ATTORNEY GENERAL REJECTS AQ BOND PROPOSAL

While excitement mounts with each new phase of construction at the site of the future on-campus apartments, legal controversy, in the Michigan Attorney General’s Office has forced the college to dismantle its innovative financing plans and turn to a more traditional bond issuance to finance the construction.

The original plan, an unprecedented approach in the financing of campus construction for institutions of higher learning, allowed the college to fund the $3.3 million project entirely within the Aquinas community, including a portion of the unique bonds that were specifically designed for faculty, staff, and an allowance for a unique tax exempt donation from Trustees.

After months of costly legal disputes and even after seeking the aid of lobbyists in Lansing, the college has chosen to eliminate the controversial portion of its original plan, so that it can issue a series of bonds acceptable to the Attorney General’s Office. This comes after months of covering construction costs with funds generated from the college’s regular revenue and dipping into its line of bank credit.

The original plan for financing the apartments, drafted by the Board of Trustees, included two series of tax exempt bonds: Series A and Series B. Series A would have covered 80% of the entire cost of the project or $2.65 million and pay principal 15 years after the date of issuance. Series B issuance was divided into much smaller denominations, as low as $1,000, in order to attract faculty, staff and other non-employee members of the Aquinas community. These bonds would have paid principal from the 16th to the 20th year after issuance.

Both series were introduced at a pro-rata basis to survey interest in the Aquinas community and were both very well received because of their attractive tax exempt nature and interest rates, as high as 25% for a small portion of Series B that would have paid principle in 2018. Of the projected Series B bonds, the school received statements of request from 67 employees, adding up to $200,000 worth of bonds along with $600,000 from Trustees. This was well over the $650,000 the college intended on issuing with the Series B bonds. A major part of the projected Series B issuance was a unique allowance for $400,000 worth of debt issued to Trustees that would have included a commitment by those bondholders to donate a portion of their proceeds back to the college as a tax exempt gift.

The unique segment of the two-part bond proposal contained in the Series B issuance could be broken down into two innovative propositions. The first was the smaller, unconventional denominations designed to spur the involvement of faculty and staff and couple it with the college’s current donors and trustees. The second was the mutually advantageous tax exempt gift agreement made between the college and a portion of its trustees. It was these proposals that turned the heads of other colleges and universities across the state to Aquinas’ financing efforts. After the Board of Trustees was able to cover all $3.3 million worth of cost with bond requests and extensive consultations with local attorneys they presented their proposal to the Michigan Higher Education Facilities Authority, the only organization permitted to give educational institutions the power to issue tax exempt bonds. That organization was the Michigan Attorney General’s Office. This comes after attorneys they presented their proposal to the Michigan Higher Education Facilities Authority, the only organization permitted to give educational institutions the power to issue tax exempt bonds. That organization is the Michigan Attorney General’s Office.

It is 7:30 a.m., a Tuesday morning, Stephanie Fochtman has just crawled out of bed in her dorm room on 2nd West Regina Hall. After a short walk to the Corner Cafe for breakfast, she’s off to her 8 a.m. class.

At the same time, Amy Clapp merges with morning rush hour traffic on US-131. During this stretch of her half-hour commute from Sparta, her eyes alternate from the road to her class notes balanced on the steering wheel. Sipping her juice breakfast, she’s also on her way to an 8 a.m. class.

Commuter Clapp and Residence Assistant Fochtman are members of Aquinas’ traditional age student body. Yet, are they both considered members of the Aquinas Community? Recently, at a Student Input Night sponsored by the Senate on Nov. 10, commuters voiced feelings of exclusion. And it’s not just because they can’t find a place to park.

“We feel we don’t belong on campus,” said commuter Kristin Miles. “We don’t spend much time on campus, but we might if we knew what was going on.”

Many commuters feel uninvolved and unconnected to the student activities on campus. “You’re not connected to the students,” said new commuter Kelly Barker, who lived on campus for three years. “You don’t know what’s going on.”

Half of the 1,149 traditional age undergraduates enrolled for the fall semester are commuters. The other half call Aquinas Residence Halls their home. With the completion of the new apartments, student residents will increase by another 100. “Students living on-campus are connected to resources as well as connected to each other, emotionally and spiritually,” said Residence Life Director Randy MacGeorge.

Announcements of campus activities come to on-campus students via their voicemail or postings in the residence halls. Commuters, however, rely on information from campus bulletin boards, the Campus Correspondence, the Aquinas Times and word of mouth.

Student Activities and the Aquinas Student Senate also send out a commuter newsletter three times a year. “Because of incorrect addresses in the directory, though, not everyone receives it,” said Senate Chair Danielle Johnson. Miles would like commuters to receive student datebooks and directories at the beginning of the year.

Being involved also helps commuters keep informed and involved with other students. “I feel part of the community,” said commuter Mike Machiorlatti. “I participate in track and cross country as well as working for campus safety. I feel these keep me in touch with students.”

Meanwhile, it’s 5 p.m. Fochtman heads to Wege for dinner. Then it’s back to Regina, where she’s on duty as an RA for the night. Except for the eight nights a semester she has off, she can be found on-campus. At the same time, Clapp drives home after a full day of classes. She’ll return to campus Thursday.
Community Senate Update

by Angela Bergman

The Student Senate meeting on Nov. 18. was called to order by Chairperson Danielle Johnson. Secretary Joelle Kwiatkowski presented the results of the Student Input Night on Nov. 10. Students expressed concerns of campus lighting, communication with commuters, career development classes, the foreign language requirement and the relocation of the multicultural office, among others to a panel comprised of President Knopke, Vice President for Finance and Operations Bill Sheffery, Campus Safety Officer Frank Courtney, Multicultural Director Stellia Ferris, Dean of Students Brad Winkler and Chairperson of the Senate Danielle Johnson. The minutes of the input night are accessible on the STU bulletin board located in the Senate folder. The Senate plans to take future action to address these concerns.

Chairperson of the Student Representation committee, Tom Ferrati, trained the Senate to use e-mail distribution lists to communicate with constituents.

