



The Beacon

News to family and friends of Ann Arbor Christian School
2005-2006, Number 3

Ann Arbor Christian School offers a Christ-centered, academically excellent education that challenges students to live and act in society as committed followers of Jesus Christ



Photo by Sue Postema Scheeters

The middle-school girls' volleyball team displayed teamwork and good sportsmanship in their first season on the volleyball court.

Teamwork: many members form one body

Dear Friends of AACCS,

As I write this, I am watching the Pistons play the Cavaliers in the second round toward the NBA finals. I have always loved basketball, and it is especially fun to watch when the players play as a true team – those Pistons certainly do!

Teamwork is something everyone needs to learn. I see examples of it all the time at AACCS. I truly believe the reason we are so successful at providing quality Christian

education is because we work as a team. From its inception, the school has relied on the commitment of everyone working together to be the best we can be.

What a joy to be part of the group traveling to Toronto! Dr. James Wagner, instrumental music teacher, dreamed of taking his ensemble to Willowdale Christian School and Community Christian Reformed Church for two performances. Everyone did their part and the rewards were great.

Each day here at school I see examples of students, parents, and staff doing incredible things to keep learning alive. That is who we are and what our school is all about. The school, committees, programs, school board and individual classrooms need all of us – willing bodies, hearts, and minds – coming together for the good of the school and to glorify and honor Jesus Christ.

As Romans 12 so beautifully says:

Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

As you read this edition of *The Beacon*, may you recognize the work of many – the AACCS team! Also note the international flavor of this edition – our team with worldwide experiences!

The Pistons just romped the Cavs – what a joy to see how well they play together! AACCS, what a joy it is to see how well we learn and praise the Lord together!

In this issue

- Parents create 'oasis' for staff 2
- Going to great lengths 2
- Grads recall special AACCS moments 3
- We're accredited! 3
- Sculpting our worldview 4-5
- Finances on target 6
- Committees need your skills 6
- Special events energize students 7

Have a wonderful summer. ☺



Kathy Broege, principal

June 2006

AACS 2005-2006 Contact People

School

Kathy Broege
Principal
principal@annarborchristian.org
734.741.4948 x116

Cheri Lubbers
Administrative Assistant
office@annarborchristian.org
734.741.4948 x115

Jan Musch
Finance
finance@annarborchristian.org
734.741.4948 x120

Board Members

Jane Anderson, At Large
janejazz@umich.edu
734.424.9725

Brooke Bowen, Treasurer
BSBowen5@aol.com
734.426.4713

Carla Byma, At Large
cbyma@att.net
734.426.7525

Tim Dekker, Secretary
tdekker@limno.com
734.327.0145

Joel Postma, At Large
248.446.8849

Lorri Vander Roest, At Large
734.996.2760

Greg Vyletel, President
gvyletel@comcast.net
734.662.0472

Committees

Building
Jeff Eekhoff
734.424.0563
Steve Lamine
734.424.2046

Development
Tim Dekker (see above)

Education
Katherine Gottschalk
kgottsch@umich.edu
734.663.4289

Finance
Ken Fil
kfil@sbcglobal.net
734.332.1248

Public Relations
Sue Postema Scheeres
spscheeres@comcast.net
734.213.2325

Technology
Darren De Zeeuw
darren@dezeeuw.us
734.424.2579

Beacon

Marcia Mitchell, Editor
marciamitchell@charter.net
734.424.8424

Kathy Ann Moilanen, Copy Editor
734.668.7437

Jennifer Boes, Layout Editor
jlboes@ameritech.net
734.973.9798

The Beacon is published by:

Ann Arbor Christian School
5500 Whitmore Lake Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48105

office@annarborchristian.org
734.741.4948
www.annarborchristian.org



Photo by Marcia Mitchell

Teachers Melanie Bolhuis, Xan Morgan, Sue De Zeeuw, and Kim Windeler enjoy each other's company at a teacher appreciation luncheon.

Parents create 'oasis' for staff

By Marcia Mitchell, Beacon editor

The staff and teachers of Ann Arbor Christian School recently dined on an irresistible Italian feast. It wasn't at Gratz or The Olive Garden, but in our own teachers' lounge, transformed by appreciative parents into a quaint Italian café serving delicious fare.

