

# The Blue Umbrella

An Official Student Newsletter of Alpha Omega Academy | June—July 2015

Vol. 1 Issue 1



## AOA LAUNCHES FIRST ISSUE OF THE BLUE UMBRELLA

AOA launched the first issue of its official student-run newsletter, *The Blue Umbrella*, on June 30, 2015 with the theme “Freedom and Role Models.”

The Newsletter is called *The Blue Umbrella* to represent a collective of ideas and a place for students to gather. The symbol of the umbrella was chosen in order to represent unity among the members of the student body. The color royal blue is one of the school colors.

The staff is comprised of twelve members from grade levels 8-12. Mrs. Kimberly Smith is the group advisor.

The Blue Umbrella is published every two months.



## WHAT IS REAL FREEDOM?



I am sure we have all heard the stories of our grandparents. *In my time...* or *When I was a kid...* As I listened to another round of my grandfa-

ther's experiences as a child growing up during World War II, I realized how much meaning these "stories" have.

Years ago, the teenagers did not have the things we now call *basic comforts*. They did not have computers to do school work with; they couldn't go down the street to McDonalds or Starbucks for a cup of coffee; they could not chat online with friends. Yes, that was a hard life, and not a single one of us wishes to doom ourselves to a life of war.

These days, everything is easy. We don't have to worry about food—our parents take care of that; we don't have to study by candle light, or run around avoiding machine gun fire. There's always a roof over our heads and carpeted floors to walk on. We literally are the Generation of Convenience and Plenty. We have iPhones, instant streaming, fast-food, Wi-Fi hotspots, and eBay. We see things that kids in the 1940's couldn't even dream about. We think we have more “freedom” than our grandparents.

What really caught my attention in my grandparents' stories are the admirable attitudes and values those teens had — perseverance, diligence, hard-work, selflessness, and sacrifice. (I have to admit that I felt guilty as I listened and sipped a can of coke while a pile of dishes sat in the sink.) Those teens didn't complain over missing an episode of their favorite show, or having a bad hair day, or waiting too long in the grocery store line.

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They accepted their challenges, grit their teeth and trudged on with their heads raised to the sun. Then, it made me ask, "Do we really have more 'freedom' than them?"

Somewhere along the line, did we lose what's important? Have we become a generation of teenagers and consumers tripping over each other to get what we want? We demand "freedom" to max out our allowance money, to drive our own cars, to stay up late at night, to watch what we want, and to fill our lives with material things that won't even matter in the long run. Most of the time, we are not



aware that this very "freedom" we demand can lead us to trouble and make us its own bitter slaves.

What is real freedom then?

Listening to my grandparents' stories made me think that real freedom is basically being able to do the right things even when they're hard to do. It is being able to make the **right** choices like staying healthy and safe. It is being able to say "No", not giving into peer pressure and popular trends. It is being able to stand for what we believe in, even when it's not popular.

Real freedom is being able to do the right thing not just for ourselves but for the good of others. It is being able to love others as ourselves even when they're different. Real freedom is having the power to fight ourselves to do something higher, nobler, and beyond our sinful nature.

We may have just a small glimpse of what real freedom is, but once we acknowledge in our hearts our Creator who is the Champion of Freedom and the Author of real freedom itself, then we can begin living real freedom the way He dreamed and designed our lives to be.

## Spanish & French



### Quotes of the Month

By Christine Marie H. and Abigail Q.

"Mi libertad acaba donde empieza mi silencio."

"My freedom ends where my silence begins."

~ Unknown



"Mieux vaut tre oiseau libre que roi captif."

(It's better to be a free bird than an imprisoned king.)

~ Aquitaine

# The Anthem of Ruby Bridges

~ by Salome Grace

**WHEN** I was in 7th grade, I was given the opportunity to be in a high school play at a local all-girls school. The play was centered on women who made a significant mark in history. Among the likes of Joan of Arc, Emily Dickinson and Queen Elizabeth I, I was playing a six year old girl I had never heard of: **Ruby Bridges**.