The college’s efforts have, however, proven entirely unsuccessful, forcing the Board to attempt a financing plan completely composed of the more traditional Series A issuance. Vice President of Financial Operations for the college, Bill Sheffery, is confident that the Board should be able to push the modified, more conservative proposal through the Michigan Higher Education Facilities Authority before the end of the year.

The Board intends to submit a letter of complaint to the new Attorney General’s Office failed in its duty to serve Aquinas and other institutions that might seek similar bond proposals, that it overstepped its legal bounds by speaking for the IRS on tax matters, and that it acted in an altogether reactionary and obtuse manner by discouraging the college from involving its faculty and staff in its structural improvements.

The Attorney General’s Office’s response to the complaint might very well set a precedent in the financing of campus projects at educational institutions throughout the state. Meanwhile, President Knopke shares with the Board of Trustees and the Administration, a general disappointment over the college’s lost opportunity to be a model in the realm of innovative financing for campus projects.

The topic of the Michigan Militia invoked curious, confused or interested audience members to attend the final edition of the fall semester faculty lecture series. The discussion attempted to provide greater comprehension of the militia’s ideology within an academic perspective.

Dr. Michaeleen Kelly, Chair of the Philosophy Department, gave a lecture entitled, “Self-Reliance: Emerson and the Michigan Militia” on Nov. 17 at 12:30 p.m. in the Wege Ballroom. Kelly has been studying and following this topic through reading newspaper articles and attending local militia meetings. She analyzed the militia through the claims of its religious belief rooted in strong Christian fundamentalism and political thought centered around government paranoia and the divisiveness of the Constitution.

The goals of the Michigan Militia, Kelly believed, were derived directly from working class and agricultural men in Michigan who experienced a sense of alienation from society. Through feeling "economic powerlessness," Kelly stated that they were unable to fulfill the traditional masculine role as "provider and protector."

The militia existed to “provide training and resources,” according to Kelly’s paper, but without a "traditional military hierarchy."

She contrasted the “guerrilla command” with “soldier commodity” and identified the members of the militia as highly autonomous. The militia also advocated, Kelly stated, the protection of the constitutional right to gun ownership. Kelly interpreted that this “disguise of constitutionality” gave the militia the "ultimate resource of power to subjugate others to one’s will." This, in essence, the “masculine component of a theory of power.”

After reading her paper on the militia, Kelly examined the ideological basis for the militia by continuing that “Emerson is the philosophical Godfather of the Michigan Militia.” The notion of "transcendentalism" has constructed the idea of “elevation above the crowd and the mandate world.” Within the militia, Kelly’s research shows greater separation and little sense of social responsibility for the general plight of society as a whole. The militia members believe that “truth will be seen when the individual rejects society’s belief system,” according to Kelly.

During the question/answer period, Kelly replied to the question of racism and sexism in the militia by stating that she "saw concern for the needs of women and minorities," but not “hate war.” She also pointed out that “existential” views were not tolerated within the militia.

The Lecture Series is meant to provide a forum for faculty to share knowledge or research with the entire community, in addition to encouraging academic debate and discussion. Although students are invited to attend, few take advantage of the opportunity.

Matt Feyen, a graduate student from Aquinas, heard the lecture. It was the first he had attended. "I enjoyed the discussion session especially at the end of the lecture," Feyen said, "When future lectures come along, I will probably check them out.”

Looking for a multicultural experience? Bethany Christian Services needs volunteers to help teach conversational English to teen refugees. Call 224-7523.

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Learning to Defend

by Mindy Smith
Times Contributing Writer

On the evening of Nov. 17 at 8:30 p.m., Aquinas Student Government's Geriatric Activity (A.S.G.) sponsored a self-defense workshop in the Cook Carriage House. Dory VanMullen and her brother, Vic Morse, taught the workshop. VanMullen and Morse shared many ways to avoid becoming a victim and then demonstrated defensive tactics if a person were attacked.

The bonus shared that freshman girls are three times more likely to be raped than sophomores, juniors and seniors, because they tend to be more gullible. VanMullen formed the group of 15 students, mostly female, that attackers will often test their intended victims without their knowledge. Attackers observe the way a potential victim walks and if eye contact is made when passing on the street. VanMullen recommended walking with confidence and making eye contact without glancing away when passing someone.

Morse also recommended the "buddy system." "Always walk with at least one other person at night. Don't walk alone," he said.

VanMullen mentioned that women can use many of the items they carry in their purses to defend themselves. Keys or a metal nail file can be used as a knife and hair spray or perfume can be effective if sprayed in an attacker's eyes.

"However, if your attacker has a gun or a knife don't fight them, wait for them to let their guard down and an opportunity to act should present itself," she said.

Morse continued that a victim shouldn't be afraid to scream or make noise to get other people's attention. Yelling "Fare" is more effective than yelling "Rape" or "Help," he suggested.

VanMullen and Morse noted that it is clear that students should try to avoid being put in a car because their chances of survival are diminished if they can take a victim to an isolated location. If someone is in a person's car and that person is driving, Morse has recommended causing an accident to avoid a dangerous situation.

VanMullen and Morse especially stressed that people should follow their gut feelings. "If you feel uncomfortable with a situation, trust your instincts and don't take chances," VanMullen said.

Native American Play Stresses Giving Thanks for Truth

by Janelle Burden
Times Contributing Writer

As the Thanksgiving holiday approaches, most Americans envision table full of turkey and pumpkin pie, to feast in celebration. However, this image is not held by some Native Americans. For them, Thanksgiving is a time for mourning over the fact that early European settlers held feasts in thanksgiving for their victory over native peoples, which most often took place in the form of massacres.

This view of Thanksgiving was the subject of the play "Harvest Ceremony: Beyond the Thanksgiving Myth" presented at Aquinas on Nov. 16 by the Theater of the Three Fires. This drama group consists of members of the tribes known as the Three Fires: the Odawa (Ottawa), Ojibway (Chippewa) and Potawatomi.