Going to great lengths to help kids without hair

By Jeanette Brooks, AACS parent

First-graders Sarah Mazurek and Hannah Warway discovered a great way to give of themselves and help other kids. Both girls – along with Sarah's mom, Tanya – donated hair to an organization called Children With Hairloss in March.

AACS middle-school teacher Xan Morgan was delighted to find out about their donation because she too recently donated hair to a similar group, Locks of Love. All together, these four donated almost 36 inches of hair!

The hair will provide free, high-quality hairpieces to children who lose hair from medical conditions such as alopecia, burns, accidents, or chemotherapy. Because hair prosthetics can cost \$800 to \$3,500 and aren't always covered by insurance, the hairpieces can be a great blessing to families struggling with high medical bills. More importantly, the hairpieces help maintain children's confidence and ease anxiety as they face difficult medical situations.

"It made me feel really good inside to donate some of my hair to kids who are having trouble," Hannah said. Sarah agreed, saying: "It helped other kids and it helped God, too!"

Donating hair "is a great way for people of any age to make a difference," Mrs. Morgan said. "And these organizations don't discriminate – you can donate hair that's straight, curly, dyed, layered, and any color. Some salons will even cut your hair for free if they know in advance that you're donating it."

This was one of five teacher appreciation lunches organized by Principal Kathy Broege and room-parent coordinator Dawn Geldermans to reconnect and reward teachers and staff this year.

Busy schedules, different lunch times for middle-school and elementary teachers, and the usual 20-minute-lunch period make it challenging for teachers to stay connected and support each other. The luncheons are one way to build unity among the staff.

"It's nice to all sit down together," explains middle-school teacher Sue De Zeeuw. "There are times when I go days without seeing the teachers in the elementary wing." Fifth-grade teacher Becky Jungkuntz describes the luncheons as "an oasis in the middle of a busy day."

Many parents pitched in to plan menus, decorate, and cook delicious dishes. Others filled in for teachers during students' lunch and D.E.A.R. (Drop Everything and Read) time, providing an hour of uninterrupted fellowship and nourishment for teachers. Sounds of laughter and fellowship in the teacher's lounge made their efforts worthwhile. As room parent Cherie Egedy says: "The luncheons are a great opportunity to show the teachers how much we care and appreciate all the energy and devotion they put into teaching our children."

For more information about hair donation, talk to your hairstylist or visit these web sites:
www.childrenwithhairloss.org
www.locksoflove.org



Photo by Jeanette Brooks

Mrs. Morgan, Sarah, and Hannah sport shorter haircuts after donating their hair.



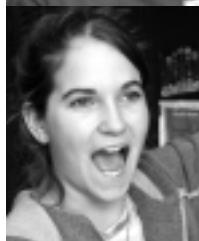
Grads recall special AACS moments

Submitted by the 8th-grade class

This year, we say good-bye to the second 8th-grade class to graduate from Ann Arbor Christian School. They have blessed our school with their leadership and friendship and we wish them all God's blessings as they move on to high school. Here are a few of their AACS memories:

- Deep, meaningful, heartfelt conversations about faith and life during devotions.
- Writing compliments to 4th-grade classmates on their birthdays, which teacher Kellie Steen put into a book.
- Watching quails hatch in 2nd grade and drawing cross-sections of them.
- All-School Unit: going to different classrooms to learn about many countries.
- Bailing out of sleds on the big sledding hill behind the old school.
- Middle-school praise jams.
- Paying taxes in 5th grade during the Early American unit.
- Making castles in 7th grade: using our imaginations and designing them ourselves.
- Praying in multi-grade groups on the National Day of Prayer.
- Visiting the Global Village and experiencing less fortunate people's lives, like cooking over a fire when it was drizzling and caring for the village baby – in our case, a water balloon!
- Awesome forts at the old school, hoarding "slates," and crushing rocks into powder.
- Coming to AACS in 3rd grade: everyone was friendly and interested in me, which is something I never experienced before.
- Wading in a knee-deep, freezing-cold stream for a 7th-grade science field trip.
- Knowledge gained by watching friends and the relationships I've experienced here.
- I hate to say it, but tougher teaching and grading has actually prepared me for high school. I'm a lot more confident now about high-school work.

