

MODUS VIVENDI

A WAY OF LIFE

FALL 2013

25

YEARS



CELEBRATING GOD'S FAITHFULNESS





Modus Vivendi Fall 2013

Modus Vivendi is translated as a way of life or a manner of living. The Bear Creek School seeks to develop individuals for whom the classical ideals of excellence in all things, love of learning, spiritual commitment, and self-discipline have become a way of life.

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The mission of The Bear Creek School is to provide a high-quality, Christian liberal arts education in a nurturing environment that will enable each student to become the individual God intends.

Only online can you find the *latest news, photos, and information* about upcoming events. We're here, 24-7.

Let us come to you

Alerts

To get text or email reminders for upcoming events, athletics team events, and special programs, sign up for alerts at tbcs.org. Click on the "bell" icon next to any upcoming event on the school calendar to sign up for an alert for that event. View a video in the "Website How To" folder in the resource box on the Parent Page to learn more about alerts.

The Bear Facts

Each Friday during the school year, *The Bear Facts*, Bear Creek's weekly newsletter is emailed to current parents, faculty, and staff. *The Bear Facts* contains news and announcements from each of the school's divisions and from the athletics department. This newsletter also contains a calendar of upcoming events. Back issues are archived and searchable on the school website at tbcs.org/bearfacts.



Watch the latest Bear Creek videos on YouTube! Link to our YouTube page by clicking on the YouTube icon in the footer of our website or on the On Campus page at tbcs.org.



See what's happening

On Campus

Stay up-to-date on the latest news and events by checking our On Campus page. On Campus is a mashup page featuring our school calendar, school news posts, the latest YouTube video, and recent Facebook posts.

Parent Page

Visit the Parent Page on our website to see the latest announcements, current lunch menu, upcoming events, and a complete list of parent resources. You will often find slide shows and videos from recent school events as well. Click Parents at the top of any page.

The Parent Page hosts tabs for each of our school parent groups where you will find news, announcements, and resources for PTF, Grizzlies Booster Club, ParentNet, Friends of the Arts, and Parents of Alumni.

The Bear Creek School Facebook page contains current photos and posts about what is happening at Bear Creek. Bear Creek Preschool and The Bear Creek School Alumni Group also have active Facebook pages. *Like* us and join the conversation!



LET'S BE
friends!
FIND US
ON FACEBOOK

Inside



Twenty-Five Years

This year Bear Creek will celebrate twenty-five years of God's faithfulness to the school, its families, and the people who make it all possible.

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Commencement 2013

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Karen Blankenbeckler

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A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dusk fell as I drove down the long street to his house. This wasn't odd in and of itself, but this was the home of my college English professor who, no doubt, likely frowned upon students showing up on his front door step. I had not been the best student, had missed more than a few assignments, and had skipped the occasional class. But I was determined. I would change his mind. Thus began my odyssey down Poplar Avenue to Dr. Daniels' home to plead my case for leniency.

As dusk succumbed to evening and the lights began to flicker on around the neighborhood, he closed the door and wished me good night. His answer remained a resolute "no." After all my imploring, he would not grant me a passing grade. I would have to retake the class. A nauseating numbness ran from my face to my chest and settled in my belly, and I distinctly remember feeling dismay and fear, prompting the need to sit down.

At the time I was angry, afraid, annoyed, and frustrated. His explanation was simple and deliberate. He was unwilling to allow a student to avoid immediate failure and hence forfeit his future. He understood that investing in me with an intentional outcome would

be painful, but it would be worth the pain in the long run. And he was right. His intended message of working hard, showing up, and striving for excellence was received, and that lesson continues to instruct to this day.

This year The Bear Creek School achieves a milestone anniversary, and throughout the 2013-2014 academic year we will reflect upon and celebrate the Lord's faithfulness over the last 25 years—a faithfulness that has been nothing short of miraculous, a faithfulness that resounds with stories of individuals investing in students with focused intentionality, and a sincere desire to see students become the individuals God intends.

This edition of *Modus Vivendi* and the 25th Anniversary Celebration page on our website (tbcs.org/25years) chronicle the narrative of God's faithfulness over these 25 years and the dream of a high-quality, Christian liberal arts education—from board members and administrators who stewarded the mission and provided critical direction and discernment, to faculty and staff being drawn to the mission in the unlikeliest of ways, from families and volunteers who dedicated their lives and significant resources to making the mission a reality, to students

and alumni who are currently living the legacy of that faithfulness by bringing wisdom, compassion, and courage to the communities in which they live.

We all share in this grand tale of The Bear Creek School—past, present, and future. The Lord is sovereign and has uniquely placed each of us here in this time and in this place to participate in His work and to *become the individual God intends*.

The Bear Creek School has been investing in students with intentionality of outcome for 25 years and will continue to do so for many years to come, by the Lord's grace and for His glory. Please join us in both celebrating the legacy of His faithfulness and looking forward to His faithfulness in the future.

Patrick Carruth
President and Headmaster

BEAR CREEK: A LEGACY OF FAITH

By Lucas Mack



Celebrating God's Faithfulness

Starting a school is no small task. It begins with a vision, is inspired by a mission, and sets off to attract like-minded families. But having a strong vision and mission only get you so far. For it is one thing to start a school, but to build one that lasts is a completely different story. Looking back over the past twenty-five years of Bear Creek's history, it is hard not to ask the questions: How did all this happen? How did a school that started with eight students meeting in a small room of a house turn into a thriving institution that is setting the standard for classical Christian education?

The answer can be found in the dedication of staff, faculty, board members, parents, students, and volunteers along the way who desired to see God glorified in education. Even though the beginnings were small, the vision for The Bear Creek School was never intended to engage just a small group of families, but rather to make a great impact on the world, both locally and globally. With countless hours poured into making sure the vision of Bear Creek became reality, founder Nancy Price along with founding families inspired each other to spread the word about what God was doing in the lives of those first students.

When asked about how the school was started, Dr. Price recalls, "In one regard, founding a school is simply a process of discovery—jumping through the necessary hoops and marketing. I designed and

wrote little tri-fold flyers and left them in libraries and churches, and of course talked to everyone I knew, and even those I didn't, about the school starting in the fall. The fact is, I knew nothing about starting or marketing a school, but it happened simply because the Lord chose to bless my efforts for His glory."

Thankfully, God did bless the work and as word spread about what was happening, more and more parents started to inquire and see for themselves the work that was taking place in the classroom. Early parent Susan Aronson remembers, "We felt like it would be a safe place for our daughters, and the Christian worldview and classical education that they were presenting was attractive to us. Most of the reasons why parents have chosen The Bear Creek School now are similar to why we chose it back then—the class sizes are smaller and the teachers are very special." So as parents enrolled their children, the school began to grow, but according to Dr. Price there were two ingredients more crucial than any others—faculty and prayer.

"We'd pray for that specific number of students to enroll in each grade. At faculty prayer times, at home before meals, and in the car with my kids, we'd lift up potential families who visited, asking the Lord to enroll the ones He knew should be a part of the school. A few years back I came across an old journal I had kept during those early years. It was so much fun to read the names of children and parents who had come to visit the school and to be

reminded of answers to each prayer about our enrollment needs! As time went on, when enrollment was booming and we desperately needed our own facilities—when we were in the throes of buying property, getting permits, raising money, construction—again, prayer was the only reason we succeeded. God answering prayer accomplished everything," recalls Dr. Price.

"Godly, caring, smart, committed teachers were the most important asset the school had from the very beginning," says Dr. Price. "We prayed for great teachers, and the Lord faithfully provided people who took the job because they wanted to serve Him while teaching children. Parents were drawn to enroll and to continue at the school because of the great things happening in the classrooms. And those great things happened because of great teachers and prayer!"

With eight students in 1988, 516 students in 2000, and close to 800 students coming into the 2013-2014 school year, the growth over the past twenty-five years has made people stop and take notice of what is happening in the cities of Redmond, Sammamish, and Woodinville, Washington. As a community at Bear Creek may we never forget to stop and reflect upon the school's history of growing in faith. And may we continue the course of prayer, and by God's grace see His hand of blessing for many years to come.

TIMELINE



The Bear Creek School operates in a mobile home on the property of The Bear Creek Community Church (BCCC).



Redmond Campus opens for grades K-12. Woodinville Campus continues at BCCC.



Grades K-5 are held in BCCC and in portables, and grades 6-10 are held at Grace Church.

The Bear Creek School opens in a home with 8 students and a dream of becoming a K-6 school.



Classes expand into portables at BCCC with 45 students enrolled.



Groundbreaking Day celebrated at Redmond Campus.

The school purchases 13 acres of land on Union Hill.



1988

1989

1991

1994

1996

1998

2000



Bear Creek's first graduating class of seven students is honored at each Commencement ceremony with the inclusion of seven graduate speakers.



Early Childhood Woodinville Campus opens at Woodinville Alliance Church.



Valley Campus purchased and enrollment reaches 628 students.. Students move from BCCC to new campus in January 2006.



Early Childhood Sammamish Campus opens at Pine Lake Covenant Church.

Patrick Carruth becomes President and Headmaster.



2001 2005 2006 2007 2010 2012 2013



THE BEAR CREEK MISSION: NEVER CHANGING

By Lucas Mack

There is an ever-present tension among the past, the present, and the future—between honoring the static legacy of the past, while being able to embrace change. Change can be good.

Winston Churchill said, “To improve is to change; to be perfect is to change often.” While this may not be fully true, it is true that change is constant. Seasons change. Situations change. People change. Acknowledging that change is part of the human condition, Solomon is credited with saying, “This too shall pass” as an encouragement to his listeners feeling stuck in their circumstances.

Change can be good.

But change can also be uncomfortable and cause tension. Change breaks up routine and enables people and institutions to continue improving as we walk on this journey of life toward becoming the individuals God intends. Yes, change can be good, but it is often uncomfortable.

But what if God changed? What if we woke up one day to find that everything we have held as truth suddenly turned out to be wrong, all on account of God suddenly changing His mind? That would not be good at all. Thankfully for us all the prophet

Malachi proclaims the character of God, “For I am the LORD, I change not.”

So change can be good, but that which does not change is also good.

Since the founding of The Bear Creek School in 1988, a lot has changed. In 1988 the average price of a new home in America was \$91,600, you could buy a dozen eggs for 65 cents, and a gallon of gas cost 91 cents. 1988 was the year the Hubble Space Telescope was deployed and George H. W. Bush defeated Michael Dukakis in the presidential race.

