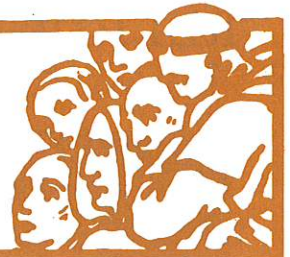




Thomas Aquinas College  
**NEWSLETTER**  
JANUARY - FEBRUARY 1979

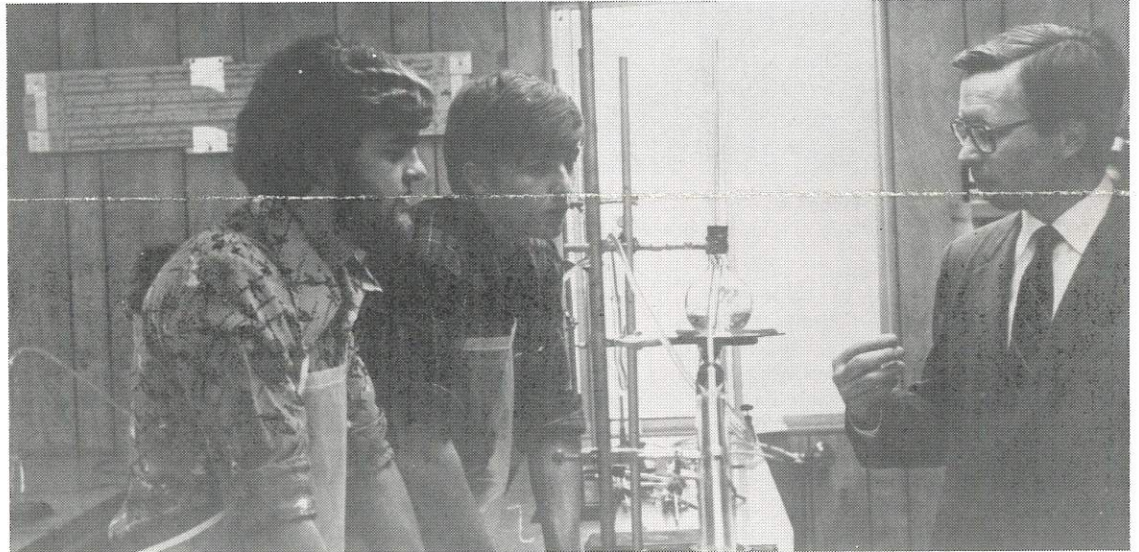
10000 N. Ojai Rd., Santa Paula, California 93060



# Universal Education & Natural Science

*Tutor Marcus Berquist, Ph.L. (Université Laval) discusses the neutralization of acids with sophomores Thomas Cools and Matthew Gebken.*

*Mr. Berquist has been an Assistant Professor of Philosophy at the University of Santa Clara, Saint Mary's College, and the University of San Diego. In this article, he summarizes the place of experimental science in the Thomas Aquinas College curriculum.*



Patty Ford photo

Those who examine the curriculum of the College are sometimes surprised at the amount of time devoted to the experimental science of nature. And they are often puzzled by the courses themselves, and the ways they are like and unlike the usual college courses in such subjects.

One cause of such difficulties is the distinction usually made between the sciences and the humanities. When this distinction has become the framework within which liberal education is located, it becomes very difficult to understand the educational program of the College. For the division of the sciences from the humanities is of recent date and is based upon assumptions contrary to the philosophical understanding that gives life to the College. In particular, by putting philosophy among the humanities, it assumes that "the proper study of mankind is man". Those who now profess philosophy have largely turned from a study of the things themselves to a study of the opinions of man; philosophy has curiously come to be *about* philosophies. The College, on the other hand, continues to hold that philosophy is concerned with the truth about the things that are. Furthermore, the current division of knowledge is the result and expression of a certain despair about universal education. It assumes that education might be scientific or humanistic, but not both. The College, on the other

hand, is devoted explicitly to universal education—to making its students proficient in all or most branches of knowledge—and believes that such an education is as possible now as it ever was.

Thus, as regards the study of nature, the College follows the example of Aristotle himself, as outlined in his *Parts of Animals*:

*Having already treated of the celestial world . . . we proceed to treat of animals, without omitting, to the best of our ability, any member of the kingdom, however ignoble. For if some have no graces to charm the sense, yet even these, by disclosing to intellectual perception the artistic spirit that designed them, give immense pleasure to all who can trace links of causation, and are inclined to philosophy.*

The knowledge of nature is an essential part of the knowledge of a free man, and because it is intrinsically worthwhile, it will be pursued not only in its general outline but also in its particular details. Thus, a good liberal arts curriculum will include the experimental sciences of nature, since these are the only ways of extending our knowledge to the details of natural things.