The production began with opening songs performed by the Owashicongom Chung-a-ming (Grand River Singers). By using a traditional drum beat and words spoken in their native tongue, Andishabawemwin, the singers set the stage for the presentation. The story consisted of a teenage girl in modern day New York who questions her family's "orange" way of celebrating Thanksgiving by mourning. Through a dream sequence, she is guided back in time of what she previously thought about American history saying, "I wonder if the Europeans realize the price paid for their survival?"

This play was an attempt to educate all people about such truth. The playwright, Marty Kreipe de Montano, serves as curator of the resource center at the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian in New York City. Her mission is to dispel the myths and educate about the history that is "seldom taught in schools." She began this mission when she set to work at the Museum of the American Indian, formerly the George Gustav Heye Museum. She now says, "They've turned it around and made it something I can be proud of." Through her work at the museum and the play that she has created, Marty Kreipe de Montano has begun to accomplish her goal of educating by giving "indian people a chance to tell their own stories." For more information about the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian, check out their website at www.conexus.si.edu. The Multicultural Office sponsored the speaker and play.
Since the beginning of the year, national debate and public opinion polls have revolved around the character and morality of leadership, namely, the prime example of President Clinton.

Frederica Mathews-Green, writer and commentator for “World Magazine” and National Public Radio, addressed an older and mainly conservative audience on Nov. 16 at the Ladies Literary Club in downtown Grand Rapids. She asked the question, “Does Character Matter?” and if so, “to whom?”

Mathews-Green spoke as one of several speakers in the Lord Acton Lecture Series. The speakers were sponsored by the Acton Institute, a non-denominational, non-profit educational organization for the study of religion and liberty.

Lord Acton, for which the institute and lecture series were named, was a 19th century intellectual commonly quoted that “Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.”

Mathews-Green earned a Bachelor’s Degree from the University of South Carolina and a theological degree from the Virginia Episcopal Seminary. She is affiliated with the Eastern Orthodox Church. The lecture focused in part on the perspective that character, conscience and integrity are not essential to successful leadership.

Mathews-Green enumerated the requirements for moral, virtuous, faith-based leadership she saw as lacking in the world today.

“Society does not require that a person be a person of character in order to be a leader: you can be a successful leader without character,” Mathews-Green asserted.

She cited the “efficient, effective, and well-connected” leadership during the Holocaust in Germany. The speaker acknowledged human nature as consisting of both good and evil, and therefore believed that the doctrine of original sin allowed leaders to “rationalize” actions.

Mathews-Green proposed a solution through asking the question, “How can we develop a trustworthy conscience?” Developing high self-esteem, she said, is no guarantee for morality—while citing the high self-confidence of Hitler, Hussein and other powerful oppressive leaders. “It [self-esteem] gives you the impression you have the right to harm others.”

According to Mathews-Green, objective morality cannot be found.

“Looking out at the world today is like looking through the curved glass of a fishbowl...at the present age distorts our view.” Therefore, in order to form character, the commentator suggested “self-doubt, self-questioning and humility” and to seek out the consensus of the majority-held values.

The lecture detailed the Christian Gospels and teachings of Jesus Christ, which transformed negative morality statements such as “do not harm unto others” to positive and more difficult morality statements such as “do unto others.”

“Jesus carried almost every moral imperative to an extreme,” Mathews-Green said. “I’m calling you to efficient leadership, or even a leader with character,” she concluded, “I’m calling you to be a saint.”

The Acton Institute will hold another lecture on Feb. 8, 1999 by Paul Gigot, a member of the editorial board and Washington columnist for The Wall Street Journal. April 14, Washington editor of National Review, Kate O’Beirne, will speak on the topic of “Gender War at the Pentagon.”

Students and faculty are encouraged to attend the lectures free of charge. For more information contact the Acton Institute at (616) 454-3380 or visit the Website at www.acton.org.

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Clinton Advisor Examines Race Relations in Visit to Wayne State U.

by Sara Kaiden-Hanna

The South End (Wayne State U.)

(U-WIRE) DETROIT, Mich. -- Members of the Wayne State University community gathered with local and national racial equality advocates in the Student Center Ballroom Friday afternoon at the 16th Annual Robert L. Millender Memorial Fund Lecture.

Harvard Law School Professor and President Bill Clinton advisor Christopher Edley lectured on affirmative action and the state of racial relations in the United States today.

Edley, a senior advisor to Clinton for the Race Initiative and a consultant to the President’s Advisory Board on Racial Reconciliation, is currently writing a book with the president about racial and ethnic justice, he said. Edley’s last book, “Not All Black & White: Affirmative Action, Race and American Values,” grew out of his experience as special counsel to the president, a position he held while directing the White House review of affirmative action.

As the country approaches the next century and millennium, Edley said much work still needs to be done to bridge America’s racial gap. “We fool ourselves into thinking somehow we as Americans are beyond the need for the acknowledgment of difference,” he said. “But no matter how wonderful a bold prescription for the future there is, it will amount to nothing unless action is taken.”

Edley said the need for affirmative action will cease “when race is of no more social and economic significance than whether you’re a Protestant or a Presbyterian.” To reach that point, Edley said “bold changes in public policies and private practices” are required.

In Edley’s view, policy is not enough to close the racial opportunity gap. “We need to complement policy development with a strategy (to reach a) political and moral consensus in America,” Edley said. “We’ve got to get the discussion on the plane of values.”

True racial equality in the United States will be evident when the nation reaches the point when “no evidence of a legacy of slavery” remains, Edley said. Therefore, in addition to equal opportunity, an integrated sense of community will exist and people will celebrate, not tolerate, their differences, he added.

Two major problems will challenge those seeking to create this kind of an integrated community, Edley said: reviving integration and strengthening democracy.

“Ideal integration does not mean surrendering identity,” he added. “We will not have neighbors caring about other neighbors unless they feel connected to one another,” Edley said. “People (need to) share enough of each other to see themseleves in each other.” He called for Americans to put forward “bold opportunity agendas” to create an eventual “sense of shared human- ity.”

