

Dec. 2006/Jan. 2007

FROM THE PRINCIPAL:

We are now approaching the busiest time of year for so many of us. It is truly a challenge, especially for our students, to stay focused when the holidays are approaching, exams are on the horizon, athletics, and activities continue to absorb one's energy, and the everyday confrontations of life consistently present themselves. It is nothing new to most of us, yet the reality is fact doesn't reduce the stress.

Let us continue to stay focused on our spiritual lives as the best way to confront the daily struggles of life. God calls us on a daily basis to be close to Him and to relate all of our joys and all of our struggles within a personal and intimate relationship with Him.

At a recent Mothers' Club Meeting, some ladies were discussing how here at Saint Thomas we jump from one major activity to another. Indeed this is true! We have constant involvement in athletic games and meets every week. So many parents are faithful in attending so many events, and many help out in different ways for the benefit of the Saint Thomas community at large. Mr. Dan Green put on a fine, professional and comical drama production of Neil Simon's *Fools*, and we congratulate him and all of our fine and dedicated actors and helpers - Bravo! We had a wonderful Eucharistic celebration at the Father/Son Mass with Bishop Vincent Rizotto, '49, as our celebrant. Thanks to the moms once again for the marvelous reception afterward, and thanks to all of the dads who went out of their way to be with us on this special occasion. Archbishop DiNardo will be celebrating our Mother/Son Mass on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception on December 8.

We are so extremely proud of the vast number of parents, friends, faculty, and staff whose time and energy assured a very successful auction. A special thanks to Jeffrey Hill, Nancy Carter, and Ann Laws, whose leadership guided us all. This year's auction was the most successful ever: we netted over \$350,000. These funds will be used to enable us to provide the best education possible in dozens of different ways, including many items from the "Teachers' Wish lists" (smartboards, instructional materials...), more defibrillators for the safety of our Eagles, and financial help for those in need. Thank you to

ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

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STH DATES

(See www.sths.org for full academic/sports calendars)

- Dec. 1 – Tuition Due for Second Semester
- Dec. 1 – Christmas Concert, 7:30 p.m.
- Dec. 6 – Permit to Exam Cards issued
- Dec. 8 – Mother/Son Mass, 8 a.m.
- Dec 14-19 – Semester Exams
- Dec. 20 - Jan. 3 – Christmas Holidays
- Dec. 24 – Christmas Eve Mass, 5 p.m.
Reckling Gymnasium
- Jan. 3 – Faculty In-service / No School
- Jan. 4 – Classes resume
- Jan. 15 – MLK Holiday
- Jan. 28 – Open House, Prospective Students

all of you who participated in our auction in one way or another.

As we approach celebrating the birth of our Savior, let us stay focused on God's tremendous love for us as individuals, as families, and as a school community. He loves us more than we could ever comprehend or appreciate.

JUNIOR SPRING SAT/ACT DATES

All juniors are encouraged to take their first SAT in either March or May. They should also take an ACT in April (preferably) so they will have a set of standardized test scores before their senior year. Juniors who are in Advanced Placement courses this year should consider taking the SAT Subjects Test in June, and freshmen and sophomores in Advanced Biology should plan to take the SAT Subjects Test in Biology in June. A strong score on this test may be used in the college admission process for selective colleges and universities.

St. Thomas High School is an SAT testing center for the May 5, 2007 test; we encourage you to register for this exam as soon as possible (by mid-March). Space is limited and students will be placed at each testing center on a first come, first served basis.

PSAT & PLAN TEST RESULTS

In October, all sophomores and juniors took the PSAT, and in November, all sophomores took the PLAN. Both of these tests are practice tests for the SAT and ACT.

PSAT and PLAN test results should be in the mail to all families by December and/or January. In addition to the score sheets, the exams will also be returned to the student. It is very important to retain the exams and answer sheets as these will help to prepare for the SAT and ACT, as well as help identify individual strengths and areas of weakness.

