



The SAGA

Serving the publics of Opelousas Catholic,
Holy Ghost, and Academy of
Immaculate Conception



"Guiding our children on their Journey with Jesus"

WELCOME HOME

"Enter the majestic hall of the Vikings for the 2016 Opelousas Catholic Homecoming festivities!" Alumni, families and friends came together in true Viking spirit to celebrate this special Homecoming with a grand parade, beautiful coronation program, glorious mass, exciting pep rally, and the tremendous game at Donald Gardner Stadium ... what a sensational time for everyone involved!

Leading the parade were the Grand Marshals, the **Marianites of Holy Cross**, who have been celebrating their 175th anniversary. In appreciation for their service to the Catholic Church and Catholic education and in honor of their special anniversary, they were invited for this recognition. The Marianite order opened the Academy of the Immaculate Conception for girls over 160 years ago. They also assisted in opening Opelousas General Hospital and founded Our Lady of Prompt Succor Nursing Home and C'est La Vie Living Center. OC thanks the Marianites for their glowing spirit, hard work and dedication to Jesus and his Mother Mary.

Another exceptional individual leading the parade was senior **Emily Ortego** as Parade Captain. For her steadfast school involvement, she was chosen for this distinguished honor. Among Emily's numerous activities have been Drama Club, Beta Clubs, and the Senior Ministry Team. She is an athlete as well, lettering four years in soccer and three years in softball. Emily finds time for volunteer work and for her music, playing multiple instruments and enhancing the music at OC school masses. She also loves her church Youth Choir and Youth Group. Opelousas Catholic was so proud to recognize all of these very important people.



Emily Ortego (OC senior), selected as the Parade Captain, was ready to roll on the Homecoming parade route.

Following the parade, many advanced into the gym to view the lovely Coronation program where Miss Madelyn Dupont was crowned as Queen 2016. Maids were announced as Blaire Guidry and Jade Bellard.

Before the big game, several alumni gathered at the Alumni Welcome Tent for refreshments and reacquainting before watching the pre-game and half-time presentations and cheering on the Vikings in their big victory over West St. Mary. See more pictures inside this newsletter of the Homecoming events where the classes of 2007, 1997, 1987, 1977, and the AIC and Holy Ghost classes of 1967 were saluted.

2016 Court and Escorts

Jade Bellard & Matthew Conde
Caroline Chachere & Connor Miller
Zori Conerly & Samuel Jarrell
Elizabeth Duplechain & Kaleb Bellard
Madelyn Dupont & Joshua Arceneaux
Samantha Dupre & Richard Martin Hollier
Mallory Fontenot & Anthony Bui
Hannah Goins & Nicholas Mouret

Blaire Guidry & Kaleb Douget
Emily Jarrell & Bailey Hanks
McCall Keeler & Gaige St. Cyr
Grace Marks & Tristan Estis
Kellie Meche & Alex Robin
Charley Minyard & Ross Costa
Oliva Roy & Spencer Gardner
Olivia Speyrer & Thomas Artall



The Marianites of Holy Cross were presented with a framed proclamation at the Coronation for serving as Grand Marshals for the 2016 Parade. With them are Msgr. Keith DeRouen, chancellor, and Mr. John Cavell, principal.



*2016 Court honorees at the game:
Maid Blaire Guidry, Queen Madelyn Dupont, and Maid Jade Bellard*

LETTER from MR. CAVELL

My Fellow Vikings:

As was announced at the beginning of December, I am stepping down as principal of Opelousas Catholic. It has been a great honor to serve this institution as principal. I hope time will show that I have acted as a faithful steward of OCS since arriving. I extend my thanks to the Diocese of Lafayette, the OCS Board of Pastors, and the Opelousas Catholic Advisory Council for presenting me this tremendous opportunity. I am particularly appreciative of the efforts of Mrs. Rose Lalonde and Mrs. Cindy Gates for their continued support and efforts on the part of OCS.

The faculty and staff at Opelousas Catholic have been remarkable. I truly appreciate the beautiful bond of friendship that we have shared. We have worked together to instill in our students a deep appreciation for our mission, and they will carry that with them for a lifetime. Please know of my continued prayerful support in the year ahead. The "Viking Family" is an often-used phrase that, unless experienced first-hand, cannot be fully appreciated. The students of Opelousas Catholic School are among the greatest. I will always remember fondly their smiles, kindness, generosity, and, most of all, their loving spirit. Watching these children grow has been the greatest source of joy for me, and I truly love each one of them and will continue to keep them in my prayers.

Opelousas Catholic School will always remain in my heart. I will think back often on the fond memories of the joys we have shared. I continue to believe in the mission of OCS and will not be leaving the school completely... I am simply changing roles; I am moving from principal to parent.

God Bless,
John A. Cavell, Jr.

ANNOUNCEMENT from the CHANCELLOR

My dear Opelousas Catholic Family,

I am happy to announce that the Board of Pastors has selected a new principal for Opelousas Catholic for the 2017-2018 academic year. The Board of Pastors unanimously has selected **Mrs. Marty Heintz**.

Mrs. Heintz has been part of the Diocese of Lafayette Catholic School System for well over two decades. She has taught in grades 6-12, she has coached sports, she is the vice-principal at Teurlings Catholic in Lafayette and has been instrumental in growing that high school tremendously. Her letters of recommendation speak highly of her Catholicity, her professional yet gentle manner of working with faculty, staff, parents, students, and alumni. Her knowledge of running and managing all aspects of Catholic Schools is extensive. Likewise, Mrs. Heintz is a sought-after advisor and evaluator of Catholic Schools in Louisiana, and as a result, she possesses a network of contacts and has a wealth of experience in seeing what has worked and what has failed in Catholic Schools. She has worked with our Catholic School Superintendent for 16 years. We had a search committee made up of the Board of Pastors, Cindy Gates (our vice-principal who is retiring), a grandfather of students presently attending OC and an alumnus, a teacher, a member of the Advisory Council and parent, another parent, the Superintendent, the Athletic Director and Mr. Bernard Dumond who served as Chair of the Committee. Mr. Dumond has been working with OC for our vision and long range planning. The majority of the committee recommended Mrs. Heintz to the Board of Pastors after being part of the interview.

The Board of Pastors is delighted with the choice and so grateful to God that we had two candidates who were outstanding. Please pray for the new leadership, and ask the Holy Spirit to inspire more families to choose Opelousas Catholic to educate their children and grandchildren.

