The Chargers' Voice

WINTER 2026
DIGITAL ISSUE

A STUDENT PUBLICATION OF
SAINT LAWRENCE SCHOOL
WEST HAVEN, CT

ARCHDIOCESE STATE CHAMPIONS!

22-0 Season



Saint Mary's Tournament Champions

New Haven League Champions

STATE CHAMPIONS!

Coach Byran, Sophia, Ariel, Juliana, Lehanna, Mia, Livia,
Sunnie, Lesmari, Lina, Selma, Isabella, and Coach Mike

THE NEWS CREW

NEWS NAVIGATORS
Sophia H, Faith K, Sophia SB,
Ryan S, Brandon R, Anthony M,
Isaac K, & Camdyn E

CREATIVE CREW
Travis S, Bianca A,
Isabella C, & Christa O

FAITH IN ACTION
Santino A, Dakota J, Gabe L,
Lorenzo H, & Gabrielle M

LAYOUT & DESIGN TEAM
Zerah N, & Lina D

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

ARCHDIOCESE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Nancy Testa

Have you ever wondered what it's like to be the Assistant Superintendent of Catholic Schools? Lorenzo and Anthony interviewed Dr. Nancy Testa to learn more about her role in Catholic Schools.



Continue reading on page 3!

Contributors:
Lorenzo H
Anthony M

Why Is Jesus Important So Important in Our Community? by Gabriel L.

Jesus is important to our school because He died for us on the Cross. When we are sad, mad, or scared, He will bring us joy. He is the light of the world. No darkness and evil will ever go near the light. Jesus is important to our West Haven community because he inspires kids and adults by helping them follow the Good Shepherd. Let him guide you through the evil in the world. He will save us from all evil forever. He is the Messiah, the most important person of all. He saved all of us from eternal suffering. He saved everyone by taking the good people from hell. He opened the gates of heaven for us, not for Him. He wants everyone to love Him, but he gives us free will to do whatever we want. He is our King that was and will always be here. Jesus is important to me because I grew up in the faith. I was baptized very young. Always remember Jesus is King!

SPORTS AND SPIRITUAL & MENTAL GAMES

Contributors Travis S and Isabella C

An event that really seemed to impact my classmates was the JV Basketball team, the St. Lawrence Chargers. By playing basketball I learned the sport and I learned how to do work with others as a team. Playing as a team can improve your physical health by working out. You can get stronger and even lose a little weight. When winning a game your spirit goes high, you feel like a winner and you gain confidence in yourself. Sports can be a mental game too.

In baseball and basketball I learned how to control emotions. When losing a game, you have to learn how to deal with it. You never show your emotions when you get off the court because that could determine how you do in the next game. You may celebrate when winning a game but you never show your emotions in front of the other team. It helps you stay humble or not get mad. If you can't hold it, a good exercise is taking deep breaths. By playing basketball you also learn how to dribble, shoot, and you have good friends to lift you up along the way. That's why it is a great joy to join a basketball team, so if this message is convincing please join the team now!