“Exposure to those who are different is part of the cure” for racial divisiveness, Edley said. “What we’re after is the experience that will have a transformative effect on people’s sense of community and connection.”

Still, Edley acknowledged that these changes won’t come easily for many people. “We need practice at the art of talking with people whose values are different than our own and figuring out how to connect with them,” he said. “This is not rocket science—this is harder than rocket science.”

Though the task is difficult, it is not impossible, Edley said. Tostan bridging the racial gap in America, people should “search for the kernel of truth in what the other side is saying,” he said. “The danger is that we make the mistake of think- ing progress is inevitable.”
Grand Rapids was pummeled by a storm leaving 80 mph winds on Nov. 11 leaving thousands of area residents without power and keeping many children home from school. Winds were stronger around Lake Michigan, reaching up to 100 mph and causing 15 foot waves. Storm warnings for Lakes Superior, Michigan and Huron remained in effect throughout Wednesday. In Muskegon, a waterspot was spotted around 2:30 p.m. Tuesday, prompting a tornado warning. It dissipated, however, before reaching land.

Shortly before 7:30 p.m., in downtown Grand Rapids, wind gusts were recorded at 66 mph and continued up to 80 mph until after midnight. By dawn, the gusts had slowed to 40 mph. The National Weather Service in Grand Rapids reported 1.43 inches of rain through Wednesday morning. As of 8 a.m. Wednesday morning, 145,000 people were without power statewide, including 55,000 in the Detroit area. About 32,000 homes and businesses around Grand Rapids were without electricity. Those in outlying areas were without power until Saturday while those closer to town regained power the next day. Several businesses along Michigan Street NE and Bridge Street NW were closed due to the power outages as well as in Rockford where the entire city was without power for an hour. As a result of the high number of power outages, electrical crews from Ohio and Virginia were called to help. All of Grand Rapids Public Schools were canceled for the day as well.

The Aquinas campus, despite a few damaged areas, fared well overall throughout the storm. Power went out for a short period of time throughout campus, leaving many students in the dark including the dance team who were practicing a routine in the fieldhouse and were left in total darkness. The Jarecki School of Advanced Learning suffered damage to the steel roof trusses, which had very recently been installed (see photo Page 1). The trusses act as a frame of the roof. New trusses will need to be made which will take about a month and installation will take four days. In addition to the steel trusses, three rows of cement blocks were knocked down and will be repaired on Friday. The apartments under construction only lost a few rows of shingles.

Tom Summers, Director of the Physical Plant, reported that the most significant damage was the destruction of five trees near Alumni Hall. Twelve trees in all were knocked down around campus.

"The grounds crew got right on it," said Summers. "The trees took more time than anything. We were very fortunate compared to others around Grand Rapids."

Courtney Cooper, a resident of Riverview Apartments on Plymouth Rd and a junior at Aquinas said the loss of power put a cramp in her schedule.

"I wasn't able to get my homework done which was due the next day, plus I missed my first class because I couldn't set my alarm." Said Cooper.

"But I'm glad we got it back the next day instead of Saturday like the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Hy Berkowitz started his own business. "We realized that we had never honored the two gentlemen," said Hoekstra. "It was overdue. They've been there longer than any other business." Hoekstra said that the men have not only anchored the 28th Street business district, but they've helped out the way.

Mayor Hoekstra said, "They've been there when we needed their help."
The School of Americas (SOA), located in Ft. Benning, Georgia, has been key in U.S. government involvement in Latin America. The school, founded by the United States in 1946, serves as a training school for Latin American military at a taxpayer's expense of $18 million a year. The official purpose of the school: promote democracy and stability and defend against communism in Latin America.

The realized effect of the school: over 30 years of social control and repression of Latin American peasants and sympathizers.

The school has become a veritable manufacturing plant for military suppressors. It was ousted from its original home in Panama when President Jorge Illescas called it "the biggest base for de-stabilization in Latin America."

SOA earned its reputation by producing graduates involved in torture, drug trafficking and death squad activity. Graduates like Gen. Manuel Noriega and Roberto D'Aubisson. Noriega was involved in cocaine drug trafficking into the United States in 1946, serves as a training school for Latin American military at a taxpayer's expense of $18 million a year. The official purpose of the SOA—except to suppress popular dissent.

Recently, past educator at the SOA Col. Joseph Blair publicly denounced the institution he worked for 20 years. He has witnessed and aided in the laundering of student's drug money.

This all supports that the SOA has not been promoting democracy or stability in Latin America and is not headed in that direction. Instead, freedom is being stamped out, citizens terrorized, and the hope of democracy destroyed. Even our officials see the hypocrisy. Nearly half of the House (201 of 413 voters) favors cutting funds to the SOA (including 12 of Michigan's 16 Representatives).

**Times View: An Editorial Comment**

"I may disagree with what you say, but I will defend to my death your right to say it." —Voltaire

It’s like reading a book that is exactly the same as one you read not long ago, and only the title has changed. It’s the same story, the same characters and the same outcome. The Iraqi ‘crisis’ of the past weeks seems to carry the usual anticlimactic drama that accompanies it every time the crisis unfolds. It is like a skipping record, repeating the same words over and over again, and now listeners are calling to change the record, to hear a different tune.

Following the latest international incident, President Clinton and many members of Congress such as Republican Richard Lugar of Indiana have begun to call for just that — to change the record and remove Saddam Hussein from power. They want to install a government that is less threatening and more stable toward the world.

The idea of removing and replacing the leader from a sovereign state has come under attack. Many argue that all people should be free to choose the government under which they live. Some see removing Hussein, or any leader of a sovereign state as a direct violation of international law.

The law has not dictated America’s actions over the past 40 years though. The United States has actively removed several world leaders who they saw as a threat to their international authority. These leaders of sovereign nations were popularly elected, yet were removed by the United States for incidents much less severe than Hussein’s reign of terror.

The world is now faced with the threat of a man who is mentally unstable having the potential of nuclear capabilities. In this case, we are not removing someone who was popularity elected. Hussein rose to power following a bloody military coup in 1968.

