

# Irish Times

March 2026

Issue 6

## A Strong Foundation

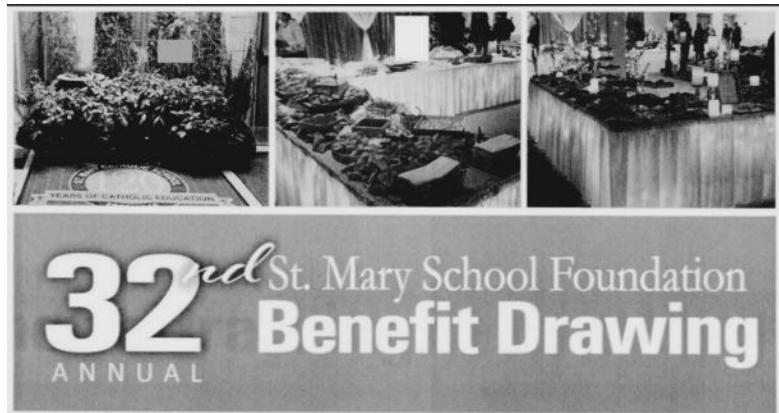
By: Lauryl Sanderson and Liberty Smith

Have you ever wondered how our school keeps its programs running smoothly or how special projects get funded? The answer is our school foundation. We spoke with Judge Williams, a key member of the Foundation, to learn more about its mission and impact, and this is what we found out! The first question we asked him was: What is the Foundation's main goal? He responded, "To keep the school financially stable."

Once we learned the Foundation's main goal—to keep the school financially stable—we asked how they put that goal into action and what some of the things the Foundation has helped pay for at our school are. "At least 40,000-50,000 dollars each year at minimum. Just for the school to use for salaries, etc. But they also give more money to pay for projects." He gave us a list of projects they have helped with, including: an annual cash donation, major foundation repairs, roof replacements, and more!

With so many projects to support, we wanted to know: how does the Foundation decide what gets funded? He responded with, "Whatever the teachers or principal think we need. The Foundation has never turned down a project. Lots of trust both ways." So, the Foundation must trust the school, and the school must trust the Foundation.

The next question we asked was what makes our school special compared to others. He replied with "It has a religious component, and our school is all about education. This school gives a good foundation for your education and prepares you for the future."



Next, we asked how families can get involved and help the Foundation continue its work. He said, "They have an annual fundraising dinner for the Foundation. Parents can help by buying tickets and coming to support them. It takes place on the first Saturday in February. The event we just had raised 78,000 dollars."

The final question we asked was, if you could give the students one message, what would it be? He told us, "Don't give up, keep working. We all have good days and bad days. Get through those bad days cause' there are better days ahead, take advantage of this great education."

The Foundation helps the school raise money and supports important projects that benefit the students and teachers. Through donations, fundraisers, and trust between the school and Foundation, they help keep the school financially stable. The Foundation plays an important role in making our school a better place.

## **Brick by Brick**

By: Madelyn Birge



Lego is a Danish toy brand founded in 1932 by Ole Kirk Kristiansen, known for its famous plastic interlocking bricks. Legos started as wooden toys before switching to the durable plastic they're made of today. Lego doesn't just make the blocks, but they also design sets to build, ranging from simple to complex. Lego holds competitions throughout the United States. I asked 7th graders Karter Lankford and Quincy Taylor about their experiences at one of these competitions.

First, I asked, "What did you guys build?" They said they built a castle with a drawbridge and a beachside. "What was the story or theme behind your creation?" They said they based the beachside on Mr. Krabs from *SpongeBob*, putting gold by the beach. When asked what inspired this specific build, Quincy and Karter told me that the theme was bridges, and they wanted theirs to stand out. "What was the most challenging or complex part of this build?" They replied that they had to create the river first, leaving them little time for the castle. They also said they couldn't grab more Legos until halfway through the competition. Finally, when asked what advice they would give to someone wanting to enter a Lego competition, they said to know how to work with limited time and materials.