Ruby Bridges was at the center of school integration in 1960. At six years old, she was one of only six children deemed smart enough to attend a white school. Out of the four who chose to integrate, she was the only one going to William Frantz Elementary School. Amid protesters and threats, she was escorted to the school with U.S. Marshals. She spent over a year alone in a class room with only one teacher, Barbara Henry, because other teachers refused to teach her.

Through all this, Ruby showed remarkable courage. She bravely forged a path for many people after her as she modeled the power of a child's innocence to see beyond skin color. As an adult, she has gone on to continue spreading a message she learned so young; racism is formed by adults, and can be stopped through children. She spreads that message through the Ruby Bridges Foundation, reminding us that sometimes children can be the most remarkable role models.



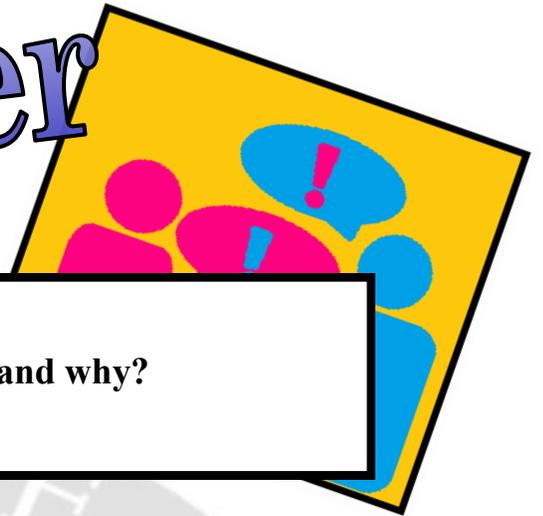
## The Blue Umbrella Staff



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# Loudspeaker



Blue Umbrella Top Commenter

**Q: Who would you consider your role model, and why?**

Reply · Like · 4 · 29 minutes ago

Hmm... I'd say my role model is **my big brother**. I've looked up to him for as long as I can remember. He's smart, he's logical and is great at what he does. I actually try to get higher grades than him in some subjects \*laughs\*

**Christine Marie H.** @EvamiRyos

My role model is **Martin Luther King Jr.** He stood up for what was right and never backed down.

**Grace S.** @Grace

My English teacher, **Ms. Jodie Medley**, is definitely one of my top role models.

She puts the students' needs above her own and is always kind, patient, and makes time for you, even if her day is going absolutely bonkers.

**Rose K.** @LostGirl

My role model is **everyone that lives their lives to the fullest** no matter how hard [it is to do so].

**Christopher Michael P.** @Christopher

**A: Jennifer M.** (fellow AOA student)

She's perfect...soooo. Haha Seriously though, she's amazing. I might be a little bias because she's my bestie, but she has multiple attributes worth noting and replicating.

A.) She is so kind and understanding. She'll put herself in your shoes and see things from your perspective so that she can better understand what you're going through and help you. Which is so helpful when you need a friend.

B.) She has an opinion on almost everything. And not in a snobby way. She has taken the time to gather facts and form her own opinions on important subjects, or even less important subjects. I admire the fact that she uses her own mind and decides how she feels about things without letting the world decide for her.

C.) She's brilliant. I only hope that one day I'll be as smart as her.

Love you Jenn. <3

~ **Suzannah K.** @Suzannah

**A:** The obvious answer is **Jesus**--because, honestly, who DOESN'T admire Him?

But on a human level, it's definitely **Gail Carson Levine**, the author of multiple Newberry Award-winning books including Ella Enchanted (which she is best-known for). She was who inspired me to want to become a writer, and I've been in love with her books since I was a little girl. I've met her in real life as well, and she was so friendly and funny that it was hard not to want to emulate her.

**Kimberly R.** @Kimberly

If I have to pick a single role model, I would pick **Corrie ten Boom**.