With reliance upon Our Lady Queen of Angels, I remain in the Lord Jesus,

Rev. Msgr. Keith J. DeRouen
Chancellor



Martha "Marty" Heintz

MEMO from ADMINISTRATION

Happy New Year! It is difficult to believe that we are in 2017, and we are looking at a very busy second semester.

The faculty and staff returned on January 4th for a Professional Development Day to finalize the self-assessment report for the AdvancED Accreditation Peer Review which is scheduled for March 30-31. During a working lunch, the faculty met with community stakeholders who collaborated with the five committees to coordinate the simultaneous work being done to develop a long-range plan to move OCS forward into the future. A Vitality Summit is planned for February 2nd, and all interested community members are invited to help determine the future priorities for Opelousas Catholic School.

Set for the week of March 20-24 is the OCS Academic Council's "Extravaganza". The theme for this year's event is "We are Art"! The week-long activities will be located in the gym with a schedule of events coming soon. Please feel free to come by and visit during this fun, educational occasion.

Faculty will spend the remainder of scheduled Professional Development In-Services examining and aligning our curriculum according to the most recent Louisiana State Department of Education Standards and Benchmarks.

As we continue our busy second semester, may God bless and direct the Opelousas Catholic family to better know, love and serve Him in this life in order to be happy with Him in the next.

Cynthia G. Gates
Rose B. Lalonde
Co-Administrators

IMPORTANT EVENTS AHEAD ...

School Vitality SUMMIT

Family and friends in the community are invited and encouraged to attend the **School Vitality Summit** on **February 2nd** in Our Lady Queen of Angels Church Hall starting at 6:00 p.m.

This school strategic planning process has been underway in 2016-17. Five "vision areas" are being reviewed: Mission & Catholic Identity; Governance & Leadership; Academic Excellence; Operational Vitality; and Continuous Improvement & Innovation. The Summit will give stakeholders an opportunity to give input and then to vote on the goals that they feel are most important. It is an exciting time for the future of OCS!

AdvancED RE-ACCREDITATION

Lots of work has been done in preparation for the March 30-31 peer review visit. Opelousas Catholic School was initially accredited through SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools) as it was known in December 2002. After this, schools must go through re-accreditation every five years. Thus, it is our time to complete the process for the third time in the continued certification. It is now known as AdvancED. OCS thanks all of the faculty and staff for their diligent work in this process.



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BRIEFS

Two years in a row!! Thanks to the support of the families, community and alumni, OC won the **\$10,000 grand prize** in the Super 1 Foods "Cash 4 Schools" Program again this fall! Competing with schools within Louisiana and several surrounding states, Opelousas Catholic kept up 1st place through the two months of daily texting by OC supporters and finished on top! *What a blessing!*

One of our "new" faculty members who joined us this school year is alumna **Pam Cormier Helton** (OC 1985). She is teaching 8th grade English/Language Arts after working in the public school system for over 20 years. ... *Welcome home!*

Thank you to **Tony Chachere's** for sponsoring the advertisement for OC in the "Best of the Best" publication when OC was voted **"2016 Best School"** in the Daily World reader's poll ... 1st place four of the last six years!

OC appreciates the efforts of Frank's Poboys on East Landry Street in Opelousas! During the first week of each month through May 2017, they will donate 5% of sales to Opelousas Catholic. Thank you to all who participate in this **"Frank's for Vikings"** program!

Have you reviewed the beautiful **school website**? The school takes pride in it and invites you to visit the site at www.OCSvikings.com to learn more about our many blessings. OC also has an official **Facebook page**. Please "like" the page and receive frequent posts to keep updated on weekly activities on campus.

The **Scholastic Book Fair** is coming! The fair to benefit the high school/junior high library will be in full swing during the week of February 13-17. *Take this opportunity to encourage more reading!*

Alumni, parents, family and friends are encouraged to collect and send to OC the **UPC labels** from Community Coffee and **box tops** from General Mills goods. In the year 2016, OC received over \$900.00 from Community Coffee and almost \$800.00 from General Mills. *Let's continue to turn trash into cash ... and please keep recycling, too!*

The OC Senior Class and Ministry Team thank all who supported their annual **National Pro-Life March Raffle**. This project raised over \$12,000.00 and has helped to curb the cost for the students' trip in January. *They are eternally grateful!*

Interested in a **trip to Austria, Germany and Switzerland**? Register now for this amazing June 2017 journey! The approximate cost is \$4,300 per student and \$4,500 per adult. Contact John Braham, OC campus minister, for more information at 337-942-5404 ext. 114.

FROSH Service Retreat

A new format was initiated this year for the Freshmen Retreat where "service" was the primary focus. On September 30th, the 63 freshmen along with their senior class mentors and sponsors were divided into groups serving six work sites in the community (St. Landry Catholic Church & Cemetery; ICONS Food Bank, Hope for Opelousas, Prompt Succor Nursing Facility, Immaculate Conception Church, and the Lighthouse Mission for Men).

All students agreed that this "new beginning" retreat brought them a sense of purpose and responsibility in helping the community. It also was a great bonding experience between the senior mentors working together alongside the freshmen for the common good. After a day's work and group discussions, it was beautiful to see the Candlelight Prayer Vigil around the Pieta late that night. The Holy Spirit was working!



One group of students completed service work at ICONS Food Bank.



A moving late night Candlelight Prayer Vigil capped off the day of service.

DEVELOPMENT BULLETIN

It is my wish that you enjoy this winter issue of The SAGA newsletter. Watch for the summer edition coming in July which will include the Catholic School Week honorees along with the spring and end-of-the-year programs. All alumni and friends are encouraged to contact the Development Office with information that may be included in future SAGA issues.

The Development Office has been busy as usual during the first semester of 2016-17: newspaper advertisements such as the two-sided full page ad for Homecoming; Grandparents' Day; Homecoming activities; School Vitality and Planning; communications including the new weekly e-blasts and church bulletin inserts; OC Facebook postings; planning for the Tasters' event and more!

Thank you to all past queens, team leaders and classes from 2007, 1997, 1987, 1977, and 1967 who attended Homecoming events! Keeping in touch with friends and alma mater is so special.