In Iraq, removing Hussein from power would be in the best interest of Iraq and the world. Hussein has a history of waging war on his own people, particularly the Kurdish population in Northern Iraq. Also, he has shown only contempt and hostility for the rest of the world.

The process of removing Hussein from power could be achieved at a low cost both in the number of casualties and financially. Although Americans might support the idea of sending troops if their objective was to remove Saddam from power, why not just use CIA special operatives to do the job? It would place far fewer Americans at risk, and this sort of thing is what they are trained to do.

The message sent in January 1991 was clear: aggression and defiance won’t be tolerated. It is time for the message to be enforced.

In recent weeks, we have seen the United States actively remove several world leaders in acts of aggression that follow the way of Love, as Christ has taught. The law has not dictated America’s actions over the past 40 years. The United States has actively removed several world leaders for incidents much less severe than Hussein’s reign of terror.

The world is now faced with the threat of a man who is mentally unstable having the potential of nuclear capabilities. In this case, we are not removing someone who was popularity elected. Hussein rose to power following a bloody military coup in 1968.

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The message sent in January 1991 was clear: aggression and defiance won’t be tolerated. It is time for the message to be enforced on the leader it was aimed at. No more threats of Tomahawk missiles on the leader it was aimed at. No more threats of Tomahawk missiles.

**BE HEARD!**

aqtimes_editor@aquinas.edu
send questions, comments, criticisms, letters to the editor, etc.

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**From our readers**

**To the Aquinas Community:**

A number of anonymous opinions have been submitted to the “Who Cares” board regarding the relationship of Aquinas as a Catholic college and the issue of homosexuality. Some basic attitudes expressed were that “The Catholic Church should not be talking about this stuff,” or that students at a Catholic college should not be talking about things that are “homophobic in a Sin.” Of course we are all still feeling from the vicious sentiment expressed in chalk on the sidewalk in front of Wege; “Kill all Fags!”

In response to these individuals we affirm that there is “grace present on our community, the unfailing mercy of Christ our Lord” (Always our Children: A Pastoral Message to Parents of Homosexual Children and Suggestions for Pastoral Ministers, p.1 - a statement of the National Conference of Catholic Bishop’s Committee on Marriage and Family). With the Church we “ask that our words be translated into attitudes and actions that follow the way of Love, as Christ has taught” (p.3).

Our reading of the relevant documents makes it clear what our response to homosexual persons ought to be. In the Catechism we find “they do not choose their homosexual condition; for most of them it is a trial. They must be accepted with respect, compassion and sensitivity” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, #2358). In the Letter to the Bishops: “It is deplorable that homosexual persons have been and are the object of violent malice in speech or action. Such treatment deserves condemnation from the church’s pastors where it occurs. The intrinsic dignity of each person must always be respected in word, in action and in law” (Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons, p.8).

In terms of a moral position, the Church makes a clear distinction between the homosexual orientation of a person and homosexual acts. We are told that sexual orientation (homosexual or heterosexual) is “a fundamental dimension of one’s personality and to recognize its relative stability in a person. By itself, a homosexual orientation cannot be considered sinful, for morality presumes the freedom to choose” (Always, p.6). Nevertheless, the Church does not believe living out this orientation in homosexual activity to be a morally acceptable option (Letter, p.4).

The conclusion of “Always…” best states our position. “All in all, it is essential to recall one basic truth. God loves every person as a unique individual. Sexual identity helps to define the unique persons we are; and one component of our sexual identity is sexual orientation. Thus, our total personhood is more encompassing than sexual orientation. Human beings see the appearance, but the Lord looks into the heart.”

“God does not love someone any less simply because he or she is homosexual. God’s love is always everywhere offered to those who are open to receiving it.”

We want to offer an outstretched hand to any person at Aquinas who may want to discuss these issues further. Whether you are gay or have strong feelings against gay persons, you are probably feeling that no one understands. Our purpose is not to condemn anyone, but to provide evidence of Christ’s unfailing love and mercy. Don’t hold your feelings in and don’t share out of fear of reprisal. We promise to love you and give you the best of our accumulated understanding in coping with whatever may be bothering you. Please let us not engage in hating from either side of this difficult issue. It is only in loving one another that we can truly discover the Christ among us.

In Christ’s Peace,

Mary Clark-Kaiser and Dan Davis,O.P.
Campus Ministry

Dear Aquinas Times Editorial Staff,

In view of the recent article in the Nov. 11 edition of the Aquinas Times titled, “Is there Truth to Aquinas-approved Sororities, I would like to note the following corrections. Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated is a social organization. The sorority is nationally defined as a social service organization. Membership in Delta Sigma Theta Sorority is far greater than the 200,000 indicated; membership exceeds 383,000. Most importantly, I do not personally advocate for other “non-academic” sororities and I’ve never said that sororities, “...create elite organizations with exclusive membership.” In fact, I am later quoted proposing the exact opposite.

Eight women, seven Aquinas students and one Calvin student, worked very hard to provide Aquinas, Calvin, and Davenport students with the opportunity to seek membership in an organization with a legacy of leadership, social action, and public service. The sorority is oriented to serve, rather than socialize. Members see “sisterhood” as the nucleus of the organization, the structure of which is based on leaders, membership, and cultural and religious activities. The relationship exists in Delta Sigma Theta for the development of individuals, as was illuminated by the quotes included in Ms. Angela Bergman’s article.

Through this letter, I hope to have dispelled many misconceptions about Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated, Sigma Beta Chapter. No individual or organization can be defined solely by stereotypes, including sororities. I urge those interested in learning more about this organization to read, “In Search of Sisterhood” by Paula Giddings, a seventy-five year history of the sorority.

Thank You,

Respectfully submitted by Regina Lungaro

Not to worry loyal Times readers! The Road Less Traveled and Angela Bergman and Heather Young (as Point and Counterpoint) will be back next issue. We hope that you enjoy the submissions of our readers and guest writers in this section for this issue.
There is also a gallery tour at 7 p.m. with a guide explaining the featured exhibit. The current exhibit is the paintings of Rapids Art Museum. On Fridays after 5 p.m. admission is free, and the museum bar/coffee bar features local jazz performers.