## **Serving Up Success**

By: Natalie Bush

Volleyball, originally called "mintonette," was invented in 1895 by William G. Morgan. For this issue, I interviewed members of the 5th- and 6th-grade volleyball team along with their coaches.

I began by asking, "What's one skill you want to improve this season?" Poppy, a 6th grader, said she wants to improve her setting. Next, I asked, "What's one thing you can say to a teammate after they make a mistake?" Annabel, a 5th grader, responded, "It's okay—you'll get it next time."

My final question for the players was, "How do you know when you've had a 'good' practice?" Lauren answered, "When the coaches aren't upset, and I feel tired because I worked hard." Haven, also in 5th grade, added, "When I feel like I'm improving and the coaches don't have to correct me."

I also asked the coach, "What opportunities exist for players to take on leadership roles within the team?" The coach explained that leadership comes in many forms. Players can lead by showing strong effort, being prepared, and demonstrating good sportsmanship. Communication is also important—calling the ball, encouraging teammates, and helping organize plays are all ways to lead. Just as important is emotional leadership, such as staying positive and helping the team stay focused during challenging moments. Overall, the coach emphasized that every player has the opportunity to be a leader and make a positive impact on the team.

## **Coaches Corner**

By: Natalie Bush

**"How do you assess and develop individual players' skills and weaknesses?"**

Coach Kellie Karson responded, "My players take a permanent place in the front of my mind during volleyball season. I study them like I'm preparing for an exam. I want them to be their best, most coachable selves. Planning is key to a great season. Before practice begins, I break down each skill into 3-4 steps. Then identify cues, one or two words for each step. The words serve as reminders of what to do at each step. Then I teach the skill, using verbal cues paired with modeling. For example, when I teach an overhand serve, the cues would be 'toss, track, step, hit.' The athletes can repeat those words in their heads as they practice the skill. As their skills develop, the cues become more technical and specific. I assess the players' skills by making the cues into a checklist or rubric. This helps me to identify, correct, and empower players to self-correct and improve their own skills. When we see the outcome of the skill (where the ball went), we can review the cues to identify which one needs adjustment. As a coach, I spend a lot of time encouraging, noticing, and pointing out players who demonstrate excellence, and most importantly, I teach all players 1 Thessalonians 5:11- 'Encourage each other, build each other up.' That's our team motto. It's our culture.

# The Tech Technician: Zack Graves

By: Ethan Barnhart & Liam Long

For this issue of the Irish Times, we interviewed Zack Graves, our school's technology specialist. We asked him about his role at school, his future goals, and what a typical day looks like for him. When discussing plans for the future, Mr. Zack shared an exciting goal. "We plan to give every student their own device, giving each grade a device, until everyone has one. We plan to have this goal achieved in the next two years," he told us.

When asked about the hardest part of his day, he jokingly said, "Dealing with Mrs. Burkey and Nurse Mya." Later, when asked about his inspiration for pursuing technology as a career, he mentioned his older brother, who also worked in technology, played a big role in that decision.

As for why he chose to work at our school, he said, "I didn't choose to be here, but I wouldn't choose to work anywhere else." To wrap up the interview, we asked him about his favorite part of the day, and he replied, "Definitely seeing Mrs. Burkey, Nurse Mya, and Ms. Tokodi."