But as many things have changed since the year 1988, one thing has remained

unchanged, the mission of The Bear Creek School:

To provide a high-quality, Christian liberal arts education in a nurturing environment that will enable each student to become the individual God intends.

The mission statement was created from a desire for children to have an experience which brings God glory in all they do. "I wanted it to be succinct, and the mission statement was a natural outflow of my own educational experience," says founding Head of School Dr. Nancy Price. "All parents want their children to have an education that nurtures each child as an individual; and in my opinion, only a school like The Bear Creek School would develop each student into the person God wants him or her to be."

Teaching how to think and not just what to think, the school has joined a lineage of great classical educational institutions, but distinctive to The Bear Creek School mission are the words, "God intends." That statement is lived out by the combination of rigorous academics and Christian worldview teaching which makes Bear Creek stand out and stand strong in the changing currents of culture. And with today's world of fast-paced technology, with time seemingly moving faster and few moments to relax, it is rare to find a constant—something to fix our sights to help navigate our course. In everything Bear Creek has done over the past twenty-five years, our mission has been our constant, enabling the school to grow from a small room in a mobile home to a thriving community serving

preschool through grade 12.

Board Chair Andrea Lairson, J.D. says Bear Creek has grown to what it is today by God's blessing on the school and because of the steadfastness of the mission. "The mission is important," says Lairson. "It has a kingdom purpose. The people who have come to Bear Creek as faculty, staff, and trustees have been very focused on that mission and have had clarity about what the mission is and have been faithfully committed to that mission. The Board has tried to be very intentional about that. There are many Christian institutions that drift from their mission. They are excellent educational organizations, but they are not Christian. We want to remain outstanding in our academics but also remain a Christian institution."

Proverbs 22:28 cautions, "Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set." Leaving some things as they were first created is important because as landmarks show us where we have come from, they also direct us to where we are to go. As the mission is coming into its 25th year, it has been the guiding principle upon which all decisions have been made, even in times of change and transition.

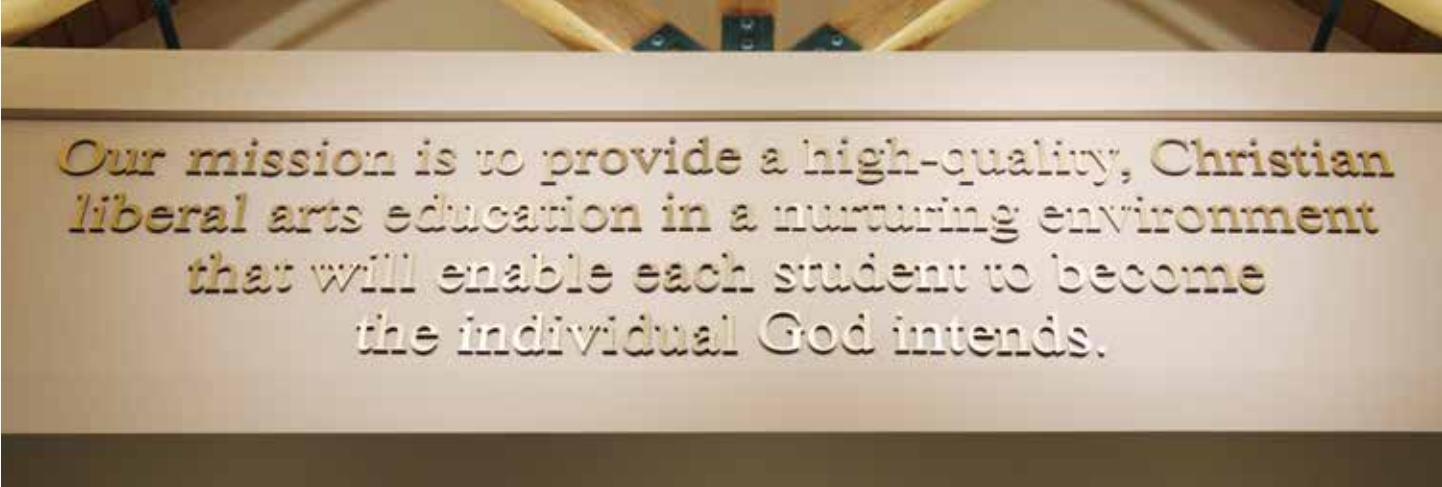
Current President and Headmaster Patrick Carruth remains dedicated to the mission while working to expand the vision of The Bear Creek School. He states, "The school has maintained its mission over the past twenty-five years by remaining faithful to Christian education and a vigorous faith experience, remaining committed

to high-quality, rigorous academics, and remaining focused on helping students become the individuals God intends. Looking forward, we are striving to prepare the next generation of leaders who are compelled by the Gospel to engage the world with wisdom, compassion, and courage."

Staying true to the mission, the school continues to attract new families looking for the best fit for their children. Discovering that Bear Creek believes that *only* when faith, mind, and heart are fed together can we experience the fullness of education, parents quickly realize the school is built upon a mission which both invests in students and is also intentional in outcome.

For parents Kevin and Kathy Keith, that was extremely important when looking for the right fit for their children. "I see Bear Creek as a partnership between the school and the parents," Kathy affirmed. "We came with our first child in kindergarten and felt like the school walked right alongside us and together we have parented, in a way. Bear Creek has really equipped me as a mom to be a better mom, whether that's at the early childhood seminars presented each fall or just in dialoging with teachers."

Living out the mission is a major reason other parents share the same sentiments as the Keiths. As the school celebrates the Lord's faithfulness and moves toward future milestones, the mission statement will continue to guide decisions and keep the school grounded in the mission God has blessed for the past twenty-five years.



Our mission is to provide a high-quality, Christian liberal arts education in a nurturing environment that will enable each student to become the individual God intends.

THE VISION FOR BEAR CREEK: FROM THE BEGINNING

By Lucas Mack

What is a vision? What does that look like? Is it a statement that hangs on the wall where no one notices? What can it accomplish and why have one in the first place? The answers may be found within both successful organizations and struggling organizations. Proverbs 29:18a reads, “Where there is no vision, the people perish.”

An organization will thrive or fail because of its mission or lack thereof. Thankfully, The Bear Creek School’s vision has been clear since the school’s founding and continues to guide the school’s decisions. During her time in college, founder Nancy Price first expressed her desire to create an educational institution which fed faith, mind, and heart. Her vision was to build upon the classical Christian model, creating an academically rigorous and spiritually strong school which nurtured the individual child.

Now celebrating our 25th anniversary, Bear Creek continues to grow and stay true to the vision Nancy cast for the school all those years ago. As the school has grown, adapting to current needs has been one of its greatest strengths, and Board Chair Andrea Lairson works to ensure the school is staying current while never veering from the vision or mission. “One characteristic I attribute to Bear Creek’s success is that Bear Creek is willing to look at itself, and I actually think that’s a cultural value of Bear Creek. For example, the Board of Trustees is willing to look at itself and say, ‘What do we need to do better?’ ‘We’ve



Dr. Nancy Price, founding head of school with husband Bill, founding board member

been entrepreneurial; we’ve done it this way; it made sense to do it this way, but it’s not really the best way to do it; we need to change that, so we need to take affirmative steps to make healthy change.’ There has been a lot of emphasis on healthy board practices and healthy institutional practices. I think that’s one of Patrick Carruth’s greatest strengths—he understands the importance of great organizational health.”

Coming into his seventh year as President and Headmaster, Patrick is dedicated to preserving and advancing the vision and mission. “We are preparing students to lead culture actively rather than react passively to culture. Truth remains constant, and we want students to engage the culture by knowing and loving truth. So, culture provides consistent opportunities for the school, students, and the Bear Creek community to lead with truth and grace,” says Patrick. “The school has maintained

its mission over the past twenty-five years by remaining faithful to Christian education and a vigorous faith experience, remaining committed to high-quality, rigorous academics, and focusing on helping students become the individuals God intends.”

The Lord’s blessing on the vision for The Bear Creek School, then and now, grounds us and also propels us forward into the next twenty-five years and beyond, by God’s grace and for His glory.



The Board of Trustees at the first Commencement Exercises, June 2001, which was held at the school for seven graduates.



Bear Creek faculty and board congratulate graduates in front of First Presbyterian Church of Bellevue. Bear Creek Alumni now number over 450.

BY YOUR GRACE AND FOR YOUR GLORY

By Donna Dunn and Sherrie Brown

Dear Father God,

Thank You for calling us to this place and these people. It took the school custodian and the admissions officer to be Your voice on our answering machines, quiet promptings to interview. You transformed a science nerd and a stay-at-home mom into teachers who serve You.

Thank You for small beginnings and immense grace. There were nine freshmen, and twenty-four students in each grade when we began. The mistakes we made as novice teachers were large, but our students graciously cheered us on.

Thank You for the vision of a high-caliber education to serve our community. For consistent administration of that vision led by captains of the “scholar-ship,” Dr. Nancy Price and Patrick Carruth. Nancy taught us to be courageous and to put Christ first. Patrick encourages us to be our best and to put Christ first.

Thank You for a responsive community, from parents to students to colleagues. We knew we were embarking on an adventure together—this classical, Christian education—new to Seattle, but as ancient as Aristotle and Aquinas. What united us? A desire to love You, Father God, with our minds and to know and understand You through math and science, language, and art. The excitement of building continues to drive us, architecting an excellent education together.

And speaking of buildings, thank You for this one! We began teaching science in Sunday school classrooms, often without running water. We are not sure we should reveal how we made dilutions of hydrochloric acid without a laboratory hood. Or how the remnants of fetal pig dissections ended up in the cafeteria cupboards. So we thank You for the generosity of parents and staff who gave sacrificially to build and equip our science labs so that we might in turn equip students to become, by Your calling, engineers, chemists, doctors, or research scientists.

We are grateful for each of the more than six hundred students who have passed through our Bear Creek classrooms. But our first seven graduates deserve particular appreciation. Caleb, Laura, Davidde, Minho, Petra, Tyler, and Max modeled all the things we love about Bear Creek students – dedication to learning, affection and grace for each other, as well as leadership and encouragement to the younger grades. They set an excellent precedent.

And finally, thank You for wisdom. Classicists have described the purpose of education as *sapiens atque eloquens pietas*, wise and eloquent piety. We humbly submit that wisdom encompasses eloquence and piety, the pursuit of truth, beauty, and goodness in order that we may better know You. We and our colleagues teach, purposed by wisdom and in pursuit of wisdom. Together with our students, make us wise.