We also thank our many "angels" who contributed to yet another successful Angel Appeal Drive. The 2016 drive saw gifts totaling \$28,235! It was enhanced by our 2016 Tasters' Dinner and Auction event, thus bringing the proceeds above \$50,000! This is a blessing to the children at Opelousas Catholic School.

We will soon celebrate "Catholic Schools Week" around the country! Let us keep Catholic education in our prayers ... remembering what sets us apart!

*Kathy Hebert
Development Director*

P.S. Come to TASTERS 2017!

The OC Development Office invites you to the 18th annual Tasters' Dinner, Auction and Culinary Competition on February 8th in the Opelousas Civic Center off of Creswell Lane Extension. The OC families and community friends look forward to the delicious dishes offered by various chef and restaurant supporters. Let's see who will take the "Top Chef" award for the favorite dish this year!



The auction committee has been working hard to attain many unique auction items made possible by generous businesses and individuals in the community. Some of those items will be offered in a Live Auction format, while many will be placed in the Silent Auction! This event has truly become THE event to attend in our area!



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TECH “BITS and BYTES”

The year is moving quickly. Our parents and teachers are using our new school information system, RenWeb, like pros! It has proven very informative for positive and helpful communications between teachers, parents and students. We still have much to explore regarding the functionality of the software, but we are on our way to utilizing it to its fullest.

Speaking of communication, you can keep up with the latest news from OCS through our website, www.OCSvikings.com, our Opelousas Catholic School Facebook page, as well as the calendar on RenWeb for our parents.

Thanks to a generous donor, we have been able to upgrade the technology for some of our teachers and classrooms. We currently have teachers using wireless technology to display lessons on the Promethean Board and/or the smart television. Being able to be mobile in the classroom while controlling the lesson electronically is a distinct advantage for monitoring the student's learning and understanding. Technology has become such an important part of our lives that it is important to teach our students to use it responsibly. Our teachers understand this and are committed to guiding our students in this area.

Looking for a way to help OCS? Bring us your used ink, toner, and old cell phones to Room 10. We recycle them and get cash back or discounts on office supplies. Thanks to our many parents who make our recycling program a success. We generally earn over \$500 each year through this.

You can also earn significant state tax credits by purchasing new computer equipment for the school. Call Beth Hebert (337-942-5404, ext 102) for more information regarding this beneficial program.

It is my pleasure to serve our students and parents in the area of technology, and we look forward to continuous improvements. Thank you for your support of OCS, and please pray for us to continue to lead by example.

Beth G. Hebert
Technology Coordinator

Technology Tidbits

Students enjoy modern technology on campus ...

- Over 250 updated computers
- Two fully-networked computer labs
- Two fully-automated libraries
- Filtered and monitored internet access
- Interactive Promethean Boards in classrooms
- Two 30-unit Neo2 laptop carts for grades 3-8
- Accelerated Reading, grades 3-8
- Chromebooks for seniors



VIKING PRIDE

Opelousas Catholic School was recognized as a **2016 National Beta School of Merit!** This prestigious honor is a true indication of our dedication to academic excellence and commitment to celebrating student achievements.

OC has awesome **grandparents** who visited for Grandparents' Day in September, beginning with a Prayer Service in the gym and followed by classroom visits with the children. Thank you to them for their love and devotion!

In the OC School Social Studies Fair, the team of **Matthew Semien** and **Jack Fontenot** placed **FIRST** in the History division; and in the OC School Science Fair, it was the team of **Mallory Pitre** and **Blaire Gerald** placing **FIRST** in the Plant Sciences division. *Good luck in Parish contests!*

OC was listed among the **top 100** fundraising schools for the St. Jude Math-A-Thon this past year! What generosity from our OC families for the children of St. Jude's!

Elementary students **Rowen Bergeron** and **Landon Miller** received New Orleans Saints' game tickets as a reward for their excellence in the "Fuel Up to Play" event. They both achieved at least 150 miles through the program.

Thank you to the teachers, parents and students who worked so hard to make the annual Christmas Play such a beautiful success!

In our **Accelerated Reading** program, the top readers at mid-term were Ethan Stelly, Dylan Hollier, and Hunter Allemond in junior high; and Beckett Boyd, Wyatt Provost, Zachary LaGrange, Emily Jesclard, and Joshua Lafleur in elementary.

Senior Ministry students and chaperones are making final plans for their trip to Washington, DC in late January to stand up for **LIFE** in the National Pro-Life March. They will also take in many historic sites to make it both a spiritual and educational experience.

Mrs. Pitre's Theatre Class participated in Opelousas Little Theatre's "Ghost the Musical" in November. Several OC students were featured in this musical based on the 1990 film, and senior **Bethany Guidry** had the leading role. You can even hear Bethany singing "Ghost the Musical" on YouTube!

The **OC Drama Club's** upcoming performance is February 3 (7 pm), 4 (2 and 7 pm), and 5 (2 pm) entitled "A Slice of Life". It involves 3 short plays (2 comedies and 1 drama). Witness lots of talent!



OC is proud of the nine 7th grade students who qualified for the Duke University Talent Search and became eligible to take the ACT at this early stage due to their outstanding achievement test scores and their academic excellence: Anna Kate Emonet, Kaylee Bergeron, Eli Guidroz, Jace Sloane, Jaren St. Clair, Bowman Guin, McKenzie DeRouen, Camille Burns, and Brady Hernandez.

ELEMENTARY SNAPS!



At the annual Flea-Fly game sponsored by the OC Athletic Council, the mini cheerleaders showed off their cheering skills with the help of the OC varsity cheerleader squad.



Coach and Dad Jonathan Boyd (OC 2000) stopped for a picture with his son Emmett as the Fleas prepared to take the field.



Several members of the OC Cub Scout Pack led in the Color Guard for the annual Veteran's Day program. Local veterans attended, and the proper retirement of a worn U.S. flag was demonstrated by the scouts in an impressive ceremony.



"Christmas around the World" was presented by the preschool and elementary school students for the annual Christmas Play. The gym was packed by parents, grandparents and family members who enjoyed the readings and song presentations.



The PTO provided their "Movie Night" again this year to the delight of the children! They came in their pajamas, brought their blankets, and enjoyed milk and cookies while watching "Frosty the Snowman" on a big screen in the gym. It was a fun evening!

Fourth grader Preston Sloane proudly held his pet dog for the annual "Blessing of the Animals" on the elementary grounds. The event was held in honor of the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, patron saint of animals.



