



St. Thomas Aquinas Grade School

The Catholic Community of Saint Thomas Aquinas Grade School is a partnership of parents, students, staff, and all parishioners that strive to nurture the growth of the whole child in a Catholic, faith-based environment. We seek to promote academic excellence in a safe and nurturing environment while fostering responsibility, positive discipline, service to others, and life-long learning.

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Principal's Newsletter *Family and School Working Together!*

Merry Christmas, STAGS Community!

On behalf of everyone at STAGS, I would like to extend our wishes for a very Merry Christmas. It is with great happiness and joy that we celebrate the reason for the season, which is Christ the Lord.

At a recent Mass, the priest told the story of a deacon who gave a sermon at a Mass attended by Mother Teresa. To make a long story short, the message in his sermon was how we bring God to the poor. He was pleased with himself and the response from the parishioners confirmed that he had done well, especially considering who was in attendance. His bubble was burst, however, by that same nun who pointed out that "it is not we who bring God to the poor; it is the poor who bring God to us."

The same goes for our students, your children. We are all catechists, teachers who bring God to the students, but who is truly the beneficiary in this relationship? Personally, I have to admit that I seek out the students when I need a little more God in my life. Whether enjoying the Kindergarten Thanksgiving Program (and eating pumpkin pie!), observing the 5th Grade science presentations, marveling at the Quiz Bowl teams' energy and intelligence, trying to stay calm at the volleyball championship, or simply enjoying a soda with 8th Graders in my office, I am constantly reminded of God's daily presence in our lives.

May God bless you and yours, and may you find the moments of peace and happiness that he wishes for us all.

Merry Christmas,

Patrick Reardon, *Principal*



Christmas Break
December 23rd—January 2nd

May you have an enjoyable holiday break with your family and friends.



Board Members

President

Nick Rodriguez - nirodriguez@cokecce.com

Vice President

Matt Kurtz - kurtzpoetz7@aol.com

Secretary

Steve Minten - mintens@cox.net

Treasurer

Terry Tessmer - terrytessmer@cox.net

Communications

Andy Mesquita - amesquita@cox.net

WILDCATS CLUB MEETING

The next meeting will take place on:
Tuesday, December 6th
 St. Clare Hall
 7PM

WILDCAT FAMILY DINING \$50 TUITION CREDIT WINNERS!

Congratulations to the Neville and Baca families for each winning a \$50 tuition credit from the September and October family dining events sponsored by the Wildcat Club.

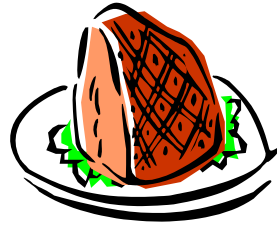
INTERESTED IN JOINING THE WILDCAT CLUB?

We are always looking for new Dads that are interested in participating in the Wildcat Club by supporting the kids, gaining service hours and having fun in all of our volunteer efforts. Anyone interested in joining is welcome to contact us at stagwildcats@yahoo.com or feel free to attend any of our monthly meetings. For more information about who we are, please visit our website at www.stawildcats.net.

Honey Baked Ham

PLACE YOUR HOLIDAY ORDER!!

You can place your order for the Christmas holiday and use Honey Baked Ham Scrip as it is available now for purchase. The school benefits from your Scrip rebate as well as the fundraiser donation. Honey Baked Ham donates 15% of sales to STAGS. Stop by the Scrip Cart to place your order.



**LAST DAY TO
 ORDER HAM IS
 DEC. 11TH!**

Scrip Updates

Congratulations to **Mrs. Goto's Kindergarten class** for winning the Scrip Christmas Special Order Contest. The class receives a pizza party for having the highest % of families who participated in the Scrip Christmas Special Order. We had a very successful Christmas order—thank you to all who participated!

Family Reports will be distributed by December 22nd, you can check your rebate balance 24/7 online at ShopwithScrip.

Shop now for the holidays, the **Scrip Cart** is fully stocked. Before inventory gets low...make your purchase!

Keep in mind **Scrip Gift Certificates** for the holidays!

Questions? scripquestions@yahoo.com

NEED VOLUNTEER HOURS?