By Your grace and for Your glory,
Donna, together with Sherrie



Sherrie Brown and Donna Dunn began teaching on the same date in October 1997, filling an emergency opening in the fairly new Middle School and brand-new Upper School. Currently, Sherrie teaches grade 7 Life Science, grade 12 Advanced Science Topics (Anatomy and Physiology), Stained Glass, and recently retired as Bear Creek’s varsity volleyball head coach. Donna is Science Department Chair and teaches grade 11 Honors Biology and AP Biology.



Donna Dunn gives a science lesson, circa 1997.



Bear Creek science students begin a dissection, circa 2007.

BEAR CREEK AT 25

By Lena Whitlock, Lower School grade 4 teacher

It was January 20, 1993 and the Inauguration Day Storm had hit Seattle. I happened to be one of the terrified people to witness glass falling to the floor of Bellevue Square from the skylights in the roof. As the storm raged outside, a storm was brewing in my mind that day as well. Being a recent graduate of Biola University's education program, one thought needed to be answered: would I find a teaching position that met my idealistic expectations internalized throughout my course of study?

My learning exposed me to *How Then Shall We Live* and *The Making of a Christian Mind*; therefore, effective biblical integration was at the forefront of my mind. Lots of educational research and the latest understanding of brain-based learning resulted in big opinions about what was best for young children and their learning. And on that day, despite weaving and driving around through several storm-related detours on my way home, strong winds and fallen trees were not the only obstacles I faced that day.

I persevered in prayer, asking God to allow me to find a loving, safe environment where a teacher could deliver a quality education to train minds to love learning, life, and their God. In the course of the next six months, I turned down positions at two other private Christian schools because I did not feel their missions matched what I truly believed was beneficial for young learners. Then, hearing about The Bear Creek School, I applied for an open teaching position.

Not owning a computer as a young, newly graduated college alumna, I went to the local Kinko's to type out my philosophy of education so I could articulate at the interview why I had chosen to apply to Bear Creek. In that interview, Nancy Price (founding head of school), Jan Mueller (former board member and current librarian), and I spoke with tears in our eyes knowing that God had brought us together because of a common goal and vision for what children deserve and what education should look like.

After the interview, I told my parents about the process and there

were gasps from them when they heard about the humble salary, no benefits, and newness of the institution. Extended family members called to encourage me to reconsider one of the jobs I was previously offered at established institutions; but I, like my fellow five colleagues, knew God was doing something very special, and we were forging new paths, taking life-changing risks, and stepping out in faith, excited to be a part of His plan for children on the Eastside. So, I accepted the job and began my Bear Creek journey.

There were many points during the school's beginnings when we as a faculty chose faith instead of fear. One of my colleagues shared years later that she cried one whole evening when she saw the very small, makeshift room that would be her classroom in the fall of 1993. Simple prayers were prayed with our husbands by our sides at night. We dared to dream something that seemed impossible. My lips dripped with prayers from David's 23rd Psalm. "...Lead me in the paths of righteousness for your name's sake." In the days that followed, potluck dinners ensued where we hung chalkboards and built cabinets and bookshelves late into the evening hours.

In spite of all the challenges that typify a new educational intuition, we all knew in our hearts that God had brought us together with a common

mission and desire to make a difference in the lives of young children to the glory of God. In the fall of 1993 we read and discussed two books together, one by Doug Wilson and another by Marva Collins, which knit our hearts and minds together as we chose curriculum, established year-long objectives, and wrote daily lesson plans. In 1993 our small faculty of six traveled to Portland, Oregon to attend the ACSI convention, and we walked away with a quote by G.K. Chesterton that would forever shape the way we looked at education. "Education is simply the soul of society as it is passed from one generation to another." Often people will comment about the color of hair or eyes or particular mannerisms passed on to the next generation, but more importantly the ideas about how to pass on a solid foundation of knowledge and skills, interwoven with a set of unshakable biblical truths, raged in our hearts and minds.



Lena Whitlock poses with her students by the school's portables at the Bear Creek Community Church in 1995.



Nancy Price, Karen Blankenbeckler, Lisa Dineen, Lena Whitlock, Donna Maholick, Kerry Clancy, Denise Peeler, and Shelly Stowell attended an ACSI conference in 1993.

In those first years we gleaned from Nancy Price's master's thesis the latest research on the most important factors that positively impact a learner's success. We drove our personal vehicles, filled with our students, on monthly field trips that allowed students to touch, see, and interact with learning at a depth that only experience can bring. Classes remained small, 16-18 students, so that each child was known, individually challenged, and loved. Quality novels and poetry were chosen as opposed to reading textbooks with prescribed curricula. Workbooks and worksheets were only used to practice skills, not to teach students. Research-based methods on how to train the mind to acquire true wisdom and understanding resulted in weekly classroom activities that included Bible and poetry memorization. Still to this day, these tried-and-true principles of excellence and purposeful instruction remain the backbone of pedagogy at Bear Creek.

Nancy Price dared to dream for the sake of children. She dreamed of children knowing their value is in who they are in Christ. She envisioned that each child would be seen as an individual, not just as another student to squeeze into a mold. She aspired to deliver a high-quality education because children deserve nothing less. Nancy envisioned faculty who set high standards for their students, while responding with lots of love and positive feedback. She believed that by using brain-based research and hiring "smart," as well as God-fearing teachers, children's bodies would ooze with a love for learning and their God.

Most of all, she dreamed "credo ut intelligam" so that all children would understand that knowledge comes from learning but learning comes from a true understanding of the Creator God. She taught how to individually pray for our students and to humbly ask God for understanding about how to reach their hearts and minds. Nancy also instructed us on correct grammar when we prayed. Many times to our chagrin, teacher "mini-lessons" would emerge after morning prayer



Lena and class of 2012 students (grade 4) with their auction class project quilt, March 2004.

time so that we as teachers could model appropriate grammar usage in front of our students.

Always holding us to a high standard in speech, execution, and wardrobe gave us a greater respect for our profession and duty to the children at Bear Creek. Finally, she envisioned that Bear Creek would be a safe place, a place where children were loved and felt secure to love others. We, as a small faculty, knew we were all just simple people desperately in need of God's help to meet the idealistic goals we had for children on the Eastside.

Looking forward, I am so pleased with the current teachers, administration, and board members who God has called to further the mission of Bear Creek and grow this institution to be a respected twenty-five year old entity. I am thankful for my amazing colleagues throughout the years who inspire each other to set rigorous goals for our institution, resulting in accreditations with notable organizations, excellent curricula, and brilliant educational practices for the benefit of the children. I am grateful for the vision of a group of parents who spearheaded the Campaign for Bear Creek and the faithful and generous supporters that God used to build the current facilities that we use to carry out the mission.

The Bear Creek journey has allowed many children and adults to see God's hands of truth and love in equipping children's souls for the journey of life. Happy Birthday Bear Creek! My soul sings Psalm 103 as I remember God's grace on you! "Praise the Lord, my soul; all my inmost being, praise His holy name. Praise the Lord, my soul, and forget not all His benefits—who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's."

Faculty Profile: **Karen Blankenbeckler**

By Vicki Kaiser

Photo by Sini Fernandez



Karen Blankenbeckler knew right away there was something special going on at the tiny new school called The Bear Creek School. Like most new teachers, she was excited about setting up her first classroom and preparing for the new faces she'd forever remember as her first students. But more exciting than that, she was entering her career as an educator in an environment she didn't know existed, one which resonated with her desire to teach students well.

That was twenty-three years ago. Karen's kindergarten classroom was in the master bedroom of a doublewide mobile home. Her supplies were stored in the bathtub, but that didn't matter. "The vision of education was more important than buildings," she states. "We believed from the beginning that God wanted us to teach students well. It was so obvious God wanted this school to exist."

And, looking back, it's obvious God wanted her at the school. Karen heard about the teaching position from someone she had just met at her husband's company picnic where she had casually mentioned she was looking for a job. She explains, "Someone called me and said, 'I saw a notice in the *Woodinville Weekly* advertising for a kindergarten teacher at a Christian school. I don't even know if you are a Christian, but thought I'd let you know.'" She scheduled an interview and was hired the next day.

Academic excellence in a faith setting was a new concept, and Karen says everyone had to be flexible and believe in the vision to do what needed to be done. She and other faculty dug through warehouses for curriculum. When classrooms weren't ready on time one year, Mrs. Dunn taught class on the lawn for the first week of school. "It took resilience and passion, believing what we were doing was special and that it didn't matter that it was different."

Grade 4 teacher Denise Peeler recalls, "We were new teachers; no one knew what classical Christian education was. I think God did that so He could grow this school from scratch."

If it was God's plan to grow the school from scratch, Karen provided the water by mentoring the "baby teachers," as Mrs. Peeler called them. "Karen was our cheerleader. The intensity of the learning curve could have deflated us, but she empowered us."

Karen treated the teachers like her family. They hung out together, went on retreats together, shared life almost like sisters. "If Karen suggested a book," Mrs. Peeler says, "I wrote it down. Still do."

This is her gift. Karen studies people, considering how they learn; packaging training that brings out people's best. "I know she is one hundred percent behind me," Mrs. Peeler shares, "that's why I can give one hundred percent."

Though Karen says she was "tricked" into administration, mentoring drew her there. As Lower School Division Head, she began the work that is now her passion—investing in people so they can go out and do what God has called them to do.

"The thing about Karen that I have loved," says preschool teacher Rachael Urban, "she always wants you to be working in what you

believe to be your calling. She loves people for who they are—loves what they bring to the table."

Teachers appreciate that Karen allows them to have a voice and that she validates their thoughts. She encourages them to teach well and with excellence, equipping them with best practices of teaching.

"Karen leads with grace and humility, but with a strong knowledge base of what kids need," Mrs. Urban says. "I knew how to love kids; Karen taught me how to teach."

If Karen has a motto, it is "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." (Philippians 4:13) When there are challenges, these words encourage her to persevere. In success, she rearranges the words, emphasizing, "I can do *nothing* apart from Christ. It's His work, not mine."

Determined to keep the excellence in education connected to faith, explaining that if either becomes secondary, the godly pursuit of learning will become meaningless. Karen believes, "We must continue working, not for our praise, but for excellence that glorifies God."

God is glorified most when we trust Him. Sometimes that

trust requires us to wait for His timing, something especially difficult, Karen concedes, when a position goes unfilled. "There are times when we wait and wait, waiting even when we feel we should not be waiting any more. But, we have learned, God will bring the right person."