Mrs. Hope Charles used a creative way to teach her 4th graders about the election process. They held a "candy election" for all of the elementary students. With their two nominees as Hershey Bars and Jolly Ranchers, the 4th graders campaigned by making posters and buttons. Some acted as journalists, and others gave speeches to persuade students to vote for their nominee. A valuable life lesson was gathered!



ON THE SPORTS SIDE

Football

Vikings football had another outstanding season in a tough district! With a regular season record of 7-3, they went to the bi-district playoffs against Calvary Baptist. The Vikings lost in a hard fought battle, ending a super season. *Special congrats on All-District and All-Parish 1st Team honors to Devin Thierry (WR); Spencer Gardner (OL); and Sam Jarrell (P); and All-Parish 1st Team to Gaige St. Cyr (DL).



CHANGES coming in FALL 2017

In the latest district plan approved by LHSA, the Vikings are moving to Class 1A and will be a larger 1A school in District 5. Their district competitors will be Catholic of Pointe Coupee; False River; North Central; Sacred Heart of Ville Platte; Slaughter Community; and Westminster Christian Academy.

Cross Country

The OC runners had a good season with the girls finishing as District Runner-Up and completing the State Cross Country Meet in 17th place.



Swimming

OC boasts of a "repeat State Champion swimmer" in **Gavin Armstrong**, 11th grade athlete! He earned the STATE TITLE in Division IV, capturing 1st place in the 500 meter freestyle again as he did last year! He was listed as a "Prep Athlete of the Week" in the Daily Advertiser newspaper in November. Gavin also made the Southwest Louisiana All League Swim Team and is being honored at a special banquet in January.



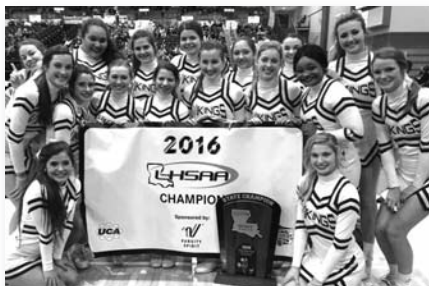
Soccer/Basketball

Boys' and girls' soccer and basketball seasons are underway! Visit the school website for schedules, and stop in to see some Viking and Lady Viking action!



- Good luck to the varsity spring sports including baseball, softball, track and field, tennis, and golf!

SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENTS



State Champion Cheerleaders!

STATE TITLE for CHEERLEADERS!

Our OC varsity cheerleader squad returned from the LHSAA Division III Cheer Contest with the 2016 championship trophy! Cheers for the girls and their hard work and great spirit! Award-winning cheerleaders pictured are Anna Lafleur, Charley Minyard, Emery Hammond, Madison Nicholas, Mallory Fontenot, Madeline Everett, Caroline Chachere, Olivia Roy, captain; Zori Conerly, co-captain; Lauren Miller, Courtney Thomassee, Bethany Guidry, Amelia Miguez, Danielle LeBlanc, Blaire Sonnier, Morgan Charles, and Halle Bihm. Their faculty sponsor is Jill Christ Artall (OC 1980).

VIKETTE Success!

The Vikette Dance Team placed 3rd in the LHSAA State Jazz Competition among all divisions! What a great feat! Dancers included McCall Keeler, captain; Emily Jarrell, co-captain; Elizabeth Duplechain, Abby Fisher, Caitlyn Hundley, Grace Marks, Heather Bergeron, Sophie Cormier, Faith Mayfield, Maddie Braham, Colleen Chachere, Amanda Knott, and Destiny Broussard. Faculty sponsor is Sonia George.

ALL-ACADEMIC COMPOSITE Honors!

Three OC senior athletes were recently named to the State All-Academic Composite Team with their 4.0 grade point averages: Sarah Joubert for girls' Cross Country and Basketball and Madeleine Hansen and Sadie Boss for girls' Swimming.

Crawfish Bowl CHAMPS!

Congratulations to the Vikings' 5th-6th grade Football Team for winning the "Crawfish Bowl" and bringing home the championship trophy in the Catholic League! The future is bright for the Vikings!

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VIKINGS to the NEXT LEVEL

Tori Collins, senior softball star, signed with Jones County Junior College of Ellisville, Mississippi. She will bring her outstanding pitching and first baseman abilities to their strong program which reached the final game of the Junior College World Series last season. With her love and dedication of the game, Tori will no doubt succeed and help her team!

Sam Jarrell signed a baseball scholarship with the Baton Rouge Community College program where he is expected to play the position of catcher for the Bears. BRCC is a Division I program competing in the National Junior College Athletic Association. With Sam's competitive spirit, he should enjoy a successful baseball career there!

OCS expects more athletes to venture into college sports with announcements coming later in the year.

ATHLETIC COUNCIL EVENTS

The annual **Gun/Cash Raffle** for 2017 is underway! Tickets are selling for \$50, and numbers are drawn once a week throughout the year where the winner has a choice of a gun or \$500 cash. Contact Robert Roy (337-523-4224) or Jeremy Guidry (337-945-0575) for tickets.

The Athletic Council is sponsoring a **Spring Barbecue Dinner Sale** on March 26th and OC's "**Dancing Viking Starz**" fundraiser on April 21st at the Delta Grand. Visit the Dancing Viking Starz page under Athletics on the OC website in the near future to view the teams.

Cheerleader for a Day!

Remi Bihm, 1st grader, lived her dream of being an OC cheerleader during a fall pep rally and game as "Cheerleader for a Day". Making it extra special was cheering with her big sister Halle as they are shown on the sideline at Donald Gardner Stadium. Her exclusive experience was made possible by a 2016 OC Tasters' Dinner auction offer.



A black and white photograph of a man and a woman standing outdoors. The man, on the left, has light-colored hair and is wearing a white long-sleeved shirt, a dark tie with a light-colored geometric pattern, and light-colored trousers. The woman, on the right, has short dark hair and is wearing a dark, sleeveless dress, a necklace with large, light-colored beads, and a watch on her left wrist. They are both smiling at the camera. The background shows trees and a grassy area.