THEA TESTING

Texas Higher Education Assessment

The THEA is a test which measures the reading, mathematics, and writing skills of students entering Texas public colleges and universities. Students must attain a passing score on this test before they are allowed to register for college courses within the Texas public school system. The passing score is set by individual institutions. For example, University of Texas at Austin requires a combined 1070 SAT I with a minimum score of 500 on each of the verbal and math sections, or a 23 ACT with a minimum of 19 on each of the English and Math sections. Each section of the THEA is designed to measure a student's academic skills against an established standard of competence. A student's score on each section of the test is based on the student's performance in relation to the skills being tested. Scores are not related to how well other students have performed on the same section. Please check with your college for its specific requirements. For more information, please visit the website at: www.thea.nesinc.com.

SENIOR NEWS

College acceptances are coming in! We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate those seniors who have already received their first college acceptance. Please make sure to bring a copy of your acceptance letter to the Counseling Center. In addition to acceptances, students are already receiving merit-based academic scholarships. Again, we would ask that you bring us a copy of your scholarship award so that we may have it on file. This information is very important for our commencement program.

SAT Reasoning Test / SAT Subject Tests (www.collegeboard.com)

TEST DATE	REGULAR REGISTRATION DEADLINE	LATE REGISTRATION DEADLINE
January 27, 2007	December 20, 2006	January 4, 2007
March 10, 2007 ▲	February 2, 2007	February 14, 2007
May 5, 2007*	March 29, 2007	April 11, 2007
June 2, 2007	April 27, 2007	May 9, 2007

▲ – SAT Reasoning ONLY available on this date.

* St. Thomas High School is a testing center for this date.

ACT Assessment / ACT Assessment Plus Writing (www.act.org)

TEST DATE	REGULAR REGISTRATION DEADLINE	LATE REGISTRATION DEADLINE
February 10, 2007	January 5, 2007	January 19, 2007
April 14, 2007	March 9, 2007	March 23, 2007
June 9, 2007	May 4, 2007	May 18, 2007

CAMPUS MINISTRY

Service Opportunity: Assisting the elderly at the Forum's Assisted Living Center located at 801 N. Post Oak. A special orientation for our students has been scheduled for **Dec. 9** from 10 a.m. - 11 a.m. For further details please contact Judy at The Forum, 713-956-5581.

ATTENDANCE OFFICE

Reminder: If your son is absent, a phone call before 9 a.m. is required, along with a note the day of return. If either of the above is not adhered to, the student may be given a detention on the day of his return and his absence will be unexcused. SEE PAGE 27 OF THE STUDENT HANDBOOK

Lost and found clothing items will be sent to the homeless shelter if not claimed by December 15.

DRESS CODE

Review pages 29 and 30 of the student handbook for "proper appearance." Please be sure that your student(s) has appropriate shirt, pants, over the ankle socks, proper shoes and hair (including facial hair). Students not adhering to the handbook will be given appropriate consequences.

EDLINE REPLACES PAPER PROGRESS REPORTS

Beginning second semester of this school year, mid-quarter paper progress reports will no longer be mailed home since parents now have access to regularly updated grades through Edline. Any parent who still needs to set up an Edline account should send an email requesting an activation code to: Edline_Registration@sths.org and follow the accompanying instructions. Your son's activation code will be included in the email. Parents who do not have access to a computer and are unable to use Edline should request paper progress reports by sending written notification to Lisa Mumbach in the Main Office.

SEMESTER EXAM SCHEDULE

Thursday, December 14:

7:50 – 9:30 Social Studies
10:30 –12:00 Science

Friday, December 15:

7:50 – 9:30 English
10:30 –12:00 Theology

Monday, December 18:

7:50 – 9:30 Foreign Language 1 & 2; Health
10:30 –12:00 Math
1:00 – 2:30 Health for Sophomores

Tuesday, December 19:

7:50 – 9:30 Foreign Language 3 & 4

Policies

1. Students are not excused from scheduled exam times because of early dismissals. Students who miss exams because of vacation plans will receive a zero (0) for the exam.
2. Students who are too ill to write a scheduled exam must provide a written statement from a doctor in order to have an exam re-scheduled due to illness.
3. All semester exams are final. The semester mark will be determined by a combination of 37.5% first quarter, 37.5% second quarter, and 25% exam.

Permit to Exam Cards will be passed out on December 6. All fees must be paid and accounts current at that time.