"Even before we had credibility," Mrs. Peeler reveals, "when it was hard to get quality people, Karen believed God would provide—and He did!"

"God has given sure, dedicated provision of the right people," Karen testifies. "They are steadfast, faithful, and committed to the work He's doing here. I can remember every faculty hire. Each one puts his or her mark on the school."

Karen's mark is memorable, too.

In many ways she has grown up with The Bear Creek School. She remembers its infancy, knows what it took to get through the teen years, and seems to know how to enjoy the fruit of 25 years without eating the seed for the future. "The early years required risk-taking, flexibility, and entrepreneurship; the middle needed stability and steadfastness; and the future," she says, "will need a combination of all."

Grateful to the Lord for this journey and place that is Bear Creek, Karen believes she is called here "for such a time as this."

"I can do all
things through
Christ who
strengthens me."
Philippians 4:13

Karen Blankenbeckler and her husband, Jim, have four children. She estimates she has cheered her children at 10 million sporting events. She loves boating on Lake Sammamish with her family, has taken up painting, and is a voracious reader. At the date of this interview, Karen had read 52 books in the last year (since July 2012)—mostly theology.

LEGACY SENIORS

Graduating in Bear Creek's 25th year

By Annika Hoiem '15

A new school year is a fresh start, a new beginning, but for Bear Creek's senior class, it's also an ending. For the seniors, their final school year comes with the bittersweet realization that time at Bear Creek is coming to a close. This feeling is further accentuated for those seventeen students who have been attending Bear Creek since kindergarten. Since they will be graduating in the 25th anniversary year of the school, a handful of them were interviewed to get their thoughts as they head into their final year at The Bear Creek School.

Since these students were five years old when they started at Bear Creek, we asked when they first realized what the school meant to them. Although the timing was varied, all of them said it was the warm, tight-knit community that struck them the most about Bear Creek. Catherine Fernandez realized this over time, stating, "As I talked with kids who went to public school, I started realizing that they didn't know everyone at their school. I feel lucky to have grown up with these kids and to have been with them for the last thirteen years."

For Stan Leszynski, freshman year opened his eyes to the welcoming environment of Bear Creek. "I became aware of the community and how it was possible to not only be friends with kids in my grade, but also kids older than me," he said. The graduation of her brother, Zach, in 2012 prompted Erin Alleva to think more deeply about her love for the school. "I realized it was special when I attended my brother's An Evening of Honors ceremony. Just seeing the community and connections those students had from being there since kindergarten was special," said Alleva.

Megan McRae had similar feelings as she went through her junior year. "I really realized how special it was, because of how close I got to new people in my grade, how willing the teachers were to help me, and how they truly cared about me as a person," McRae reflected.

We followed up by asking what would surprise people most about kids who had gone to Bear Creek since kindergarten. "What would surprise people most is how you can walk through school and either recognize someone or know their name," McRae replied, "As such a small school, we are really connected, but we are not just the typical 'nerds.' There are athletes, artists, and performers, as well as smart students." Fernandez agreed. "It is different than just going to the same school," she said, "I have had relationships with these kids. Not in a weird way," (laughs) "but they are all genuinely good people. Whether I am super close with them or not, I know and trust them all."

"A lot of people would expect us to be sheltered, but there are a lot of people who look beyond their own perspective," noted Benjamin Button. "For example, the debate team has to take on opinions that are not their own and argue for them." These students have been at the school for most of their lives, yet that has not prevented them from participating in organizations outside of the school. Alleva has not

only been swimming on a club swim team, but also on Eastlake High School's team. "Even though we have gone to the same school since kindergarten, we have lives outside of Bear Creek," she commented.

Not only has Bear Creek been designed to strengthen students academically, but spiritually as well. All of these students feel like the school has a unique part in pushing them in their faith, "[My faith has become] stronger and more developed than that of someone who simply went to Sunday school. Christian Studies classes give you the history. You learn the origins of what you believe. You don't just know what you should believe, you understand it," Leszynski said of his experience. Button also thought that giving the 'why' behind his faith made an impact on his love for God. "I am a very logical guy. A lot of Christianity defies what people say is 'logical.' Bear Creek supported me in my belief and set a godly example for me in my faith."

In addition to Christian Studies classes, students attend Chapel every week where they hear a speaker and join in worship led by their peers. "Constantly being reaffirmed by my school and having Chapel has strengthened my faith," Alleva said. "Being surrounded by people that I can feel comfortable around has really helped me." Similarly, McRae found that growing up in a Christian environment with students and teachers whom she knew on a deeper level helped her grow in her faith. "My faith life has been impacted by being able to go to a school where I can express my faith. Whenever I have questions or



Bridget Daugherty and Catherine Fernandez on the first day of kindergarten in September 2001. Photo by Sini Fernandez

am feeling a little confused, there is always someone to talk to; I don't have to hide my religion." This encouragement and growth is becoming especially important as these seniors prepare for college and careers. "My faith would not be what it is without Bear Creek. It reinforced my faith so I am prepared for being tested as I move on to college in ways that simply going to church every Sunday would not have. I could feel safe and confident here," Fernandez agreed.

Bear Creek is meant to prepare students for all of life. As these soon-to-be-graduates move closer to college, we asked them how the school has benefited them overall. "Bear Creek nurtured my faith to an extent that nowhere else could have," said Fernandez. "I enjoyed growing up in a community that I know I can trust. I know that I can talk to a teacher or a student about anything and that they will accept me and help me through it." McRae also felt like Bear Creek grew her emotionally as well as academically. "By going to Bear Creek my whole life, I have become a successful all-around student," McRae said thoughtfully, "I have received the tools to thrive in learning, skills to succeed in sports, and opportunities to show my talent. Bear Creek is a place where people care about each other, and being able to connect on a close level to so many people has been a great experience." The hearty education and caring teachers at Bear Creek were something that stuck with Erin Alleva too. "I have benefited by having a strong basis in learning, being in an environment where I am able to ask questions

freely without being scared of being wrong, and being taught how to actively engage in school from a young age," she said.

Leaving Bear Creek will certainly be a change for these seniors. As they move on to other things, we asked them what they would miss most about their time here. "I will miss the school's friendly environment and how it is small enough to know everyone and not feel excluded," Button said of his interactions at Bear Creek. The rest of the seniors agreed that the people were what they would miss most. "I think I will miss the community and environment where I know everyone and everyone knows me," said Alleva, "Also I will miss the teachers who invested so much in me and how much I learn, how small the school is, and how comfortable I feel with the people." Leszynski felt the same way. "[I will miss] the camaraderie, all the strong relationships, and people I have seen change and who have changed me," he reflected.

Celebrating God's faithfulness in the upcoming year, these seniors have quite the year ahead of them. From the senior rafting trip, to prom and graduation, they have a lot to look forward to. This year marks the end of an era in their lives as they leave this place they have always known and discover where they want to go next on their life journey. Yet it is safe to say that Bear Creek has set them on a firm foundation as they navigate their futures.



Caleb Alleva as Shylock in the 2008 Valley Campus grade 4 and 6 production of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*. Photo by Sini Fernandez



The first day of school for legacy seniors Caleb and Erin Alleva, Benji Button, Catherine Fernandez, and Bridget Daugherty in Mr. MacKenney's AP Calculus BC class. Photo by Bill MacKenney

COMMENCEMENT 2013

Congratulations to the Class of 2013

Lauren Nicole Adkins‡
Azusa Pacific University

Andrew David Benson***
Carnegie Mellon University

Michele Eleanor Brown‡
University of Idaho

Alyssa Marie Buchanan*
Baylor University

Morgan Elizabeth Cadigan***
University of California, Los Angeles

Jacob Johannes Casale‡***
Dartmouth College

Hae Seung Chang***
Wesleyan College

Karin Louise Diamond‡***
Rice University

Samuel Von Drashek Ethington
San Diego State University

Christopher Quinn Finkelson
Gonzaga University

Kaley Laurence French***
Tulane University

Katherine Grace Gomulkiewicz***
Davidson College

James Thomas Gorzalski*
Wheaton College

Kyla Deanna Hasenpflug‡**
University of Washington

Jessica Jane Heddenhausen
Gap Year

Sydney Alyssa Helton**
Boston University

Miya Simpson Higashiyama*
Pacific Lutheran University

Alyssa Christina Jenson
Vanguard University of Southern California

Dongmin Jin*
University of California, Los Angeles

Reed Thornton Joslin
Willamette University

Dylan Christopher Kern‡***
Colorado School of Mines

Yoon Lee***
California Institute of Technology

Xian Li*
University of Washington

Riley Bond Loudonback‡*
Whitworth University

Shi Lu*
University of Washington

Stacy Jayne Maier
Loyola Marymount University

Katherine Mary Matthews
Baylor University

Chandler Grace Nelson
Bellevue College

Richard Wayne Olson
University of Idaho

Hannah Jean Postings*
University of Washington

Caroline Garner Ptaszynski
Gonzaga University

Gabriel Rolland Rongve‡
Western Washington University

Makena Ryann Schoene*
Drake University

Min Soo Seo
Loyola University Chicago

Isabelle Mae Shively*
Loyola University Chicago

Kiersten Noelle Sprick‡
Whitworth University

Samuel Joseph Stansell
Western Washington University

Ian Joseph Stenersen‡*
Whitworth University

Connor Altig Thomas*
Biola University

Elisabetta Lillian Udeschini**
Santa Clara University

Kimberley Joy White
Gap Year

Joseph David Wilson**
University of California, Berkeley

Sarah Elizabeth Witt‡**
Calvin College

Michael Davies Worley**
Whitworth University

So Seol Yun*
University of Michigan

***Summa Cum Laude (3.9 - 4.0 GPA)

** Magna Cum Laude (3.75 - 3.89 GPA)

*Cum Laude (3.5 - 3.749 GPA)

‡Legacy Honors (Bear Creek student from kindergarten through grade 12)

Commencement Charge

By Patrick Carruth, President and Headmaster



On a cold January day in 1965, dignitaries from over 100 nations, including the Queen herself, looked on. Like the pagan kings of old, the lead-lined coffin was loaded onto a barge, and it passed along the Thames River from the Tower to Festival Pier, ultimately making its way to Blenheim. Shipyard workers ceased their labor, lined the river, removed their hats, and silently lowered their crane jibs in salute to Winston Churchill.

