

Aquinas High School

P a r e n t N e w s

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• May 2011

PRINCIPAL POINTS

Student Awards

The end of a school year always brings with it a flurry of well-deserved student awards. You will find complete listings of the awards on our website. Follow the links from our homepage to view Senior Awards, Underclassmen Awards, Athletic Awards, and 4th Quarter Honor Roll. You can also follow the news about our very recent graduates (Class of 2011) on the Alumni pages of our website. In addition, the Student Life section of this newsletter contains several student accolades and election results. We are truly blessed to work with such generous and talented students at Aquinas!

Results of the Vote

The parents of students in the Classes of 2012 and 2013 were given the opportunity to vote on how graduation activities should be scheduled—all on the same day or over one weekend. With nearly 2/3 of the votes coming in to keep everything on the same day, the Baccalaureate Mass & Awards will be on Sunday, May 20, 2012 at 2:30pm. The Graduation Ceremony will be at 8:00pm on the same day.

Website Calendar

The 2011-12 school calendar is posted on the website. Be sure to subscribe to the calendar so you'll know when events are added.

New Athletic Director

I am very pleased to announce that Matt LeZotte has agreed to serve as the athletic director at Aquinas, in addition to continuing with his teaching and coaching duties. Scott Harrison will serve as the assistant athletic director. We'd also like to thank Kevin Trammell for the two years of service he provided to the athletic department. Kevin will continue to teach and coach at Aquinas. For athletic information, you can contact Matt by phone at 706-736-5516 ext. 27 or by email at athleticdirector@aquinashigh.org.

Summer Office Hours

The school office will be open Monday through Thursday, 8:00am to 2:00pm. Regular hours will resume on Monday, August 1.

Tuition and Fee Reminders

The registration fee must be paid in full in order to receive a student schedule for next year. For those parents who intend to pay 2011-12 tuition in monthly installments, you need to set up your tuition account with FACTS by following the link on our website. The deadline to set up your account for the 11-month plan is June 15, for the 10-month plan the deadline is July 15.

Schedule Changes

The 2011-2012 courses your students selected were mailed with report cards. If you find that you are missing a course or need to change a course, please contact Mrs. Jenkins at 706 736-5516. Mrs. Jenkins' office hours are 8:00 am - 2:00 pm on the following days: June 08, 14, 21, 22 and July 12, 19 and 26.

Irish Blessing

Thank you for sending these young people into our lives. Thank you for all you did to make this a wonderful school year. Enjoy family and friends and summertime fun, look for a back-to-school mailing to arrive at your house in late July, and we'll see you again on August 8!

*May love and laughter light your days,
and warm your heart and home.*

*May good and faithful friends be yours,
wherever you may roam.*

*May peace and plenty bless your world
with joy that long endures.*

*May all life's passing seasons bring the best
to you and yours.*

NEWS FROM THE CLASSROOMS

Physics

Physics students ended the year with the final project of building an electric powered car that could complete five laps around the Aquinas Commons in the least amount of time. The vehicles could be any size and voltage. Each team was given a budget of \$30 to complete the task. Students had to choose motors, axles, chassis design and body shape, all of which were to be built from scratch as much as possible. The fastest car was awarded to the team of Daniel Jackson and Jack Bernard (the Quantum Enforcers). Their car completed the five laps in 20 seconds! Yes, that's really fast. Their car was powered by 4 AA 1.5 volt batteries using a 9 watt motor. Congratulations also to Jose' Blanco for winning the quality and creativity portion of the competition.

Latin

Another successful year! Everyone in all levels passed, and *almost* all are very excited about continuing their Latin studies next year. In fact--mirabile dictu--three students took Latin II books home to study over the summer. Next year, students can also look forward to the formation of a new Latin Club, which will enable them to participate in some fun activities outside of class time.

Literature & Composition

Freshmen in Mrs. Hegwood's classes wrapped up the semester with an in-depth study of composition. They focused on two types of essays, narrative and persuasive, and spent weeks talking and thinking about what makes a story compelling and interesting, and what makes an argument persuasive and relevant. In addition to studying structure and organization, students studied sentence-level errors and commonly confused words. Students wrote several drafts of the same essays, which allowed them to learn the importance of revision and track their own writing and editing processes.