FATHER/SON RETREAT

Friday-Sunday, January 12-14, 2007 All of the men of St. Thomas are invited to an active weekend of spirituality and fellowship at Camp Allen Retreat Center in Navasota, Texas. Students may also bring a step-father, uncle, grandfather, family friend, or a "father-figure" if their father is deceased or not available to attend. The retreat will be lead by Mr. Matulia, Fr. Storey, and Mr. Wardwell. Registration forms can be found in this issue of Big Red News and in the campus ministry office. They must be turned in to the campus ministry office by December 8, 2006. The limit is 80 people, which means only 40 students and their father/father-figure will be able to attend - so register early!

OPEN HOUSE

Prospective students and parents are invited to visit St. Thomas for our annual Open House on **Sunday, January 28**, at 1 p.m., beginning in the Cemo Auditorium of the Moran Fine Arts Center. There will be an opportunity to meet teachers in the various academic departments as well as students, coaches, and other staff members, and also tour our impressive facilities.

MOTHERS' CLUB NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Are you currently a senior mother who will not have any sons at STH next year? If the answer is yes, you are an eligible candidate for serving on the nominating committee that selects the leadership positions of the Mothers' Club for the next school year. A total of five mothers will be chosen to complete the Nominating Committee whose other members are the current president, the immediate past president, Fr. Belisch, and Fr. Huber. Candidates just have to submit their names to Fr. Belisch, our club moderator, either by e-mail (carl.belisch@sths.org) or by some form of written notification. He will forward your name to Margaret Chiavone, this year's facilitator for the nominating and selection process.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING YOUR NAME FOR CONSIDERATION IS MONDAY, JANUARY 15, 2007

The Nominating Committee will be announced at the February Mothers' Club meeting on **Saturday, February 10, 2007**.

Below is a complete timeline for the selection of the Nominating Committee and the selection of next year's Mothers' Club Executive Board.

- January 15** Deadline for submitting name for consideration for the Nominating Committee.
- February 10** Nominating Committee will be announced at Mothers' Club meeting and current junior class mothers can begin self-nomination for a Mothers' Club Executive Board position by filling out a self-nomination form and submitting three letters of recommendation.
- March 2** Deadline for submitting self-nomination form and three letters of recommendation.
- March 7** Candidates for Board positions will be presented at the Mothers' Club meeting.
- April 15** Nominating Committee will meet to select 2006-2007 Executive Board officers.
- April 18** New Executive Board will be presented for ratification.

Detailed information regarding all the above will be made available at Mothers' Club meetings and on the STH website, or by contacting Margaret Chiavone by email at jchiavonejr@houston.rr.com or by phone at 281-376-4240.

STH TO HOST PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS

Current students and their families are our greatest ambassadors. Please remind friends and relatives who have junior high sons about Open House on **Sunday, January 28** at 1 p.m. For all admission information and forms, please visit our website at www.sths.org.

"all that Glitters" Auction 2006

It's hard to believe that Auction 2006 is over. And what a night it was! The sparkling decorations, the amazing meal and stellar company all combined to make it a night to remember. And there was plenty of spirited bidding too. Thanks to our many donors, preliminary results indicate that your generosity will allow us to contribute much, much more to STH than we had anticipated. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

An event of this magnitude would not be possible without the tireless dedication of a legion of volunteers, including our talented committee chairs, and the many underwriters, donors, alumni and friends of STH. Your wholehearted response to our requests at every turn was overwhelming and truly exemplifies the spirit of the St. Thomas family.

Although the stars, glitter, and auction hype will fade, the friendships forged during the process of planning this event are enduring. Many thanks for allowing us to be part of this experience with each of you.

SOCK HOP APPRECIATION

Thank you so much to the parents that helped chaperone the SOCK HOP. We really appreciate that you were kind enough to extend your already long day and join us after the game. Even though the weather did not cooperate, a good time was still had by all!

FRESHMAN ENTRANCE EXAM GOODIES ARE NEEDED

The St. Thomas High School Entrance Exam is scheduled for **Saturday, February 3, 2007** at 8 a.m. We are in need of breakfast items such as kolaches, donuts, fruit trays, breakfast casseroles, croissants, and orange juice. A sign-up sheet will be available at the January Mothers' Club meeting. For questions, or if you'd like to volunteer, please contact any of the following: Deborah Sifuentes at dsifuent@mdanderson.org; Gloria Moreno at gmoreno@rocketmail.com; Eileen Debo at john.e@sbcglobal.net, or Lisa Phillip at lisa.phillip@hybasinternational.com. Thank you for supporting this event!

