

3434 PHEASANT CREEK  
SUGAR LAND, TX 77498  
281-634-2000

# AHS Bulldog Bark

DECEMBER 2011

## Dates to Remember

Students return from Winter Break Term 2 Grades Mailed	Jan. 3
Martin Luther King Holiday No School	Jan. 16
On-Line Course Requests	Jan. 23, 25, 27
8th Grade Parent Night	Jan. 24
Progress Report #5 Mailed	Jan. 25
Last Day for On-Line Course Request	Feb. 6
Progress Report #6 Mailed	Feb. 14
Presidents Day Holiday No School	Feb. 20
ELA TAKS for 10th, 11th Grades	Mar. 7
International Festival and Fine Arts Showcase	Mar. 8
Last Day to submit Course Request Changes	Mar. 9
Spring Break	Mar. 12-16
Term 3 Ends	Mar. 23
Annual Commander Baker Softball Game	Mar. 28

## Principal's Message *by Mary Ellen Edge*

Dear Bulldog Parents,

The 2011-2012 school year is moving so fast. It's hard to believe that the spring semester is almost here and we are already planning for graduation! Amidst the fast pace, we have much to celebrate here at AHS. Many of our students and organizations have advanced to regional and state-level competitions in our extracurricular activities. AHS was recently recognized from the National Center for Educational Achievement and

ACT, Inc as a "Higher Performing School." It is truly a great day to be a bulldog!

On another note, state legislation's mandate for End-of-Course Testing (EOC)/STAAR has kept us busy as we have worked to examine testing standards, as well as our teaching practices, and instructional strategies. Teachers are meeting regularly to examine collected data and work samples in order to work through various steps of the Data Teams process.

I'm confident that as we

utilize these processes, and evaluate information from classroom walk-throughs, failure rates, rates of student engagement, and questioning strategies during instruction, we can prioritize our needs instructionally and map out strategies for accomplishing our Campus Improvement Plan Goals.

In closing, I appreciate your continued support and encourage you to remain connected through our Websites.

Regards, *Mary Ellen*

## Counselors Corner

### Course Selections

We will begin preparing for course selections for the **2012-2013** school year. Once again, students will have the opportunity to complete their course selections online. We will meet with students prior to the registration window to review the process and to answer any pertinent questions they may have.

**January 23, 25, 27**

Course request windows open

**February 6**

Course request window closes for ALL campuses

### March 9

Last day for students to submit course request changes and corrections

As we prepare for the second semester, please be reminded that course availability is very limited. Students must stay in year-long courses and the number of semester electives is small.

Teacher changes may occur for balancing purposes. If this is necessary, we will look at students whose schedule will be least affected before we make the change. We cannot guarantee that parents will be notified if we are forced to do this. Your support is appreciated.

## Money, Money, Money ... Where Does It Go?



We know that budget cuts exist in our schools, but informed decisions help school communities raise funds for wanted programs. Did you know that all the extras that are sold during lunch help support many of the programs that Austin High School has become famous for? For example:

- ✓ **Monday Chick-fil-A** — These funds benefit our Theatre and Choir Department. Our goal is to purchase supplies which will benefit the students for years to come. Our wish list includes an electronic seating system for the theatre classrooms and a new lighting system.
- ✓ **Tuesday Nachos** — This income supports the AHS VIPS budget.
- ✓ **Tuesday Pizza** — These profits help the AHS NJROTC program.
- ✓ **Wednesday Cookies** — These earnings are used for orchestra and band.
- ✓ **Friday TBD (a new one for the spring)** — PRO-GRAD will be sponsoring this fundraiser to help support AHS PRO-GRAD activities.
- ✓ **Friday Snow Cones** — Profits benefit the Yearbook.
- ✓ **Before School and During all Lunches Spike's Spot** — The Marketing Education Program and DECA have opened a Spike's Spot, our school store. Students can purchase supplies necessary for classes, coffee, swirls, gelato, and school spirit items. In the spring, the new custom scrapbook supplies will be available for Senior Legacy Projects. Money raised is used to offset expenses for students to compete in State and National Competitions. It also offers students "hands-on" experience in a retail environment.



So the next time your student asks for money to purchase something extra at lunch, please remember that you are also supporting one of the many fantastic programs at AHS. For more information, go to <http://www.austinbulldogprograd.org/>

If you would like to be an AHS Volunteer, contact **Asha Vaidya** at [vaidyas@msn.com](mailto:vaidyas@msn.com) or **Julie Vowell-Ramirez** at [j-vowell@hotmail.com](mailto:j-vowell@hotmail.com). They will be happy to get you connected. Otherwise, you can attend a Board Meeting the first Friday of every month, unless otherwise noted.

