

## SMA Celebrating 150 Years

By Alex Bush  
Eighth Grade

To me, SMA is not just a school, it's a second home. I have been here since kindergarten. The nine years I have spent here have not only taught me to follow the Loretto School Values, but these years have taught me the importance of being a part of a supportive community. The nine years I have spent here at SMA have molded me into the person that I am today. The memories that I have made here are unforgettable, and I am proud to say that I am a wildcat.

The first day of kindergarten was the scariest day at SMA. I knew not a single person, and was very excited and anxious to start the day. I was in Mrs. Jordan's homeroom. I remember meeting two girls. We were the three main line leaders because it was alphabetical order, and all of our names started with A's. Those two girls were my first friends made at SMA, and I am still close to both of them today.

Once I graduated kindergarten, I went to Mrs. Hoogie's homeroom. I loved being in her homeroom because she was very creative, and we always did the best projects. My favorite memory from first grade was the doing the Christmas play. All of the first and second graders did an annual play together, celebrating the Christmas season. I was a tree decorator. We told the story of decorating the Christmas tree. It was a very fun play to be involved in.

Second grade came around the corner very quickly. My favorite memory from second grade was when I got to have a first grade buddy. When I was in first grade I had a buddy as well. I looked forward to being a second grade buddy, and the day finally came when I got to meet her. She was very nice, and I was happy that she was my buddy. Having a buddy was such a fun experience.

Going into third grade was when I started getting into the older grades. I was in Ms. Freeman's homeroom, but now she is Mrs. Stroz! My best memory in third grade was Pioneer Day. I had been looking forward to Pioneer Day since I was in kindergarten, and saw all the older kids on this day. I got a matching dress with my best friend, except mine was blue and hers was pink. On this day, we washed clothes with a washboard,

churned butter, and built cornhusk dolls. I loved learning about how the pioneers lived, and I had looked forward to this day for a long time.

Fourth grade flew around the corner, and I was very excited. The fourth and fifth graders are the leaders of the school. I was ready to lead the school, and take on the duty of service patrol. I was in Mrs. Wuertz's homeroom. Overall, my best memory was Ameritowne. I was a worker in the Utility Company. At first, I was very angry about this job. It sounded very "lame," and I didn't want to have that job. I wanted something cooler, like a Snack Shack manager, or a doctor. Once I started on the job, I realized that I hadn't given the job a chance. I had a great time at Ameritowne, and learned not to judge things without giving them a shot.

Fifth grade arrived, and I was ready to be "top dog" of the Lower School. I was in Mrs. Marvin's homeroom, which I thoroughly enjoyed. I had to come to the realization that eight of my closest guy friends were switching schools, and one of my girl friends was leaving as well. I was really disappointed that we weren't all going to the same middle school. My favorite memory was when we were all at our last assembly together, and we all were really sad that some of us wouldn't be going to middle school together. All the girls started crying because we had been friends with some of these people for six years. When everyone started crying, and saying how sad they were that our scholastic journey together was over, I realized something. I realized how strong our bonds were, and to me that was what true friendship looked like. I am still friends with all of the students that moved schools, even though we couldn't go to the same middle schools, we have stayed connected.

Sixth grade came and I was scared. I was so intimidated by the big scary eighth graders. It was a new building, new teachers and new friends. By the end of the first trimester, I was completely comfortable. My favorite memory was my first day in CAT. CAT is our Community Action Team. I was in Mr. Easton's CAT. There are sixth, seventh and eighth graders in every CAT. It gives us all a chance to meet people in different grades. We also do community service together, and go to places like the elderly home, soup kitchen and children's day care facilities. CAT is supposed to be a safe place, and as a nervous little sixth grader, this was a good place for me. It was a welcoming place where I could get to know older kids, and get advice on how to "survive

middle school.” I came to the realization that middle school isn’t al that bad. These three years were great years of my life that taught me so many things.

I was warned that seventh grade would be hard, and it lived up to that expectation. Seventh grade is filled with many hard projects and tests, and I learned that I needed to be more organized. Although seventh grade was hard, I really enjoyed this year. My favorite time in seventh grade was out spring trip to the Keystone Science School. My group teacher was Mr. Pritchard. Mr. Pritchard works as a ski patrolman during the winter. He had told us about a cabin in the woods that he had found. We all went up a small hill, and found the cabin. It was really unique because people had hand built it. On this trip, I had a fantastic time with new people that I hadn’t ever gotten to know very well. I think that the best part of school trips is getting to know new people. Out of all the school trips I’ve been on, I have gotten closer with a new person every trip.

Eighth grade was the year when I was finally a “ruler of the middle school.” This year I have experienced what I did in fifth grade. I have to learn how to say so long to people that I’ve been going to school with for nine years. My favorite memory in eighth grade was the last social that is always dedicated to the eighth graders. For the last song we all gather around in a circle and have our last dance together as a grade. Looking around at all the faces that I have come to know and love so well, I realized how much this grade means to me. At first, I was really sad because I felt like I was never going to see people again. I then realized that I will always continue to keep in touch with people, and will start to grow new friendships.

The nine years at SMA have truly changed my life. I would not be who I am today without this place. I have grown up here and feel prepared to go out into the world and accomplish anything. I have spent nine years here, and am ready to spend four more. That’s because I’m going to high school at SMA! I can’t wait to continue here at SMA, and make even more unforgettable memories!