



TROJAN TRADITION

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2
AUGUST 2015



Save The Date:

Family Day At The Races
Monmouth Park on
Saturday,
September 26, 2015
at 11:30 a.m.



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Upcoming Issue:

November 2015

What are you thankful for this year?

The Perfect Getaway?



One hundred plus degree weather. Four inches of mud. Howler Monkeys shouting in the middle of the night. Torrential downpours every 25 minutes. Bugs and the constant fear of Malaria. Sounds like the perfect college Spring Break...right?

In March of my freshman year, I was given the opportunity to partake in a Research Experience through my school, American University. I, along with fifteen other students and professors, traveled 22 hours by bus, planes, and boats, to our final destination, the Nicaraguan rainforest. The goals of our research were varied. Biology majors were brought down to study the flora and fauna of the rainforest. Communications majors and Spanish speakers were there in order to communicate with the locals and teach new school lessons to both children and educators. Two Film and Media Arts majors, myself included, were brought down to film our experiences there, interview the local residents, and produce promotional videos of the Makengue Wildlife Reserve we had been staying on.

(Continued on page 3)

A message from the Director of Advancement

Check out the 2nd Issue of our Alumni Newsletter. Sign up today to be a part of all the great new and exciting things happening with our **Bishop George Ahr/St. Thomas Aquinas Alumni**.

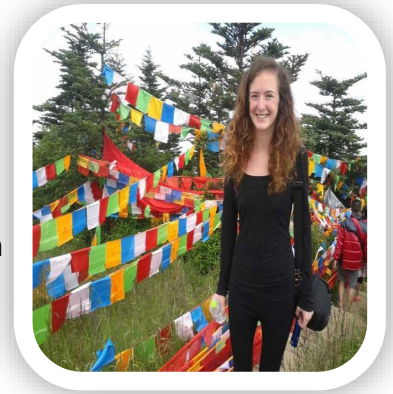
Have a new engagement, anniversary, baby, job, sports news, know of an alumni death or need a prayer request?

Tell us, we want to share it at: alumni@bgahs.org
All submissions must be received by October 15th

Update your contact info on bgahs.org

BGA Grad Takes Stewardship Around the World

BGA Graduate **Hannah Thielmann (Class of 2009)** can count herself as a world traveler. She has been to Kolkata, India, Lima, Peru and is currently living and working in Suzhou, China. These have not been pleasure trips, however. She has journeyed around the world and each step of the journey has afforded her the opportunity to help others along the way.



In 2010, through Global Outreach at Fordham University, Hannah worked with a parish community in Lima to renovate a barren patch of land and develop a sustainable gardening program. Then in January 2012, through the same organization at Fordham, she volunteered in the houses of Mother Teresa at the Missionaries of Charity in Kolkata, India, providing medical assistance to the elderly and disabled. Following graduation from Fordham in 2012, Thielmann was certified by the TEFL (Teacher of English as Foreign Language) Institute to teach English to speakers of other languages. In August of 2013, she traveled to the Suzhou Foreign Language School in China for an assignment teaching English to pre-school and kindergarten children.

Suzhou is in Central China, about a half hour commute from Shanghai to the east. Bisected by the longest man-made canal, The Grand Canal, it is known as the “Oriental Venice” because water covers more than forty percent of the city.

Adapting to life in China has been challenging, but an exciting proposition. For the first year, she shared an apartment with another teacher within walking distance of the school. After the first year, once she was more familiar with Suzhou’s subway system, she moved to an apartment further from the school, but home to more expats with a livelier social scene. Along with her “day job” as a kindergarten teacher, she has been tutoring a local high school student in Latin (thanks to Mrs. Lepine!).

Hannah has found that China is a country of opposites. Lush, green countryside shares space with identical high-rise building developments; plain land contrasts with jungle and mountain landscapes. One of the drawbacks of life in the urban areas can be dealing with the air pollution. A common fashion accessory is a facemask to filter out pollutants caused by factories, car exhaust, and even weather patterns. She has spent the last two years studying Mandarin in her spare time, and travels whenever possible to other cities using the high-speed train system which can travel at roughly 300 kilometers per mile. During the longer breaks in her schedule, she has been able to travel to Western China and Tibet, Cambodia, Thailand, and the Philippines.



