

## Mulch Madness

By Ellen Cronin

The St. John's school parking lot was alive with activity on April 5th, but it wasn't a weekday lunchtime with the children and Sr. Mercille at recess. It was Saturday morning at 7:00 AM and the parking lot was bustling with cars and trucks in front of what looked like a giant wall of mulch! Three-thousand, two hundred and sixty five bags of mulch, to be exact. Mulch piled in rows and rows, reaching higher than the basketball hoop and filling up one whole side of the parking lot. It was the 2008 HSA fundraiser known as "Mulch Madness." Now in it's third year, this highly successful mulch sale is a great way to raise money for the school. Organized and run by Kathy Whalen, it depends solely on the hard work of many parish and school families who give up part of their Saturday morning to help hoist, load and deliver the fifty pound bags of Country Boy Shredded Hardwood Mulch to homes in and around the Silver Spring area. Many hands and strong backs (and some hot Dunkin Donuts coffee) make the work go faster than one could ever imagine. This year, in particular, the crew did a fantastic job and moved the whole load by early afternoon. Kids, dads, moms, Sisters, and friends all banded together to load the SUV's, the mini vans, the trailers and pick-up trucks, not to mention Charlie Johnson's commercial truck from Johnson's Landscaping and Dermott Calcutt's flatbed tow truck, to get the job done. Charlie and Dermott are fondly known as "the Cavalry" " to the mulch haulers because they come to the rescue with vehicles that hold hundreds of bags of mulch each! They grab a couple of helpers, load and deliver their multiple bags and then return many times over to reload again. The job would literally take days without their help and very generous assistance. It's all just part of the reason for such a successful fundraiser! The 2008 Mulch Madness endeavor, with orders from 165 families, netted a profit of \$5,970 for the school. Thank you to all our fabulous volunteers and mark your calendars for next March!