The Lady Chargers: Leaders of Basketball

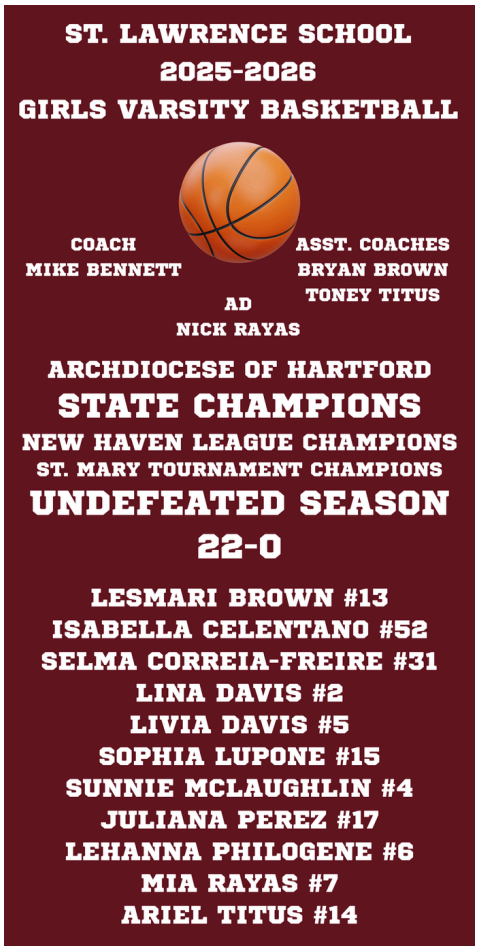
Contributors Lina D and Gabby M

We spoke with two 8th-grade basketball players, Ariel Titus and Lina Davis, two of our 7th-grade students, Isabella Celentano and Sunnie McLaughlin, and head coach Mike Bennett. We asked them, "What does teamwork mean to you?" This topic is important because it shows the hard work and dedication our coaches put into training and helping the girls succeed. Sunnie McLaughlin, 7th grade, says that "Teamwork means a group of people working together to achieve a goal that they all want for each other and themselves." Sunnie's favorite basketball play is *Charger*. Isabella Celentano, in 7th grade, said, "In my words, teamwork means you work together to reach achievements or goals as a team." Isabella's favorite basketball play is *Chicago*. Lina Davis, in 8th grade, said, "Teamwork means to work as a group to reach a goal and succeed near the end of my last year on the Saint Lawrence girls' basketball team." Lina's favorite basketball play is also *Chicago*. Ariel Titus, in 8th grade, says that "teamwork means working together as a team to reach high expectations." Ariel's favorite basketball play is *Villanova*.





We also interviewed head Coach Mike Bennett and he said, "Teamwork means to me that together everyone achieves more. That's what everybody has done so far, the team has had a great season, with everybody from the top to the bottom just chipping in, preach, and our team, not one player here can beat the team. We all strengthen numbers; the more executable the team, the better, so fortunately for us right now, thankfully, that's what results have done. It has been a great experience coaching the girls. Tremendous group of girls. I've actually coached a lot of these girls in rec all over the years, so it's been great. It's been a tremendous experience working with them. They work hard, they're good kids, good students off and on the court. It's been a great experience. I would definitely do it again, very, very happy with what they're doing, but it's been a blast having fun and enjoying every moment of it. I would definitely recommend all of them to pursue their dreams by pushing themselves. I always teach kids to be tough, and I hope they can hopefully get a free education."



The Saint Lawrence Varsity Chargers ended the season with 22 consecutive wins and were the champions of the Saint Mary Tournament, New Haven Parochial League Tournament, and Archdiocese Varsity Girls Tournament!

The new banner that hangs in our school gym is pictured to the left







Teamwork at Saint Lawrence by Sophia S-B

In Saint Lawrence, we have excellent teachers and students that help our school. The school holds fundraisers to lower students' tuition and help to fix parts of the school. Teachers help the students by teaching students new things. When students have higher grades, they have a better chance to get into high-school. Students can sign up for after school help. In their classroom, the teacher can correct mistakes and help the students. Our school demonstrates teamwork in multiple grades. For example, the 5th grade and kindergarten participate in book buddies. They help kindergarten with art projects, and reading books. St. Lawrence inspires students to believe in themselves and continue their dream. I personally believe that Saint Lawrence students can freely express their creativity and artistic feelings. According to the school motto, "Saint Lawrence provides academic, moral, social, and educational excellence to all in a Christian environment," and I believe this motto holds true. This school has taught me multiple responsibilities throughout my time here. We hear this motto and reminder that Christ is with us. I believe your children will have a great experience at our school!

Dr. Nancy Testa, Assistant Superintendent of Catholic Schools

An Interview by Lorenzo H and Anthony M

What is your favorite part of your job? My favorite part of my role as Assistant Superintendent of schools for the Archdiocese of Hartford is visiting schools and interacting with all our students, teachers, staff and administrators. As the Assistant Superintendent of Schools, I will always be a teacher first; this is where my heart is filled with the love and joy of teaching and learning. I also enjoy witnessing the joy of students, watching them pray, or observing them participate in service projects reminds me of the profound, lifelong impact of this work.



What are some of the interesting things you experience in your job? As an Assistant Superintendent of Catholic Schools, no two days are ever the same. It is a deeply rewarding, complex role that sits at the intersection of faith, education, and strategic leadership. The most fulfilling aspect is ensuring our schools are providing academic excellence and are deeply rooted in Catholic identity.

Who is a memorable teacher you have mentored? One of the memorable teachers I have mentored was an innovative first year teacher who displayed a high energy for learning and who was focused on the concept of the classroom as a faith-filled community. A Catholic school teacher does not just deliver a curriculum; they provide a living witness to our students!