The 8th-grade class of 2006 left to right, top to bottom: Aaron, Kelsey, Peter, Kevin, Jared, Joe, Rachel, Kelsey, Drew, Greta, Beth, Luke.



Photos by Jen Boes

We're accredited!

After months of hard work, AACS has earned accreditation from Christian Schools International. This process, which began in 2004, was successfully completed in May. A six-member team from CSI visited our school for two-and-one-half days, and after reading our self study, visiting classrooms, and speaking with parents and teachers, voted unanimously to approve accreditation!

The next step? The AACS school board will write a School Improvement Plan based on CSI's recommendations. We will have five years to meet the plan's goals.

Thank you to the accreditation steering committee, the teachers and staff, the school board, and many diligent AACS parents for your efforts! Job well done!

Keep AACS in your prayers!

Please pray:

- That the summer break will be a time of rejuvenation for the staff and students
- For the 8th-grade graduates as they prepare for the adjustment to high school
- That the Holy Spirit may prompt us to reach out to new students and their families and help them to feel welcomed in the fall
- That we may honor the Lord in all that we do at AACS



Sculpting our worldview:

My Japanese Adventure

By Annaka Scheeres, 6th-grade student

Last year at this time, I had many questions and worries about my family living in Japan for five months. What would my new school be like? Would I make many friends? This experience turned out to be the biggest adventure of my life. I'm glad I went!

I attended Christian Academy in Japan (CAJ), a



Photo by Sue Posterna Scheeres

Sixth-grader Annaka (3rd from left) with her CAJ classmates.

K-12 school near Tokyo. The 6th grade seemed huge with 40 students, but I felt welcomed the moment I walked in the door. I made many good friends that I still keep in touch with today.

My Uncle Tom and Aunt Michele teach at CAJ, and I lived with them and my cousin Chris during the week. I missed my family in Sagami-hara, where my dad was working, but my "second" family made me feel at home.

I enjoyed trying new classes, like home economics and industrial art, and having my uncle for math! Playing volleyball on a team for the first time was really fun.

CAJ was the place where I hung out with my friends, too. We stayed after school, did homework, and sometimes walked by ourselves to the shopping area close to school. Kids in Japan do many things on their own!

Traveling to school was an adventure. Most days, I rode my bike there and back. When I went home on weekends and returned to school on Mondays, I took the train for an hour and a half with friends! Some of my friends had to do this everyday.

My family and I went on lots of "field trips" by bike, train, and on foot. We traveled around Tokyo, visited temples, shrines, and gardens in Kyoto, and took the bullet train to Hiroshima.

Someday, I hope to return to Japan, but I'm happy to be back home and at AACs.



Photo by Kristen Kovak

Third-grader Lindsey displays her mask modeled after the masks of the Sepik River Valley in the Pacific Islands. Each classroom created artwork characteristic of the country they represented in the spring musical.

3rd graders gain mature appreciation of Native Americans

By Kathy Ann Moilanen, Beacon copy editor

"My goal in this is that the children's world gets a little bit bigger...that they are able to learn about other peoples, other cultures and God's creation."

- Teacher Kellie Steen

A docent-led art museum tour and a series of power-point presentations...sounds pretty adult for part of a 3rd-grade lesson, wouldn't you say?

Our 8- and 9-year-olds handled it well. They researched various Native American tribes in teams and gave power-point presentations full of insight into the tribes' lives. In a dimly lit classroom, titles came in from all sides of the projector screen with personalized colors, designs and fonts adding zip to each computerized presentation.

The children immersed themselves in such tribes as the Sioux and the Iroquois as well as the lesser-known Nez Pierce and Dakota peoples. They studied their housing, village life, food, customs and other interesting facts, such as how parents punished their children!