## Word Search

|              |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|--------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|              | L | L | A | B | T | E | K | S | A | B | C | W |
| Spring Break | E | F | I | L | G | G | S | F | K | W | C | I |
| Baseball     | S | A | B | V | E | S | J | G | C | A | J | A |
| Flowers      | P | K | A | E | R | B | G | N | I | R | P | S |
| Spring Bloom | I | R | S | N | T | H | O | I | R | M | S | E |
| Basketball   | L | G | E | R | I | I | L | R | T | T | Y | A |
| Grass        | U | Z | B | R | E | G | K | P | A | H | N | S |
| Easter       | T | D | A | L | P | W | R | S | P | Z | Y | T |
| St. Patrick  | C | I | L | L | L | Q | O | A | T | G | A | E |
| Warmth       | N | D | L | J | P | L | J | L | S | L | B | R |
| Kite         | H | O | O | D | I | E | S | H | F | S | X | P |
| Rain         | M | O | O | L | B | C | C | C | T | J | S | J |
| Hoodies      |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Life         |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Tulips       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |

## Walking on the Path of Righteousness

By: Liam Long

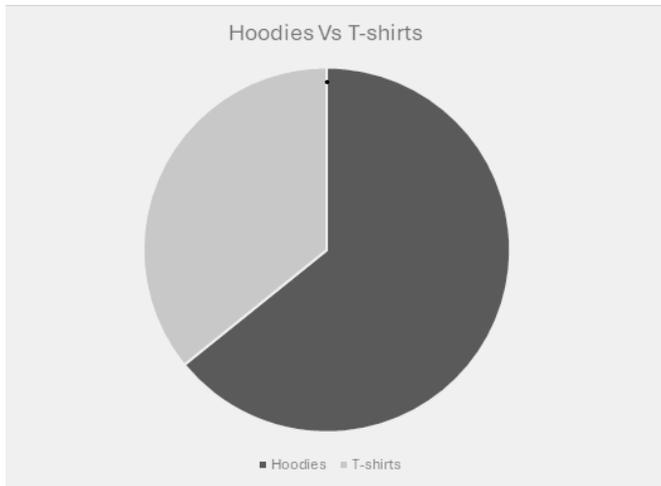
For the second-grade class's service project, the students have chosen to donate to Soles for Souls. Soles for Souls is a charity that collects used shoes, which are then shipped out to other countries to kids who are less fortunate than we are. The students plan to collect the used shoes at the school. From there, they will go to Cobbler Johns, and then they will be shipped to other countries. This service project will run from April 1<sup>st</sup> through May 14<sup>th</sup>.

## Hot Takes: Hoodies -vs- T-Shirts

By: Connor Bichard, & Jude Hodge

Hoodies are worn most in late fall and throughout the cold winter. People needed warm, practical clothing for training. Later in the 1980s and through the 1990s, hoodies became popular attire for people of all ages and backgrounds.

T-shirts are most often worn in late spring, summer, and early fall. The things people love most about T-shirts are their ability to keep the wearer cool on a warm summer day, their casualness, their ability to be worn with almost anything, and their affordability. The earliest T-shirt dates to the early 1900s. Miners, laborers, and stevedores wore one-piece union suits. The men were growing tired of the hot suits that made them sweat and made it difficult to move freely. The men cut the suits, separating the bottoms from the top, and they made a lightweight top that kept them cool in hot environments. Later in the 1960s and 1970s, T-shirts became known for tie-dye designs and bands, featuring popular artists of the time like the Beatles and Jimi Hendrix. This made T-shirts a way for people to express themselves.



## Newspaper Staff

- Ethan Barnhart
- Connor Bichard
- Madelyn Birge
- Mia Brockmeier
- Natalie Bush
- Jude Hodge
- Liam Long
- Lauryl Sanderson
- Liberty Smith

## Virtues

By: Mia Brockmeier

The virtue for the months of February and March is justice. Justice means giving God and neighbors their due, fulfilled through the 3 pillars of prayer, fasting, and alms-giving. “But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen, your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.” That passage from Matthew 6:17-18 teaches us that fasting should be done with sincerity and humility, privately before God rather than for public hearing, and that God rewards such secret devotion.



## Winter Drawing Contest

By: Mia Brockmeier

Winner: Aubrey Heiss from 4<sup>th</sup> Grade  
“Bloom into Art: Spring Garden”

