

HELPING HANDS

ST. ALBERT THE GREAT IS NO STRANGER TO COMMUNITY OUTREACH

BY ERIN GARDNER

St. Albert the Great Catholic School's volunteer and community programs are worth talking about. Opportunities for families within the school and parish include the athletic board, PTO, worship commission, community service and education commission.

The athletic board runs "sports programs for grades kindergarten through eighth grade. We offer a variety of sports including soccer, golf, basketball, volleyball, and track," says Janelle Brand, marketing coordinator of St. Albert.

"Our athletic board also holds an annual fish fry the third Friday in January to help raise funds for our athletic programs. All money is used to help offset the cost of participating in sports, new uniforms and updates to our gym and field. We recently updated our gym with updated and renovated bathrooms, lobby entrance area, painted the gym and new wall pads."

The PTO programs collaborates with the school and families to hold numerous fundraisers where the funds "support music programs (Muse Machine), school and office supplies, field trips, Catholic Schools week and field day," Brand says.

The two largest fundraisers are the magazine sale in September and the Christmas Tree Lot that takes place from the Friday after Thanksgiving until the week before Christmas.

"This year's big subcommittee from PTO was our Playground Fundraiser. We had a family friendly hoedown, father-daughter dance, kickball tournament and sold personalized sidewalk pavers to help raise money for demolition of current playground and replacement with new equipment," says Brand.

The elected education commission members "assist in the formulation and



review of educational policies and programs in the parish. Specific duties include developing and supporting the strategic plan, evaluating the effectiveness of parish educational programs and promoting the various educational programs available to parishioners," says Brand.

St. Albert is proud of its community service. In the past, students have helped the elderly or homebound with yard work and worked on the gardens around the school campus. This year, the eighth-graders partnered with Matthew 25: Ministries on its service-oriented required projects.

"Our students also will occasionally raise money to help others in need," says Brand. "We've had nickel wars for hurricane reliefs, a baby drive with donations going to Hannah's Treasure Chest and they've raised money for a family in need who had an unexpected medical emergency."

The majority of the programs have been around since the school was opened, making it a part of St. Albert's mission.



St. Albert the Great Catholic School offers plenty of community service opportunities for its students.

Each program that the school offers has different goals; the overall goal of the volunteer programs is to bring the school and community together as one to help strengthen St. Albert the Great for the future, says Brand.

"We are striving for all of our families to work together to make St. Albert the Great a place that is strong in community and welcoming to all," Brand says. ■