

# Aquinas High School

## P a r e n t N e w s

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• March 2011

## PRINCIPAL POINTS

### Grandparent's Day Mass

The annual Aquinas Grandparent's Day Mass will be celebrated on Friday, April 15 at 11:00am in the dining hall. School will be dismissed immediately following the mass—approximately 12:15pm. Students have been asked to invite their grandparents, and as always, parents are also invited to join us in this Celebration of the Eucharist.

### 2011-12 Registration

Student registration forms and a partial payment of at least \$300 of the registration fee are due today, March 31. When we begin building the master schedule of courses after spring break, only those students who have submitted their form and fee will be included in the course counts.

If you selected the 12-month tuition payment option, don't forget to follow the FACTS link on our homepage to set up your account. Your account needs to be set up by May 15 in order to begin payments in June.

### Aquinas Prom

The Junior-Senior Prom will be held on Saturday, April 16 from 7-11pm in the grand dining hall. The junior prom committee has worked hard all year in planning this event and in keeping the theme a surprise for the seniors. All those who attend can look forward to music by DJ Squish, a light show, crowning of the prom king and queen, and photo slides of Aquinas students.

### It's Not Worth It

Being a cool parent could cost you. . . your house, car, boat, and retirement savings. Purchase, pour, or provide alcohol for underage drinkers and the people they injure can sue you. And since your homeowners' insurance doesn't cover illegal activity, the risk all falls on you. Please keep our kids safe. Don't be a party to teenage drinking. (*Drug Free Action Alliance*)

### Exam Time Change

Please mark your school calendars with this change: The dismissal time for underclassmen exams on May 27 will be 12:30pm, not 10:00am as listed in the Handbook.

### Spring Musical

*Attention all Whos! Attention all Whos!  
We've got to be heard! There's no time to lose!  
So send up a shout! Make it loud! Make it clear!  
WE ARE HERE! WE ARE HERE! WE ARE HERE!  
WE ARE HERE!*

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>, and 30<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm, the Aquinas gymnasium will be transformed into the magical world of "Seussville" as we present *Seussical the Musical*. Structured around Dr. Seuss' classic, *Horton Hatches an Egg*, and including elements from favorites such as *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, *The Butter Battle Book*, *Oh! The Places You'll Go!*, and at least a dozen others, *Seussical* is more than just a bunch of his books crammed together in a musical. It's a story about being a true friend, keeping a promise, and becoming the best person you can.

Join us on a journey through Jojo's imagination as he "Thinks" us from Augusta to Palm Beach to New York City, and from the Jungle of Nool to McElligot's Pool. You'll meet many of your favorite characters along the way, including Horton the Elephant, Gertrude McFuzz, Mayzie LaBird, the Wickersham Brothers, Yertle the Turtle, the Grinch, and of course, the Cat in the Hat.

*Oh, the thinks you can think!  
Any thinker who thinks can come up with a few!  
Think a trip on a ship to the Vipper of Vipp  
or to Solla Solle.  
Think of beautiful Schlopp with a cherry on top!  
You don't need an excuse!  
Oh the thinks you can think when you think about Seuss!*

Tickets will be sold in advance (no reserve seating) at the school during the week of the production and at the door the nights of the performances.

# NEWS FROM THE CLASSROOMS

## **Integrated Math III**

Students are learning about parabolas, circles, ellipses and hyperbolas—the variety of shapes that arise from the different ways that a plane can cut through a cone. These shapes are sometimes referred to as conic sections. Consider a circle: Its definition is “the set of points in a plane that are all the same distance (the radius) from a fixed point (the center). Each conic section has an analogous definition, and from each of these definitions it is possible to derive an equation that describes the object (circle, parabola, ellipse, hyperbola).

## **Catholic Moral Theology**

After learning about human sexuality and discussing the responsibilities of parents to children and children to their parents, sophomores watched the PBS documentary, *The Lost Children of Rockdale County*. This documentary deals with an outbreak of sexually transmitted diseases in Rockdale County, just a short distance away. In addition to their shock over the sexual behavior of the children in the documentary, our students were even more disturbed at the lack of supervision demonstrated by the parents. “Whether they say it or not,” says Mr. Culver, “your children appreciate the fact that they have caring and concerned parents.”

During the same month, sophomore discussions also focused on living expenses in the Augusta area. Students researched the costs of an apartment, utilities, groceries, car payment and insurance. Students then compared their costs to minimum wage earnings. Needless to say, it was an eye opener for the students as they began to realize how expensive it is to live on their own and how difficult it would be to survive on minimum wage. This exercise hopefully has two outcomes—to help the students appreciate how fortunate they are in their own lives and to develop concern for the welfare of others.

## **Physical Education**

Freshmen PE students are playing Ultimate Frisbee. The competition has been great, but students are also finding just how difficult it is to accurately throw a Frisbee in the wind. Students are seeing improvements in their hand/eye coordination and having fun at the same time.

