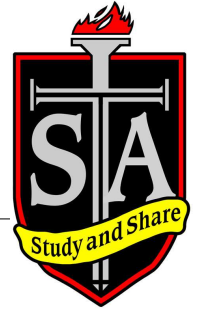


THE TORCH

JULY 2008

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Secondary School



INTERVIEW



Juane Odendaal: Grade 9 Student at STA
Double Gold Medal at the OFSSA Track and Field Championship in June.
Gold Medallist in 800m and 1500m

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Message from the Principal

The receipt of this newsletter and report card signifies the end of another school year. Please review the report card with your son or daughter. If you have any questions concerning the report card, please contact the school during the hours of 8:00am to 3:00pm, Monday through Thursday, and 8:00am to 1:00pm on Fridays.

The school year concluded on several high notes.

Our Annual Athletic Awards was held on June 10, 2008. The success of our Athletic teams was celebrated along with our students who excel and make this a better place to learn and teach.

On the morning of June 25, all stu-

dents were encouraged to meet with their teachers and take the opportunity to review their exams. The purpose was to allow students the opportunity to learn from their examinations. We were encouraged by the number of students who took advantage of this learning opportunity.

Our Graduation ceremony was celebrated on June 25, 2008. We were proud of our graduates from STA. The evening was dignified as we celebrated Mass and presented diplomas to a record number of 310 graduates.

On August 18, 2008, we will mail student timetables, transportation information, and the August newsletter, which will contain school start-up

information. We will host a grade 9-orientation morning on Wednesday August 27, 2008 at 8:30am. Parents and students in grade 9 are invited to join us for some orientation activities.

Many thanks to parents, students and staff who served on our School Council. This is a dedicated group of our school community who work hard to serve the interests of STA. In the fall, we will be looking for new parents to join the council. A special thanks is extended to **Ron Mikula** for his leadership.

Lastly, let me take this opportunity to wish you a safe, restful and relaxing summer break.

Sincerely,

Paul Digby, Principal

Congratulations!

Kayla Allain: STA student who was presented with a prestigious cooperative education award. She will be pursuing an Apprenticeship in a Manufacturing trade.

Teacher **Danielle Gosse** and husband Paul on the birth of daughter Marissa Krista Gosse, 7lbs 15 oz.

STA Rowing Club: Rowers **Mackenzie Curtis and Hannah Lawson** who placed first in the heats and won the right to compete at WOSSA.

STA Mountain Biking Team: **Jake Riffel** and **Connor Johnstone** who placed 36th and 41st out of 70 of the best bikers in Ontario at the race in Barrie in late May.

Corrine Genier who recently won the National Junior Tae Kwan Do championship in Calgary. This is her second year as the Canadian champion in the Poomse category.

STA Junior Badminton Team, they were awarded the TVRAA West Champions!

Lauren Silvestro: who was elected Student Trustee for our Board for the

2008-9 school year. This is the first time an STA student has been elected to this important position.

Boys Baseball Team: for an excellent first year, including the "first ever" system baseball game in May. The team defeated RMC 15-4.

Girls Baseball Team: for an excellent first tournament in May.

STA Fishing Team: Over 45 students and 4 staff members who participated in our first ever fishing tournament.

Alastair Thompson: Placed third in a half marathon at the Run For Retina Research with the time of 1 hour and 25 minutes.

Brandon Ethier: His AAA Midget Jr. Knights Team won the Ontario Alliance Hockey Championship. Brandon is also captain of the team.

STA Swimmers: **Kristine Walker, Aly Walker, George Young and Mike Faul** who demonstrated their excellent swimming skills at the WOSSA championship and qualified for OFSAA.

Dean Van Asseldonk, Matthew Komer and Katie Sentjens who achieved the high scores among STA students on the recent Waterloo Math

Contests. Along with the high score **Dean Van Asseldonk and classmate Christina Skinner** each earned Bronze certificates for placing in the top 25% of all grade 9 participants.

Barry Thompson, teacher who was honoured for his 25 years of dedicated service to our Board in May.

Tennis players **Katie Spivak, Monica Jordon and Nevin Eltaib** who participated in OFSAA tennis in Toronto.

Jose Espinoza who delivered an excellent speech at the Toastmasters club as part of the public speaking class.