A field trip took the students to the traveling Artrain, actual train cars filled with Native American art. They pondered works contrasting traditional Native American lifestyles with modern America. One painting showed a long-haired man kneeling sadly beside highway road kill. An interactive art display let them hear an ancient language. The children even got to close their eyes to "experience" the sound of a herd of bison thundering in the distance.



Photo by Sue Posterna Scheeres

An "Artrain USA" volunteer weaves a Native American design as 3rd-graders Sara and Sam watch.

"My goal in this is that the children's world gets a little bit bigger...that they are able to learn about other peoples, other cultures and God's creation," said teacher Kellie Steen. "All the different cultures are gifts from God."



AACS opens door to a much bigger world

AACS tours world through song: Says 'bon voyage' to 2 teachers

By Jeanette Brooks, AACS parent

Where can you experience sights and sounds of India, China, Russia, the Pacific Islands, the Netherlands, Nigeria, South Korea, Italy, and Mexico—all in one evening? The AACS spring musical!

Under the able direction of music teacher Larry Karow and instrumental music teacher James Wagner, students performed the spectacular program "A World of Music" on May 4. Parents, grandparents, and friends were treated not only to a lively and multicultural musical celebration but also to a spectacular array of stunning costumes. Each grade performed in the native dress of a different country.

At the program's end, students gave Mr. Karow and Dr. Wagner giant notes of thanks and a warm farewell. Both are finishing their tenure at AACS at the end of this school year. They definitely will be missed!

The evening also included other honors. AACS recognized 3rd-grade teacher Kellie Steen and athletic director Melanie Bolhuis for five years of

dedication. Finally, 7th-grader Sera Bird won the John Philip Sousa Award, given to one student each year for outstanding musicianship, dependability, loyalty, and cooperation. Last year's winner, Kelsey Boes, presented the award.

Bravo to all the parents, teachers, and especially the students, who worked hard to make the spring musical a fantastic success!

*Spring musical
"A World of
Music" delights
crowd.*



Photo by Sue Crittendon

Dressed in the traditional clothing of India, 2nd graders sing enthusiastically in the all-school musical.

Students uncover family histories

By Kathy Ann Moilanen, Beacon copy editor

Be careful what family secrets you tell your child.

Many Ann Arbor Christian School 5th graders took great pride broadcasting their parents' childhood antics to a full audience during Family Heritage Day. One dad set a Christmas tree farm on fire. Another drilled holes into the family's brand-new garage door so it resembled Swiss cheese!

Still other classmates chose to use an allotted five minutes on microphone to tell touching family tales. One grandfather risked his life to save Jews during World War II. A mother escaped Castro-controlled Cuba, a trip that involved a leaky shrimp boat.

"I'm so glad my mom and her family risked their lives so we can be free," concluded Erik Freund in his speech.

The students learned their family stories by interviewing parents and grandparents as homework assignments. After writing versions of these tales, they gathered photos to make gorgeous family-history scrapbooks. The books included information about their countries of origin, researched at the library and online.

After showing off their heritage books and family keepsakes to a gathering of parents, grandparents and friends Feb. 10, the students feasted! Each brought food from their countries of origin or their favorite family recipes. The potluck included Mantecaditos (Cuban cookies with guava filling), Hungarian-American goulash, Polska Kielbasa, Japanese Mochi with Kinako, Banket from the Netherlands, and Finnish Pannu Kakkua (an oven pancake).

When your child or grandchild reaches 5th grade, don't miss this rich cultural event!