Theater you still have time. It is playing Tuesday through Sunday until Dee. 12. Although floor tickets are $16 you can get balcony seats for only $6. Call Tickets Plus (616) 222-1234 for ticket information and show times.

If you haven’t seen Cinderella yet at the Grand Rapids Civic Theater you still have time. It is playing Tuesday through Sunday until Dec. 12. Although floor tickets are $16 you can get balcony seats for only $6. Call Tickets Plus (616) 222-4000 for ticket information and show times.

When you’re looking for something to do on a Friday night and you’re short on cash, why not take a trip down to the Grand Rapids Art Museum. On Fridays from 5 p.m. admission is free, and the museum bar/foyer features local jazz performers. There is also a gallery tour at 7 p.m. with a guide explaining the featured exhibit. The current exhibit is the paintings of Mathias Allen.

Knee Deep Shag Stops at WAQU, Intersection

On Saturday, Nov. 14, the members of the Kalamazoo-based band Knee Deep Shag, stopped in at WAQU to chat with Resident Director and disc jockey Calvin Webb and gave an interview with the Kalamazoo-based band. His lyrics are about contemporary problems and relationships. He’s a storyteller and we are invited to hear his tales. But not all songs on this CD are emotional and deep, a few are optimistic and amusing. Rather than becoming an all-ages show, Don’t forget to catch Milkhouse at the B.O.B., if your over 21.

big Head Todd and the Monsters Live in Latest CD

big Head Todd and the Monsters released their newest CD "Live Monsters." Don’t Tell Her I Love Her," and "Resignation Superman," fans and new listeners will be amazed at the emotional and down to earth lyrics. Lead singer Todd Park Mohr writes most of the music for the band. His lyrics are about contemporary problems and relationships. He’s a storyteller and we are invited to hear his tales. But not all songs on this CD are emotional and deep, a few are optimistic and amusing. Rather than becoming an all-ages show.

Big Head Todd and the Monsters have stayed in the shadows, yet their momentum in music has been strong. The individual talents of the band are colossal and this CD proves it. Brian Nevin, drummer and backing vocalist, said in a recent press release, "the audience is screaming for more and singing along.

From the sultry blues to a country music twist, "Big Monsters" should leave everyone wanting more. These individual talents have helped launch Todd, Brian and Rob Squires (bass and backing vocals) into cities across the nation including Chicago, Austin and San Francisco. This album is a calling card for those who are searching for a new sound. Watch for their newest project to be released in the summer of 1999.

Knee Deep Shag
time's
tasting
concert
with
style
ensemble
audience
energy
emotional

With the Kari Newhouse Band opening the show, Knee Deep Shag took the stage at the Intersection around midnight. "We always get a good crowd," said drummer Jeff Moehle, and he was certainly right. By the time Knee Deep Shag launched into its set, a large crowd of screaming fans had assembled, eager to hear the band perform. "We have a lot of different opportunities to do whatever we want to [when we're onstage]," Los Angeles-based band Knee Deep Shag Live in Latest CD

Big Head Todd and the Monsters Live in Latest CD

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Fall Jazz Night Brings Out Talented Musicians

by Joe Theuerkauf
Times Contributing Writer

The musicians were relaxed and poised, the audience was warm and responsive, and everyone seemed to have a good time at Fall Jazz Night '98. The Kreithheimer Recital Hall was a little more than half-full last Thursday for the first major performance of the school year for Aquinas' jazz ensembles. Starting to lead the Vocal Jazz group through two pieces, one of which was a lengthened medley in tribute to Duke Ellington, arranged by the podiums as other pieces, titled "Black Orpheus," was an uplifting love song, but according to Talaga, a rare piece. "I don't know who did this arrangement," he announced between tunes, "but if anyone does, let me know.

The group's performance was tight and for a smaller group this year, still as powerful as ever. With solos from alto Schanti Dixon and soprano Miriam Lynch, the tone of the set was smooth and fun.

Alto Jeanete Shaibe enjoyed the performing on stage, "The Vocal Jazz group had a lot of fun. I enjoyed singing with this group. The Jazz Band was amazing, especially how everyone received recog...

A.C.T. Improv Night Gets Laughs

by Elizabeth Dukid
Times Arts and Entertainment Editor

The Aquinas College Thespians (A.C.T.) hosted their second annual Improv Night on Nov. 12 at 9 p.m., entitled "Whose Line Is It Anyway?" and it proved to be a success yet again. This brought out the hilarious talents of all the participants, and the on-stage antics left the audience laughing.

Aquinian's improv night is similar to the British television show "Whose Line Is It Anyway?" The participants were split into two teams and both improvised lines with games like Party Quirks, Movie Dubbing, the Post-It note game, the Freeze game, Helping Hands and the People Mover. All of these games allowed for audience participation. For example, in the Post-It note game, the audience wrote down various phrases and words on Post-It notes and participants read the notes while acting out a scene on stage.

Dania Fiorito, co-founder of the Aquinas College Thespians, felt the Improv Night was a hit. "It was nice to see so many people laughing and having a genuinely good time," said Fiorito. A fun moment for all during the evening was watching Regina's Resident Director, Calvin Webb, teach Brendan Earle how to shave during the "Helping Hands" game, with the help of Jennifer McVicker. Rick Mills thought the evening was exciting. "It was a blast and my heart was beating really fast when I was on stage," said Mills.

For audience members like A.C.T. Advisor Penny Avery, the Freeze Game was a chance to get up on stage and have fun. "I can think of a better way to spend a Thursday evening! This was another great way to see students express themselves," said Avery.