She has found the people of China to be warm and inviting. Her western height is a contrast to the diminutive stature of the locals, especially a classroom of kindergarten children. She has essentially been teaching the same group of students for the past two years, preparing them for the proficiency exams that will determine if they can move on in the international study program offered by their school. Her students love Hannah Laoshi (Mandarin for “teacher”), and she will miss them as they move on to grade school. Hannah expects to complete her assignment in China this July.

A Perfect Getaway?

(Continued from page 1)

One of my primary jobs while on the trip was to record the various sounds of the rainforest. It was my job to set up audio recorders during five different “peak” times of the day where I could capture the best sounds. These times included early in the morning and midnight, when the birds chirped and bugs buzzed the loudest. Afterwards, I had to collect all of these audio samples and compile them into a rainforest “soundtrack,” almost like the ocean breeze or mystic rain sounds that people go to sleep to.

Each day of our 10-day excursion began with the sounds of Howler Monkeys and songs of tropical birds. Our breakfast, like every other meal, was filled with locally grown fruits and vegetables, rice, beans, and a protein accompanied with freshly-squeezed exotic fruit juice. Afterwards, our adventures for the day began. It was a lot of activity for 10 days. We took a five hour hike around the property line of the forest, examining the various birds, insects, plants, and creatures we encountered. Traveling by boat is the only mode of transportation in the rainforests of Nicaragua. It was how we could get to the main city ports to visit elementary schools, play soccer with a local girls’ team, eat at local restaurants, and tour Nicaragua. Stumbling across 6-inch planks with my size 14 feet, I hiked around two active volcanoes that seemed to have touched the heavens. I enjoyed a fresh cup of mocha from a coffee plantation which was on the side of one of the volcanoes while taking in the view. Surrounded by colorful fabrics and beautiful hand-carved sculptures, I shopped and bartered at the mile-wide Grand Masaya artisan marketplace. We visited the 350 year old masonry fort of San Carlos in El Castillo. In complete awe, I stood atop what the locals consider to be a symbol of human determination and endurance. I even held a 3 month old baby Spider Monkey named Milu, that the Makengue Wildlife Reserve was fostering after its mother was killed. The experiences on this trip were truly once in a lifetime.



Although these experiences were wonderful, I must tell you that some of them were very arduous in nature. It wasn’t easy for a person of my size to stomp around a hot and muggy rainforest in long sweatpants to prevent bug bites. It wasn’t comfortable for 16 people to crowd together in a long thin boat as it rained over the San Juan river. One of the things that I found to be the most difficult to adapt to were the rural living conditions. There was no air conditioning. There was no Wi-Fi. There was limited electricity and running water. Having to use an outhouse wasn’t something I readily looked forward to doing. There were absolutely no comforts of home. After all, the cabin was located in the middle of a rainforest.

Upon returning to Washington, DC, we immediately had to get to work. In two weeks time, we needed to present our findings and my videos at a Research Symposium hosted by American University. Attending the Symposium were various higher-ups of the university including professors, provosts, and even the Dean of Students . They loved our research and commended us on our hard work. After the symposium took place, I was commissioned to submit the audio I had recorded by the Executive Director of the U.S. National Botanic Gardens and my rainforest “soundtrack” is now what you will hear when visiting the Botanic Gardens in Washington, DC. One hundred plus degree weather. Four inches of mud. Howler Monkeys shouting in the middle of the night. Torrential downpours every 25 minutes. Bugs and the constant fear of Malaria. Yes, it was a perfect college Spring Break.