*One grandfather
risked his life to
save Jews during
World War II.*

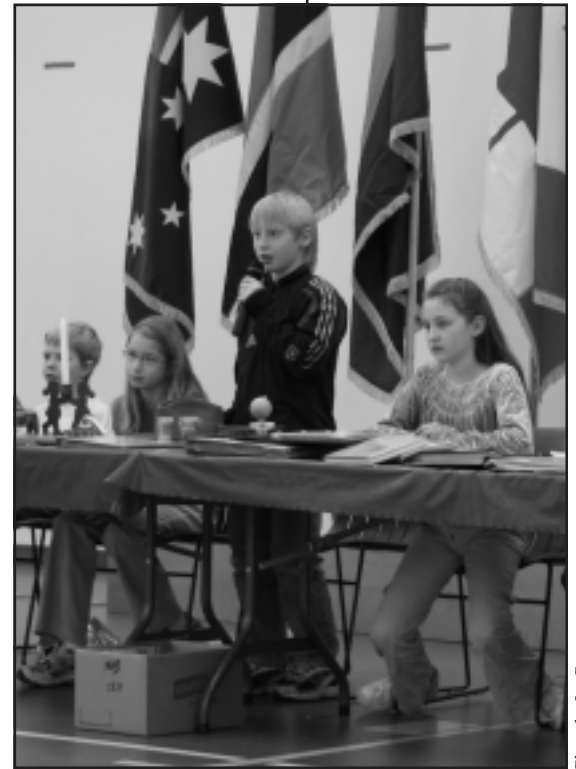


Photo by Jen Boes

*Erik shares his favorite
family history memories.*





Photo by Sue Postema Scheeres

Kindergartner Samantha finds numbers fun, showing off her 100's Day collection of 100 twist ties.

Finances on target

By Ken Fil, finance chair

At the AACS Annual Association Meeting on May 23, the Finance Committee reported that the school is making good progress toward its financial goals. Revenues and operating expenses year-to-date are on budget.

The main sources of income continue to be tuition and contributions. Contributions have slowed considerably, from roughly \$100,000 last year to a projected \$25,000 by the end of this fiscal year. This decline has been offset through increased enrollment and cost controls that were implemented at the beginning of the school year.

The mortgage balance stands at \$857,500 with annual payments totaling \$78,800, most of which is interest expense. A balloon payment comes due in 2009.

Ongoing financial goals include: covering all operating expenses through tuition, and using all contributions and fundraisers to cover mortgage payments, improve facilities and acquire educational equipment. The school will also launch a major capital campaign to pay off the mortgage, thus freeing the school from its major debt. Eliminating this burden will increase cash flow, help to keep tuition affordable, and secure the school's financial future.

In Brief

Annual meeting

Conchi Freund and Joel Hofman were elected to the AACS school board on May 23 at the annual association meeting. We give thanks for the service of Greg Vyletel and Lorri Vander Roest whose board terms will be finished this summer.

Collecting books

AACS is collecting new and gently used history, geography, science, and other books to be mailed to Moldova. Contact the school office for details.

From the back page

Answer: Future kindergartners Bella and Katie take a liking to the mice in the science lab during this year's Science Fair.

During a recent unit, 6th graders wrote poems based on current events. Kyle DeVries' poem about the Middle East was chosen to be published in an anthology called *A Celebration of Young Poets*.

Taliban Fever

By Kyle, 6th-grade student

Taliban, Taliban, Taliban
with the Taliban around
you might go to jail
if you make the wrong sound.

You don't want to get caught
because the Taliban are bad,
they'll take away your freedom
and everything you had.

Women and girls they hate so much
for them there's different rules
prisoners they are in their homes
with no friends and no schools.

But one fateful day
came the U.S. of A.
they took over the Taliban
and took some of the hate away.

Osama bin laden helped the Taliban
He sends us messages on videotape.
He went into hiding in Afghanistan
worry and fear we can never escape.

He moves in secret
he lives in deep caves
The Afghan people are strong
They will continue to be brave.

Committees need your skills

Submitted by committee chairs

Did you know there are six standing committees at Ann Arbor Christian School? The last edition of *The Beacon* described the **Education**, **Finance**, and **Technology** committees. Below are summaries of the remaining three. Join a committee and get involved!

The **Public Relations Committee** works with the principal, teachers, and parents to promote the school. Committee members maintain the school's website, which offers an overview of the school and is updated with current events. Check it out at: www.annarborchristian.org. The committee places ads in a variety of area magazines and newspapers. Members also publish *The Beacon* newsletter three times a year. It is mailed to all families and supporters. If PR is your passion, contact Sue Postema Scheeres to volunteer.