A black and white photograph of a large group of students and faculty posing on a flatbed trailer. The trailer is decorated with several balloons and two large signs. One sign reads "Class of 2010" with a football icon, and the other reads "1997" with "30 40 50" below it. The group consists of approximately 20 people, mostly young adults, dressed in casual attire. They are posed in two rows on the trailer. The background shows trees and a building, suggesting an outdoor campus setting.

A black and white photograph of a group of students in a parade float. The float is decorated with a white picket fence and a 'STOP' sign. Students are wearing dark t-shirts with the number '4' and are cheering and waving. A boy in the foreground is holding a white flag.

Young Vikings got into the parade action like this team of soccer players filled with excitement!



Sr. Marlene Labbe (AIC 1956) was singled out in the Coronation program as the Marianite who was an alumna of the school.



1986-87 honorees were noted at the Coronation program as Joni James Walker, maid; Kevin Carriere, team captain; and Mary Chachere, maid. A special acknowledgment was made to remember the late Denise Hull who reigned as Queen those 30 years ago.



Precious at the Coronation were the Flower Girl Anna Katherine Miller and Crown Bearer Jackson Trahan.



Emily Ortego was presented with her proclamation by Mr. Cavell for her selection as 2016 Parade Captain.



Many members of the 2016 Court watched and enjoyed the Coronation merriment!



The Marianites came together for a Grand Marshal picture at the closing of the Homecoming Mass in St. Landry Catholic Church.



At the Homecoming Pep Rally, even the parents got into the spirit and were very amusing!



In a pre-game presentation, 20-year honorees were presented as Justin Ledoux and Ben Dye, team captains, escorting Queen Allison Joubert Richard on the field.



From 10 years ago in the fall of 2006, Dustin Ardoin and Tim Taylor, team captains, and Queen Abby Reed were introduced to the stadium crowd.



A popular place at the stadium was the "Alumni Photo Booth". Many classmates from 1997 got together for a memorable picture.



Another photo opportunity was taken by this group from 1992 who was celebrating 25 years since their senior year Homecoming!



Last year's Queen Carley Stanley and captains Aaron Miller and Koy Guillory led the half-time presentation as visiting royalty.



Visiting near the Alumni Welcome Tent was this group of friends from the Class of 2007, reminiscing about their high school days just 10 years ago!





A few members of the 1986-87 group from 30 years ago posed in the "Photo Booth" to make a wonderful keepsake!



Amanda Minyard Vidrine (1997) enjoyed her 20-year reunion with friends and seeing her daughter Charley on the 2016 Court.

HOMEcoming THANKS

The Development Office thanks **Frank Finchum** at **Edward Jones Investments** for providing the nice tent for the alumni welcoming and to **Tony Chachere's** for providing the delicious chili for the tent! Appreciation also goes out to the **Catholic Schools of Opelousas Alumni Association** for making possible the fun "Photo Booth" and "Balloon Artist" near the tent for a fun-filled evening with friends!

Appreciated as well are the following supporters who donated very NICE give-away prizes for our alumni drawing:

Steamboat Warehouse Restaurant (Jason Huguet, OC 1994)

Tikey T's (Tikey LeLeux, OC 1977)

Raising Cane's Chicken

Jimmy John's Sandwiches

Pizza Shack

OC Academic Council

OC Purple Club

OC Development Office

Thanks also to the Alumni Association board members who gave of their time to work the tent and provide all of the fall decorations. All gifts and time were blessings!

Our Grand Marshals and Administration/Pastors are grateful for their beautiful vehicles compliments of our friends at **Roy Motors**, allowing them to ride in style for the Homecoming parade!

A special thanks and kudos to the **Class of 1997** celebrating 20 years since their senior year! In true Viking spirit, they organized a flatbed trailer for their classmates to ride in pride for the parade festivities!



Appreciation goes out to the Alumni Association Board members who helped to work the Alumni Welcome Tent during the game. Present at the time of the picture were Becky Faul Diesi (1970); Priscilla Huckaby Guidroz (1959); Haley Devillier Emonet (1996); Heather Savoie Wallace (1993); Mary Robison Joubert (1983); and Jeanne Fontenot Harmon (2001).



Another proud alumnus was Bill Speyrer (1979) escorting his daughter and court member Olivia at the half-time presentation.

FLASHBACK!

Here are just a few "flashbacks" or "blasts from the past" prepared for announcements during the Homecoming game this fall ...

Remember just 10 years ago when OC had these top-ranking grads: Rhea-Claire Hargroder & Caroline Jarrell, Valedictorians; and Melissa Budden and Laramie Lemon, Salutatorians ... and when Heather Bullara was Cheerleader Captain; Rebekah Prudhomme, Vikette Captain; and Kelada Edwards, Viking Mascot!

It was only 20 years ago when we saw student leaders walking the halls ... Andy Martin as Student Body President; Krisi Carriere as Senate President; and Kyle Lavergne as Senior Class President ... and when selected Homecoming Maids were Ashley Bienvenu and Krisi Carriere ... and then Prom Queen and King were Amanda Minyard and Greg Richard!

"Flashback" to 30 years ago in the 86-87 school year when we saw Lynn Lanclos as Prom Queen and Bart Guillory as Prom King ... when Bubba Dupre led his class as Senior Class President ... and when the Sports Banquet announced Bobby Blueitt as Viking of the Year and Carrie Sebastien as Lady Viking of the Year!

In a 40-year "Flashback" in 76-77, the football team led by Coach Mickey Mills and Team Captain Scott Sebastien went undefeated in district to capture the District 3-AA Crown ... and Chris Fields and Joe Ewell served as Co-Presidents of the Student Council.

A L U M N I N O T E S

Spotlighted are a few graduates from the classes of 60, 50, 40, 30, 20, and 10 years ago!

Frances Duhon Bordelon (1957) is now retired after completing her education at USL in Lafayette in the field of Elementary Education. Her husband **Richard Bordelon** (1956) graduated in Mechanical Engineering at Tulane University in New Orleans and is also enjoying retirement. They continue to live in Opelousas and have raised two children over the years.

Rose Marie Doucet Boulet (1957) fondly remembers her days in high school as Class President and Student Body President. She spent her career in management and lives in Opelousas with her husband Dr. Lloyd Boulet, Jr. They have raised three children.