Mackenzie Curtis, member of the STA Rowing Club who successfully competed in the finals at the rowing regatta in St. Catherine's in early June.

Juanne Odendaal who won 2 gold medals at the OFSAA Track and Field Championships. This grade 9 student won gold in the 800m and 1500m. (See front page for her picture.)

Marion Austin and Peg Daigneault teachers of STA who retired at the end of June. These teachers dedicated over 30 years of their life to the promotion of Catholic Education. Students and staff will miss them.



Prior to the opening of the 2008/2009 school year, counsellors will see students by appointment only, and as determined and arranged by the counsellor. Requests for appointments will not be taken at this time; students will have the opportunity to request an appointment after classes begin.

The timetable of each student has been balanced, and courses have been scheduled, staffed, and set.

Parents/Guardians and students have been given the opportunity to review the STA Course Calendar, attend information workshops, meet with counsellors to discuss pathways and goals, and discuss next steps with classroom teachers. The course selections made by each student are then used to create a master timetable, and staff accordingly. Students received verification forms in early April and had the remainder of the semester to see their counsellor to make any appropriate changes to their course selections.

Guidance Procedure for Student Course

Student timetables must be set by August 1; disruption to timetables impacts the entire school.

Parents/Guardians of students who wish to make a course change at this time are asked to explain below the desired course change, and the reason.

Requests must comply with one of the following:


- Summer school achievement
- Failure of a prerequisite course
- Incomplete timetable

Course changes will **not** be made for the following reasons:

- Teacher preference
- Lunch time preference
- Class preference

Please be aware that not all requests will be granted, due to filled classes, schedule conflicts, or “poor pass” grades.

The deadline for submission of Course Request is 2:00p.m. on July 23, 2008.



This form must be completed in full and delivered to the drop box in the forum of STA.

Student Name: _____

Daytime Telephone Number: _____

Requested Course Change: _____

Reason for Course Change: (provide a full explanation)

Parent/Guardian Signature

Not sure of your career goal?...

Don't yet know your post-secondary target? Not definite about your curriculum path? Consider taking some time to discover who you are, what you like and where you are going. The following tests are highly valued and successful tools in helping to determine academic and career pathways.

The Strong Interest Inventory links your specific interest and learning with various jobs and work settings.

The MBTI helps you to understand your individual personality type preference.

For information on availability and costs of these tests, please contact **Mrs. Hall** in the Guidance Office.



2007-2008 SCHOOL PRIORITIES

<i>PRIORITIES</i>	<i>MEANS TO ACHIEVE</i>	<i>REPORT ON ACHIEVEMENT-JUNE 2008</i>
1. Focus Upon Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to provide in-service to staff and students regarding Emergency Response Plan • Educate the graduating class regarding the dangers of year end pranks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted 2 lock downs this year • Results were excellent last year, work being done at classroom level, need to continue to reinforce this message until the end of June • Need to update our surveillance system
2. Focus Upon Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of the new IEP requirements • Promote effective instructional and assessment strategies including Student Success Teacher and revised Assessment and Evaluation Policy (April 2007) • Increase use of student technology by upgrading our 3 computer labs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On going, new guidelines are being created • Initiated Student Success Program, including Math After Hours program, started credit recovery program-grades 9 & 10 • Completed September 2007, we need to develop a new procedure for the booking room 235
3. Focus Upon Catholic Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete building the Tim McDonald Fieldhouse • Recognize the gifts and talents of students and staff and their accomplishments in the school newsletter, staff meetings and assemblies • Continue to support faith based celebrations and create opportunities for staff to come together to pray and celebrate together • Encourage prayer in each class room • Continue to build community among staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be constructed in June 2008, opening and blessing scheduled for September 6, 2008 • Excellent Day of Prayer in December 2007 • Need to review the number of classes which begin with a prayer • On going need to review Wonderful Wednesday
4. Focus Upon The Code of Conduct as Related to Electronic Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise Student Planners to reflect the policy • Educate the students to the implications of misusing computer technology through assemblies and guest speakers • Upgrade Course Outlines to reflect the change in policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed September 2007 • Assemblies (October 2007) and poster campaign (May 2008) will assist our need to talk in class about the issues, use of cell phones inside school is still an issue