**We Are Austin!!!**

Looking for news about Austin High School?

**We Are Austin!!!**

For the latest updates, events and information, visit our new Website AHS Access – CHECK OUT - <http://ahsaccess.weebly.com/>

## Graduation Date for Class of 2012

### Graduation is Thursday ~ May 31, 2012 at 11:00 a.m. at the Toyota Center

## Notes From the Counseling Office

### MY COLLEGE QUICKSTART/PSAT SCORE RESULTS



*My College QuickStart* is an online college and career planning kit available free of charge to all students who take the PSAT/NMSQT. It is powered by their responses to the test and provides personalized information that helps students take their next steps toward college.

*My Online Score Report:* An enhanced score report that allows students to review each test question, their answers, and the correct answers with answer explanations.

*My SAT Study Plan:* A customized SAT study plan based on students' PSAT/NMSQT test performance, highlighting skills for review and practice.

*My Personality:* A detailed personality test that helps students learn about themselves and discover majors and careers that fit their strengths and interests.

*My Major & Career Matches:* Extensive information about majors and careers, including insights about what to expect and what courses to take now.

*My College Matches:* A starter list of colleges based on students' home state and indicated choice of major.

Access is available using the access code printed on your child's paper score report and the tool can be utilized throughout high school. Using *My College QuickStart* together with your child is a great way to introduce and guide your child through important aspects of the college-going process.

[www.collegeboard.com/quickstart](http://www.collegeboard.com/quickstart)



### *Library Low Down*

It was a busy first semester in the AHS Library! Freshmen received library/technology orientation, and as part of that experience, the library helped students set up their Gaggle (school e-mail) and their Turn-it-in.com accounts.

Juniors and seniors completed their short story research using resources in the library including databases, e-books, and print materials. Speech, Science, Social Studies, and Fine Arts classes all visited the library as well. Next semester the sophomores and freshmen will complete their ELA research projects; planning has already begun. AHS has many good readers who enjoy and demand the newest print books that the library is able to provide, despite the budget restrictions. Many thanks to the VIPS who helped the library complete inventory in the fall.



## Student Successes



**Best in Show  
Sculpture  
Fort Bend  
County Fair  
Leanne Gifford**

**1<sup>st</sup> Place  
Houston  
Firefighter's  
Fire Prevention  
Poster Contest  
Amanda Arena**

**All State Orchesta  
Students:  
Blake Awoku  
Mai Ito  
Jane Lee  
Ankit Shah  
Federico Venturi  
Anne Wells  
Claire Wood  
Travis Yeh  
Jonathan Yeung  
Kevin Zhang**

**The Legend  
Newspaper Editor  
Rhea Turakhia  
received an  
"Excellence" rating  
in Editorial Writing  
at the  
TAJE Fall Fiesta**

# Social Studies

The spring semester is filled with multiple Social Studies testing opportunities: TAKS, AP Exams, and EOC. Be sure your student is ready to take the EOC (9<sup>th</sup> graders), TAKS (10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> graders), and/or the AP Exams (AP students) by attending tutorial sessions with his/her teacher. STAAR/EOC tutorials will be held every Monday from 2:30-4:00 p.m. starting March 9, 2012. Social Studies TAKS tutorials will be held every Wednesday beginning the last week of January 2012.

TEST NAME	DATE OF TEST	TEST NAME	DATE OF TEST
WORLD HISTORY TAKS	APRIL 27	AP EUROPEAN HISTORY	MAY 11 P.M.
US HISTORY TAKS	APRIL 27	AP GOVERNMENT	MAY 15
GEOGRAPHY EOC	MAY 8	AP ECONOMICS	MAY 17
AP PSYCHOLOGY	MAY 7 P.M.	AP WORLD HISTORY	MAY 17 A.M.
AP US HISTORY	MAY 11 A.M.	AP HUMAN GEOGRAPHY	MAY 18 A.M.

Don't wait until the last minute to help your student improve her/his grades. Contact teachers as soon as you see her/his grades slipping to determine how you can help your child be successful! Please continue discussing current events with daughter/son, keeping track of their progress, and making sure sleep is a priority.