On a warm September day in 1997, following a military band procession, her body was carried from the church by military officers and soldiers, placed onto a gun carriage, and escorted to Netaji stadium as tens of thousands of people lined the streets and filled the stadium to pay their last respects to Mother Teresa.

Okay, I'll admit, that is a rather depressing way to begin a graduation speech about courage and risk. I mean, seriously, two funeral pictures? How about we try again?

Did I mention that in celebration of the end of the school year that I'm going on a date? That's right, I have two tickets to see *Man of Steel* on Monday with my lovely wife. So what, you ask? Good question. Over the last five years or so I have noticed a flurry of movies about super-heroes being produced, and, as I have mentioned before, each time one is released, it sets another box-office record, as people flock to the theaters to see them. And for about five years or so, I've been pondering "why?" And I think the answer is relevant to today.

We live in a very postmodern age. An age that often tells us we are solely the material outcome of pure chance and much time. An age that cries to us to constantly and consistently consume in the *pursuit of happiness*. An age that emphasizes difference and discourages honoring our common humanity. An age that debates rather than discusses. An age that tells us meaning is nonsense, merely the result of power. An age of fragmentation where there is no center, where things fall apart. An age with no grand story. An age with no heroes. As Nick Carraway recalls, a world where "There are only the pursued, the pursuing, the busy, and the tired."

So, when we see heroes, read about them, or encounter them, we are drawn toward that vision because we know, deep within ourselves, that the world is not as we have been told. It is not as it should be. We were created for something else. And heroes remind us of this truth. They give us **hope** that all will be as it once was—the **hope** of redemption and restoration.

Graduates of the Class of 2013: Congratulations! You have worked hard, have persevered, and today arrived at the next step on your journey. We are proud of you and gratefully celebrate this milestone with you! As Mr. DeYoung mentioned last night, this day is often filled with boundless clichés: believe in yourself, you are the future, nothing can stop you now, and so on and so on. This almost makes you sound like heroes. So on this wonderful celebratory day, I'd like to turn the basic idea behind those clichés on its head (merely to make a point, of course) and remind you we have a problem. To begin with, at some point, you will lose your hair.

You see, we, all of us here, are inheritors of a grand paradox. Students, you are selfish, stubborn, prideful, confused, ignorant, fallen, giving, flexible, charitable, smart, intelligent, and magnificent. In a nutshell, we are a glorious mess—at the same time bearing the deadly curse of the fall and the heroic image of God, which can blunt courage and leave us afraid to risk.

But we must not stop here. The story does not end here. Reality is indeed stranger than fiction. A real hero has come. The dragons have been defeated. Zod does not succeed. The ring has been destroyed. Christ has overcome death. We have been rescued. We have been freed not to fear, empowered to risk.

Augustine of Hippo is reported to have written, "Hope has two beautiful daughters; their names are Anger and Courage. Anger at the way things are, and Courage to see that they do not remain as they are." Have the courage to "see that [things] do not remain as they are."

Continued on page 21

Faculty Address

By Kenneth Norris, English Department Chair

Dear Seniors of the Class of 2013,

In many ways, selecting me as the faculty speaker is akin to assigning me an essay—a fact that, I am sure, did not escape you. I would be remiss, then, not to practice what we teach. In my case, I realized you expect me to use a gimmick. So my advice for your future amounts to a guiding metaphor, an ironic statement—a statement with which I’m sure Mr. Carruth, Dr. Nelson, and Coach Moe would agree: enjoy your hair.

You may wonder, in light of my current status, what right I have to comment on such a pastime, so I offer the following picture [holds up photo]. That was me in high school. Those locks required the utmost attention. Their placement was not haphazard. Intention guided each strand.

Such a focus on what was, is not, and never will be again, demands an explanation. Let me begin that process by focusing on what the phrase “enjoy your hair” does not mean.

It does not refer to lamentation. Hair, like much of life, is fleeting. Styles change. No one today wears his hair the way I did in high school (I hope). Priorities shift. Even if I had those same curly locks, I would not have time to devote to their intricate shaping. Self-confidence builds. I don’t really miss my hair. I am now much more aerodynamic, after all. You will one day look back at your senior pictures with this same sense of time.

“Enjoy your hair” does not express regret. I don’t look back and wish I had tried dreadlocks or dyed my hair green. Likewise, you must learn not to second-guess your life’s decisions. We must live within the confines of time. Time will bring the rightness or wrongness of your decisions to fruition. As you analyze this fruit, you will have two

options: hindsight or regret (yes, I realize I may have just bifurcated). Hindsight offers a rule of right living for the future. Regret imprisons us in agony over the folly of a decision. Listen to hindsight—that of your own introspection and the introspection of others. Flee from regret—it will keep you from your future.

“Enjoy your hair” does not insinuate bitterness. Change will come. You will age. Your experiences, positive and negative, will shape you. Those of you who grasp the nature of change—that it is in itself inert, that its power rests in your reaction to the change—will look back in laughter at who you were, thankful for how those experiences brought you to maturity. Those of you who do not regard change as a catalyst but instead deem it evil may indeed become bitter. Your bitterness may create an unhealthy desire: if only you could return to a particular period of life or attain that position of prestige as a ward against change. Living in the realm of these “if onlys” will rob you of the “right now.” Remember *The Great Gatsby* as a warning against this imprisoning nostalgia.

“Enjoy your hair” is a call to neither hedonism nor materialism. The world beckons with these “isms.” It pushes us to work hard for pleasure or the absence of pain, for things and stuff. Your efforts at enjoying your hair may yield pleasure and objects, but these tangibles must never become ends of themselves. Do not chase what forfeits lasting joy—the intangible.

So what characterizes the life of the person who enjoys his or her hair? First, he or she exudes a sense of appreciation. This appreciation stems from acknowledging God’s many gifts—your *kairos*, your interests, your talents, your friends, your family. Enjoy your hair by learning to pause in the midst of your life’s tasks to take stock of your blessings. With that advice in mind, allow me to pause and thank you. In working with you, I enjoyed a rare privilege among teachers: students who actually acted on my instruction. You reciprocated my smiles. We laughed as we learned. My classroom was a place of joy and



laughter and learning thanks to you.

The second characteristic of the person who enjoys his hair is steadfastness. I'm not suggesting a pun to hair spray or gel. Steadfastness is a refusal to let a bad hair day become a determiner of other factors. Live above your life's circumstances. In theological terms, this concept equates to trusting in God's sovereignty, His control over all of our futures. We become steadfast by attaching our trust to Someone who, by definition, is unchanging.

Let's enjoy our hair right now for a moment in appreciation and steadfastness. As freshmen, you looked ahead to this day with fear. Your four years of high school loomed like the largest test. The vastness and seriousness of your future endeavors stared you in the face and you trembled.

Now look at you. You have worked diligently. You have risen to our challenges. You have arrived at what then seemed an impossible milestone. Do the next four years loom with that same vastness at which you trembled as freshmen? Probably. And that's okay—we learn to trust in God's sovereignty over the course of multiple exposures.

What makes trusting in God's sovereignty so difficult? The answer comes in the form of a chiasmus: We rarely want what we need; we sometimes need what we want. In other words, we confuse our wants and needs. God does not suffer from this confusion. His sovereignty and our position as His children guarantee He will meet our needs. Just be careful. Avoid calling your wants needs. God does not make that mistake.

Enjoying your hair through appreciation and steadfastness will prove lacking. You must become fearless. Fearlessness springs from a trust in God's sovereignty. Be bold in your enjoyment of your hair—I certainly was. I recall a particularly bold hairstyle while I was a senior in Mrs. Loudenback's Music Appreciation class at Cedarcrest High School. I had grown my hair out on top and then turned it into a

pseudo mohawk. I was looking for attention; I received it in the form of a freshman saying I looked like a dragon (not the reaction I had in mind). I am not alone in this fearless hairiness. Coach Moe had a "side spike" in high school (I have seen the pictures—a white tuxedo with baby blue accents and bleached blond hair) and Mr. Sorensen had long locks prior to coming to Bear Creek.

Apply your fearlessness to your dreams. What dreams has God given you that seem equally impossible? Writer, engineer, artist, accountant, doctor, soldier, senator, entrepreneur, teacher, preacher, mother, father, role model, catalyst. Each role requires a fearlessness in the face of time, a patience to take the next step and the next and the next. Few great accomplishments occur in an instant. A full head of hair takes time to grow.

Lastly, intentionally and strategically enjoy your hair (yes, I know that I violated my mantra of using adverbs sparingly). Appreciation, steadfastness, and fearlessness do not just happen, just as Coach Moe's side spike took the right balance of hairspray and patience. We live in a culture that takes intentionality and strategy too far, embracing Benjamin Franklin's popular saying, "God helps those who help themselves." He was wrong. He confused discipleship and entitlement. To put it another way, God does not owe you anything; He gives you the chance to learn from Him. We call this learning discipleship. It requires sacrifice and promises true fulfillment. It yields character rather than coinage. It focuses on love of God and love of people, not love of self.

I have found He best knows how to teach me to enjoy what He has given me, including my hair (or the lack thereof). I pray you learn to enjoy your hair as well, because someday you may wake up to discover it is all gone. But if you have learned where true enjoyment resides, the loss will not matter. You will have gained that which cannot be taken from you—the ability to live life well.

May you lead such a life, Class of 2013.

Commencement Charge, continued

G. K. Chesterton put it this way in *Orthodoxy*, "He can only get away from death by continually stepping within an inch of it. A soldier surrounded by enemies, if he is to cut his way out, needs to combine a strong desire for living with a strange carelessness about dying. He must not merely cling to life, for then he will be a coward, and will not escape. He must not merely wait for death, for then he will be a suicide, and will not escape. He must seek his life in a spirit of furious indifference to it; he must desire life like water and yet drink death like wine. No philosopher, I fancy, has ever expressed this romantic riddle with adequate lucidity, and I certainly have not done so. But Christianity has done more: it has marked the limits of it in the awful graves of the suicide and the hero, showing the distance between him who dies for the sake of living and him who dies for the sake of dying."

Now I know that Bear Creek students are pretty type A, pretty driven but not exactly known for being big risk-takers, and, to be honest, I have passed up my fair share of zip lines and mountain climbing.

Which leads me to the charge for you, graduates of the Class of 2013: You are a glorious mess. Don't be afraid. Be courageous and risk.