Her story illustrates her strong, courageous, and Godly character--the type of character worth imitating.

~ **Shelby D.** @Shelby

**Quick Q4U: Who would your role model in French be?**

"The first one that comes to mind is my high school French teacher. She was marvelous and made us speak only French in her classroom.

It's because of her that my pronunciation is the quality that it is."

~ **Madam Klimes**



# CALC-YOU-LATER

- by Nathan M.



In our present age of technology and computers, it is surprising to see that most math students do not know how to use their scientific and graphical calculators effectively. They can perform the basic operations and possibly do some graphing, but they do not use the built-in programming languages or the more advanced operations that seem hidden from normal users.

It is surprising to see that the **TI-83** and **TI-84** calculators do not, in fact, contain a formal modulo operator. If you cannot remember what the modulo operator did, it basically divides A by B and returns the remainder of the operation. The modulo operator is used in many mathematical calculations, so a workaround would be helpful to any math student using the aforementioned calculators, or, indeed, nearly any calculator without a modulo operator.

## So how would you go about implementing the modulo operator?

Quite simply, the formula is:  $fPart(A/B)B$ . The `fPart` command is standard to the TI calculators mentioned, and returns the *fractional* part of a given number. You can input it by pressing MATH, then RIGHT, then 4. The A represents the dividend of the division operation, and B represents the divisor.

Supposing you had a calculator that did not have the `fPart` or similar command, there is yet another workaround. To get the fractional part of a given number, simply get the absolute value of the integer value of that number subtracted from itself. The `Int` and `+/-` commands are standard to many scientific and graphing calculators and you should have no difficulty finding it.

Have fun working with your calculators, and good luck!

<code>+, -, *, /</code>	Performs the basic arithmetic operations
<code>( and )</code>	Places parentheses around operations
<code>Del</code>	Presses the CE button
<code>D</code>	Presses the Mod button
<code>P</code>	Presses the Pi button
<code>Q</code>	Presses the $x^2$ button
<code>Y</code>	Presses the $x^y$ button
<code>Ctrl-Y</code>	Presses the $y \setminus x$ button
<code>F9</code>	Presses the <code>+/-</code> button
<code>@</code>	Presses the square root button
<code>!</code>	Presses the factorial button
<code>;</code>	Presses the <code>Int</code> button
<code>3 y 3 =</code>	Computes the cube of 3.
<code>P * 2 =</code>	Computes "tau", twice the number of Pi
<code>P * 5 Q =</code>	Computes the area of a circle with radius of 5
<code>5 ! / ( 5 - 3 ) !=</code>	Computes the repetitive permutation of 5 with a repetition of 3.

# Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité!

by Rose K.

## Red, white, and blue.

These colors fly on fabric flags crammed through the streets of America and France. On July fourth of every year, the American people ignite fireworks and send them tumbling up into the sky, families and friends group to watch in back yard grill parties. Similarly, on July 14th, also known as Bastille Day, the French population watches a military parade, eats a lavish feast, and sits back to admire evening fireworks. Two different flags, two different revolutions, and two different dates encase these Independence holidays, but both occurred for one underlying purpose. The shout of a hundred thousand voices, the single throb from every heart, all pleading for the same exact thing. **Freedom.**

Stage-set and propped by the philosophical Enlightenment period, the American and French Revolutions had one common denominator: people who were discontent with the government. Leaders of these revolutions communicated the cries of the people to the indifferent ears of their rulers.

In a last attempt to squirm away from the British Empire's grip, Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence. The Declaration of Independence was a statement and explanation to the British monarchy elaborating the reasons why the thirteen colonies in America demanded to be independent states, no longer under the control and submission of Britain and its government. This statement was received by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776, which is now the national Independence Day of the United States. The war was long. Many died for what they believed, hoping their death would bring the coming establishment



of the idea, freedom for all, one step closer.