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

St. Thomas High School Concert Band & Orchestra
in conjunction with
The St. Thomas High School Choir

Friday, December 1, 2006

7:30 p.m.

Cemo Auditorium

Under the direction of
Donald Thoede & Joshua Wilson

Free Admission and Refreshments

DRAMA GUILD NEWS

Many thanks to all who volunteered their time and sent refreshments and supplies to help make the Drama Guild production of Neil Simon's *Fools* such a big success. You are all very much appreciated. Our talented students put on a terrific show that provided lots of fun and laughter to all who attended. We had a full house every night!

The Drama Guild is looking forward to the spring production of *The Music Man* which will be presented March 23, 24, and 25. We encourage all students to become a part of the St. Thomas drama team this spring as this will be a really big show and we'll need many singers, dancers, musicians, actors, set designers, and stage crew. You'll have a great time!

There is still time to order a DVD of our fall production. It would make a great Christmas gift! Please contact Gina Sheil at 281-363-0575 or rsheil@flex.net.

CHRISTMAS EVE MASS

Celebrating Together as a Tradition
St. Thomas High School

Sunday, December 24, 2006

5 p.m.

Reckling Gym

MUSIC GUILD NOTES

Thank you to the Federico and Vargas families who chaperoned our football games and provided drinks for the band, and thanks to all those who assisted them.

Thank you to everyone who helped make the Chamber Music Concert and the Hot Art/Cool Jazz Dessert Night a success. Thanks also to Sandra Nauert, Maria Mesa, and Janet Ruhnke for coordinating those events.

Upcoming Events...

The next MUSIC GUILD MEETING will be held on Saturday, January 20 at 9:30 a.m. Please come to hear more about these and other events. If you have questions, please call Guild President, Kathy Terry at 713-880-1602, or email ktterrysthsmusic@sbcglobal.net; or contact STH Music Director, Donald Thoede at 713-864-6348 x 250.

MOTHER/SON MASS FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Friday, December 8, 2006

8 a.m.

Reckling Gym

Reception following in Cemo Auditorium

Respect Life Baby Drive Collection
Accepting donations for the less fortunate:
diapers, blankets, baby clothes,
baby formula and food,
all new baby items appreciated

STH MERCHANDISE AT MOTHER/SON MASS

The St. Thomas Booster Club has restocked its merchandise with new items for purchase after the Mother/Son Mass on December 8. Stop by Mary Moody and Turner Hall after Mass to purchase Christmas gifts and stocking stuffers! Also, the arrival of more sweatshirts, sweatpants, long-sleeve t-shirts, scarves, and beanies are in just in time for the cold weather.

HIGH SCHOOL ENTRANCE EXAM AT ST. THOMAS

Prospective students take our entrance exam, the High School Placement Test (HSPT), at St. Thomas from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, February 3. The cost is \$25 and may be sent with the pre-registration form or turned in at the door the day of the test. Pre-registration forms may be obtained from the school office or from our website.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER:

It is hard to believe that we are half way through the school year. By now, most of our seniors have sent in their college applications and are anxiously awaiting responses. We will blink and graduation will be here. The Mothers' Club is already busy assembling a nominating committee to select the 2007-2008 Executive Board and soon our members will be asked to begin the self-nomination process for those positions. If only we could slow down the speed of life!

As we approach a New Year, it's natural to reflect on our past accomplishments. I've been thinking a lot about the concept of "The Village" and the idea that it takes a whole one to raise a child. I have always supported this concept, but have come to realize that true success lies in the quality of "The Village." After all, there are good villages and better villages. When common values are reinforced at school and at home, the potential for successful children increases. It's important that the values of respect, honesty, hard work, responsibility, self-control, and community are reinforced from a number of angles. While it is impossible to control all of the influences on our children, I thank God for leading us to "The Village of St. Thomas High School." It is an honor to share in this community with so many outstanding parents, students, teachers, and administrators.