Vincenzo Dama (Class of 2014)



Jeffrey Wolfthal performs Shakespeare

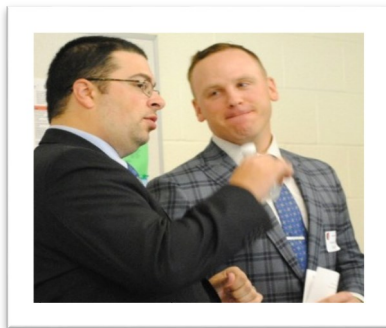
Jeffrey Wolfthal (Class of 2007) performed a scene from Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* at the New Jersey Renaissance Faire at Liberty Lake Camp in Bordentown. Jeffrey performed at the New Jersey Renfaire on the weekends of May 30, 31 and June 6,7. Later this summer Jeffrey will be performing at the Pennsylvania Renfaire in Manheim every weekend from August 1 through October 30.

Alumni Provide Juniors with Real-World Experience

On Friday, May 22, Bishop George Ahr High School hosted their annual Alumni Comeback Day, a day-long event organized by Mrs. Lilly Acab, Career Counselor, the Counseling Department and the Advancement Department.

The day is a capstone for the Junior class at the end of their Careers course. As the name suggests, numerous alumni come back to the school and shared with the Juniors their experiences in regards to their chosen careers and college life. This year, 21 alumni returned to give information to and answer questions from students. The day is very valuable for the Juniors as this summer, they will be visiting colleges and searching for "their perfect fit" as it relates to what they wish to pursue for a career and what they want to get out of their college experience.

The alumni who returned to give career presentations to the students were:



Michele Powers, Class of 1995	William Veit, Class of 1995
Casey Paluskiewicz, Class of 2004	Connor Crehan, Class of 2002
Rebecca Restaino, Class of 2004	Lauren Machovic, Class of 1999
Jamie Alexander, Class of 1999	Jeff Prosdocimo, Class of 2000
Michael Clore, Class of 2006	Theresa D'Addio, Class of 2009
Cheryl Zonkowski, Class of 1999	

The alumni who returned to give presentations and answer questions about college life were:

Danielle Scanlon, Class of 2010	Mark Celis, Class of 2012
Abraham Alinea, Class of 2014	Catherine Woodrow, Class of 2014
Brandon Pugnet, Class of 2014	Alana Taub, Class of 2014
Nina Chua, Class of 2014	Thissa Thambugala, Class of 2014
Patrick Serafin, Class of 2014	Gregory Burke, Class of 2013



Overall the day was a tremendous success. "It was very helpful to hear from people who have been in my position and it gave me reassurance to know that so many people sat where I sat, had the same concerns that I have, and are so successful right now," said Emily Lancia.

If you are an alumni and are interested in coming back next year to help with this event, please contact: Deborah Chippendale Director of Advancement - dchippendale@bgahs.org



Alumni News & Announcements....Congratulations!

Congratulations to the Class of 2015! You are now a part of the 9958 existing Alumni.



David Holder



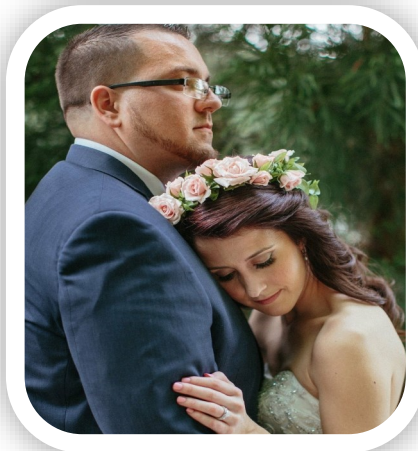
Rachel Rivera



Paul Gabriel, Jr.



Graduates from the Class of 2015 and their parents, Alumni of BGA/STA



James Tavormina (05) married Robin Wilkerson of Roanoke, VA on May 24th 2015 at Seton Hall University in South Orange, NJ