Now in natural science, as everywhere else in the curriculum, the College is primarily concerned with making a *good beginning*.

Given the limited time available, and the various capacities in students and faculty, it is impossible that great progress should be made in any one science. It is possible, however, to do what one does carefully and thoroughly. Thus, while fewer experiments are done, and equipment is less sophisticated, what is done is done thoughtfully and discussed at length in class, in relation both to common experience and to the other studies in the curriculum. The nature and power of a method are learned naturally, not from dogmatic courses on "scientific method," but from the actual experience of working with particular problems which are fundamental enough for the student to profit from understanding.

Therefore, unlike many courses designed for the general student, which are *about* science in some way but never actually require the student to *do* any science, the courses at the College are based upon and follow the methods appropriate to the sciences themselves. But unlike courses designed for science majors within other colleges, they are limited in scope and spend much more time on fundamentals and on integrating scientific considerations with common experience and other kinds of knowledge. No attempt is made to bring things "up to date"; for the right evaluation of current theories requires a prior consideration of more basic questions.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NOURISHES FAITH



Rev. Msgr. John F. Gallagher, J.C.D.  
College Chaplain

Under the guidance of Monsignor John F. Gallagher, J.C.D. and Father Thomas A. McGovern, S.J., the whole community of Thomas Aquinas College has the benefit of a rich spiritual life. In addition to sacraments, daily Mass, Rosary, and other devotions, many students are involved in the Legion of Mary and the choir.

Freshman Lise Moreau of Victoria, B. C., Canada reflects that, "Working with the

Legion of Mary completes my life at Thomas Aquinas College. I concentrate a lot here on myself—both in getting an education and in developing my spiritual life; through the Legion I can do the important work of spreading this good to my fellow man as well." Junior Therese Syren of Anchorage, Alaska is the president of the campus *Legio Mariae*.

The choir follows the guidelines set by the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* of Vatican Council II: "The Church acknowledges Gregorian Chant as proper to the Roman liturgy; therefore, other things being equal, it should be given pride of place in liturgical services." The choir sings Gregorian Chant as well as leading the congregation in traditional Latin and English hymns. The four-part chorus with 20 to 30 members sings liturgical music, sacred polyphony, and classical choral music.

Senior Michael Six of Poughkeepsie, New York comments: "We are devoted to fostering a genuine sense of piety in the faithful at Mass by singing appropriate liturgical music which focuses attention on the Mass and not on the music itself. We perform more lighthearted music at the Christmas and Spring parties for our enjoyment and to entertain the rest of the community."

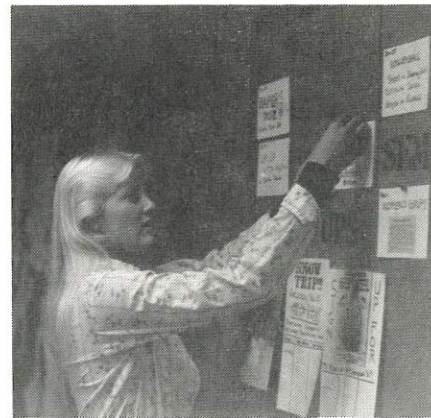
## HOME, HOME ON THE RANCH . . .



Patty Ford photo

Dr. McArthur discusses the riding program with Natalie St. Arnault and Jeanette Langley (both of Colorado). Along with Cathy Walsh of Phoenix, Arizona, they have helped organize and lead afternoon and weekend rides around the Ferndale Ranch. The horse is aptly named Jim Dandy.

## Campus Life Issue



Patty Ford photo

Senior Maggie Ford, of Downey, California, is at the center of the student activities program, planning and promoting a variety of extra-curricular events. In this article, she summarizes some of the most popular.

Volleyball has always been the favorite of Thomas Aquinas students. This year the league consists of 12 teams, with a record 80 people participating. Games are played on Thursday and Friday afternoons, and are getting very competitive.

The men are also participating in a local basketball league, Monday and Wednesday nights at the gym in Ojai. They are even winning these days! Soon the softball season will start with games on Sunday afternoons.

Saturday afternoon horseback riding is a real favorite. There is a choice of trails crossing the Ranch meadows up Mount

Santa Paula, or through the canyon into Los Padres National Forest. The high trails offer breathtaking views of the countryside all the way to the Pacific and the Channel Islands.

