

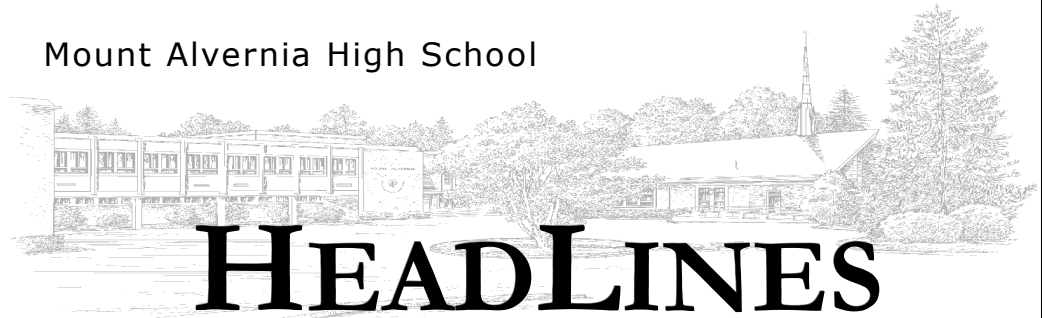
October 2009

Volume 11, Issue 1

790 Centre Street
Newton, MA. 02458

Phone: 617-969-2260
Fax: 617-969-4246

Mount Alvernia High School



Dear Parents,

Many years ago I was given an assignment in graduate school: to create a product designed to affect change. (I think it must have been around the time that teenage mutant ninja turtles were popular.) Working with other students in the class, I proposed the idea for a comic strip featuring three very special super heroes. They were small lizards with Latin names. (Sr. Celestine helped with the names.) Each one exhibited a powerful characteristic and when they worked together, the combination of their talents was unbeatable. They were called: Audacia (bold), Meditabundus (thoughtful) and Sal (clever). We thought they would teach children how to solve problems with courage, reflection and a little wisdom.

What prompted me to think of these little creatures recently? Like all private schools, Mount Alvernia has faced challenges this year. The economic downturn led many families to rethink their plans, especially for the middle school years. This caution contributed to our enrolling the smallest seventh grade class since 1994. Our response to this development has been short-term prudence and long-term strategic planning.

We have tightened our belts and adopted cost cutting measures without compromising our program – which is, in fact, our strongest feature. *Boston Magazine's* ranking us as the #1 private school for value recognizes what you and we have known all along. The personal attention and the academic preparation here are excellent.

Circumstances like these times force all institutions to look at their missions, their constituencies and prospective clients. Hunkering down is not an effective way to respond. When you visit, you will see improvements throughout the school. To enhance communication and instruction we have added flat screen monitors for announcements in the main corridor and the dining room, two classroom Smart Boards and a language lab.

Since the spring we have been working with a branding company to assess our market position and to design a new logo, a new web site, and new ads to capture and publicize the unique qualities of Mount Alvernia High School. Over the next few weeks you will see evidence of our initiatives. The new school flag, your daughter's MA tee shirt and your automobile decal are three of them. I believe the strategies we are adopting are bold, thoughtful and clever. I think the little lizard super heroes would approve.

Maybe there's a new look at 790 Centre Street; however, the faith-centered, holistic Franciscan education you chose for your daughter remains a constant.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathleen Kent".

Kathleen Kent
Head of School

Attendance Requirements

In order to play a sport or participate in any after school activity a student **must** be in class for a **minimum of 5 periods** in a day.

Perfect attendance cannot be achieved if a student has any half absences during the year. A half absence is determined as follows:

If a student comes in after 9:51 but before 11:42, a half absence as well as a tardy is recorded. If a student comes in prior to 9:51 she is marked tardy only.

If a student leaves after 9:51 but before 1:03, a half absence as well as a dismissal is recorded. If a student leaves after 1:03 she is marked as dismissed only.

Students arriving in homeroom or at school after the music goes off at 7:53 will be marked tardy. A student receives detention for every three morning tardies.

Detention

Detention takes precedence over all after school activities. There will be no acceptable excuse for not going to detention. Please keep this in mind when scheduling dentist and doctor appointments. Detention is always on Wednesday afternoon from 2:45 to 3:30.

Please refer to the handbook for updated cell phone/electronic device infractions as well as the acceptable use policy and the consequences for violation.

Lunch Cards

Meal cards are available in the office all the time. Lunch cards are available in increments of 10, 20 and 30 punches. The cost is \$20.00, \$40.00 and \$60.00 respectively. See Mrs. Herlihy if you have any questions.

No School or Early Dismissal Days

Monday, October 12 NO SCHOOL

Columbus Day

Wednesday, October 14 Early Dismissal (approx. 11:15)

Standardized Testing Day

Seniors do not have school. This is the day they should schedule their college visits.

Book Club

All are invited to join the Mount Alvernia High School Book Club on Tuesday evening, October 20th at 7:00 p.m. Discussion of the book *The Elegance of the Hedgehog* by Muriel Barbery will take place.

Olympic Day

On Friday, October 23rd students will participate in spirited intramural events during the last two periods of the day. Teams are made up of students from across all grades and the members of each team are told the color they should wear which identifies their team. Faculty members are there to cheer them in in the quest for M.A.H.S. "Olympic Gold."

Progress Reports

Progress reports will be issued October 7th.

Junior Ring Ceremony

The ring ceremony for the class of 2011 will be on Tuesday morning, October 28th at 8:15 a.m.

Senior Retreat

On Thursday, October 15 and Friday, October 16 the senior class will go on an overnight retreat at the Craigville Retreat Center. They will leave school at approximately 1:00 on Thursday and return to school by 2:30 on Friday.

Financial Aid Night

College financial aid night is on **Wednesday, October 21st at 7:00 p.m.** This night is open to parents of students in all grades. We strongly encourage parents of students in grade 11 and 12 to attend. The information given out is valuable as you begin the college application process.

Picture Retakes

We haven't received our school pictures yet but we do know that the retake day will be November 3rd. Students requiring retakes will be able to change their tops for their pictures. This will take place first thing in the morning.

Coffee with the Head of School

On the second Tuesday of each month, please join Mrs. Kent in the dining room for coffee and conversation from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. All are welcome.

Community Service Forms

Evaluation forms for summer community service work completed were due on September 30th. If you have any questions, please call Sr. Julie at extension 15. You may also refer to her newsletter "Franciscan Footsteps" for more community service information.