## **Zoology/Anatomy**

With the start of the 4th quarter, students in both the Zoology and Anatomy classes are spending much of their class time dissecting. Zoology students are dissecting frogs, snakes, turtles, pigeons, and pigs, while comparing the various body systems. Anatomy students are systematically dissecting a cat and comparing it to the human body systems.

## **Economics**

The stock market has been volatile this month due to conflicts in the Middle East and the fallout from Japan’s earthquake. Economics students are learning about those fluctuations first-hand by playing Georgia’s Stock Market Game. In January, 86 regional student teams were given a hypothetical portfolio of \$100,000 to invest. At the end of 10 weeks, the team that has the highest portfolio value wins the game. All students who participate in the Game learn about the connections between economic theory and real life, as well as the need for sound financial planning. Cha’ Kara Murray has learned this last lesson well! She said, “You can’t invest in something you simply like or in something you use every day. You have to research and find a stock that will increase in value over time.” Students will receive their final ranking after the game concludes on April 1.

## **French**

French I students have been learning French through storytelling. This week’s story *Les Trois Eléphants*, has Charles Whatley and Chris Lambert wearing elephant trunks and Rachel Singletary and Mary Beth Lovering making peanut soup.

After having translated various children’s books, French III students are filming dialogues based on the stories. Kellie Pitts and Emily Skidmore played the roles of Bert and Ernie in the uproariously funny French adaptation of *Le Livre de Bert et Ernie*. Catherine Grady and Elizabeth Brady re-enacted *La Graine de Carotte*. Alicia Manigault and Jed Amurao dramatized *L’araignée très occupée*.

French II students are acting out the poem, *Déjeuner du matin* in order to master speaking in the past tense. Ivey Wright completed the poem started in class, translated it into English and was able to help her classmates with the translation.

## Advanced Composition

At the start of each quarter, seniors were introduced to the subject of study through lecture and discussion of background information surrounding that subject. In the first quarter they considered the history, causes, and aftermath of WWI as preparation for studying *All Quiet on the Western Front* and the poetry and short stories of the war era, for example. As they begin to study Dashiell Hammett's *The Maltese Falcon*, they are conducting their own research on pulp fiction—the literary genre, not the movie! Topics include pulp's inception in the 1920s and its relation to the Great Depression as well as its evolution over the last 90 years; the many sub-categories of pulp; various target audiences and marketing strategies; and language and content unique to the genre. Students will find and read several short stories from pulp's golden era (1920s, 30s, 40s) to explore several of the sub-categories (e.g., westerns, horror, mystery, romance) but the primary focus is on the hard-boiled detective. They will find and read two hard-boiled detective novels from the modern era and compare them to the archetypal hard-boiled detective, Sam Spade. They will showcase their knowledge in a portfolio project to be turned in at the end of the term.

# STUDENT LIFE

## NHS Applications

Application packets were distributed to eligible students this week. (Eligibility is described in the Student-Parent Handbook, page 5.) Completed applications must be returned on or before April 12, and the applicants will be notified of their status by April 21. Newly selected members will be inducted on May 5 at 7:00pm.

## Special Olympics

On March 11, fifteen students from Aquinas spent the day at the Richmond County Special Olympic Track and Field Event, where they assisted nearly 350 amazing Special Olympic athletes. "Happiness is the key to life, and those kids are full of it," commented Shayna Tilsner. Aquinas students helped to set-up, ran the race events, and cleaned-up afterwards.

## Pro-life Kickoff

The first meeting of the *Irish Fightin' for Life Club* was held on March 1. Club president, Denton Boone, got the evening meeting started with a prayer from Fr. Charlie and pizza for all. Students then watched several inspirational and thought-provoking videos before listening to a speaker. Paeter Wait, co-leader of Students for Life in the CSRA, shared her story and encouraged students to write their senators about a bill passed in the Senate. "The night was a perfect way to get our club started and get people involved in making a difference," said Catherine Grady.

## Scholarship Winner

Congratulations to Katie Kessinger on receiving the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship. This is the most competitive scholarship offered by the state of South Carolina. Recipients must rank in the top six percent of their class and must have scored 1200 or higher on the critical reading and math sections of the SAT.

## Voter Registration

Students who are at least 17.5 years old may register to vote. Mr. McLeod will make the Voter Registration forms available in senior homerooms before April 21. Both Georgia and South Carolina residents are permitted to register. All Voter Registration forms collected at the school will be picked up by a rep from the Board of Elections.

## Summer Trip to France

Aquinas students interested in traveling to Loches, France this summer must see Mrs. Meredith before April 12. The trip will take place about May 27-June 15. The cost is approximately \$3,000 per student and includes ground and air transportation, housing and meals, and admission tickets to castles, museums, and other places of interest, including a week in Paris. Be part of the student exchange that has been going on for the past 17 years between Aquinas and St. Denis School. See Mrs. Meredith before April 12.