The **Building and Grounds Committee** oversees the maintenance of the school property. The committee organizes monthly parent work days, provides simple building maintenance, and negotiates service contracts with external suppliers. A board member on the committee facilitates communication with the board and staff. If you have skills in this area, contact co-chairs Jeff Eekhoff or Steve Lamine.

The **Development Committee** ensures the school's long-term financial strength and viability. Tasks include encouraging and directing charitable support of the school, managing capital campaigns, developing new revenue sources, and communicating needs to the school's support base. The committee needs members committed to the school and interested in preserving its long-term viability and affordability. Contact Tim Dekker if you are interested.



Annual events energize students

Even the rainy weather couldn't dampen the spirits of AACs students during the annual Field Day events. While the kindergarten through 2nd-grade event was moved inside, the older students braved the wind and rain. Kudos go out to our students for their positive attitudes despite the unfavorable conditions! Pictured here are kindergartner Jonathan and 6th-grader Megan.



Photo by Marcia Mitchell



Photo by Greg Yyletel



Photo by Bob Brodbeck

An expert in Choi Kwang Do demonstrated the art of breaking boards during a workshop at Fine Arts Day. Students showcased skills in art, writing, music, and oration at the annual event.

Our musicians experience Toronto's sights and sounds

By Marcia Mitchell, Beacon editor

The AACs Instrumental Music Ensemble took a giant step, embarking on a two-day adventure to Toronto this spring. Twenty-two musicians, five chaperones, Principal Kathy Broege, and instrumental teacher James Wagner piled into vans packed with instruments and enthusiasm to give the gift of music to others. The trip included performances at a school and a church. The students at Willowdale Christian School grooved to the music, especially appreciating the familiar tune "Spider Man." Their vice principal and instrumental teacher Cathy Sallows thanked the band for providing a selection of music so interesting to every age group.

Wonderful acoustics at the Community Christian Reformed Church accentuated the talents of our budding musicians. The band performed for the churches' Dinner Club ministry, which began as an outreach to seniors and single moms and provides dinner twice a month for up to 150 people. Listeners stood to sing "O Canada," and – for possibly the first time in history – clapped to the music of Tchaikovsky's "Nutcracker Suite." The band received a well-deserved standing ovation. Gracious host families from the church housed students for a much-needed good night's sleep.

Although the performances were the reason for the trip, students also enjoyed a morning at the Toronto Science Centre and witnessed the area's multiculturalism through signs written in French, Arabic, Chinese, and Korean. According to 6th-grader Hannah Klinkman, the highlight was free time spent at a local park, where the kids played a rousing – and long – game of capture the flag.

The students performed beautiful music, made memories and strengthened friendships. Thank you, Dr. Wagner, for a successful trip, and for all your contributions to a thriving instrumental music program! We wish you all God's blessings in your future endeavors. *Soli Deo Gloria!*



Photo by Marcia Mitchell

Seventh-grader Elisha and her dad Mike take a ride on the luge simulator at Toronto's Science Centre.





What are these girls looking for? Answer inside on page 6.

Upcoming AACS Events

June

- 14 Eighth-grade Graduation, 7:00 PM
- 15 Last day of school -- 11:35 AM dismissal

August

- 30 Back-to-School Picnic
- 5:30 PM Meet on playground
- 6:00 PM Welcome, prayer and picnic

September

- 5 First half day of school -- 11:45 AM dismissal
- 12 Middle School Back-to-School Night, 7:00 PM
- 19 Elementary Back-to-School Night, 7:00 PM

October

- 19-20 No school -- Teacher's Convention

November

- 1-2 Parent-Teacher Conferences, Kindergarten
- 3 No kindergarten
- 10 Grandparent's Day -- 11:45 AM dismissal
- 11 Pancake Breakfast
- 20-21 Parent-Teacher Conferences, Grades 1-8
- 21 Half day of school -- 11:45 AM dismissal
- 22-24 No school -- Thanksgiving Break

PRINTED
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MANOUPH BELLEN
ASSOCIATES, INC.

Ann Arbor
Christian
School
for Excellence in Education



Ann Arbor Christian School
5500 Whitmore Lake Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48105
Phone: 734.741.4948

