

ST. AUGUSTINE INDIAN MISSION the Trumpet Call

SUMMER 2009

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF EDUCATION, TRADITION AND FAITH

A Letter From Father Dave

Summer is here: the students are on summer vacation, our teachers are hopefully getting some much needed rest, our principal is taking more classes toward his Masters degree, our maintenance staff is working at getting the building cleaned and ready for the fall, myself and the rest of the Mission Office staff pray that donations continue to come in through the summer to pay the bills that continue to come in – they don't slow up for summer!



Besides praying, the summer finds our staff welcoming lots of service groups that come to work in the community to try to make a difference in the lives of the people here. Some groups go out to the homes and try to make things a little better for them there, such as paint their house, or fix a broken down porch. Other groups provide opportunities for the kids to come here to the Mission and provide a few days of Bible school, athletic camps, or arts and crafts camps.

For some of our kids here in the community the service groups provide a chance to get away from an environment that might include an alcoholic family member, or a home that is in total disarray because their parent or guardian spends too much time at the casino or in a bar.

I remember taking a few people from a service group in the past to a home where a single mom was trying to take care of 6 children by herself. The family was in need of food. The visitors were shocked by what they saw. The trash had piled up in a couple corners, the floor needed swept and scrubbed. The table needed scrubbed as well. By the time the group left, things looked a lot better in that house.

We also point out to the visiting groups that scrubbing floors and painting houses are only temporary fixes, in



A service group from Wisconsin pause to have their picture taken.

effect “band-aids”, to the bigger wounds. That is why our main mission here is education. The education provided at St. Augustine Indian Mission is giving hope to the children who are in these types of dysfunctional environments do not have to continue the cycle, but rather can take other avenues in life.

Other aspects of life here on the reservations we are sure to point out to the visiting groups are the positive things that can be found here. We have community members who are extraordinary people speak to them about their experiences and attitudes of overcoming challenges, as well as lessons from the Native American culture that inspire the visitors. In that way, their time here becomes an exchange. Our hope is that they gain an understanding of the challenges that still face the people here, but also recognize the reasons for hope.

Thank you so much for your support! Your donations help us continue our work of offering a brighter future for the children of the Omaha and Winnebago people. May God bless you and yours this summer with opportunities for rest and relaxation.

Thank you for your gift!

Chief Standing Bear Organizational Award

On May 15, 2009, Don Blackbird and Fr. Dave accepted a “Chief Standing Bear Organizational Award” on behalf of St. Augustine Indian Mission from the Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs. The award was given at the State Capital Rotunda in Lincoln, NE during an event celebrating the legacy of Chief Standing Bear. The award was given to honor St. Augustine Indian Mission in recognition of its 100 years of service to the Native Americans in Nebraska, and the Mission’s respect, honoring, and promotion of the Native American culture of its students.



The Kateri Warriors Drum Group offer a “thank you” song at the State Capitol Rotunda.



St. Aug’s principal, Don Blackbird, Jr., accepts the Chief Standing Bear award on behalf of the Mission.

Chief Standing Bear is famous for his landmark case, *Standing Bear v. Crook*, where he successfully argued in U.S. District Court in 1879 that Native Americans are “persons within the meaning of the law” and have the right to the safeguarding of individual freedom against arbitrary state action. The words attributed to Chief Standing Bear during the trial ring as true and powerful for us today as they did for him 140 years ago: “This hand is not the same color as yours, but if I pierce it, I shall feel pain. The blood that will flow from mine will be the same color as yours. I am a man. The same God made us both.”

The Commission on Indian Affairs was established in 1971 and consists of 14 Indian commissioners appointed by the Governor. The commission’s statutory mission is “to do all things which it may determine to enhance the cause of Indian rights and to develop solutions to problems common to all Nebraska Indians.” It helps to ensure that the sovereignty of both tribal and state governments are recognized and acted upon in a true government-to-government relationship. The commission serves off-reservation Indian communities by helping assure they are afforded the right to equitable opportunities in the areas of housing, employment, education, health care, economic development and human/civil rights within Nebraska. All goals of the commission are accomplished through advocacy, education and promotion of legislation.

Fr. Dave put the honor of this award in the context of the Mission’s 100 years of history, “To be recognized by a commission comprised entirely of Native Americans tells me that our prayers for healing of past hurts and mistakes are being answered! It speaks loud and clear that the Native American community recognizes the efforts we are making in helping our students embrace the beauty of their Native American culture and heritage. I truly appreciate the “vote of confidence” the Commission is giving us with this award!”

SAVE THE DATE!

Please put **Oct. 17, 2009** in your calendars for our centennial celebration of our 3rd annual Circle of Dreams dinner event. It will be held at the Mike and Josie Harper Center on Creighton University's campus.