# Choir

The AHS Choir has had a wonderful Fall Semester. The choir has grown from 75 students in 2009 to 115 students in 2011. There are four auditions leading up to the selection of the Texas All-State Choir. There are two students, David Norby and Weston Ruths, who are advancing to Area, the last round. This audition will take place January 2012 in Corpus Christi. Congrats to them both for making it this far! Chorale, the AHS Varsity Mixed Choir, took 2<sup>nd</sup> Place at the Early Music Competition at the Texas Renaissance Festival. They did an amazing job!

Here is what is coming up this next semester:

- ♪ AHS Choir Solo Night – January 30<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. in the AHS Cafeteria
- ♪ AHS Choir UIL Send-Off Concert – March 27<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. in the AHS Auditorium
- ♪ AHS Choir Dinner Theater Production – May 21<sup>st</sup> – Dinner at 5:30 p.m. and Concert at 7:30 p.m.



**CONGRATULATIONS  
KARLA LALENDORFF  
AHS TEACHER OF THE YEAR**

# NJROTC Corner

By Commander Sellards and Master Chief Girdner

The NJROTC Unit is off to a fast and furious pace for the school year and as the 1<sup>st</sup> semester comes to a close, we have had tremendous accomplishments that we are so very pleased and proud to recap. We have qualified for the Area 10 Manager's State Championship for the 9<sup>th</sup> year in a row! Way to go TEAMS!

SFA NJROTC had the following finishes at Texas High School JROTC Meets this semester:

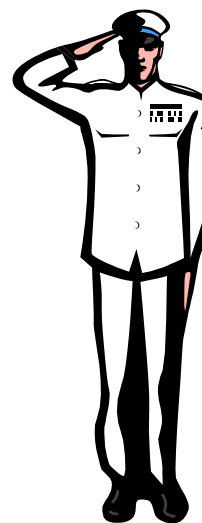
- ❖ 2<sup>nd</sup> Place at the Annual FBISD JROTC Drill Meet 10; Air Rifle Team led by **Cadet CO Shawn Cleary** finished in 1<sup>st</sup> Place. 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Trophies were awarded to the drill teams in all drill events.
- ❖ Seven cadets took individual honors ranging from 2<sup>nd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Place at the Houston Orienteering Club Challenge 7 Meet in September which involved over 400 entrants. Top positions in their respective categories were: Cadets **PO1 Harnet Sarkaria** (2<sup>nd</sup> Place) and **CPO Robert Nguyen** (3<sup>rd</sup> Place). Other awardees included: **Austin Kellum, Walker Shores, Aaron Callegari** (4<sup>th</sup> Place), **Michael Li** (5<sup>th</sup> Place), and **Michael Brand** (6<sup>th</sup> Place).
- ❖ Trophies earned at the Prairie View A&M PT and Orienteering Meet in October: 1<sup>st</sup> Place for Academics; team consisted of **Cadets Shawn Cleary** and **Michael Brand**; 3<sup>rd</sup> Place Overall; 2<sup>nd</sup> Place for Flex-Hang; 3<sup>rd</sup> Place for Sit-ups; 3<sup>rd</sup> Place for Push-ups.
- ❖ 5<sup>th</sup> Place out of 35 teams overall at the George Bush NJROTC Drill Meet in October; 2<sup>nd</sup> Place in Academics-Team Captain **Cadet CPO Michael Brand**; 2<sup>nd</sup> Place in armed Exhibition-Team Captain **Cadet LTJG Ryan Pruthi**; and 2<sup>nd</sup> Place in Air Rifle-Team Captain **Cadet LT Shawn Cleary**; **Shawn** won the 1<sup>st</sup> Place medal for Highest Standing Position score.
- ❖ 3<sup>rd</sup> Place out of 27 schools overall at the Sequin High School Veteran's Day Classic JROTC Drill Meet in November; 2<sup>nd</sup> Place among Navy Units, advancing to State Championship!!! 1<sup>st</sup> Place for Academics-Team Captain **CPO Michael Brand**; 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Armed Drill Team **Commander Ryan Pruthi**; 3<sup>rd</sup> Place Overall Armed Drill; 3<sup>rd</sup> Place for Obstacle Course-Team Captain **PO1 Britany Orta**; Air Rifle Team Captain **Cadet LT Shawn Cleary** was the top meet shooter with a total score of 282 out of 300.