Augustine and Chesterton do not speak of courage which passively wishes, but rather the courage to actively risk—the courage to actively hope. In distant countries, different circumstance, and different ways, Winston Churchill and Mother Teresa risked to hope and actively sought to restore the world to the way it should be. Each made a difference: Churchill by risking ridicule and scorn to lead Britain to victory in World War II, Mother Teresa by risking death and disease to help the poorest among us. The Scriptures tell us in 2 Corinthians 3 that we are living letters to a watching world, "written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts."

Risk being a living letter of redemption and restoration. Risk living faithfully in the face of ridicule. Risk being excellent in a culture of mediocrity. Risk living virtuously by bringing truth, beauty, and goodness into the communities in which you will live. Risk becoming doctors, lawyers, teachers, students, professors, athletes, and mothers who demonstrate wisdom, compassion, and courage. Risk hope in the face of despair. Risk making a difference by living well through dying to self. Risk living heroically. Risk living hope.

BEAR CREEK HIGHLIGHTS

Forensics Team Places Fourth at State Speech Tournament

The Bear Creek forensics team enjoyed unprecedented success at the WIAA 3A State Speech Tournament on March 16, 2013. The team brought home the fourth place team trophy, the first ever State speech team trophy for Bear Creek. Additionally, the following students earned medals for their individual performances: Senior Katie Gomulkiewicz won a State Championship with a first place finish in Impromptu, another first for a Bear Creek student. Senior Jake Casale took second place in Humorous Interpretation. Junior Jacqueline Hom placed fourth in Dramatic Interpretation. Sophomore Angela Eun placed fifth in Interpretive Reading.



Jake Casale, senior, Katie Gomulkiewicz, senior, coaches Bob Gomulkiewicz and Andrea Lairson, Jacqueline Hom, junior, Grace Carruth, sophomore, and Angela Eun, sophomore, celebrate their success at the State Speech Tournament last March. Photo by Abby Gomulkiewicz '11

State Solo and Ensemble Contest

A quartet of Upper School singers placed first in the Mixed Ensemble-Small category at the WIAA/WMEA State Solo and Ensemble Contest held April 26-27, 2013 at Central Washington University in Ellensburg. Ensemble members are Jaco Dippenaar and Alex Levasseur, both juniors, and Miya Higashiyama and Karin Diamond, both seniors. The quartet performed "Esto Les Digo" by Kinley Lange and "Dirait-On" by Morten Lauridsen.



Jaco Dippenaar and Alex Levasseur, juniors, with Miya Higashiyama and Karin Diamond, seniors, await results at the State Solo and Ensemble Contest in April. Photo by Louise Dippenaar

Bear Creek Named "Best of 425" in All School Categories

The Bear Creek School swept all school categories in *425 Magazine's* annual "The Best of 425" contest, including best Preschool, best Elementary School, best Middle School, best High School, and best teacher on the Eastside. Kindergarten teacher Pam Erickson, honored as best teacher, has taught at Bear Creek for more than 15 years. Months of online voting helped to create this reader-generated list of some of the best places on the Eastside. This is the first time Bear Creek has received the honor of winning Best of 425 and the first time a school has ever swept all categories.

the best
of 425
2013

Congressional Art Competition Winner

Junior Alex Eppenauer was honored in May as winner of the 2013 Congressional Art Competition for the First Congressional District. Her art will be on display in the Nation's Capitol for one year. Seniors Morgan Cadigan and Caroline Ptaszynski and junior Jacqueline Hom also received Honorable Mention recognition in the competition.



U.S. Representative Suzan DelBene and Alex Eppenauer, junior
Photo by Jacqueline Hom, junior

Scholastic Cup

Bear Creek captured its fifth consecutive 2B Scholastic Cup (and seventh overall). The WIAA Scholastic Cup is the state's most prestigious annual school award given to the top school in each of the six WIAA classifications, acknowledging the accomplishments of our varsity sports teams and other Upper School activities (band, choir, drama, forensics) in State competitions and in the classroom. This year the Grizzlies took home a State Championship in girls soccer and girls golf and earned three Academic State Championships (boys tennis, girls tennis, girls track & field).



Lt. Col. Anthony Lieggi presents the Scholastic Cup banner to Athletics Director Chad Pohlman. Photo by Sini Fernandez

Mathletes in Action

On May 18, 2013, Bear Creek was represented by three teams in the statewide Math Is Cool Masters competition at Moses Lake High School after all three teams placed first in Division II (for smaller schools) regional competitions. At the Masters competition, the grade 4 team, Asher T. and Brandon M., both grade 4, and Egan T. and Liam R., both grade 3, competed in the Elite Division which comprised the top eight teams in the state, regardless of size, and placed a respectable fifth after a day filled with fierce competition.

The grade 5 team, Andrew H., Ben Z., and JJ D., all grade 5, and Tommy V., grade 3, brought home the first place plaque in Division II. Individually, Andrew placed second and Ben placed fifth in Division II. The grade 6 team, Alexandra R., Daniel R., Julian M., and Sam P., also earned the first place team plaque in Division II. Individually, Alexandra placed fourth in Division II.

The top scorers from Bear Creek in the American Mathematics Competition were sophomore Angela Eun and freshman Caleb Ji (AMC 10) and Hayden McCraw and Tim Van Baak, both juniors, along with Andrew Benson and Yoon Lee, both seniors (AMC 12). Caleb Ji received the top AMC 10 score in the state. All six students scored high enough on their respective AMC tests to earn an invitation to take the American Invitational Mathematics Exam (AIME). Based on his performance on the AIME, Caleb Ji was one of the 230 math students nationwide invited to sit for the nine-hour, six-question USA Jr. Mathematics Olympiad qualifying exam. His USAJMO score was twelfth highest in the nation.



Math Department Chair Steven Prokopchuk recognizes Caleb Ji, freshman, for his achievements in math competitions throughout the 2012-2013 school year. Photo by Sini Fernandez

Winter Sports Highlights



Kristina Engelstone, junior, brings the ball down the court during the Lady Grizzlies' Homecoming game victory, 51-25, over Tacoma Baptist in January. Photo by Sini Fernandez



Collin Feight, junior, drives in for a layup during the Grizzlies victory, 59-50, over the Tacoma Baptist Crusaders in the semifinal game of the Bi-District Tournament. Photo by Sini Fernandez

Girls Basketball

The girls basketball team won the Sea-Tac 2B League Championship, finishing the year with a record of 13-9 (9-1 in league) and advancing to the District Tournament where the Lady Grizzlies eventually lost to league rival Crosspoint Academy. Point guard Kristina Engelstone, junior, was named the Sea-Tac 2B League MVP and Catherine Fernandez, junior, earned an honorable mention.

Boys Basketball

The boys basketball season was not short on nail-biting moments as Grizzlies came within one free throw of advancing to the 2B State Basketball Tournament at Spokane Arena. Nonetheless, it was a successful and rewarding season as the team finished with a 16-7 record (10-0 in league) and advanced through the District Tournament to the State regional round where they dropped an overtime thriller to Lind-Ritzville/Sprague. Luke Blankenbeckler and Collin Feight, both juniors, earned first team all-league honors, and Blake Denniston, also a junior, received an honorable mention. Coach Scott Moe was named Sea-Tac 2B Coach of the Year.

Spring Sports Highlights



Golf

The 2013 girls golf team won both the District Championship and State Championship! At the 2B State Girls Golf Tournament, Morgan Cadigan, senior, led the Lady Grizzlies with rounds of 91 and 97, placing third overall. Kiersten Sprick and Sarah Witt, seniors, and Gracie Matthews and Wendy Hsia, sophomores, also qualified for State and played on the winning team. Sprick earned medalist honors at the League Championship Tournament while Cadigan was the medalist at the District Tournament.

The boys golf team also won the District Tournament. Ricky Olson, senior, took medalist honors at both the Sea-Tac 2B League Championship Tournament as well as at the District Tournament. Olson and Colin Diamond, sophomore, both qualified for the State Tournament, where as a team, they placed fourth. Olson finished in sixth place overall with rounds of 82 and 84.

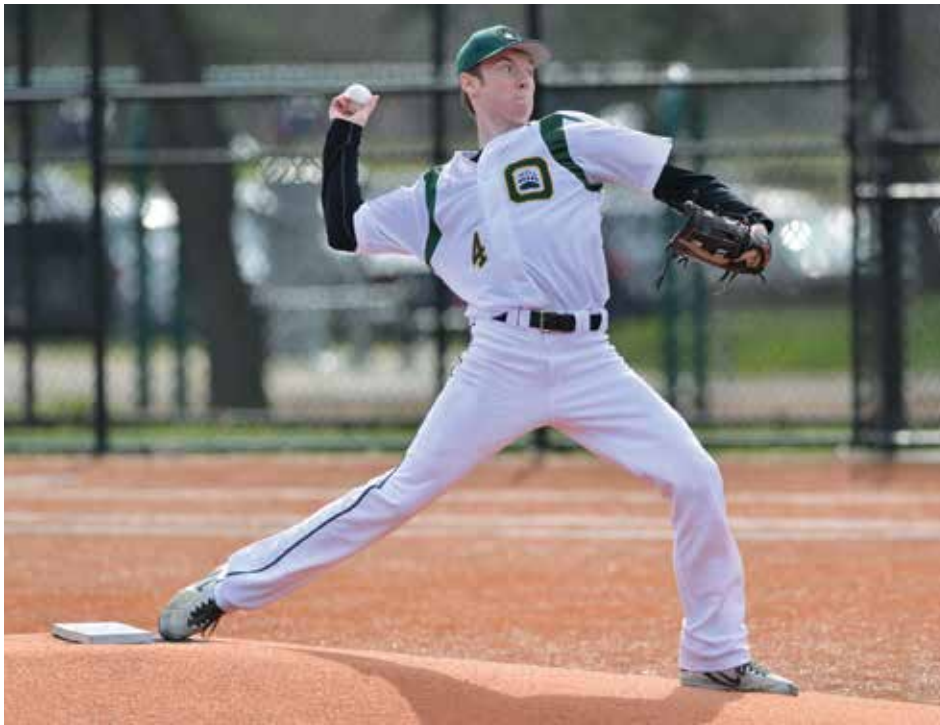


League and district tournament medalist Ricky Olson, senior, tees off at the Sea-Tac 2B League Championship match last spring. Photo by Kathy Cadigan

Kiersten Sprick, senior, tees off on the first hole of the 2B/1B State Golf Championship at Oakbrook Golf and Country Club in Lakewood in May. Photo by Ken Sprick



Coach Ken Diamond, Gracie Matthews, sophomore, Morgan Cadigan, senior, Kiersten Sprick, senior, Wendy Hsia, sophomore, and Coach Jeffrey Kettman '07
Photo by Ken Sprick



Growls pitcher Matt Kaiser, junior, throws a strike during an early season game. Photo by Warren Mell



A.J. Rial, sophomore, plays defense during Overlake's 10-2 victory over Highline in April. Photo by Kurt Klimisch

Spring Sports Continued

Baseball

The "Growls" (combined team of Grizzlies from Bear Creek and Owls from Overlake) finished the season on a hot streak after winning their second consecutive Emerald City 1A League Championship. In the first round of the District Tournament, Bear Creek/Overlake faced Charles Wright with Matt Kaiser, junior, on the mound and came out on top (10-0). Unfortunately, the Growls dropped both games after the big win, dashing their hopes for a berth in the State Tournament. Peter Perkins, sophomore, was named league MVP and Kaiser and Ben Kelleran, both juniors, and James Geiger, freshman, all earned first team all-league honors.