Jennifer Schwartzburg Bellard (1967) attended USL in Lafayette and earned an associate degree in Office Administration. She works for her husband's business and enjoys gardening in her spare time. Jennifer has been married to her classmate **Russell "Rusty" Bellard** (1967) for the past 47 years. They have raised four children and now enjoy time spent with their ten grandchildren. Rusty graduated in Civil Engineering from USL and is a Structural Engineer in his business, Bellard and Associates. He also enjoys fishing offshore and scuba diving for lobsters in Key West, Florida.

Ronnie Emonet (1967) completed his degree in Civil Engineering and has spent his career as a Civil Engineer Project Manager in Facility Planning and Control with the State of Louisiana for 34 years. He is now retired and enjoys woodworking in his spare time, often helping with his grandchildren's class projects for OC Tasters. Ronnie and his wife Marcia live in Opelousas and are the parents of four children who are all OC alumni! They also love their 14 grandchildren and have five of them attending OC at this time.

Cheryl Richard Schneider (1967) spent her career in education, teaching for 24 years at St. Mark Catholic School in Chalmette and 13 years in the St. Bernard and St. Landry Parish public school systems. She and her husband Kurt live in Opelousas and have raised two children.

Suzie Hatch Hargroder (1977) received her degree in Dental Hygiene through the LSU School of Dentistry. In recent years, she has been working for the dental office of Dr. Mike Malone and Associates in Lafayette. Suzie married her high school sweetheart, **Raymond Hargroder** (1977). Raymond attended USL in Lafayette and later joined his family's furniture business. He currently works as a buyer and manager for Olindes' Furniture in Lafayette. Suzie and Raymond are the parents of one daughter Rhea Claire Hargroder Richard (OC 2007) who has blessed them with two grandchildren.

Tikey LeLeux (1977) lives and works in Opelousas where she has been self-employed since 1993 as owner of a screenprinting company, Tikey T's, located on Main Street.

Neal Whipp (1977) has been married to his high school sweetheart **Kathy Cortez Whipp** (1980) for 34 years, and they are the proud parents of four children (all OC graduates) and now six grandbabies with one more on the way in the spring. Neal received his Pharmacy Doctorate from the University of Louisiana-Monroe and spent his career as a pharmacist. He recently retired from CVS after 32 years. Kathy enjoys her time taking care of family as a "stay at home" Mom.

Kevin Carriere (1987) graduated from LSU in Baton Rouge with a bachelor's degree in Finance. He is now the Founder and CEO of Powertron Global in Austin, Texas. Kevin and his wife are the parents of two children and live in Austin.

Mary Chachere (1987) received her Business Administration degree with a concentration in Human Resource Management from LSU. She has spent over 12 years as a Hospital Human Resources and Marketing Director and then 14 years as a "professional volunteer", marketing and raising funds for several nonprofits and schools. Mary is now Director with Nerium International and Marketing Director for The Grouse Room in Lafayette. She is the mother of two daughters.

Angela Lalonde Duos (1987) did her studies in Interior Architecture at USL in Lafayette. She has been working in the loan department at the Bank of Commerce in Crowley, La. Angela and her husband Philip are the parents of two and live in Crowley. As a pastime, she loves heirloom sewing and monogramming and especially loves to make christening gowns.

Joni James Walker (1987) earned her bachelor's degree in Psychology from Southern University and her master's degree from Florida A&M University. She is now pursuing a Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership at Southeastern Louisiana University in Hammond. Joni is also working as a Special Education Discipline IEP Facilitator in Livingston Parish. She and her husband are the parents of three children who attend Catholic school in the Baton Rouge area.

Ben Dye (1997) completed his degree in Mechanical Engineering from LSU in Baton Rouge and is currently a Sales Manager with Prime Occupational Medicine. He has also played music professionally for 15 years and is still playing with the band Dollar Short. Ben lives in Baton Rouge and is engaged to be married.

Justin Ledoux (1997) obtained his state electrical license and now owns his own business, Ledoux Electrical Service. He and his wife have two children who attend Opelousas Catholic, and their family lives in Bunkie, La.

Allison Joubert Richard (1997) completed her B.S. and Ph.D. in Biochemistry at LSU. She is now a Research Scientist with Pennington Biomedical Research Center in Baton Rouge. Her research helped to obtain a million dollar grant to study a specific protein involvement in metabolic disease related to Type 2 Diabetes. Allison and her husband are the parents of two young sons. They also co-own a photography business.

Elizabeth McCardell Tauzin (1997) studied at LSU and then went on to LSU School of Dentistry in New Orleans where she graduated in Dental Hygiene. She has worked for Dr. Mike Malone and Associates in Lafayette alongside her mother Carol Hidalgo (1972) and then her sister Katherine McCardell Thimmesch, dentist (1996). Elizabeth is married to Jude Tauzin, and they are the parents of two boys. Chef Jude and Elizabeth share a love for food and together they offer wine dinners and cook for people around the area.

Dustin Ardoin (2007) attended the University of Louisiana in Lafayette as well as Baton Rouge Community College where he also played baseball. He earned a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice with a minor in Health and is now working in law enforcement. Dustin is married to Gina Glynn Ardoin (OC 2008), and they are the parents of one young daughter.

Tommy Hebert (2007) completed his degree program at Louisiana Tech University and was married in December 2015 to Emily Comeaux. He is now employed at Liggio Insurance Company in Lafayette as an insurance sales agent. The couple lives in Scott, La.

Laramie Lemon (2007) received her B.S. degree in Biology and is now working on her Ph.D. in Cell and Molecular Biology. She is currently performing research on pediatric bone marrow failure syndromes at Texas Children's Hospital in Houston, Texas. Laramie plans to pursue a career in Science Education. Included on her impressive resume is the American Society for Microbiology Science Teaching Fellowship; the Howard Hughes Medical Institute Science Education Leadership Fellowship; and the Baylor College of Medicine Huffington Center on Aging T32 Fellowship. Laramie notes that her OC Biology teacher, Mrs. Vercher, sparked her interest in being a scientist!

Abby Reed (2007) attended UL in Lafayette for Business Management and has been employed by Ortego Chiropractic Health Center in Opelousas as the Office and Financial Manager for the past three years. She is certified by the Louisiana Board of Chiropractic Examiners as a chiropractic x-ray tech. Abby is the mother of two boys, and her family lives in Carencro, La.

Tim Taylor (2007) completed his studies in Business Marketing at the University of Louisiana in Monroe where he was also a four-year letterman in ULM football. Tim served as the Defensive Captain in 2011. He is now the Project Manager at Schlumberger MiSwaco based in Long Beach, California.