Recently Deceased Alumni

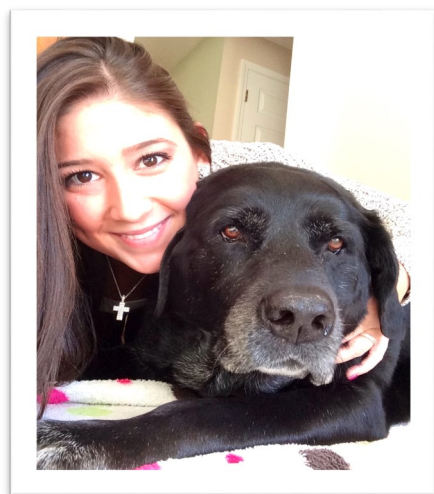


Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

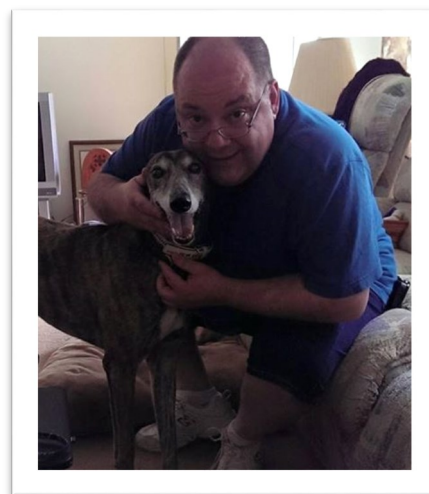
Brenda Raia Mracek	Class of 1983
Mary Jo Delahunty	Class of 1981
Anthony Raspa	Class of 2008
Katherine Bilsky	Class of 2008

Visit the website for a complete list of Alumni, Faculty and Benefactors.

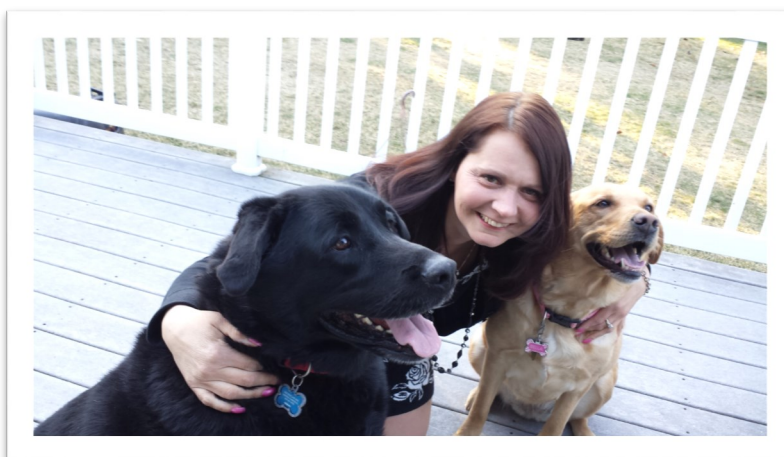
Pet Corner



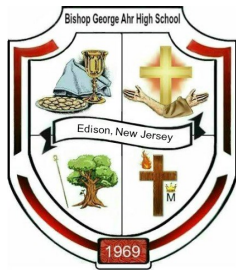
Kelsey Wilton (12) and KC



William Graziano (81) and Ozzie



Eileen Carvahlo Jacome (93) with Champ and Bella



Today's Students. Tomorrow's Leaders.

Upcoming BGA Events

- **September 26th** Family Day at The Races at Monmouth Park at 11:30 a.m.
- **September 25th, 26th, 27th:** "The Tempest" by William Shakespeare directed by Amy Kate Byrne Class of 2005
- **October 1st:** "Ahr Star" Spaghetti Dinner
- **October 18th**—Open House 1:00 pm—4:00 pm
- **October 23rd:** Annual Homecoming Game and Welcome Back Alumni starting at 6:00 p.m.

Save The Date:

BGA/STA Alumni Family Day

Saturday, April 23, 2016



Principal: Sr. Donna Marie Trukowski

Associate Principal: Harry Ziegler

Vice Principal: Brian Brogno

Campus Minister: Sr. Cynthia Marie Babyak

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BISHOP AHR/ST. THOMAS AQUINAS ALUMNI

Purse - \$18,000

Rising Sun Racing Stables, Inc., Owner

Gregory Sacco, Trainer

Gabriel Saez, Rider

6 Furlongs 1:10 4/5

Wildcat Creek 2nd

Surprise Strike 3rd

September 27, 2014

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Quepos

