

LEO DECEMBER NEWS



UPCOMING IMPORTANT DATES

BASKETBALL GAME
Leo vs. Bro. Rice
Dec. 19 at 7 p.m.
St. Xavier Shannon Center

OPEN HOUSE
Jan. 8 at 5:30 - 8 p.m.

ADMISSION TEST
Jan. 10 at 7:30 a.m.

Dear Leo Family,

As I sat down to write this it occurred to me that the first semester of the 2014-15 school year is pretty much in the books already. And we thought the summer had zoomed by. The old adage about time flying when you're having a good time is applicable here at Leo.

The annual Christmas Concert will take place at Leo on Wednesday, Dec. 17, beginning at 6 p.m. It's always one of the great nights of the year as our singers and musicians show off what they've learned from **Ms. LaDonna Hill**, our incomparable music director. Two nights later our basketball game with Brother Rice will be played at the Shannon Center on the St. Xavier University campus, 103rd and Central Park, at 7 p.m. It's our home game, but we're expecting a big crowd, and rather than try to jam everyone into our little gym we have arranged to use the college facility. Donations from several Leo alums helped with the rental fee.

Speaking of basketball, a huge victory over De La Salle was one first-semester highlight as the Lions got off to a 4-1 start behind juniors **Darias Oliver** and **Darius Branch**. A bigger one was an Honors Assembly at which more than a third of the student body were recognized as Honor Roll students for the 2014 spring semester. We celebrate junior **SirLaurence King's** stellar performance as a runner—he qualified for the state cross country meet for the second consecutive year and finished 36th among more than 200 competitors with a time of 15:46, his personal best for three miles. SirLaurence is also an accomplished student who ranks fourth in the junior class with a 3.67 GPA. He is as fine a representative of Leo as we have.

Football was a little quieter this season, at least compared with last year's deep run into the IHSA playoffs. That success and Catholic League expansion resulted in a "promotion" to the White Division for the Leo Lions, and we didn't prosper from it, ending the season on a three-game losing streak for a 4-5 record. With five wins required for playoff participation, we missed out by a game. But senior **James Britten** was named Defensive Player of the Year in the White Division, and fellow seniors **Latrell Giles**, **Saheed Adewole**, **Zuriel Cook** and **Raheem Williams** joined him on the All-Conference first team.



I'm very proud of our school's academic performance, proud of our sports teams ... proud to be associated with Leo High School. Never more so than during the second weekend of November, when the history, traditions and future of Leo were on full display.

On Friday, Nov. 7, we held our annual Veterans Memorial observance. Leo, of course, has a rich tradition of military service, as exemplified by the War Memorial in our courtyard, which lists the names of 73 Leo grads who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to their country. Twice that many were on hand for this year's Veterans ceremony, which featured the 2nd Battalion, 24th Marines presenting the colors, Leo freshman **Vidal Cargo** leading the singing of the Star Spangled Banner, and highly decorated Vietnam veteran **Jim Furlong '65** presiding at a wreath-laying ceremony.

The students had been dismissed for the day at 11 a.m. in observance of the Veterans Day holiday, but nearly all of them stuck around to witness the ceremony, to mingle with the alums in the cafeteria afterwards and to help the older gentlemen negotiate the traffic as they crossed 79th Street. This interaction of Leo Men spanning the generations is always an uplifting sight.

On Saturday, Nov. 8, Leo played host to a performance by the United States Naval Academy Women's Glee Club. As impressive as the young women were as singers, they were even more so as sharp, committed individuals as they addressed the crowd and described their daily lives and myriad duties at the Academy. You couldn't help but come away believing the country is in good hands with these young women as its future leaders. We were honored to have them as visitors to Leo.

Finally, on Sunday, Nov. 9, we held our second of three Open Houses to acquaint prospective Leo students and their families with our school. The turnout was the best we've had in the last several years of Open Houses, further proof that the uniquely valuable Leo Experience is something in which the young men of Chicago's South Side are increasingly eager to share.

May God's blessings reach you and your loved ones this Christmas season.

***There has never been a better time to be a Leo Man.
We may be 88 years old, but our best days are still ahead of us.
Come join us in the Leo Family.***

With sincere best wishes,
Dan McGrath '68
Leo High School President