This year's Honorary Chairs are Terry and Judy Haney. The Committee Chairs are Dr. Bob and Mary Jo Langdon, Dr. Pete and Annette Townley, Mark and Deb Heeney, and Mitch and Colleen Johnson.



St. Augustine's Summer Wish List

Electricity (last year's prices including rectory and convent)

- June - \$50 per day (\$1,500) • July - \$86.50 per day (\$2,600) • August - \$83.50 per day (\$2,500)
- Washer - \$730 & Dryer - \$710 (Both for rectory) • Paint for buildings - \$150
- Laser Printer Cartridges - \$165 • Dry Erase Markers - \$16 per box
- Ink Jet Cartridges for Mission Office - \$15 per cartridge

Field Trips Made Possible By Board Members



Anne Hubbard poses with the students outside the Hubbard Gorilla Complex.

Two members of the St. Augustine Indian Mission Board of Advisors provided memorable field trips for students of the Mission this Spring. Judy Haney provided the 7th and 8th grade students a day at “Hot Shops”, a warehouse of artist studios and gallery in Omaha. The students were given demonstrations in glass blowing and pottery. Then Judy gave them an opportunity to make their own art. They created prints using water based colors and a printing press. It was an inspiring day for the students. They were shown new possibilities in how they can use their God-given talents and creativity.

Dr. Anne Hubbard made two field trips possible for students from the Mission. First she arranged for a group of students to visit Ashfall Fossil Beds State Historic Park near Orchard, NE. It is the only known site in the world where entire three-dimensional skeletons of large prehistoric animals are preserved. The students were fortunate to hear a presentation by Dr. Mike Voorhies, who made the original discovery of the fossils back in 1971.

Anne then accompanied students from 5th through 8th grade to the Henry Doorly Zoo in Omaha for an overnight experience. The trip was a reward for good behavior and excellent

attendance. The students were treated to a “behind the scenes” tour of the zoo at night, a pizza party, and then had the unique experience of being able to sleep in the “shark tunnel”, which is part of the Scott Aquarium. It is the world’s 2nd largest tunnel in an aquarium, and the largest with a bend in it.

We are truly grateful to Judy and Anne for broadening the horizons of our students and allowing them to go beyond the confines of the reservation to see and learn new and exciting things. Who knows, it might even inspire some of the students to seek careers in one of these fascinating fields!



The glass blowing exhibition got the students fired up!



Students are captivated by the pottery exhibition.

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St. Augustine's Centennial Year Graduating Class

Every year the St. Augustine Indian Mission's graduating class varies in size. This year's graduating class was no exception. On May 20th, 2009 we celebrated our annual graduation Mass in St. Augustine's Church. This year we promoted 14 kindergarten students to first grade and graduated three eighth graders. We are pleased to introduce this year's graduating 8th grade class which is a small but mighty group of students. Our 8th grade graduates included three very talented young students who have been praised for their service to the school and fellow students. Mary has been a constant pleasure ever since her early days as a student in the kindergarten class. Mary has an infectious smile and a spirit of service that allows her to freely volunteer her assistance and accept challenging tasks with a smile. Christian is known around St. Augustine's for his gentle spirit, knowledge of technology, and his ability to create beautiful and powerfully moving poetry which includes a poem that was read at the



2008 Sponsor-a-Child lunch in Omaha. Zaneya is known for her quick wits, incredible math skills and amazing artistic ability. Zaneya recently created and donated pieces of art to the school that were sold at auction to help raise money to assist St. Augustine's in these very difficult financial times. Although this year's graduating eighth grade class may be small it exemplifies the values we strive to instill in all our students. We wish them the best of luck as they journey forth from St. Augustine School. We know they have the foundation needed to find success.



Sister Parish Hosts "Circle of Dreams" Event

St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Andover, KS once again proved to be the "favorite sister" for St. Augustine Indian Mission! Since the year 2000, St. Vincent de Paul has been in a "sister parish" relationship with the Mission.

On May 9, 2009, to help the Mission celebrate its centennial, St. Vincent de Paul hosted its own "Circle of Dreams" event for the children of St. Augustine's. Srs. Agnes, Frances, and Ellen Marie accompanied Fr. Mike Eckley and Fr. Dave Korth to Andover. Garan Coons, a member of the Winnebago Tribe, also made the trip to perform for the audience.

Each of the classrooms and the staff contributed to the event by putting together theme baskets that were auctioned off at the event. The item that sold for the most, however, was "Take a Winnebago to Winnebago" chauffeured by Fr. Mike Baldwin, pastor of St. Vincent de Paul.

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St. Augustine Indian Mission

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