



XMAS FACTOR FINAL ... LATEST NEWS!

It is with great excitement that we announce Portumna Community School's very first **XMAS FACTOR FINAL** will be held on **Wednesday** afternoon, **16th** December – classes will be rearranged to ensure minimum loss of class time. Fifteen acts are working hard practicing and preparing to make it an amazing show. They will perform for the whole school and battle it out to claim the top prize of Winner of Xmas Factor 2009! There are many surprises in store for students and staff with special guest appearances along with a judging panel that bears a remarkable resemblance to some very famous people!! We are asking everyone to give **€3** to attend the show – some of this money will cover the running costs and the rest will be donated to local charities who need a lot of help in these difficult times. The €3 will be collected from each student during Tutor class on Wed. (**9th**) by the Prefects. We are asking students to support the finalists in their own year group to make the event an enjoyable experience and celebration of our school's creativity and talent in the run up to Christmas. *To add some colour on the day, don't forget your Santa hat!*

ADVENT



Christmas Liturgies for all classes will begin on Monday, 14th December. Each class will be invited to Suaimhneas during one of their R.E. class periods during that week.

2ND YEAR STUDY DAY

On Thursday (3rd) the Second Year students, in three separate groups, took part in a Skills Study Day, facilitated by Mr. Michael Bond, former Principal of Loughrea Vocational School. Later that evening Mr. Bond made a presentation to the Parents on the same topic. The day proved most useful to all.



1ST YEAR RETREAT

All First Years will be taking part in their annual retreat on Tuesday, 15th December, in two Retreat Centres. One group will be travelling to Esker Monastery, Athenry, while the other will be travelling to Castletown Retreat Centre in Laois. Full details by letter to parents next week.

Fr. Abe

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Some of you have been busy filling and wrapping shoe boxes for Operation Christmas Child. The TYs have sorted them and approximately **80** shoeboxes were collected. A very big Thank You to all who went to the trouble of filling boxes. Your effort is greatly appreciated.



WEBSITE UPDATE

A number of new features have been added to the school website over the last week. We now have a **LIVE CALENDAR** facility which contains all the main dates of relevance for our school. Keep checking this as new dates and events will be added as they arise.



A "**LATEST NEWS**" panel has been added to the homepage - this is being used to highlight forthcoming school events, over the coming week.

A number of **BLOGS**, which will be maintained by students, are being prepared. The 1st of these, the TY Blog, is currently in operation with Mary Cleary as editor. Blogs for both our Camogie and Hurling teams are currently being worked on and will be visible over the weekend.

DEBATING

Next Thursday three TY students – Mary Cleary, Aoife O'Hara and Ciara Kennedy – will take part in the Mental Health Ireland Public Speaking competition. This will take place in Loughrea and the topics being discussed are Bullying, Depression and the importance of Positive Mental Health in Young People.

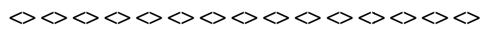
Good luck girls.

Also hard luck to the debating team who were up against a very strong Birr side on Tuesday night.

The next debate is in January.

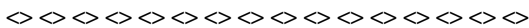
L. Skelly & A. Hough.

There are still **SCHOOL JACKETS** left outside Anne's Office that were found. If you lost a jacket come and check if yours is there!!



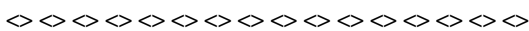
SCHOOL CALENDAR

- Tues. 8th Dec. : No School. Staff meeting (morning). 3rd yr. & TY P/T meeting : 1.00pm – 3.30pm.
- Tues. 15th Dec. : First Yr Retreat.
- Wed. 23rd Dec. - 6th Jan. (incl.) : Christmas Hols (School finishes on Tues. 22nd at 1.25pm).
- School reopens Thursday, 7th January 2010.
- Mon. 1st Feb. : Start of School Musical week.
- Mon. 8th Feb. : Mock Exams begin for 3rd & 6th yrs.
- Mon. 8th - Fri. 12th : Work Experience for 5th yrs.
- Mon. 15th - Fri. 19th Feb. : Mid Term Break.
- Mon. 22nd - Fri. 26th : Work Experience for TYs.

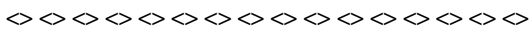


RED CROSS - UPDATE

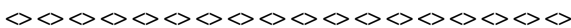
The Portumna Red Cross Team who were credited with 3rd Place in the All Ireland First Aid Challenge in Laois on 24th October have been elevated to 2nd Place following a recount of the marking. The team: Niamh Gordon, Alanna Coniry, Keith Flynn and Maria Whelan – Subs: Keith Rutledge & Kayleigh O'Brien.



The **SIGN OUT FILM CLUB** will be screening the comedy film **The Hangover** next Monday, 8th Dec, at 7.30pm in Sign Out Youth Cafe. The Film Club is open to both members and non-members. Adm. €2.



Past pupil, Kym Hoary, has reached the final 20 in the Sunday World Debs competition and is the only Galway girl to do so, and she would appreciate your votes. Voting can be done by calling 1515 606096 and keying in 117 or you can text DEBS 117 to 57001.



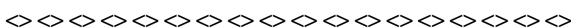
T.Y. MINI COMPANY

On Monday (7th), as part of our Mini Company, Chocolate Milkshakes will be on sale in the Home Economics room (EH) at Break Time for €2.



Please come and support!

Aoife Kennedy, Kelly Hoary & Michelle Cunningham.



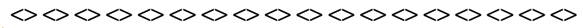
Students, please collect all bags, coats, etc. from around the school before you leave each Friday.

All unclaimed property will be gathered and disposed of at Christmas. Make sure you collect your belongings and take them home.

PLC MODULE

The P.L.C. (Fetac level 5) candidates took part in a practical assignment in the 'Acorn To Oak' Community Crèche today (4th) and last Friday (27th Nov.). This was to help complete two of their three assignments in the Early Childhood Education Module. It was a very successful two days for the candidates and we would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank the manager, Ms. Anne Rabbitte, for organising our visit to the facility. It is a wonderful asset to the area and provides a warm welcome and a homely atmosphere for children, parents and staff alike.

M. Lohan



Portumna Christmas Events Committee



The time has come again to prepare for the Christmas celebrations. Firstly we would like to thank everyone (especially the businesses in the area) for the support afforded us over the past four years since this committee took on the Christmas Lights in Portumna.

We hope that our ongoing improvements and commitment to the task have met with everyone's approval and that we have helped to add a Christmas atmosphere to the town.

*On behalf of our committee I would like to invite you, along with your younger brothers and sisters, to join us on **Sunday, 6th Dec.***

*from **4.30 to 7.30 pm**, in the magnificent **PORTUMNA CASTLE**,*



which is being turned into a Christmas Wonderland for the day.

There will be carol singing, music, storytelling, face painting, card making, letter writing with

Mrs. Claus, helper Elves and, of course,

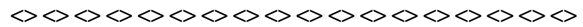
Santa will be there at 5 pm to meet the Children in his Grotto!



(Note: All children must be accompanied by an adult. Admission is free but there is a cost of €5 per child visiting Santa in his Grotto)

Santa will officially turn on the Christmas Street Lights and Tree @ 6 pm from the castle.

Anne Donohue



"Life is short, but there is always time enough for courtesy."

Events Diary: (5th – 11th December)

- Tues. 8th : No School. Parent-Teacher meeting for parents of 3rd years and TY students – Starting at 1 pm & concluding no later than 3.30 pm
- Wed. 9th : Connacht Senior Camogie Final – Venue & Time to be confirmed.