This year's Auction – "*all that Glitters*" – *St. Thomas High School Red Carpet Gala* is a perfect example of a strong village. Our Auction Co-Chairs, Nancy Carter, Jeffrey Hill, and Ann Laws, along with a host of volunteers, created the perfect setting for a beautiful celebration of the extraordinary generosity and support within the St. Thomas Community. For nearly a year, these ladies have worked tirelessly and their hard work certainly showed on November 4 with this remarkable event. Congratulations and an enormous "THANKS" to Nancy, Jeffrey, Ann, and all of the committee chairs and volunteers.

Tradition also plays an important part in the quality of a village and no school knows tradition like St. Thomas High School. We always look forward to November and December and the tradition of the Father/Son and Mother/Son Masses. Our sons really look forward to the tradition of the donuts!

This year's Father/Son Mass on November 1 was certainly in keeping with tradition. After a beautiful Mass with Bishop Vincent Rizzoto as our guest celebrant, Trina Harmeyer, Gail Nevlud, and Annette Tamborello made sure each father, grandfather, and son had their fill of donuts; 230 dozen or 2760 donuts to be precise! A special thank you goes out to Mr. Jim Fischer, Class of 1939 for generously underwriting the cost of the donuts once again. This year our men enjoyed a new tradition of a special photo presentation. The Mothers' Club has officially moved into the 21st century! Thank you Trina, Gail, and Annette for hosting this special event.

We now look forward to the Mother/Son Mass on Friday, December 8. Archbishop Daniel DiNardo will preside as we celebrate the Eucharist with our sons. Mary Beth Kayle, Dana Jo Kurtin, and Mary Valencia are planning a special day for us. The Booster Club merchandise will be set up so we can Christmas shop for our favorite Eagles!

I'll look forward to seeing many of you at Carrabbas afterwards for lunch at 11 a.m. If you'd like to attend, contact our Social Events Chair, Kathleen Barndt at kbarndt@houston.rr.com to make a reservation. And while you're at it, you can make your reservation for our next social event, a bus trip to the Round-Top Antique Fair on Saturday, January 20. It's going to be a good time!

The Annual Christmas Gift Fund is in full swing. This fund was established many years ago for all of the families of St. Thomas to come together as one family to show appreciation for the Faculty and Staff. It's such a great way for everyone to participate and all donations are kept confidential.

Save the date for our first Mothers' Club meeting of the new year on Wednesday, January 10, 2007. We will celebrate Mass with Father Belisch in the Chapel at 11:30 a.m. and the meeting will follow at noon in Cemo Auditorium. Find time to rest a little because we have a busy and exciting 2007 coming up!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.
Cathy Poye, President
713-460-4115

SOCIAL EVENTS CALENDAR

Friday, December 8 - Lunch at Carrabba's, 3115 Kirby, 11 a.m., \$20 per person. RSVP by December 1.

Saturday, January 20, 2007 - First Annual STH Mothers' Club bus trip to the Round Top Winter Antiques Fair. Bus leaves STH at 8 a.m., returns 6 p.m. Cost \$30 per person. RSVP by January 3, 2007.

RSVP to Kathleen Barndt, 713 823-9117 or by email to kbarndt@houston.rr.com

SPRING BIBLE STUDY

Next semester, Bible Study for Adults will meet Monday evenings 7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. in Room 2116. The first meeting will be at Jax Grill (on Shepherd) on January 8 at 7 p.m. to pick up books and get acquainted. Books this session will be Cultural Tools for Studying the New Testament, and Mysteries of the Rosary. IF you have questions, see Fr. Belisch.

VALENTINE DANCE CHAPERONES NEEDED

Please join other “big hearted” STH parents as chaperones for the Valentine Dance. It will be held on Friday, February 9 from 8:30 p.m. – 11:30 p.m. in Cemo Auditorium. *This dance is for freshmen and sophomores only.* Please call Beverly Cones 713-937-1893, Dianne Hammelman 713-973-7037, Mary Valencia 713-688-7853, or email Dianne at diham39@aol.com to volunteer.

OPEN HOUSE NEEDS BAKERS AND MORE

St. Thomas Open House is scheduled for Sunday, January 28, at 1 p.m. Last year we welcomed and fed over 750 families. We will need 300 dozen cookies for visitors as well as sandwiches, salads, chips, and cookies for approximately 200 boys and teachers working the event. At least 20 parents are needed to help with the event. Please join us in welcoming prospective students and their families.

