

Senior School Day
By Bonnie Wagner

Our project focused on bringing students and the elderly community closer together. Students contacted a local senior/nursing center. We took a field trip to the center to meet the residents and spend time getting to understand their needs. Students began developing a senior day to be held at our school. Many organizations within the school actively became involved with our project. The day began with a tour of the school, followed by a talent show put on by classes and students, a senior luncheon with a Mexican theme, a jazz band presentation and door prizes for all. Best practices:

- The elderly population in our community needs to be involved in the lives of our young people. Their lives, and the lives of our students, can be enriched by this interaction.
- Many curricular areas became involved with this project because it fit easily into their curriculum areas. The contemporary issues class used the topic for discussion groups. Art classes worked on the decorations for the luncheon. Band students studied cultural music and practiced the melodies. Keyboarding classes developed the program and fliers for the community. English classes created the program and helped with the invitations. All areas pulled their talents together for the entertainment.
- Continuous discussion revolved around updating and refining the visitation surveys filled out by senior citizens and planning the program for the visitation day.
- Student recognized the need for addressing the issues of the elderly in their community. Every step of the process was student led.
- The nursing home has asked us to consider visiting the center more often. Students might help their elders with correspondence and day-to-day routines.
- Many of the student who took on and led this project are not typical school leaders. They understood the need of the elderly population of our community due to personal experience. They worked to make the visit rewarding for all in attendance.
- These students were equipped with the skills and knowledge to continue performing service for the elderly and others who are in need of companionship in our community. They feel confident to continue this program next year and look to other needs that are found in the St. Michaels' community.