Our many activities included:

- ✓ Annual Fort Bend County Fair Parade on September 23
- ✓ Visited the Battleship Texas and traveled the Houston ship channel aboard the M/V Sam Houston on 7 October
- ✓ Supported AHS home football games with color guard and flag detail
- ✓ Over 500 community service hours with Houston Hermann Park Conservancy, Keep Sugar Land Beautiful, the Alzheimer's Association, and the Marine Moms Food Collection Drive.

The unit's Annual Military Inspection was conducted 17 November with 20 cadets being presented medals for an Outstanding Personnel Inspection. Led by **Cadet Chief Petty Officer Robert Nguyen**, 3rd Platoon won top honors as the Best Marching Unit and Best in Personnel Inspection. They were presented the Honor Platoon Streamer by the inspecting officer. The cadet staff did an outstanding job in planning, executing, and providing an informative and professional briefing to our guest inspecting officer, Captain William Fitzgerald. Captain Fitzgerald is the Senior Instructor from the Houston NROTC Consortium.

## THE NATION'S FUTURE MILITARY LEADERS



Congratulations are in order to our **Cadet CO, LT Shawn Cleary**. Shawn has been selected early for a NROTC scholarship for The Citadel! **Cadets Ryan Pruthi, Jaquala Couch, and Michael Brand** are also awaiting word on scholarships and should know by the time

you read this!

Additionally, **Cadets Shawn Cleary** and **Michael Brand** have applied for appointments to the Air Force Academy and Naval Academy respectively and should have word soon after December 25th.

# English Class Updates

## English I Advanced

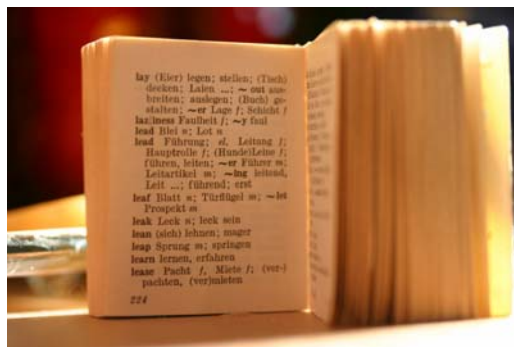
ELA had a wonderful first semester in their reading of various short stories and the epic poem, *Odyssey*, by Homer. Students wrote an engaging story and are beginning to create their Character Analysis essay. Next semester students will be reading Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, creating a research paper and reading a novel.

## English I Pre-AP

The fall semester began with a review of grammar and literary devices. Students then quickly began learning new literary devices and grammatical elements and why authors use these devices. Students read and analyzed short stories, excerpts from Homer's *Odyssey*, and wrote an engaging story in preparation for this year's new STARR exam. In the spring semester, we will continue to read, annotate, and analyze Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations*. Once students have completed this wonderful novel, we will also read and analyze William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* and then enjoy Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*. The spring semester will also hold in store more analytical writing which will include a research paper; students will research what factors influenced their selected author to write and support their findings with primary text—a selected work by that author.

## English II Pre-AP

For the first semester, the students have been taking a journey from paradise into hell to discover the Dante's four levels of theme in an effort to connect various text to themselves and the world that they live in by exploring archetypes, psychological, political and moral connections in text. Students have analyzed various author's style and literary devices in the following works: William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, Nathaniel Hawthorne's *Rappaccinni's Daughter*, Zora Neale Hurston, *Their Eyes were Watching God*, Edgar Allen Poe's,



TEST NAME	DATE OF TEST
ELA TAKS 10TH & 11TH GRADERS	MARCH 7
ALL STUDENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO BRING A SACK LUNCH	
STARR ENGLISH I WRITING/READING 9TH GRADERS ONLY	MARCH 26—30

*The Pit and the Pendulum*, *The Bank Robbery*, and Dante Allegheri's, *Inferno*.

Additionally, students have been focusing on how syntax creates meaning through sentence structure and patterns. Students have examined various pieces of poetry and non-fiction. For their Required Outside Read, the students have been reading, journaling, and discussing Amy Tan's *The Joy Luck Club* to help them relate the text to their own lives and conflicts. The students have written five analytical essays, including their summer reading assignment and pre-writes, table essays, focusing primarily on how to write a timed write. By focusing on how to plan a pre-write, the students' organizational skills have improved tremendously in their very first timed write in class.