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ALUMNI IN THE MEDIA ...



Chief Judge Louisiana Supreme Court Carl Stewart administers the oath of office to Associate Justice Louisiana Supreme Court James T. Genovese while his wife Martha holds the Holy Bible. *"photo courtesy of Daily World"*

Judge James "Jimmy" Genovese (1967) was recently elected to the Louisiana Supreme Court! He was sworn into his office as Louisiana Supreme Court 3rd District Associate Justice on January 3rd with several state dignitaries present for the investiture ceremony. He had received his bachelor's degree from Northwestern State University and his juris doctorate from Loyola University. In his career, Judge Genovese served as a judge ad hoc for Opelousas City Court, state district court judge and has served as a judge for the Louisiana 3rd Circuit Court of Appeals since 2005.

Blaine LaFleur (2004) was recognized with one of the "20 Under 40" Young Leader Awards honoring the best and brightest in Acadiana younger than 40 who are instrumental in moving the area forward through their leadership skills and community service. Blaine is CEO/owner of Stonewall where they help enterprises through strategic consulting, operational leadership, and breakthrough solutions, including those in engineering, manufacturing and product design. He also helped to launch two other companies, Fleurish Health (functional medicine) and HP3 (leadership performance).

Opelousas General Health System welcomed **Dr. Lori Gautreaux (Bergeron)** (2003) to their medical staff in Internal Medicine. She is now practicing from the office of Dr. Richard Tate who recently retired.

Butch Alsandor (1977) was featured in a Daily World sports article in September. It reviewed his professional career with its start after his mass communications and broadcast degree from McNeese State University where he played college football. After his initial broadcasting position at KPLC in Lake Charles, he moved over to markets in Baltimore and more recently in Houston at KHOU where he was the nightly sports anchor for 20 years. Of late, he has been working games for the Southland Conference.

An article written by **Tyler LaFleur** (2005) was seen as he currently writes for "Active in Acadiana" magazine while he serves as the executive officer for Fleurish Health and holds a degree in Nursing. He is also a Clinical Exercise Physiologist and a Certified Functional Medicine Practitioner. Within the health and wellness coaching industry for 12 years, he just completed the first year of his Master of Leadership Arts and Sciences at the Thayer Institute where he is studying under the leadership of Dr. Lee Thayer. Tyler also conducts HP3's Leadership Performance Group.

On the University of Louisiana-Lafayette website, it was noted that **Shelbi King** (2011) graduated in December with a major in Accounting. She finished as "Outstanding Senior and Graduate" in her Accounting class! She is now working with Darnall Sikes Gardes & Frederick CPA firm in Lafayette.

Brent Bradley (1988) was seen named a 2016 Honoree for Excellence in Sales and Marketing by the Sales and Marketing Executives of Greater Baton Rouge. He was honored during a banquet and awards ceremony in Baton Rouge alongside an inspiring group of accomplished individuals.

Claire Cortez Thom (1976) is the industry relations director for LAGCOE, one of the country's largest and oldest oil and gas shows held biennially in Lafayette. She recently wrote an article as seen in the Lafayette Daily Advertiser newspaper about Lafayette and Louisiana's representation in the International Petroleum Exposition and Conference in the United Arab Emirates. Their aim was to establish and grow international business relationships.

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"OC COUPLE" News

Weddings ...



• **Bailey Branton** (2009) and **Matthew "Matt" Soileau** (2007) became "Mr. and Mrs. Soileau" in a beautiful ceremony on November 25th in St. Landry Catholic Church. Bailey works with Advanced Pharmaceutical Consultants, while Matt is in the insurance business with Simoneaux and Wallace Agency in Opelousas.

• **Kaitlin Young** (2008) was married to **Oliver LeBlanc** (2007) on November 18th in a lovely setting inside St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church in Grand Coteau. Kaitlin is a medical coder for Acadiana Computer Systems, and Oliver is working as a sales representative for Steven Dupuis Oil Company.

Babies ...



• **Sarah Whipp Keating** (2003) and **Patrick Keating** (2002) added baby Keating #4 to their family when Jeannie Clare was born on September 21st. Congratulations to Mom and Dad and siblings Sarah Jayne, Joseph, and Rose! Dr. Patrick Keating continues his work as an ophthalmologist with the Azar Clinic in Lafayette.

• **Libby Lastrapes Going** and **Jarret Going** (both 2005) welcomed a baby daughter named Amelia Claire on September 28th. The Going parents also have a son named Landon. Dr. Libby is a family doctor working at Women's Health and Treatment Center of Acadiana. Jarret is the director of marketing at Dexcomm. Congrats to the entire family!

STORY OF A LOST CLASS RING

The school received a letter a few months ago stating that a 1982 OCS graduation ring had been found on the USL campus in Lafayette back in the 1980's. There were initials inside the ring ... so a little research was done on the alumni records ... and it was noted that Lori Auzenne was a member of the '82 class which matched the initials. After making a few contacts, Mr. Cavell found Lori (now **Lori Auzenne Higginbotham**) who is currently a teacher at Acadiana High School in Lafayette. She was thrilled to get her ring back after 34 years and was glad to visit her alma mater to pick it up. What a heartwarming story to share with OC family and friends!



Mr. Cavell
and
Lori Auzenne Higginbotham

ALUMNI SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT

The seventh annual Opelousas Catholic Alumni Softball Tournament held in August 2016 had some new faces and "old" faces in the championship game. It was the class of 2014 making it to the finals against the well-known class of 2007 who has been there a few times. Once again, it was the 2007 team who won and claimed the bragging rights for the year! This is their THIRD championship in the seven years of competition. All in all, it was a fun and very successful weekend for the many alumni, family and friends who participated and attended.

Alumni are encouraged to begin planning now for the next tournament ... the date to be announced in the near future! Opelousas Catholic is truly grateful to Heidi Fisher Pelloquin, Travis Ledoux (both OC 1999) and Kristein Fisher (OC parent) for coordinating the weekend with other committee members and volunteers. Check the OC Alumni Softball Tourney Facebook page for updates.



