



JOURNEY OF HOPE

A NEWSLETTER OF HOPE RURAL SCHOOL

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PAYING IT »»»» FORWARD FORWARD FORWARD!

PARENTING COUNTS! We celebrate every family!

Hope Rural School's uniqueness is best illustrated through our Parenting Counts Program, begun in 1990 in partnership with **The United Way of Martin County**. It has been a major influence in the education of our children and their parents. Many of our families come from a very different culture than the one their children are growing up in, and the program has been instrumental in teaching them how to approach new ways of raising their children. Major topics in these classes are school policy, family communication, self-esteem, and discipline.



The Program includes four weeks of classes with a total of eight hours of instruction per group. These classes are mandatory, and participants receive a certificate of completion each year. This year the classes are changing drastically! After 20 years of presentations, some of our parents are **"PAYING IT FORWARD"** and assisting Antonio Silvestre, our Parent Outreach Coordinator, with the new families coming to Hope.

Mr. Montejo Gaspar (pictured left) spoke to his peers: "Parenting Counts changed the whole way we were raising our family. We have learned a new way of being a parent. We now talk with our children about homework, respect, honesty, limits, and so many other ideas. It was not easy! Our children push our limits, want to hang out with friends a lot, and my son's school work was failing. We talked to him about making the wrong choices, hoping that he would choose to be serious about his education. Our son apologized to us for his behavior, and has told us that our support will help him to have a better life."

Mrs. Sophia Vicente (pictured right) spoke to a new group of parents: "In the beginning, I was the only one who attended the Parenting Counts classes, my husband did not want to come. When I tried to apply effective discipline, my husband really opposed me and did not help me at all. It was frustrating and difficult to raise my children in the new way that I was learning. We talked seriously about working together as a couple, and fortunately my husband agreed to attend the classes with me, and things began to change! We enjoy better communication and supportive discipline in our family. We are so proud of our children. We will never stop coming to parenting classes because each time we learn new ideas. I encourage you to take this class seriously, and I am here to help."



PAYING IT FORWARD: "It DID work for me... it WILL work for you!"



A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



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Mission Statement

The mission of Hope Rural School is to offer hope to families.

The school primarily serves children from immigrant families by providing them with a Catholic Elementary education in grades Pre-K through 5 in an environment that nurtures the Gospel values of mercy, justice, and love, through fostering the principles of Christian discipleship; supporting, guiding and encouraging parents in the education of their children; developing an appreciation and respect for heritage; encouraging and enabling graduates to reach their full potential through advanced education.

Dear Friends,

As the world mourns the loss of Steve Jobs, the visionary founder of Apple, his words and actions continue to energize and inspire us. For 33 years, he asked himself a challenging question, "If today were the last day of my life, would I want to do what I am about to do today?" As I personally reflected on his question, my answer was a resounding "YES". I believe so strongly in the mission of Hope Rural School, the need for its existence in today's society, and the impact it is making on the 142 students and 93 families that I am willing to put my life on the line to further its growth.

This YES is echoed by the staff, board, and volunteers who work tirelessly to bring hope to the children and their families. It is echoed by the individuals, organizations, and foundations that place their trust in the mission and share their resources.

The stories included in this newsletter provide a glimpse into the many reasons Hope Rural School's mission is valued and supported. Thanks to the encouragement and partnership with the United Way of Martin County, our Parenting Counts Program is making a significant difference in the lives of our families. Our lead story "Paying It Forward" validates the success of the parent program as is evidenced in the testimonies of the former parents.

Our efforts to address language development and literacy skills at an earlier age have been realized with the addition of our new 3 year old program. What a delight it is to visit our "Little Hopes" in their classroom and hear the singing of songs and reciting of poems in English after seeing them struggle with the language at the beginning of the year.

The present 5th Graders, our first Pre-K 4 class, have improved in their leadership skills, emotional maturity and academic excellence. These accomplishments have demonstrated that intervention at an earlier age has paid off.