For the second semester of Sophomore Pre-AP English, the students will learn the art of rhetoric and persuasion through various non-fiction passages, controversial topics and plays such as *Oedipus Rex* by Sophocles and *Julius Caesar*. The students will write a Controversial Topic Research paper to learn how the synthesis paper works on the Language AP Exam. The students will also examine how Ethos, Pathos, and Logos work in forming an argument. For their Required Outside Read, the students will get to read pre-chosen novels in literature circles while having online blackboard discussions over the novels. The students will explore archetypal characters and philosophical argument in the novel *The*

*Fountainhead* by Ayn Rand. With this novel the students will learn how to discuss in Socratic Seminars as well as how to write a rhetorical device and strategy paper taking apart various epistemological arguments. The students will end the year with a unit and research project over poetry.

## English Class Updates continued ...

### English II

10<sup>th</sup> Grade First Semester:

- ✓ Students read a variety of fiction and non-fiction short stories
- ✓ Students wrote a short story analysis
- ✓ Students read some poetry pieces that were thematically linked to short stories
- ✓ Students read *Lord of the Flies*
- ✓ Students will write a character analysis that links one of the characters to a theme in the novel
- ✓ TAKS Practice
- ✓ Journals
- ✓ Students will write a symbol analysis for their final exam



We will also work on an SAT review, write a literary essay, and write a creative paper either as a short story or a poem.

### College Now

We have completed the first semester of College English. Students wrote five different types of essays in order to get them ready for the writing that will be required of them in college. We also read and discussed numerous essays and short stories. We covered *Beowulf*, *The Canterbury Tales* and closed off the semester with *Macbeth*. Next semester, we will be writing a research paper and other essays that revolve around literature. We will be reading *Dracula*, *Lord of the Rings* and numerous short stories.

10<sup>th</sup> Grade Second Semester:

- ✓ Students will write a research paper
- ✓ Students will read *Julius Caesar* and another piece of drama
- ✓ Students will read and analyze poetry
- ✓ Students will read another novel
- ✓ Journals
- ✓ TAKS Practice

### English III

Junior English students had a busy first semester. We began with a diagnostic essay, then wrote a documented essay over *The Crucible*, and finished their writing with a research paper over a short story. We read great Early American Literature like *The Crucible* and other short pieces, and finished the semester with *Of Mice and Men*. During the second semester, we will work on preparing for the TAKS test in March, while studying Romanticism, Realism, and Modernism through short stories and poetry. Juniors will also read great novels such as *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and another novel of their teacher's choice.

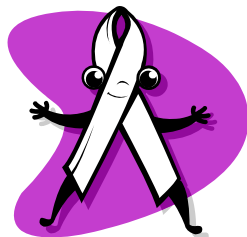
### English IV AP

We dove right in and began to analyze literature. We started with *Dune* and carried it through with *Beowulf*, *Canterbury Tales*, and *Macbeth*. We also covered multiple short stories and poems. Our writing emphasis, outside of the research paper, was the poetry essay for the AP Exam. Next semester we will focus on novels such as *Dracula* and plays such as *Hamlet*. Our writing focus will be on the passage essay and open-ended essay questions for the exam in May.

### English IV

For the first semester, students worked on their college essays and their research papers over a short story. We studied early British Literature with *Beowulf*, and followed up with *The Canterbury Tales* and *Macbeth*. Next semester we will read and analyze novels such as *Dracula* and *Frankenstein*. Students will also write two more essays over literature and round out their senior year with the Senior Legacy.

## Peer Assistance and Leadership (PALS)



On November 11, 2011, the PALS class organized and implemented their Annual Dodge Ball Tournament to “KNOCK OUT BREAST CANCER”. Each year, a different breast cancer charity is selected and proceeds from the Dodge Ball Tournament go to that specific charity. This year, the event organizers, **Erica Peterson** and **Sam Vollmer**, selected the Young Survival Coalition (YSC) as their charity of choice. YSC is actively involved in the coordination and distribution of

Newly Diagnosed Resource Kits to young women who are newly diagnosed with breast cancer. YSC also hosts an annual “Courage Night” to celebrate survivorship, and “In Living Pink” their signature fundraiser which helps raise funds for their programs and services. The AHS PALS are proud to announce that through their event they raised \$1000 for the Young Survival Coalition! Hundreds of Austin High School students and staff members donated to this cause, whether through playing in the actual Dodge Ball Tournament itself, or by being a spectator at the event.

**WAY TO KNOCK OUT BREAST CANCER, AHS!**

**REACH US AT**  
**[HTTP://AHSACCESS.WEEBLY.COM](http://ahsaccess.weebly.com)**

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Fort Bend Independent School District  
3434 Pheasant Creek Drive  
Sugar Land, TX 77498*

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