The Wildcat Club serves coffee at the 9AM and 10:45AM masses the first Sunday of each month. This is a great opportunity for members to promote the Wildcat Club and earn volunteer hours! If you are interested in volunteering, please email us at stagwildcats@yahoo.com

Catholic Education

A R I Z O N A

Formerly (Catholic Tuition Organization Diocese of Phoenix)

Deadline: December 31, 2011 (for claiming the payment as a charitable contribution on your 2011 federal income tax return in addition to the tax credit on your Arizona tax return).

Any amount helps: \$50, \$100, \$250, \$500 \$1,000

- Receive a dollar-for-dollar state income tax credit
- Married couples can contribute up to \$1,000 and single taxpayers up to \$500

For more info., visit CatholicEducationArizona.org or catholictuition.org.

CEA brochures are available in the back of the church and in the church and school office. Make sure to mark **CODE 191** so St. Thomas Aquinas School receives the funds.

Contribute By December 31st!

CEA Questions?

Matthew Scheller at 623-910-9025 or txb2god@msn.com

PTO News

What an amazing Parish Ball we had this year! Thank you to all who attended, donated, planned or participated in one way or another. What an amazing community we have that comes together to make a difference for the school and our children.

Two important dates to mark on your calendars this month. The Wildcats have graciously allowed PTO to sponsor the Family Dining Night in December. So on December 13th PTO will be sponsoring the Family Dining Night at Chipotle. This is the location on McDowell and Litchfield. Come out for dinner and support the school. Watch the Friday Folder for flyers and more information.

We will also be having our annual cookie drive for the teachers and staff on December 20th. For every two dozen cookies you donate that day you will receive one hour of volunteer credit. Watch the Friday Folder as the date gets closer for more information.

Finally, I would like to personally close my last PTO message with a word of "thanks". As most of you know my family will be moving to San Antonio, TX in December. We cannot tell you all enough how much being a part of this community has meant to our family. We have been blessed more than we could ever have imagined by amazing teachers, staff and of course friends. Please know if you are ever in San Antonio our door is always open and you are always welcome. Thank you for all the wonderful memories we will take with us and hold close to our hearts!

I want to close with my favorite Irish Blessing;

"May the road rise up to meet you, may the wind be ever at your back. May the sun shine warm upon your face and the rain fall softly on your fields. And until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of his hand."

Kelly Fitzmaurice
PTO President

Tax Credit Organizations

Contact Liz Hansen, School Advisory Board Member, at lhansen@smknights.org or 602-251-2510 for more information.

Arizona Private Education Scholarship Fund, Inc.

14550 N. Frank Lloyd Wright Blvd.,
#210
Scottsdale, AZ 85260
480-699-8911 Fax: 480-946-5224
www.apesf.org

AZ Scholarship Fund

P. O. Box 2576
Mesa, AZ 5214
480-497-4564 Fax: 480-497-4737
www.azscholarships.org

AZ School Choice Trust

P.O. Box 1616
Glendale, AZ 85311
623-414-3429 Fax: 623-243-6846
www.asct.org

Catholic Education Arizona (CEA)

2025 North Third Street, #165
Phoenix, AZ 85004-1425
Phone: 602-218-6542
catholiceducationarizona.org

Educare Scholarship Fund

P.O. Box 8393
Scottsdale, AZ 85252
602-980-2680

Giving Kids the Credit

17212 N. Scottsdale Rd, Apt. 2321
Scottsdale, AZ 85255
480-664-8617 Fax: 480-664-8618

Institute for Better Education

5151 E. Broadway, Ste. 1600
Tucson, AZ 85711
520-512-5438 Fax: 520-512-5401
www.ibescholarships.org

School Choice Arizona, Inc.

2241 E. Pecos Road, Ste. 38
Chandler, AZ 85225
480-722-7502 Fax: 480-820-0403
www.schoolchoicearizona.org

Tuition Organization for Private Schools (TOPS for Kids)

P.O. Box 41930
Mesa, AZ 85274
480-710-8943 Fax: 480-835-9615
www.topsforkids.com



Water Conservation Night