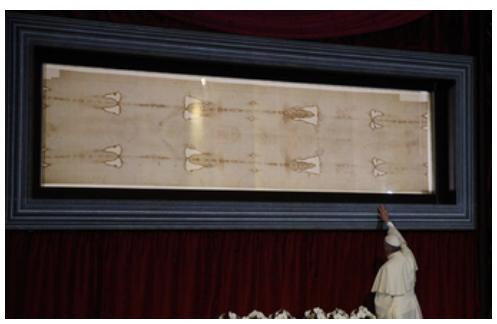
According to our research you help develop curriculum for the schools - What is your favorite part of the curriculum? My favorite part of the curriculum we've developed is the intentional integration of Catholic Social Teaching into our Pre-K to Grade 12 frameworks.

What did you do before you became the Assistant Superintendent? My 42-year educational career has covered many roles. Before becoming the Assistant Superintendent, I was a high school Spanish teacher, a K-12 District Supervisor of World Languages, ESL / Bilingual and Gifted & Talented Departments In recent years, I was an elementary school principal of two of our Archdiocesan schools before taking on my current role as Assistant Superintendent.

Animals of Service

Camdyn E

There are many people in the world who face various challenges in their everyday lives. This is usually due to a disability a person has, whether they were born with it, had a tragic event happen, or they served within the military and were injured. One way to help these people with their everyday actions and help ease the strain of struggling with everyday tasks is with service animals. Individuals may have their own animals trained to become service animals, or, they may also apply for a service animal through the many organizations that train service animals. Service animals are great as they don't only need to be for the disabled. What do service animals help with? Service animals can be for safety, help with the ability to function, and they can help with independence. There are also animals who aren't trained but can be there when you need them. These animals are different from service animals and instead they are called therapy animals. Therapy animals are there to provide comfort, support, and affection to those who can need, it such as people in nursing homes, retirement homes, hospice, disaster areas, and people with learning difficulties. Studies have been pursued that have demonstrated a decrease in both the stress levels and blood pressure of people during visits by therapy dogs. Emotional support animals are similar as they are just there for the people that need them.



Pope Francis prays with the shroud in Turin, Italy in 2015

The Shroud of Turin

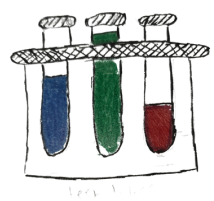
by Gabriel L

The Shroud of Turin is a 14 foot long 4 foot wide burial cloth containing the image of the Holy Face of Jesus. During the stations of the cross, Saint Veronica wipes the face of Jesus. The Veil of Veronica, or Sudarium, is a revered relic that bears the image of Jesus' face. This object is the most tested object in the world. The shroud is not public, but stored stored at the Cathedral of Saint John the Baptist in Turin, Italy. The shroud is very important in our Catholic faith. The shroud is more than 2,000 years old.

What Is STEM? by Anthony M



STEM is an acronym for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, representing a grouping of related academic and professional fields focused on innovation, problem-solving, and critical thinking, often emphasized in education and career development. The S in STEM stands for the study of the natural and physical world. T stands for the application of scientific knowledge for practical purposes. E stands for engineering designing and building solutions for humanity.



Add an "A" for arts, and the acronym becomes STEAM. Some schools in the Archdiocese have STREAM, where they add Religion and ask, "How can our faith guide our thinking and team work?" At Saint Lawrence School, we have done some STEM projects in the past with our fourth grade teacher, Mrs. Boynton. These STEM projects involved building a fan out of paperclips and a cup. When students are doing STEM projects they involve using your resources with very little things available. STEM projects are a lot of fun because they make you think. STEM projects use a lot of critical thinking, and some of these projects are essential for life. For example, when you need to light a fire without a match. You would need bark and something to get the fire started.

From our Halls to your Hearts - *Happy Anniversary*!

Class of . . . 1956: 70th 1966: 60th 1976: 50th 1986: 40th 1996: 30th 2006: 20th 2016: 10th

Saint Lawrence School's Unsung Heroes

Brandon R and Ryan S

We interviewed Ms. Connolly and Mrs. Simmons, who don't get enough credit for what they do for this school.
They are the Office Manager / Bookkeeper and Secretary for Saint Lawrence School and help make the school the place it is.

What made you want to work at SLS?
Ms. Connolly: "I started working here because my daughter was a student here, and I volunteered and eventually became a worker in the office."
Ms. Simmons: "I started out at food service, and then a better offer opened up to help in the Main Office."



How many unofficial jobs do you have here?
Ms. Conolly: " I am also the treasure of the Home and School Association"
Ms. Simmons: " We don't have unofficial jobs, but help where is needed."