On weekends, we usually bring a "classic" movie on campus, set up our own theater, and afterwards enjoy an ice cream social, complete with home-baked goodies. Periodically, when there is a good movie or sports program on T.V., we have a T.V. night at a tutor's home — a sort of family night.

Equally popular are the more academic activities, which include Shakespeare readings on Wednesday evenings and readings of Newman sermons on Sunday evenings in the Hacienda.

Off campus, we have had a snow trip to Big Pines in the Angeles National Forest. The contrast between the Mojave Desert (which we skirted on the way) and the snow-covered mountains is really stunning. There are excursions planned to Magic Mountain and Disneyland, the Ventura beaches, the South Coast missions (San Buenaventura, Santa Barbara, Santa Inez, and La Purisma Concepcion). A group attended a discussion with Charlton Heston following his performance in "A Man for All Seasons" in Los Angeles.

The most traditional and most popular activities are our casual parties and formal dances. Suiting the season and the occasion, they usually include the culinary products and entertainment talents of the students.

## KIRK STUDY PRAISES COLLEGE

"I think it the best college for anyone in America to choose, provided that he is willing to work very hard at his books, and entertains no strong prejudice against Papist dogma and doctrine." This strong endorsement of Thomas Aquinas College comes from Dr. Russell Kirk's just published *Decadence and Renewal in the Higher Learning* (Gateway Editions, South Bend). Professor Kirk of Mecosta, Michigan examines the trend of American university and college education during the last 25 years. He demonstrates the decay of standards, aimlessness of objectives, and corruption of students in the contemporary multiversity, which he dubs "Behemoth State U." Nor does he spare smaller institutions.

He quotes Dr. Ronald McArthur's observations on the self-made dilemma of the Catholic colleges:

"Religious courses were isolated," he wrote, "and in no way performed a sapiential function with respect to the rest of the curriculum, contenting themselves with passing on some of the truths of Catholicism and the richness of the Catholic heritage - all the while claiming to be the most important part of Catholic education.

The Catholic college was, therefore, a house divided against itself, which asked its students either to retreat into the narrow confines of a Christian philosophy unable to cope with the modern world, or to abandon in the name of that world the Christianity which was their valuable possession. Added to this weakness is the general debility of all the American colleges, which long ago abandoned any genuine liberal education, substituting for it a random collection of courses to serve the multifarious demands of the students."

Dr. Kirk's visits to the campus led him to conclude: "Thomas Aquinas College is the most close-knit community of scholars—senior and junior—in this country, and therefore a stimulating, cordial, cheerful place to be. Aquinas College knows freedom under dogmas, which is no paradox. It is a circle of friends, everyone knowing his companions, all bent upon the objects of wisdom and virtue, all sharing a common faith. And it is a highly intellectual community, in the better sense of 'intellectual': the Thomas Aquinas tutors could talk rings around the sentimental liberals or the carping radicals on the faculty of Behemoth State U."

## TAC STUDENT DELEGATION ATTENDS REAGAN — HARVEY FORUM



Carole Schabow photo

Newsman Paul Harvey and Mrs. Harvey meet Freshman Christina Andres of Lake Park, Florida. Her account of the Young Leaders Forum follows.

Former California Governor Ronald Reagan and newsman Paul Harvey, two of the country's most outspoken conservative figures, were the featured guests at a lecture and reception recently attended by a group of Thomas Aquinas students.

The appearance by Governor Reagan and Mr. Harvey was one in a series of thirteen educational seminars offered in cooperation with the University of Southern California College of Continuing Education, for Ventura County students with "leadership potential."

The lecture, held at the Oxnard Community Center, was also open to the general public but Mr. Robert Seale, program administrator invited the students from Thomas Aquinas as his personal guests. They were also given the opportunity to meet and talk with the two speakers and their wives at a private press reception held beforehand.

Mr. Harvey's topic for the evening was "Life in America Today." The well-known news broadcaster and columnist, whose

radio and television constituency is one of the largest in the nation, offered both amusing and alarming observations of current trends in American society, along with his no-nonsense opinions on their improvement.

Following Mr. Harvey was Governor Reagan, who presented a realistic, but encouraging, "Special View of Accomplishment," with his experience and insight into American economics and politics.

Proceeds from such occasions are used to benefit the Young Leaders Forum, an organization comprised of almost 200 student leaders from Ventura County who are attending the entire series of public seminars.