If you can help with time or food donations, please call
Jeannette Jeffus 713-283-0030
Cecile Guarino 713-721-5600
Kathy Saccone 281-447-6684
Diane Watler 713-877-1107

FATHER/SON MASS

The Father/Son Mass was well attended. We were honored to have the Most Rev. Vincent Rizzotto, '49 as the Principal Celebrant. The reception following the Mass was a big success due to the help of our dedicated Mothers' Club members/parents who provided the orange juice, the lovely fruit trays, and helped with everything from table set up, to serving, to clean up. We are so thankful to receive the donation from Mr. Jim Fischer who sponsored the dozens of donuts we served; and to Betty Fischer who assisted with the displays from our Mothers' Club archives. Thank you to Fisher Florists on Shepherd for the loan of the lovely plants on the altar at Mass; and to Craig Slein for his assistance with the powerpoint presentation. This was a new addition this year. A special thank you to Madelyn Garza in the office for her help in collecting photographs, and tp Joe Callahan and his staff for all of their assistance.

STH MOTHERS' CLUB EAGLE'S EYE CHAIRPERSON

The Eagle's Eye is the document that each new STH Mom receives at the Mentor Mom Party she attends. This document contains all the answers to the everyday questions a Mom would have about STH.

The chairperson would need to update the information for next school year. This position really begins in the winter semester when you'll need to get an understanding of what information needs to be updated, and get acquainted with the staff or Mothers' Club member who is able to supply the new information. Some information can be acquired as early as Spring Break; other facts, such as the coming-year calendar, are collected in May. The first Mentor Mom Party is usually in June.

Currently, the document is in Microsoft Word format. When the updated document is completed, a copy is printed. This printed document is duplicated by the STH Print Shop for the Mentor Moms' Parties.

I will be happy to supply you with a copy of this year's Eagle's Eye to get a feel for the job. It's a great chance to learn the latest and work with those in-the-know. Anyone interested in filling this position or having any questions, please contact Pat Fahy 281-455-0998 or patricia.fahy@ sbcglobal.net.

DIRECTORY UPDATES

Killian Holt (11th): Parent 2

Mr. Troy Everett Holt
271 Misty Dawn Dr.
Conroe, TX 77385
Ph. H (936) 321-0666

Aaron Davatgar (11th):

Ms. Lauren Barragan-Davatgar
4100 Greenbriar #315
Houston, TX 77098
Ph. H (713)298-1402

Anthony Blunsen (10th):

M/M Philip Blunsen
838 Hickorywood
Houston, TX 77024

MORE DIRECTORY CHANGES

Todd Zdunkewicz (11th):
M/M Richard Zdunkewicz
4018 Betsy Ln.
Houston, TX 77027
Ph. H (713) 840-8317

EAGLES TREATS

In November, Linda Makris, Frances Ferrante, Mary Payne, Susan Gutkowski, Suhong Pan, Stephanie Landsman, and Kathy Stewart provided much appreciated snacks for the Teachers' Lounge. The faculty and staff appreciate every bite! If you'd like to participate in providing Eagles' Treats, contact Susan Gutkowski at 713-965-0317.

Save the Date

Round-Up 2007
Sunday, March 4, 2007
12:00 to 6:30 p.m.

*All proceeds benefit the
Tuition Assistance Program*

CASINO NIGHT 2007

"Guys Night Out"

The STH Alumni Association is sponsoring the 15th Annual Casino Night on Thursday, January 25, 2007. The Casino Night is always a great "stag" event. It will be held in the school cafeteria from 7 p.m. until 10 p.m. This is a time to get together with fellow alumni and dads of St. Thomas and win some really fine prizes.

The cost per person is \$20 for advanced tickets and \$25 at the door. BBQ dinner and beverages included. Make checks payable to the Alumni Association, 4500 Memorial Dr. Houston, TX. 77007 or see Fr. Gaelens for pre-registration. For more details call the alumni office at 713-864-2606 x153 or check the web site at www.sths.org/alumni. ***Pass the word along!***

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