The dreamers and visionaries of Hope Rural School continue to inspire and energize us, the caretakers of the dream. Their vision for the children of migrant and immigrant families is alive and well, thanks to you and the many believers in our students and their possibilities.

with deep gratitude.

Sister Mary Dooley, SSND

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Director

March 4, 2012
GARDEN OF HOPE DINNER
SAVE THE DATES
May 7, 2012
GOLF AT McARTHUR

SHARING TIME, TALENT, AND TREASURE



Hope Rural Drama Club, under the direction of **Ms. Lupe Martinez**, Kindergarten teacher, works hard on productions for our school. They are now preparing an adaptation of “Annie” for our March 4th Fundraiser, “Garden of Hope”. It is a real treat to watch these talented children grow in poise and self-confidence. Broadway...watch out for our **RISING STARS!**



Third Grade students (pictured right) have the honor and the responsibility to raise and lower the flag each day at Hope Rural School. They have learned to respect the flag by never letting it touch the ground, and always taking the time and effort to fold it in military fashion at the end of the day.



Fourth Grade students use their **TALENT** for painting in Art class as they put on the final touches to bird houses and flower pots that will be offered for sale in our new Hope Rural Gift Shop.



READ TO SUCCEED

The first day that “**Mr. Gus**” visited **Hope Rural School**, he fell in love with the children and their families. He came from Greece at a young age, not speaking English, so he felt connected to the Hope Rural children who had to learn another language. Like him, they had to work a little harder to succeed. He began tutoring the children, working with the fundraising committee, and rewarding the students with a day at Golf World for those who read the most books for the year. The 5th Grade class (pictured right) accompanied Sr. Mary and Betty Marentis into the reading room the day it was dedicated in loving memory of “**Mr. Gus**”. All have been recipients of his kindness, love, and dedication to their education. The reading room is a covered screen enclosure connected to our Library, enjoyed by all as a special place of quiet and peace. The 5th Grade students were installed as **Hope Ambassadors** on the same day. These students model the six pillars of character and pledge to be trustworthy, respectful, responsible, fair, caring, and good citizens. **We are very proud of them!**

MR. GUS'S
READING
ROOM



In Honor of
Gus Marentis



who loved and mentored the
Hope Rural children and wanted
them to **READ** and **SUCCEED!**

PARTNERSHIPS



TEACHING PARENTS HOW TO GROW ORGANICALLY

The Garden Project is thriving thanks to the wonderful donation of a complete fertilization program from OceanGrown, Inc. Our parents listened to Jay and Doren tell the story about OceanSolution and agreed to be part of the experiment. The solution of liquid fertilizer was applied to the soil in preparation for planting, and they also sprayed plants already growing in the garden plots, making them healthy too. OceanGrown promised to be available throughout the season to ensure successful growing. We are looking forward to a healthy harvest!

WE THANK



for the many programs and projects at
HOPE RURAL
that are supported by United Way:

- *PARENT OUTREACH
- *CHARACTER COUNTS
- *GARDEN PROJECT
- *NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION
- *AA MEETINGS

LEARNING NEW SKILLS

Walk into our Computer Lab on a Tuesday evening and feel the excitement in the room! **Adult Ed classes** for parents, taught by **Sr. Mary Dooley and a wonderful staff of faithful volunteers**, is the reason for the smiles and thankfulness of the parents who are learning to speak, read, and write sentences in English! It is rewarding to see how hard they work, and it is awesome to hear them say: "I can do this... I can read!"

A+ for the parents!



LITTLE HOPES

That is who we are! We are learning our ABC's and 1-2-3's, we love singing songs, and enjoy coming every day to our very happy, bright, and busy classroom. **Mrs. Lopez** teaches us many wonderful things, reads us stories and poems, and loves us very much. We are so glad that Hope Rural School started this program just for 3 year-olds! If you ever get a chance to visit our school, please don't forget to visit OUR classroom because we have a LOT to share with you...especially HUGS!

XOXO, Pre-K3

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