CHAMPIONS again! 2007 team members pictured standing from left: Oliver LeBlanc, Seth Dupre, Phil Edmond, Dustin Ardoin, Seth Jarrell, John Grant Hebert, Tommy Hebert, Cody Vidrine, and Matt Soileau. Kneeling are Jack Ryan, Victoria Wagley Taullie, Michelle Hebert, Heather Bullara Quirk, and Lance Dupre.



Home Run Derby winners for 2016 were four ... Logan Constantine (2014); Tommy Hebert (2007); Justin Boyd (1997); and Matt Hebert (2008) ... interesting that the three youngest hitters were baseball players under Coach Boyd!



Closing prayer after the final game

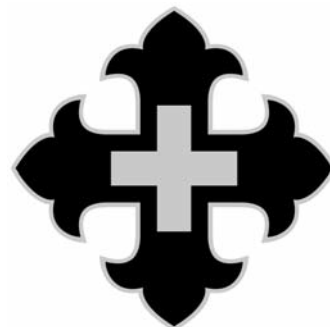
LOOKING BACK...



A football awards ceremony back in the 60's ... do you recognize any of these young athletes with Coach Mickey Mills?

LOOKING FORWARD...

Remembering all of the remarkable alumni who have walked the halls of our school, make that investment for your children and become part of the notable history and tradition of Catholic education at Opelousas Catholic School! OCS educates the WHOLE student ... mind, body and spirit ... and offers a total package from preschool through 12th grade graduation.



Register your child for 2017-18!

Registration for the next school year will begin on January 30th for current students. New student registration will get underway on February 13th. Opelousas Catholic now uses RenWeb for our registration process. More information will be posted to our school website soon (www.OCSvikings.com). Please stay informed so that your child will have a place at OCS for a quality and caring Catholic education!

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GIVING in MANY WAYS!

After reading this newsletter and witnessing the many wonderful happenings at OC, won't you consider a way to get involved and give back to support Catholic education at Opelousas Catholic?

Supporters can PRAY for OC, VOLUNTEER time for the children, and/or provide monetary DONATIONS to help OC carry out the school's mission!

Become INVOLVED ... join the Alumni Association ... help in the organization of class reunions

Become CONNECTED ... follow the OC Facebook page ... check out the school website and update your Alumni Profile

Become INFORMED ... read school newsletters, publications and more
Become SPIRITED ... visit The Viking Shop and wear with pride your Viking apparel

GIVE BACK ... gifts for the Foundation Trust Fund, Angel Appeal Drive, Building Fund, Athletic Fund, Alumni Association ... they all make a tremendous difference!

Did you know that you can leave a legacy with the **Planned Giving** concept? Gifts through a will or estate plan may be completed by anyone. You can take care of your loved ones and the children of OC at the same time. Please check with your financial advisor, CPA or attorney to find out more.

Your company may have a **Matching Gift Program**. Many corporations give back to local communities as one of the benefits to employees. Please look into it!

Give, and it shall be given unto you ... Luke 6:38



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MEMORIAL PROGRAM

Please consider an Opelousas Catholic School memorial gift as a meaningful way to memorialize departed friends and loved ones. Gifts are invested perpetually in the OCS Foundation Trust Fund, enhancing quality Catholic education now and into the future.



*In
Remembrance*

Simply send any amount for your gift to the OC Development Office at 428 East Prudhomme Street in Opelousas, LA 70570. Indicate the name(s) of the persons making the gift, the name of the memorialized person, and the name(s) of the family to be sent a memorial card in acknowledgment of the gift.

Names of deceased honorees are inscribed in the OCS Memorial Book, and they are remembered at all school masses. A lovely memorial card is mailed to the family of the memorialized. This is a beautiful way to remember someone special!

SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

*OCS educates students in the mission of Christ:
to know, love, and serve God as disciples in this life
in order to be happy with Him in the next.*

STUDENTS OF THE YEAR



Congratulations to our Students of Year: Oliva Hebert, 8th grade; Emily Jeslard, 5th grade; Samantha Dupre, 12th grade! The trend went to "all girls" this year after all boys last year!

**Coming in the summer issue of The Saga will be our "Teachers of the Year", "Achiever of the Year", and our "Distinguished Graduate" ... and much more!*

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

PASTORS:

Msgr. Keith DeRouen, Chancellor
Rev. James Brady
Rev. Lambert Lein
Rev. Gregory Simien
Rev. Jared Suire

ADMINISTRATORS:

Cindy G. Gates, Interim Administrator
(AIC 1966)
Rose Lalonde, Interim Administrator
Willard Hanks, Dean of Students

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John Braham

ATHLETIC DIRECTOR:

Tommy Tate

SCHOOL COUNSELOR:

Liz Meche

TECHNOLOGY COORDINATOR:

Beth G. Hebert (OC 1974)

DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR:

Kathy Hebert

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Candice Gussman
Murphy Ledoux
Sharon Ortego
Heather S. Wallace (OC 1993)

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Candice Gussman, Vice President
Carmen St. Cyr, Secretary
Candace Randell, Treasurer

ACADEMIC COUNCIL:

Vickie Collins, President

ATHLETIC COUNCIL:

Linda L. Richard, President
(OC 1976)



UPCOMING EVENTS 2016 - 2017 SCHOOL YEAR

January 23-28.....OC Trip to National Right-to-Life March, Washington, DC
January 29-February 3.....National Catholic Schools Week
February 2.....OC Vitality Summit, 6 pm
February 3, 4, 5.....OCD's "A Slice of Life"
February 8.....Tasters' Dinner and Auction, Opelousas Civic Center, 6 pm
February 13-17.....Scholastic Book Fair (junior high/high school)
February 27-March 1.....Mardi Gras break
March 1.....Faculty Day of Recollection
March 8.....Bishop Douglas Deshotel celebrates OC school mass, St. Landry Catholic Church
March 20-24.....Educational Extravaganza, "We are Art!"
March 26.....Spring Barbecue Dinner Sale
March 30-31.....AdvancED Peer Review
April 12-13.....Passion Play by senior class, St. Landry Catholic Church
April 14-21.....Easter break "The Lord is Risen!"
April 21....."Dancing Viking Starz", Delta Grand
May 6.....Junior-Senior Prom
May 15.....Athletic Awards Program, OC gym, 6 pm
May 17.....Senior Academic Awards Banquet, OC gym, 6 pm
May 19.....Mass and Graduation Ceremony, St. Landry Catholic Church, 6 pm
May 26.....Last day of school year for students

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