Senior Religion

Another year has ended in Senior Religion. Projects were completed, students struggled with Frodo in the *Lord of the Rings*, and discussed the new challenges that will arise now that the 'salad days' at Aquinas are over. Congratulations to Holley Avrett, who won the Alabaster Vase Award for the most beautiful model. Her model was an elegant presentation of one of the transepts of the Cathedral at Tournai in Belgium.

God bless the seniors. Know that you will be in our prayers especially next year as you start your life in college.

French

Summer is a good time to listen to French songs, watch French films or American movies with the French audio and subtitles, and Facebook friends from our sister school, St Denis in France. Continuing to build listening and speaking skills is fun and very beneficial for achieving the ultimate goal—to be bilingual. Here are some other ideas: Tex's French Grammar for verb and vocabulary practice and YouTube for French singers like Etienne, Zazie, and Axelle Redd. The more students listen to French people speaking, the better they'll sound when they speak French and adding more vocabulary will allow them to say so much more!

Physical Education

Congratulations to freshmen PE students on completing the timed, one-mile runs. Everyone in the class showed improvement, with the fastest time coming in at 6 min 7 sec. Studies have shown that during summer break the students' body fat tends to increase due to a the lack of structure and lack of activity. Encourage your teens to stay active throughout the summer so they can come back to school in August fit and ready for the new year.

Horticulture

With 24 students in the horticulture class this year, they were able to tackle some big jobs. The lower side of the gym was cleaned, the area outside the cafeteria was replanted, irrigation ditches were dug, and a major clean-up of the entire grounds was begun. Special thanks go out to Anthony Spencer, Marshall Snead, Michael Kantz and Jacob Cliatt for going beyond the call of duty throughout the year. Please come by the school over the summer. We have switched to "tropical mode" where you can enjoy the Plumerias, Bananas and Palms—all planted and cared for by the students of AHS.

AP U.S. History

Students finished the year by playing a new version of the classic board game *Risk*—Cold War style. They watched numerous news reports, commercials, and personal interviews about the time period to prepare for this highly competitive game of strategy, which defines the losers as those who come closest to nuclear war or nuclear proliferation. Winning captains Matt Ross and Joseph Byrd learned first-hand just how difficult it was to "call the shots" during this volatile time period.

Catholic Moral Theology

At the beginning of the school year, students completed two exercises to determine where they stood on certain moral topics. The first of these was a morality survey, affectionately known by the students as the “kayak exercise” because the scenarios all deal with a kayaking trip. The survey presents 11 different situations in which the students must determine the best course of action to take. In the last week of the school year, students repeated the exercise and then compared their answers from August. Although many students found their answers were very similar months later, they were surprised by how much better they were able to discuss the “why” of their answers using phrases like “the principle of double effect” and “the sanctity of human life.”

The second exercise completed at the beginning of the year asked students to define success in 50 words or less. At the beginning of the school year, many of their definitions dealt with wealth, position, and material things. When the exercise was repeated in May, more student responses focused on spiritual or family matters. Students were surprised to see how their view of the world had changed throughout the school year.

Painting

Painting students finished up the semester with a wide variety of fun projects including “painting with light.” In this project, students used a digital SLR camera set on a very slow shutter speed, along with a light source of their choice (laser pointer, cell phone, flash light, etc.) to create a “painting with light.” Pablo Picasso made a series of “light drawings” in 1949 on a shoot for *LIFE* magazine. Using the image from this shoot *Picasso draws a centaur in the air* as their muse, students created some beautiful light paintings of their own. A selection of these light paintings is available for viewing on the fine arts web page.

STUDENT LIFE

Helping Hands

Twenty-nine Aquinas High School students took a three-day trip to Tuscaloosa, Alabama, to help residents in neighborhoods that were recently damaged by a tornado. The students, working with Project Team Up, removed debris for residents in Tuscaloosa’s Holt community.



