chicago Archdiocese with Smart Boards in every Homeroom and the only school taking advantage of the ongoing Professional Development training scheduled by Mrs. Veverka throughout the school year.

St. Mary School



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## Summer Happenings

**Computers** – Students will return to a state of the art computer lab in August 2010 plus new and exciting media software to go with our awesome 20" iMac machines! The computers that were in the lab were distributed into the classrooms replacing the oldest machines.

Special thanks to Mrs. Veverka, Mrs. Atwood and Mr. Cervenka.

### Technology Recognition

*LTConnections* newsletter is published monthly by Learning Technology Center One Central and supported by the Intermediate Service Centers of five counties, this newsletter is sent to Springfield to inform our congressman about technology is schools in hopes that technology funding continues. One of St. Mary technology projects was highlighted and presented in the newsletter to demonstrate what could be done with technology in the classroom.

## New Technologies in the School Office and Library

Improving communication online: St. Mary School recognizes that grading and classroom management tools are significant aspects of a school's overall need to involve parents in the success of their students and the school. Spear headed by Mrs. Vrablik and the teachers St. Mary School will be posting the students grades online giving parents the information they need to make a difference in the educational lives of their children.

New to the Library/Resource Center\* the latest addition to the library is "Destiny", our new library management system. Destiny puts the library's catalog in every classroom, allowing teachers and students to browse the collection whenever the need arises. This easy-to-use system is designed to strengthen the library/classroom connection by letting users find the right materials by subject, reading level, and relevance.

## Fall Happenings

### St. Mary Students + Wilderness Classroom + The North American Odyssey = Global Awareness

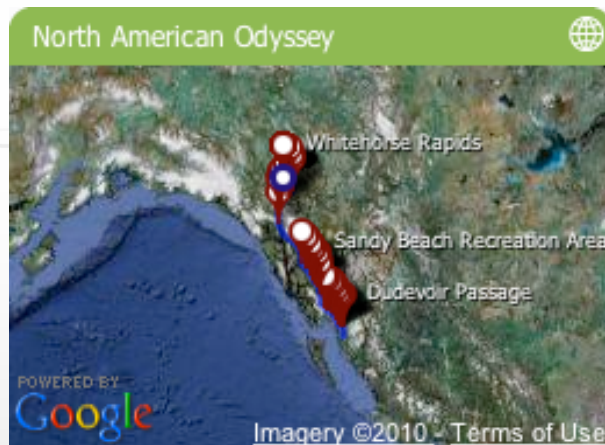
*"We want to educate people about the importance of making healthy choices that simplify life, reduce your global footprint, and provide quality time for friends, family, and outdoor pursuits. We hope to inspire people to make lifestyle changes that are environmentally sound and improve quality of life," explains Dave.*

On Earth Day (April 22) of 2010 Dave Freeman and Amy Voytilla will begin a three years, 11,700-mile journey across North America by kayak, canoe, and dogsled. Their goal is to use their journey as a platform for gaining support and protection for North America's waterways and wild places, while actively engaging over 100,000 elementary and middle school students in their journey through this website and live school assemblies.

Their odyssey begins by kayak on the Pacific Coast studying temperate rainforests and marine life of the Pacific Northwest, but this is just the first in a series of six stages on their quest to highlight North America's wildest places.

After kayaking 1,400 miles from Seattle, Wash. to Skagway, Alaska, the team will progress over the history-studded mountains in the footsteps of the Klondike Gold Rush, to the home of Inuit along the Arctic Ocean where polar bears roam. From the Arctic Ocean they will dogsled and canoe south through central Canada, kayak across the Great Lakes, then follow the annual whale migration past the salt marshes and sea turtles of the Atlantic Coast, finishing in the mangroves and coral reefs of the Florida Keys. (See route description for more details)

Through lesson plans and daily Web updates, elementary and middle school students will learn alongside the explorers through [www.wildernessclassroom.com](http://www.wildernessclassroom.com) and adults can follow their progress through [www.NorthAmericanOdyssey.com](http://www.NorthAmericanOdyssey.com).



### Dave- Notes from the trail-

## Exploring the Yukon Wilderness

WRITTEN BY ADMINISTRATOR | 28 JULY 2010

As we have been traveling down the Yukon River for the past two days, we have seen many forms of wildlife: vast acres of dense green forest and steam shores of sand and rock. These beautiful scenes seem perfectly pristine, but human artifacts, such as boat wrecks, old abandoned cabins, wood camps, and washed up tires and barrels are physical blemishes of the Klondike Gold Rush on this wilderness. It is amazing to research the evolution of the Yukon River from primitive wilderness to industrial highway. Now, people are working to transform the river to its original state.

A student in Chicago might consider the Chicago River to be Wilderness, while a Yukon trapper might completely disagree and give his or her own definition. Our group defined wilderness as: "a large isolated area, untrammelled by humans with a true sense of freedom, where everything feels uncaged." Our definition is based off of our expectation of seeing fewer people; we've encountered numerous adventurers seeking similar solitude in nature (contrary to our initial belief), fewer signs of human contact (people, trash, roads, sounds, etc.), and the frequency of spotting the numerous kinds of wildlife (we had thought we'd find much more than we have so far).

Wilderness Classroom Explorers will visit St. Mary School in Oct. before they start phase two (Arctic Ocean where polar bears roam), of their expedition. They will talk to us about the first couple of months of their journey Grades 3-8 will be at the school assembly.