What is one of your best work memories?
Ms. Conolly: "Helping to get to the one hundred tenth year of the school!"
Ms.Simmons: "Being part of Saint Lawrence School!"

Why did you choose to work in the Main Office?
Ms.Connolly: "SLS chose me!"
Ms. Simmons: " SLS chose me to work and I took the offer."

What advice would you give to new students?
Ms.Connolly: "Everybody is welcome have fun make friends and relax!"
Ms.Simmons: "Make friends and work hard!"

What inspirational advice would you give to a student who would want to work in a school office?
Ms.Connolly: "We get to make a lot of new friends and a lot of phone calls!
and Mrs.Simmons said "We get to make a lot of new friends and a lot of calls".

What's your favorite thing do at St. Lawrence School?
Ms. Connolly: "Joke around with the other staff members!"
Mrs Simmons: "Work!"

Saint Lawrence School History: The Golden Age

Lorenzo H

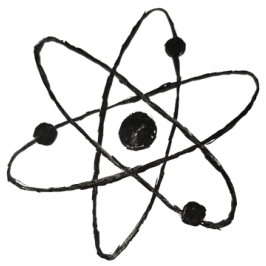


The 1950s-1980s were the golden age of St. Lawrence School. In 1948 Father Heller was assigned to St. Lawrence Parish. The enrollment at St. Lawrence School was growing. In 1955 he added 4 classrooms along with the gymnasium/auditorium/cafeteria. The school had 450 students at that time. A Mother's Club was formed in the early 1960s. The school library was enlarged. Even today our library is one of the best in the archdiocese. The Gridiron newspaper was published monthly. In 1968 Father Mihalek succeeded Father Heller. During the 1960s and 1970s were changing times for the church. The higher cost of education forced many catholic schools to close, but Saint Lawrence School staff, parishioners, and parents worked hard to keep our school from closing. In the 1980s many ideas and activities with an active alumni association was established in the school. In our next issue our story will continue to the present day!

How Matter Effects Everything

Santino A.

Matter is everything in the universe. The air we breathe is made of matter, oxygen and nitrogen. It's very confusing, but I think that this subject of science is my favorite type of science because it is everything we see. For example, your Legos are made matter, your books are matter, and YOU are made of matter! I think this is very important because it is essential to survival. We need air and air is matter. Water is matter, all food is matter. So in conclusion, I think this is why Science is my favorite subject.



The Impact of a Good Teacher

Christa O

What are some different ways of teaching and how do they impact students? Teachers influence students' lives, futures, and careers by acting as mentors, offering career guidance, shaping self-belief, and problem-solving. Teachers impact students as mentors by boosting their academic performance, building social skills, and increasing self-confidence. Career guidance helps connect the gap between classroom learning and work readiness, creating a clearer path for students' personal and professional development. Shaping self-belief can be through realistic expectations, fostering a positive growth mindset, and celebrating the small wins. To conclude, teachers impact students by helping them problem-solve by building critical thinking, and resilience.

Another Batch of Charger Victories

Camdyn E

On Sunday, March 1 at 5:45pm the New Haven League playoffs championship commenced between our undefeated consecutive 18 winning streak girls Varsity Chargers at Sacred Heart Academy in Hamden.

The girls played fiercely in the first half of the game, ending with 24 points. You can tell from the atmosphere of the court that everyone was playing hard and giving it their all. The girls overall had great defensive play and balanced offensive plays.

During the game Lehanna seemed to get a great amount of steals and had contributed a good margin of layups. They made Ariel Titus seem unstoppable in the paint as she led the team with 16 points. Sunnie made many far-range shots making 3's from the corner and also banking a mid-range shot. Sophia had also been very helpful getting many defensive and offensive rebounds as well. The game's final score was a 32-8 victory over Saint Mary's School of Milford. Winning this has given our team the honor of becoming the New Haven League Champions!

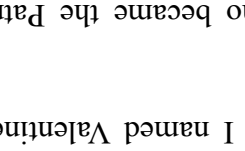
Overall in the season all the girls contributed major plays and made shots as well. The Varsity Chargers won, becoming champions and winning medals showing their consecutive 19-0 win streak. The girls have then gained the title of being *New Haven League Champions*!

On March 7th, 2026 the game between the Chargers and St. Timothy tipped off at 1:00pm at North West Catholic high school in West Hartford. The heated game ended 50-25 with the *Saint Lawrence Chargers* prevailing and moving on in the Archdiocese of Hartford Tournament before they ultimately won the State Tournament on Sunday, May 15th with a 43-30 win over Saint James School.