Election Results

Congratulations to the following students who were elected as Student Council officers for the 2011-12 school year: President, Georgianna Malchow; Vice President, Denton Boone; Secretary, Teresa Ziemba; Treasurer, Mollie Moses; and Historian, Jane Douglas.



Newly elected and current AHS Student Council members met on May 20th to plan for the 2011-2012 school year. The summer planning meeting for all members will be held August 1 from 9-1 at Aquinas.

Eucharistic Miracle Exhibits

"I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger..." (Jn. 6:30-35) In the 8th century, a priest saying Mass in Italy took the bread and wine. He didn't believe that this ordinary bread and wine changes into the true body and blood of Jesus, but when he said the words of consecration, the bread turned into actual flesh and the wine into actual blood. The whole congregation was witness. Since this miracle, the flesh and blood have remained intact for 12 centuries and have been through numerous scientific studies, even as late as 1981. The flesh is documented to be from the heart muscle and the blood type is AB. This and other Eucharistic Miracle exhibits were on display at Aquinas for several days in May.

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Area Player of the Year Named

Matt Moses was chosen Area Player of the Year by the *Augusta Chronicle*. Matt led the team in scoring with 24 goals and was also one of the assist leaders for the Irish with 8. Matt plays club soccer for Cobb in Atlanta, and even though he just finished his junior year at Aquinas, he has already committed to play soccer at Mercer. Congratulations Matt!

Trip to France Planned

From June 11 to July 1, 2012, a group of Aquinas students will spend three weeks in France for the price of a 10-day tour. They will visit Normandy, Mont St. Michel, Honfleur, Rouen, Giverny, Paris, and our sister city, Loches. They will travel with NETC and also spend 12 days with a host family. The family stay allows them to spend more time in France for a greatly reduced cost. Please contact Terry Meredith with questions or for more information about the trip. Important note: The payments can be spread out over 11 months if they begin in June. It also qualifies for an early bird discount. Bonnes vacances!

Class of 2012 Officers

The following students have been elected to class office: James Williams, president; Hunter Rafoth, vice president; Kellie Pitts, secretary; Alli McInerney, treasurer; and Catherine Grady, spiritual events coordinator. Congratulations seniors!

National Honor Society Induction

On May 5, the Summa Chapter of the National Honor Society inducted 21 new members into the organization. The induction ceremony, held in the school's dining hall, was an opportunity to recognize both the accomplishments of these new inductees and also to recognize the on-going accomplishments of all the NHS members with special recognition to the graduating seniors.

NHS President Stacia Fritz gave an inspiring speech that challenged her fellow members to be the leaders and examples that are needed in the world today. "It is a gift to be able to help others in any way possible and an even greater gift to be able to do this together as NHS members," said Stacia.

All the new inductees were presented membership certificates and NHS pins. Graduating seniors were presented with the gold honor cords worn at graduation.

2011 Inductees: Jerome Amurao, Nick Burwinkel, Ashlee Carr, Evan Cook, Will Doss, Alysse Edwards, Luke Joseph, Pawel Kraj, Stephen Lint, Thomas Menk, Caroline Merz, Jessica Munie, Richard Murray, Jonathan Mysona, Nick Novajosky, James O'Quinn, Millie Smith, Megan Visotski, Carter Wertz and Teresa Ziemba.

Youth Leadership

Alexis Kenny was selected to serve on the Columbia County Youth Leadership Committee. The highly respected youth leadership program trains and educates future leaders through hands on experience with current government, community leaders and decision makers, as well as providing opportunities for community service. Congratulations!

2011 Prom

On April 16, about 200 students attended the Aquinas Arabian Nights Prom hosted by the Class of 2012. A vote of attendees named Elizabeth Brady and Matt Moses as their prom princess and prince. Connor Callaghan and Allie Creed were voted prom king and queen. Students who forgot to pick up their prom favor that night (a photo album), may pick one up in the office this summer.

Community Award Recipient

Congratulations to Mary Rose Ziemba on being selected as a Youth of the Year by the Exchange Club of Augusta. Nine area high school seniors were selected based on their superior academic achievement and leadership and were honored at a luncheon on May 12.