The performers for the second annual Improv Night were: Lauren Ivory (Co-founder of A.C.T.), Calvin Webb, Liz Dukid, Bridget Clark, Brendan Earle, Mary Magyar, Jennifer McVicker, Brian Cech, Tammy Vandenberg, Lynn Gates, Dania Fiorito, Lisa Farmer and Carrie Greenwald. A.C.T. plans to host another Improv Night next semester, along with the play "Rumors." Be sure to watch for details and for more information about A.C.T., contact...
Team Highlights and Scores

Men's Basketball
11/20 vs. Ohio Dominican 82-74 L
11/21 vs. Shawnee State 78-69 L

Women's Basketball
11/20 vs. Calvin 76-58 L
11/21 vs. Alma 75-60 W

Men's Cross-Country
11/21 Finished 11th at the NAIA National Championships in Kenosha, Wisconsin

Women's Cross-Country
11/21 Finished 15th at the NAIA National Championships in Kenosha, Wisconsin

Cross Country Runners See National Results

By Melissa Ann Pline
Times Contributing Writer

Four years ago, Shannon Ottenweller and Knut Maass were the only Aquinas runners competing at the NAIA Cross Country Nationals. This year, the seniors were members of the men's and women's teams that earned Aquinas national recognition in the Nov. 21 Championships. In the men's race, Ken Baginski earned his second All-American title finishing 22nd in 25:31.

"The conditions were good," said Baginski. "I figured I could finish in the top 30, so I raced until I broke into the top around 3 miles." Baginski had considered red-shirting the season due to an early season knee injury. The men's team, comprised of Baginski, Maass, Kevin Smith, Luke Branyan, Bob Thormeier, Alex Rowan and Greg Thull finished 11th in the 32 team field. A team effort by Aquinas women Melissa Pline, Audrey Reimnberg, Jenny Flanders, Beth Boruta, Ottenweller, Jocelyn Rodgers, and Sarah Carter achieved a 16th place finish. In the academic race, in which teams compete with grade point averages, the men were named Academic Champions. "It's an accomplishment they can be proud of," said men's coach Cliff Somers of the team's 3.60 combined GPA. "I haven't paid much attention to it besides asking if they need help in their classes. It's great they have the will-power to do well."

The woman's team had a 3.62 GPA. "This shows our team isn't just athletes," said women's coach Mike Wojciakowski. "They strive for excellence in academics and athletics."

Individual awards were presented to runners at their year-end banquet. Receiving the Outstanding Cross Country Award were Pline and Baginski. Ottenweller and Branyan received the Captain's Award. And receiving the Most Spirited Award was Carter and Josh Maaireyld. At the season's end, the teams are reflecting on their successful seasons as well as looking ahead to next year. "We hope to work our way into the top 10 at nationals next year," said sophomore Carter of the women's goals. "The team needs to be more competitive and focused during the big races."

The Lady Saints at Cross Country Nationals in Kenosha, WI pose for a picture before their run.

By Ryan Smith
Times Sports Editor

The Final Score

Sports and Politics

Of all the new trends in the sports world, there is one that seems to fascinate me the most. Since the popularity of pro-sports has risen in recent years, so has the interest of these athletes in the political circle. Some well known athletes turned politicians include former NBA star Bill Bradley, former NFL star Steve Largent and Jack Kemp, and most recently WWF star Jesse "the Body" Ventura. That's right, he's from the World Wrestling Federation and not only is he a politician, he is the governor-elect of my home state of Minnesota.

Since his election win I have been asked many times how we Minnesotans could vote for him. I guess that is where the ever-popular terms of "change" and "different" come in. The current governor of Minnesota had not done a poor job, but the locals wanted to see what someone of with a different background could do.

The situation is pretty similar to Feiger making the Michigan ballot. Yes, Ventura did have running mates, and yes, his running mates both had their loyal followers. The answer surrounding his win is rather simple, he got people to get out and vote. The election of 1998 in Minnesota had the highest voter turnout in a long time and Ventura was the reason behind it. Ventura went and visited every college campus he could around the Minneapolis-St.Paul metro area. He got college students, who rarely show up at the voting booths, to arrive in bunches. The funniest part of this whole ordeal is that Ventura's two opponents were all for the idea of college voters. They both encouraged Ventura to visit campuses because they felt that Ventura had no chance of winning.

Well, in the end, these are the voters that won Ventura the governor's position and that gave him the chance to head the state of Minnesota for the next four years. If Ventura had had it his way another former athlete would have been his running mate. He asked former Minnesota Twins first baseman Kent Hrbek to be his lieutenant governor, but Hrbek turned him down stating that he wanted to be able to have leisure time for such activities as fishing and hunting. Can you imagine two former athletes as political partners? One is probably enough for most people.

Since his win a couple of weeks ago, Ventura has been the media's best friend. He has appeared on various talk shows including The Tonight Show with Jay Leno. He always seems to have a witty answer to every question. It is a pretty good bet as well that his election win was as big of a surprise to him as it was for the rest of the nation.

Some people are still dumbfounded about the fact that he beat two politically sound politicians. People are wondering if it his wrestling background that helped him win the race because it certainly wasn't his political views. Granted, he has continued to be in the public eye around Minnesota as he has been a radio talk show host for years, but that is still no reason to go out and vote for him. The best answer for his win and the reason why he beat two career politicians is simple: brilliant campaigning.
Changes on the Field

One of the solutions to the parking problem on campus will have a major league effect on our athletic program at Aquinas College. The softball team, in particular, is the most affected by the added spots to the Mayfield lot. In the past month, several spots have been added to the parking lot on Fulton Street, resulting in a subdivision of field space. But, with the subtraction came the added bonus of placing outfield fences at softball regulation distance. Instead of playing with barebattype dimensions, the softball team now has a fence more the size of their game.

"The long ball hitters are excited at the possibilities of hitting home runs," stated sophomore Lyndsay Szczepanek, who hit 5 home runs last year with no fence.

AQ softball players are excited about the addition of a softball-regulation fence to the softball field following Mayfield lot expansion.

"With the number of long ball hitters we have, we are looking forward to taking our shots at going deep." The fence measures 8 feet high with a 205 feet distance from home plate. Regulations state that the fence must be 200 feet away from home plate. With the present infield being the size of a baseball infield, the dimensions look a little awkward. But this will soon change with the outfield grass being brought in the metric softball proportions in the next few years.