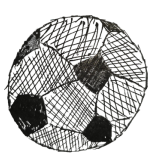


Sports Trivia

Travis S



1. Which NHL team has won the most Stanley cups?
2. Which MLB team won the World Series last year?
3. Name one MLB team that has not won a World Series?
4. The NFL player with the most career passing touchdowns in NFL history?
   Bonus question: How many passing touchdowns does he have?
5. Which NBA player has the most points of all time?
   Bonus question: How many points does he have all time?



6. Which soccer player has the most goals of all time?
   Bonus question: How many goals has he scored?
7. What two NBA teams did Michael Jordan play for in his career?
8. How many Stanley Cups have the New York Rangers won?
9. Who is the UConn women's basketball all time leading scorer?
   Bonus question: How many points did she have all time for UConn?

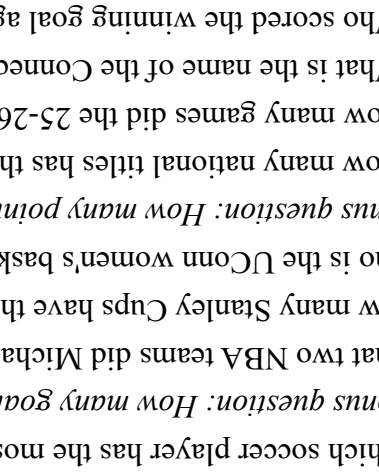


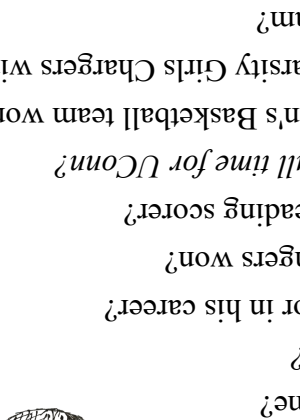
10. How many national titles has the UConn Women's Basketball team won?
11. How many games did the 25-26 St Lawrence Varsity Girls Chargers win?
12. What is the name of the Connecticut WNBA team?
13. Who scored the winning goal against the Soviet Union in the 1980 Winter Olympics?
14. Which NY Yankee pitcher has the most wins in a Yankee uniform?
15. How many World Series titles have the NY Yankees won?

Portraits of the Saints

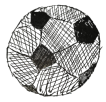
Story & Illustrations by Christa O

A Christian priest in Rome, named Valentine, conducted marriage ceremonies for soldiers forbidden by the state. He was arrested as part of the Roman persecution of Christians. While in prison, he is said to have healed the eyesight of his jailor's daughter. Before being executed on February 14, 269 AD, he wrote her a note signed "Your Valentine." Two centuries later, in 496, Pope Gelasius I named Valentine a saint. This made what we now know as Saint Valentine's Day.





Saint Patrick was a Romano-British Christian missionary who became the Patron Saint of Ireland. Kidnapped by Irish raiders at age 16, he spent six years in slavery, finding faith through prayer before escaping. He later returned to Ireland as a bishop to convert the pagan population, using the shamrock to explain the Holy Trinity. Each leaf represents the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit of the Trinity, while the stem holds them together as one.



CHARGERS' WORD SEARCH



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SLS basketball football	ice ring kick	baseball hockey gymnastics	Chargers hoops split	three pointer soccer homerun	interception belts racket	martial arts jersey tennis

Top Clubs of 2025-2026

Lorenzo H

Art Club: Many of the students in Kindergarten through Grade 5 worked with Ms. Saslafsky to make a variety of art projects, including salted snowflakes, 3D Cardboard Villages, and other projects that reused household materials to make a variety of artwork!

Newspaper Club: At Newspaper Club Middle School Language Arts and Literature teacher Mr. DeFonce, 5th grade teacher Ms. Emerson, and Mrs. Grestini run the Newspaper Club. We write stories for a newspaper using Google Docs. We write stories about St. Lawrence School, clubs, events, science, sports, religion, and our Saint Lawrence History.

Kickball Club: At Kickball Club middle school history and teacher Mr. Sale for 4 weeks we played kickball outside in the parking lot for an hour. This year we did boys vs girls and the record was 2-2 boys and 2-2 girls over the 4 weeks of the club. The boys won the first and last game and the girls won the 2nd and 3rd game.