The program sponsors have extended an open invitation to the College for subsequent events in the series, and Thomas Aquinas students and faculty plan to take advantage of future opportunities like the Reagan-Harvey seminar, which will be offered throughout the remainder of the year.



Patty Ford photo

Three volleyball league games go on simultaneously in the Hacienda park on campus.

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We began our classes this year at the end of October; and even then we ended up, after a worrumsome summer, with facilities which were inadequate for our purpose. We survived those first weeks because the students rose to the occasion, and because the spirit of the community became even stronger with each adversity. We now find that the College is, if anything, stronger in its purpose than ever before, and, as our campus takes shape, that our future looks bright.

This Newsletter contains reports of our students' activities, which reflect, I think, the vitality of our efforts . . . and of your own, for your interest, concern, and prayers for Thomas Aquinas College have made, and continue to make possible, a place in which these excellent young people can develop their minds and hearts.

The intellectual and spiritual growth occurring in the lives of students, faculty, and friends of the College is a natural development of the serious academic work undertaken in this Christian community. We are grateful for the degree of success thus far; and especially under the extremely difficult circumstances of planning, funding, and constructing facilities, while carrying on the educational program.

We look forward to the time when our administration, tutors, and students may direct their entire energies to the intellectual pursuits of the College, unhampered and undistracted by the burden of laboring with limited facilities.

It is of lasting importance that we complete construction and funding of the commons building in May. It is equally essential that we move promptly to secure permanent dormitories, classroom buildings, and the chapel in the near future. The total phase I needs for capital in 1979 amount to \$1,750,000.

In light of these facts, I would like to urge those who plan to invest property, securities, or cash in the permanent construction program at some future date, to consider: (1) the possibility of giving property, securities or cash now; (2) or, alternatively, to make a definite decision to commit these resources in the future.

For those desiring to make a gift in the future, it is advisable to execute a will, thus assuring your purposes will be carried out.

I take this opportunity to discuss this aspect of support because historically among colleges, it is the single most significant part of a successful long-range program.

So, should you be interested, we would be happy to discuss your participation with you or anyone who might represent you in such a matter.

But please remember that your prayers are the most important source of our success, and that those who pray for us make it possible for many good young people to have the chance they so much deserve.

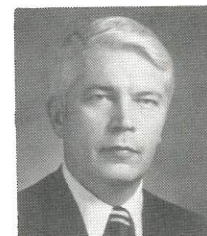
## SCHOLARSHIP FUND APPEAL NEARS GOAL

The Scholarship Fund goal of \$51,000 seemed improbable in November, but has now very nearly been reached. In a recent letter, Dr. McArthur called the response "overwhelming" and the accompanying letters "extremely gratifying."

Dennis Koller, Assistant to the President, reports that an unprecedented number of contributors helped replenish the scholarship fund. Seventy percent of those are first-time donors to the College. Mr. Koller pointed out that charitable foundations which give the College annual grants are encouraged by the increasing base of support evident in such a generous response. Recognizing the College's indispensable role as a Catholic center of learning, many priests and religious (more than ten percent of all contributors) gave of their own limited resources. They, as well as many others, wrote that their prayers also were being offered for the College community.

Mr. Koller also reports that membership in the President's Council (those making annual gifts of at least \$1,000) has increased from 35 members in November to 52 in mid-February.

## Board of Governors Adds William Isaacson



*William James Isaacson  
Chicago, Illinois*

Thomas P. Sullivan, Chairman of the Board of Governors of Thomas Aquinas College, has announced the election of William James Isaacson to the Board.

A native of Chicago, Mr. Isaacson graduated from Loyola University of Chicago and Northwestern University School of Law. He served in the United States Naval Reserve, worked as a tax accountant and in private law practice, and since 1955 has been a partner in the firm of Henehan, Donovan & Isaacson, Ltd. He is a member of the American, Illinois, and Chicago Bar Associations, as well as of the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars, and an Associate of the National College of Education.

A Catholic family man, Mr. Isaacson and his wife of 21 years Mary Alice, have three children, William James, Jr., Margaret Anne, and James Edward. He has worked extensively for the cause of Christian family values. He is currently Secretary and Director of the Institute of Religious Life; Assistant Secretary of the Apostolate for Family Consecration; Director and member of the Executive Committee of Friends for Life, Inc.; Director and Member of the Executive Committee of National Pro-Lifepac.



Jane McClenahan photo

Snow covered Topa ridge during January storm.