"I think it will provide an emotional lift to us when we play at home," commented sophomore Aaran Bush. "We have always gone into other fields aiming for the fence and then returned home to our field with no fence. I think our offensive strategy will be provided a positive lift with the addition of the fence."

In the near future, the softball field as a whole may be sacrificed as the construction on the fieldhouse expansion project.


It's Friday night. You're stranded at the bar. You can't drive a car and the busses have stopped running for the night. What do you do? Should you call a friend? What if your friends decide that they want to stay at the bar?

Two Grand Rapids taxi companies have the answer.

Yellow Cab (also known as Vets' Cab and Port City Cab) cover the entire greater Grand Rapids area (which means a few city streets). Yellow Cab offers 24-hour service, 365 days a year. Prices of the two cab companies vary. Yellow Cab charges a base $1.65, plus $1.53 a mile. Port City Cab charges $1.50 a mile.

When choosing a cab, however, there is more to look at than price. Both companies offer clean cars, but Yellow Cab has a requirement that all drivers must keep their cars clean. Yellow Cab also has a mandatory dress code for their drivers. Yellow Cab will not lease drivers a car unless they follow the code. Yellow Cab drivers are encouraged to be friendly and required to follow a specific dress code and keep their cars clean.

Veal's Cab drivers are encouraged to be friendly and required to follow a specific dress code and keep their cars clean.

Those deciding that a walk will be a better option than a cab or the busses have several techniques. When walking, you benefit? Put simply, it is a common bond, these people are all doing the same thing. They may be well groomed. Yellow Cab has a requirement that all drivers keep their cars clean.

Vets' Cab drivers are encouraged to be friendly and required to follow a specific dress code and keep their cars clean.}

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Yel-

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Vets' Cab drivers are encouraged to be friendly and required to follow a specific dress code and keep their cars clean.

For more information, contact the GRATA Information Center at (616)776-1100. Give GRATA a try, it's cheap, dependable and it's better than walking to the mall, especially in the pouring rain.

The Wheels on the Bus

by Jessi Cleveland

Young families. The disabled. Senior citizens. Business people. Children with a newfound freedom, but still lacking the license to drive. Students, strapped for cash and without wheels. With no other common bond, these people are all likely customers of the Grand Rapids Area Transit Authority, or GRATA.

So what is GRATA, and how can you benefit? Put simply, it is a system of buses running throughout the greater Grand Rapids area which can take you to the places you need to go cheaply and safely.

GRATA services the cities of East Grand Rapids, Grand Rapids, Grandville, Kentwood, Walker, and Wyoming, as well as the townships of Byron, Gaines, Ada, Alpine, and Cascade. Bus service offers a downtown shuttle service, and arranges ridesharing programs.

GRATA bus service runs from about 8 a.m. until 6 p.m. This is perfect for people going to work or a day of shopping. Both those new to the city and long time residents, are taking advantage of the bus for a variety of reasons.

Freshman Leanne Borek of Comstock Park said, "Although I have lived in the Grand Rapids area my whole life, I've never used public transportation very much. Now that I'm in college without a car, though, I might be riding the buses a little more often."

The price, $1.25 each way, is also convenient for most people. Once aboard a GRATA bus, a rider can also receive free transfer passes if he or she wants to switch over to another route. Transfers must be requested at the beginning of a ride and used within one hour of arrival at the Transit Center or Route Terminal Point.

For more information, contact the GRATA Information Center at (616)776-1100. Give GRATA a try, it's cheap, dependable and it's better than walking to the mall, especially in the pouring rain. 

When You Have to Walk the Walk... 

by Chris Manning

Your car is dead, your friends are already where you're supposed to be and you really want to cry. Now there is a better way to handle the related stress due to the loss of a vehicle. First, plan ahead and know how far you plan to go. Make the arrangements you need to so you won't be late. If you're in a bind, check the bus schedule or call a cab. Or, if you are feeling really dangerous, you might even... walk.

Among the benefits of walking, according to the New England Journal of Medicine, are those who walk at least two miles a day cut their risk of death between 60 and 80 years in half. If one finishes two miles and is hungry for more, adding an extra mile or two increases the chance of living even more.

Those who don't leave their front yard without being attached to a car might want to plan for an early retirement because they are two and a half times more likely to die between 60 and 80 years of age. Those deciding that a walk will be in their future, should consider a few techniques. Asian Health Services recommends that walkers set a brisk pace. While the pace shouldn't be too slow, one should be able to have a normal conversation while walking.

Don't just walk for a mile or two then stop. Instead set a time limit of at least 30 minutes per day. More importantly, don't walk for distance, walk for time. Another bit of advice is to swing both arms as a good way to walk 20 miles an hour.

As walkers bolt for the door eager for their trek down the street, they will want to drink water and bring some along as well. For extra weight and a better workout throw on a backpack. If you hike to class already you're doing your body a big favor than you realize. Serious walkers that want to give their heart a tough workout should stick to flatter terrain. Those that want to strengthen leg muscles should find hilly, rough terrain for their hiking.

Other benefits of walking include burning 100 to 150 calories per mile. Women's Sport magazine lists walking as better than a treadmill in a gym or at home because the air is fresh and not heavy with moisture and carbon dioxide.

Fresh air reportedly improves circulation. Those rehabilitating injuries can also benefit from walking as part of their physical therapy (consult a physical therapist or doctor first). Be sure to ease into higher speeds.

If a new walker needs to get into shape he or she may want to use it to lead into running or other more intense forms of exercise. As walkers continue to walk longer they get healthier immune systems. As a general rule those pounding the sidewalk every day are half as likely to get the flu or to catch a cold. Those sticking to a regimen of three to five miles per day five times a week can enjoy the same fitness as that of a marathon runner according to Women's Sport magazine.

So, next time you are going somewhere and can walk, do just that. Oh, and don't forget to wear comfortable shoes.