Girls Tennis

The girls tennis regular season culminated at the Emerald City 1A League Tennis Championships where six Lady Grizzlies represented Bear Creek. The girls fought hard and battled their way through the tournament. Leading the way was Annalise Hastings, junior, who advanced to the semifinals where she ultimately lost a "winner to advance" match. The girls tennis team also won the 2B Academic State Championship for having the highest average GPA in the state.

Boys Lacrosse

After beating Peninsula-Gig Harbor (17-8) in the first round of the Washington High School Boys Lacrosse Association Division II State Tournament, the Overlake/Bear Creek lacrosse team dropped a hard-fought quarterfinal game to Garfield by a score of 15-7. The team finished with a 9-3 overall record and A.J. Rial, sophomore, earned all-conference honors.

Track & Field

At the 2B State Track & Field Championships held at Eastern Washington University in Cheney, the Grizzlies made many podium appearances including second place finishes in the 100M and 200M by Jesse Leuenberger, junior. Other medal-winning performances included Jonny Magee, sophomore, finishing third in the triple jump and setting a new school record (6'0") to finish seventh in the high jump. The girls 4x100M relay team (Brittany DiGenova and Bridget Daugherty, juniors, Darryln McDonough, sophomore, and Mia Niikkonen, freshman) finished seventh, the boys 4x100M relay team (Gabe Rongve and Chris Finkelson, seniors, Brandon Saw and Jesse Leuenberger, juniors) placed third after setting a new school record (44.78) in prelims, and Bridget Daugherty, junior, finished eighth in the 400M.

The boys track team also won the Sea-Tac 2B League Championship and the District Championship. Earlier in the season, Jesse Leuenberger set new school records in both the 200M (22.79) and 100M (11.30). Coach Scott Wright and Coach Carla Darr were both honored as Sea-Tac 2B Coach of the Year. The girls track & field team also won the 2B Academic State Championship for having the highest average GPA in the state.



Jesse Leuenberger, junior, runs the second leg of the 4x100M after receiving the hand-off from Brandon Saw, junior, at the State Track & Field Championships last May. Photo by Gregg Daugherty



4x100M relay team members Bridget Daugherty, junior, Mia Niikkonen, freshman, Brittany DiGenova, junior, and Darryln McDonough, sophomore, placed seventh at the State Track & Field Championships at Eastern Washington University in Cheney. Photo by Gregg Daugherty

Fine Arts

Education in the fine arts develops personal expression, creative thinking, imaginative communication, and intellectual curiosity. We all can create because we are creatures made in the image of God. Bear Creek student art expresses the nature of reality and truth, as well as the significance of beauty.

Grade 3 – Van Gogh Sunflowers

After viewing Vincent van Gogh's famous sunflower paintings, grade 3 students set out to create their own version. With a vase of fresh flowers for inspiration, students were challenged to draw what they saw, not what they knew, and to study each line carefully.



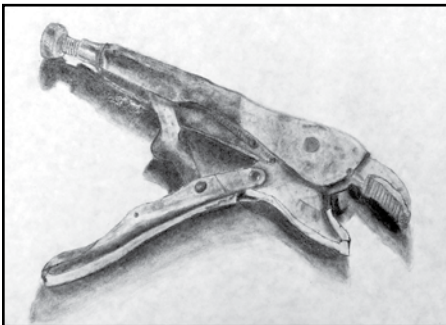
Sunflowers by Alana T., grade 3



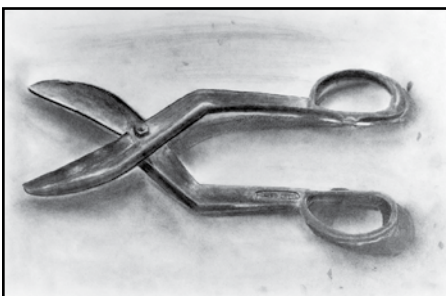
Bird by Jack C., grade 4

Grade 4 – Watercolor Birds

Drawing inspiration from nature, each student chose a bird that interested him or her and set out to carefully observe every beautiful detail. Once the drawings were complete, students added watercolor to bring their drawings to life.



Vice Grips by Angela T., grade 8

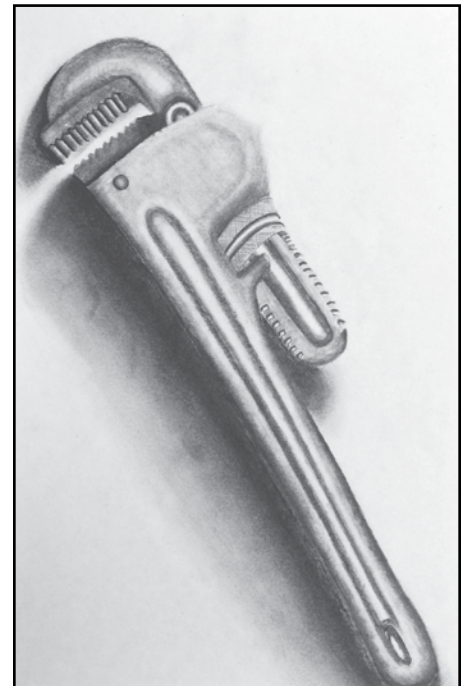


Tin Snips by Mara K., grade 8

Middle School Art – Tools of the Trade

A Value Study Inspired
by Jim Dine

In this project, Middle School students were challenged to bring attention to an unimportant or insignificant object such that observers would see the subject “in a new light.” Students developed their value and shading skills by depicting the multiple tones of the values observed, creating a pencil drawing of a hand tool that shows depth and form. Students started by drawing the contours of the object accurately, then observing the shades of light reflecting on or projecting from the tool. Students shaded a full range of nine values to show the shape observed as they sought to create a realistic looking object.



Pipe Wrench by Ashley C., grade 7



"Light Through the Forest" by Kevin Lim, sophomore

Upper School Painting – The Impression of Light

A Warm and Cool Color Study in an
Impressionistic Technique

"For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' made His light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ."

2 Corinthians 4:6

For this project, Upper School painting students began at the beginning, imagining the very light God spoke into darkness and trying to visually describe God's light in their own hearts. Practicing impressionistic painting techniques, students were challenged to examine the concept of illumination visually and learned to render a scene such that it glows and shines. Students applied warm and cool color schemes to enhance the impression of the changing qualities of light, portraying overall visual effects instead of details, and using short brush strokes of mixed and pure unmixed color in order to achieve the effect of intense color vibration.



"Midwinter in Mexico" by
Madeline Mott, freshman

Performing Arts

The classical model is alive and well in the performing arts at Bear Creek. As students begin to learn the rudiments of their instrument, to read music, or to memorize their lines, they are learning in the grammar stage. Developing and honing their skills through practice represents the dialectic stage. And finally, it is in the performance where the fruit of all that practice and learning come together to be outwardly expressed with precision and confidence, exemplifying the rhetoric stage of learning.



The Comedy of Errors

March 8 and 15, 2013

Grade 4 classes at both Redmond Campus and Valley Campus performed Shakespeare's well-known farce, *The Comedy of Errors*, for their friends and families.

ACSI Junior High Musicale

March 13, 2013

Middle School band and choir performed for adjudication at this annual event hosted by Northwest University in Kirkland.

ACSI Elementary Musicale

March 14, 2013

Grade 6 band and choir performed for adjudication at this annual event hosted by Northwest University in Kirkland.

And the Dish Ran Away with the Spoon

March 22, 2013

Kindergarten classes at Redmond Campus performed this adaptation of the children's book by Janet Stevens.



Fiddler on the Roof

April 18-20, 2013

Over 80 Upper School band, choir, and drama students performed this beloved musical to the cheers and tears of sold-out crowds at four performances. When the 2013 nominations for The 5th Avenue Awards, honoring outstanding achievement in high school musical theater, were announced in May, Andrew Benson, senior, who played the fiddler, received a nomination for Outstanding Performance by an Actor or Actress in a Non-Singing Role. Receiving Honorable Mention recognition were Connor Thomas, senior, as Tevye, for Outstanding Performance by an Actor in a Leading Role, Miya Higashiyama, senior, as Hodel, for Outstanding Performance by an Actress in a Supporting Role, and Alexa Calcagno, junior, as Yente, for Outstanding Performance by an Actor or Actress in a Non-Singing Role.



The True Princess

April 26, 2013

Valley Campus kindergarten students performed an adaptation of *The Princess and the Pea* by Hans Christian Andersen.

An Evening with Authors and Artists

May 16, 2013

Upper School Jazz Band and Lower School String Ensemble both performed at this event as Bear Creek students and their parents enjoyed the displays of artwork throughout the school building.



Middle School Band and Choir Spring Concert

May 21, 2013

Performing for friends and family at its year-end concert, the Middle School choir sang four pieces, including “Nella Fantasia” in Italian with a solo by Adesuwa A. The piece is based on the theme “Gabriel’s Oboe” from *The Mission*. The band performed four pieces as well, delighting the audience with its interpretation of Henry Mancini’s “The Pink Panther,” adapted by Victor Lopez.



Lower School Band and Choir Spring Concert

May 30, 2013

In their concert finale of the year, grade 5 and 6 students performed as three ensembles. The grade 5 band wrapped up its part of the evening with a rousing rendition of “Dry Bones” arranged by Lloyd Conley. The grade 6 choir sang four pieces including a choreographed “I’ve Been Everywhere,” words and music by Geoff Mach, arranged by Jay Althouse. The grade 6 band performed three pieces and concluded the evening with “Whirlwind” by James Currow.