In France, on July 14th, after much rioting and government instability, the French people, "intoxicated with liberty" ("The Storming of the Bastille"), gathered around the Bastille, a stronghold prison with an arsenal of gun powder, and demanded it be surrendered over to them in defiance to king Louis XIV's faltering power. They stormed the Bastille later that day, meeting with opposition from the king's soldiers, but were allied by government troops. This event was the inciting spark that began the French Revolution, which was led by men such as Maximilian Robespierre and Georges Danton, and later led to the independence of the nation and the writing of the Declaration of the Rights of Man ("Storming of the Bastille").



What we celebrate today as a holiday, was once a revolution, a bloody event in the lives of actual people. Revolutions have many complicated reasons for being started, and wherever you go, people will have differing opinions of them. Destiny J. of Alpha Omega Academy summed it up well when she stated; "To me, a revolution is a movement of people who take a stand for what

they believe in."

Revolutions prove how great a wave that a united group of people can be when they come together under the formation and zeal of an idea, and decide as a group to act against the wrongs of their surroundings for the purpose of making things better. The Blue Umbrella Editor in Chief, Ms. Abigail Q., has proved with her actions as a leader that the power of a unified student body is great enough to make things happen, regardless of numbers or resources. All that is needed is one passion to light the fires of many hearts, to bring glory to God, and to hasten the coming of His kingdom.

*"If you feel that something is unfair and can be better, you should do something to change it instead of waiting for others to do it. It's like a mantra repeated over and over again. Freedom, freedom, freedom." I think in any case, freedom that is hard won shouldn't be taken lightly, and we have those revolutions to remind us of the price." - Lionheart*

# A Biblical Perspective On Role Models

by ~Alicia M.

Though role models can be famous people who inspire us, many times they are family and friends who guide us on a personal level. They are the ones who more radically affect us, much more than ones whom we have seen or read about. Because they influence every part of us, they have an effect on our spiritual lives as well.

As Christians, ever growing in our faith, we need others to help us. God has placed in our lives spiritual leaders, ones who train us



up and be the support we need. **Hebrews 13:7** says *Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith (NIV).* We all have faults and weaknesses, but together as Christians we make up the Body of Christ, encouraging and building up one another.

As we have spiritual role models, so we also are to others. Many times it is to the younger, whether that is in age or walk with Christ.

We need to train up and be the spiritual leader to those that God has given us to. We can give reassurance as well as admonishment. While we draw strength from others, let us give it. As we are blessed with our spiritual role models, let us continue and be the ones in which the future generation can be blessed from.

## Literary Corner

### Book Choice for the Summer

*A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, written by Mark Twain, was published in 1889. Focusing on Hank Morgan, an inventor and mechanic who gets hit on the head and travels back in time to 16<sup>th</sup> century Camelot, the novel was the subject of controversy.

Extremely humorous in tone, the novel examines what 6<sup>th</sup> Century England *would be like if technology from the 1800's was integrated in their society (Like knights on bicycles, for example).*

Mark Twain was born in Florida, Missouri, in 1835. He became an apprentice to a printer, fought in the Civil War, captained a steamboat, and was a journalist in California. Two of his more famous works are the novels *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and its sequel, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. He is most known for his humorous stories.



I chose Mark Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, because I found the concept of the story to be very interesting. It would be exciting to see what the medieval world would be like with electricity, phones and, most importantly, soap.

I admire that the novel was humorous, while still managing to tackle some serious issues (like smallpox, being sold into slavery, and having all your supporters abandon you). Mark Twain's humor is very contagious for me, and I have always looked forward to reading one of his stories. *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's*

*Court* is one of my favorite books, and I have read it over many times. I have found other stories of Mark Twain to be written in an equally down-to-earth, honest and witty perspective. Finally, Twain's main characters are very entertaining people, and reading about their adventures is a great delight.



**"Esther" by Sonder**



**"Chicago" by Benji G.**



**"To Shining Sea" by Lionheart**



**"Blue Umbrella" by LostGirl**

# ARTISTS CONVERGENCE



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