Science Club: At Science Club math and science middle school teacher Ms. Noyes prepares packets and STEM sheets for our experiments. The experiments we did in science club in order were elephant toothpaste, oobleck, fireworks in a jar, parachute making/floating drawings/air gliders, candy heart chemistry,and yeast is alive.

Chess Club: At Chess Club there are 4 chess boards where for an hour after school the people who signed play chess matches. The person running helps people learn how to play chess and everyone wins and loses games. The grandfather of a grade 5 student ran our chess club.

Cooking Club: Parent and Food Service supervisor Mrs. Hernandez organized the Cooking Club. At the Cooking Club they made pizza bagels, pudding, and a parfait. They did coloring sheets while they cooked. They got to take their food home to share with their families afterwards.

Gardening Club: At the Gardening Club they completed a small project each week. These projects were to plant six flowers to take home, a beaded plant craft, paint garden rocks, and they planted six vegetables to take home**.**

Saint Valentine's Story

Mrs. Collura and the Grade 3 Class

Recently during their Library time, Third Graders were asked ***'How did Valentine's Day come to be?'*** They had no answers. Mrs. Collura told them it was named for **Saint Valentine**. The students then gave their ideas of why this holiday is named for Saint Valentine. Some answers included "he was kind", "he was nice", and "he cared about people," "he loved God and Jesus!"

All good answers. Here's one story of Saint Valentine and how the celebration of Valentine's Day came to include love notes and more. There may have been more than one Saint Valentine, maybe as many as three different Saint Valentines! The history of Saint Valentine says one was a priest and then they name another as a bishop – could they have been the same person? Specifically known for healing miracles, Saint Valentine was also known for bringing whole families to Christ. *Did he send love notes or candy to people?* Not that we know of. Much of what he did is not known, except that they died for their faith in Jesus. So, maybe they didn't send Valentines or love notes; but their love of Jesus mattered to them. The word 'valentine' comes from Latin words meaning 'strong and healthy' (*Saints: A Year in Faith and Art*, Rosa Giorgi, 2005). Finally, about 1,000 years after the St Valentines died, people noticed that birds started looking for a mate about Feb 14. That's possibly how it became a symbol of love. (*A Saint a Day*, Meredith Hinds, 2021).

Chess Club Memories

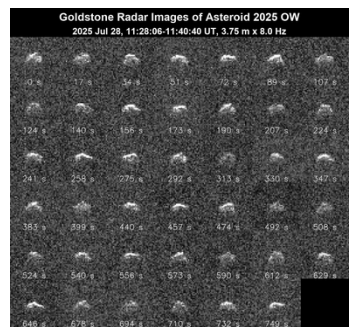
Gabriel L



Chess is a very fun and popular game. It is most popular in Russia and in the Netherlands. Chess is a strategy game where you have to move your pieces to take out the opponent's king. All the chess pieces are the King, Queen, Rooks, Bishops, Knights, and Pawns. Each piece has a special purpose. The Kings have to be careful of the other pieces because if they are taken by a piece the Game is over. The kings can move one space at a time. The Queens can move wherever they want, except over other pieces. The Rook can move in straight lines only. The Bishops can only move diagonally on the board. Knights can only move in an L shape forward or backward. The pawns are always the first pieces you use. You can move only forward and they attack diagonally. Chess boards are square and have black and white dots on it like checkers. Chess boards are the same as checker boards. Chess is an after school club in our school. We play one on one. I myself play with Ryan from 5th grade, Anthony from 6th grade and Lorenzo from 6th grade. Ryan's grandfather runs the chess club. Chess Club is also a good time to hang out with your friends. Maybe you should join, too!

Recent Astronomical Discoveries

Lorenzo H



In the 6th grade we learned about astronomy in science class. In this story we will tell you about the most recent discoveries in the field of astronomy. The first discovery we would like to tell you about is the rapidly spinning asteroid. The rapidly spinning asteroid was discovered in mid-2025. The asteroid was 200 feet across. Most asteroids have a 2.2 hour spin barrier, but this asteroid has a 1.5-3 minutes due to the YORP effect, a subtle, continuous torque produced by sunlight being absorbed and re-emitted unevenly across the asteroid's surface over time (*NASA Fast Spinning Asteroid*)

The second discovery is the interstellar comet 31/ATLAS. This has a nucleus estimated to be a few hundred feet-3.5 miles in diameter. This is rare because it displays jets of gas and dust pointing surprisingly towards the Sun, unlike typical comets, possibly due to its rotation according to NASA's study. (*NASA Comet 31/ATLAS*)