Performance photos by Sini Fernandez

THE GAME OF IDEAS

Story and photos by Sini Fernandez

Chess is a game of ideas. It can be played throughout one's entire life, from childhood through old age, anywhere, at any time, and with just about any opponent. Jenn McDonough, Lower School Division Head at Redmond Campus, has watched her four children grow through their participation on the chess team and extend the lessons learned at the boards to the classroom and family life at home.

As a mother, Jenn appreciates that chess is something all four of her children can play with one another. During the summer, "play a game of chess" is always on the list of things her kids must do each day, but usually it can be checked off before she has even written the list. As a teacher and administrator, Mrs. McDonough says chess teaches skills and lessons that translate well to the classroom. She finds that chess students are calm and careful and are calculated in their approach to test-taking as well as managing homework. Studies have shown that learning to play chess develops pattern recognition and abstract reasoning, calculation and analysis, intuition and deduction, as well as problem-solving skills.¹

Smiley Thakur, whose two sons both play chess, says that chess makes parenting easier because so many ideas and scenarios that present themselves on the chess board are also present in life. For example, while watching his boys play chess, he may notice that Eamon responded to Asher's attack with a quick counter play, but was ultimately unsuccessful.

Later at supper, Eamon may have a quick retort to Asher's verbal jab. Drawing parallels helps the boys find strategic solutions to both dinner table sibling rivalry as well as chess board situations. At chess practice last March, Coach Leo Stefurak instructed the students to write down two good moves for both themselves and their opponents before making a move. A chess player considers alternatives and learns to view a conflict from his or her own position as well as his or her opponent's position.

As children play chess, one of the chief lessons they learn is that actions have consequences and further, what happens next may be more important than what happens now. Because chess games are annotated as they are played, they provide unique insight into the workings of a player's mind. Parents and coaches can replay the child's chess game move by move and see what the child sees and what he or she misses.

At Bear Creek, a handful of students are learning to enjoy this ancient game under the direction of Dr. Leo Stefurak. Coach Leo is an Advanced Life Master with a U.S. Chess Federation rating of 2365. These students practice on Tuesday mornings at 7:00 a.m. in the Hazel Petesch Art Room and participate in at least four or five weekend chess tournaments during the school year. The camaraderie and competition at tournaments is a lot of fun, especially at tournaments where Bear Creek is able to field a team of 10 or more players. "They are a force to be reckoned with in their bright green T-shirts," says Mrs. McDonough.





Chess tournaments provide a safe environment for children to grow in confidence because chess is not played in front of an audience or fans. Players need only focus on their opponents. Win or lose, they emerge from the chess hall to the comfort and support of their parents and teammates. After a snack and a few minutes to toss a ball around, they head back into the hall for another game. In so doing, chess players learn that failure is not fatal, nor is it beneficial to rest on one's laurels. Mrs. McDonough says that chess has taught her children to be gracious losers and humble winners.

As with any academic, athletic, or extracurricular activity, dedicated parental support is critical to student success. Just as kids don't become great basketball players, nor derive sufficient exercise, from practicing with a team for just an hour each week, successful chess players require more practice than just the weekly chess team meeting.

The Thakur boys practice about an hour each day, and over the last several years, Smiley has enjoyed learning the game of chess with his boys. He was not a chess player before his sons started playing but recognized that he could best support his sons' interest in chess by learning the game himself. As an adult, he is able to bring perspective to his sons' chess experiences, and chess has become a shared activity at which they are all improving together.

At Bear Creek, the chess club is designed to foster this kind of parental involvement since parents may attend morning practice with their students and learn from Coach Leo as they play one another. Smiley says it was initially humbling to have his young sons beat him in a game of chess, but ultimately his initial embarrassment has turned to pride. The chess board is a level playing field where contenders do not have to meet certain height, weight, age, or tenure requirements, which is very empowering for children. Gaining the respect of adults has increased his sons' levels of maturity as they grapple regularly with ideas such as empathy, alternatives, and consequences.

1Jim Celone, Advancing Connecticut's Chess Community, <http://ctchess.com/?sect=why>



2012-2013 chess team members Clara S., grade 3, Kate M., grade 4, Lucy M., kindergarten, Omo A., grade 3, Sebastian G., grade 2, Asher T., grade 4, Charlie M., grade 3, Eamon T., grade 3, and Egan T., grade 3 with Coach Leo

Generosity Changes Everything

By Craig and April Chapman

What is Biblical generosity? Over the years, the Lord has grown our depth of understanding in this powerful area of life. Generosity is about freedom and grace. It is about the freedom that comes from understanding, in the deepest parts of our souls, that God alone is our Provider. All that we have is a gift from God; and all that we have belongs to God. We are simply here to steward and deploy all that He has entrusted to us for His glory and our joy. Generosity encompasses the way we live our whole LIFE, and includes Labor, Influence, Finances, and Expertise.

The Lord has brought us through many stages in our own journey of generosity, and we are now privileged to spend a portion of our LIFE encouraging and supporting this journey in others. We offer this story of our journey as an example, rather than a prescription, of how generosity has transformed our lives.

OBEDIENCE

Malachi 3:10 – Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. “Test me in this,” says the Lord Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.”

April and I didn't start out as generous people – generosity was simply not part of our upbringing. We both grew up in stable families with parents who loved us and who shaped our core values of hard work and responsibility. They taught us that our goal in life – and our security – was all about financial independence and worldly success. We learned our lessons well, were both honor students in school, attended college, and began well-paying careers in software engineering. April became a Christian in high school, and I found Jesus in college. However, generosity was certainly not on our radar.

Things changed when April and I married in 1994. We had both been previously married, and carried significant debt. But, in spite of our difficult financial situation, we both knew in our hearts that if we truly loved God, it was only right that we obey His command to give a minimum of 10%. So, as soon as we began our new life together, we also began our new life of giving.

God was true to His Word and blessed us right from the start. Our financial situation quickly improved. We weren't doing anything else differently. We were simply being obedient in our financial stewardship.

So the first lesson we learned along our journey was simple

obedience—obey God, and He will be faithful to His promise. This, however, was only a small piece of the fullness of generosity He would soon reveal to us.

LIFE

2 Corinthians 9:10-11 – In the same way, he will provide and increase your resources and then produce a great harvest of generosity in you. Yes, you will be enriched in every way so that you can always be generous.

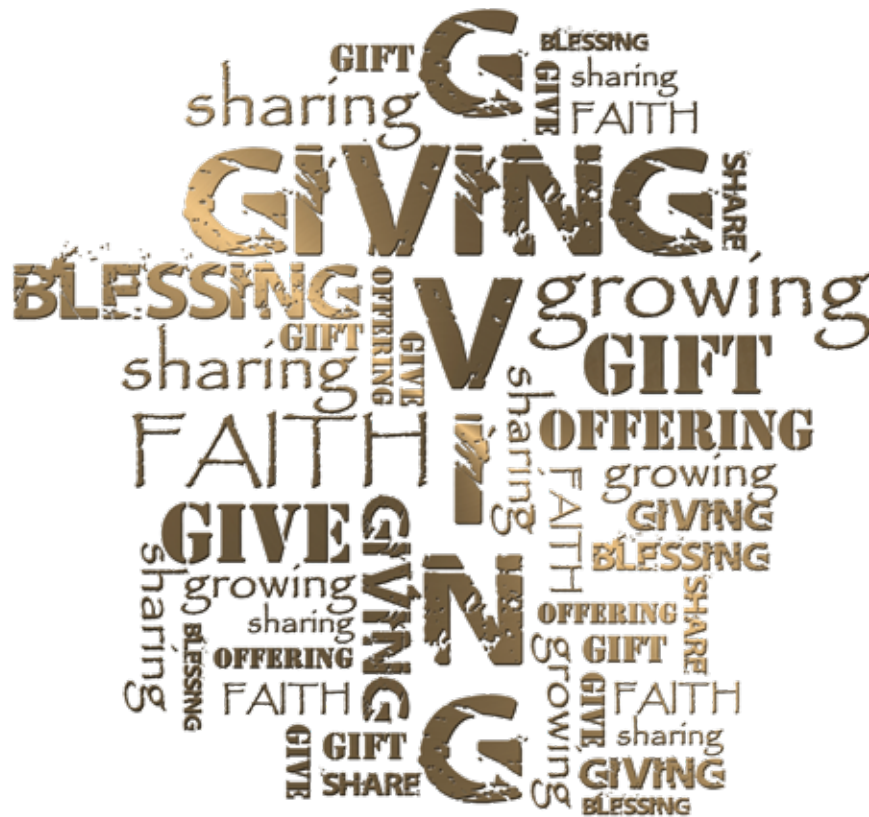
During the early years of our marriage, we worked for Microsoft, benefitting from the boom years of the 1990s and rapidly appreciating stock options. We began to give away significant funds and we found ourselves invited to occasional donor conferences. It was at one of these conferences that God chose to speak more directly to us than He had ever spoken before. We both felt a tangible message that He had a plan for us that would “shake up” our status quo and direct the next period of our lives. God didn't reveal the details at that time, but started to slowly direct us out of Microsoft and into lives of service for Him.

Soon after, we attended a conference with Campus Crusade where we learned the acronym that has become central to our lives: generosity means not just our finances, but should involve our whole LIFE – labor, influence, finances, and expertise. We have to give more than just dollars. With this in mind, April left Microsoft in early 2000 and began full-time consulting work providing internet strategy for Christ-centered organizations like Campus Crusade, Family Life, and Antioch Bible Church. It was also an exciting time of becoming parents with the birth of our (now fifth grade) twins, Jack and Haley. God's plan for our lives was coming together!

Our second lesson on our journey of generosity was that God is interested in more than our money. We will be “enriched in every way so that we can always be generous.” God wants our whole LIFE.

TRUST

2 Corinthians 9:7,8 – For God loves a person who gives cheerfully. And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others.



In 2003, I left Microsoft to join April in full-time Christ-centered service. I spent a year enjoying a new perspective on my life, learning that significance does not come from my job. However, God had different plans for me. Despite my initial doubts about returning to the corporate world, God soon called me to create a new technology company with another Bear Creek parent. He gave me two caveats, however: build a company which emphasized integrity and family values (not always easy for a technology company) and plan on giving away half of anything that I made from my equity. The real epiphany for me was that, although I was “going back to work,” I was no longer deriving my personal significance from work. Instead, I was using my work to be significant for Christ.

I had hoped to return to full-time Kingdom service in about two years. It took seven. And even then, I had to step away without firm confirmation of the financial aspects of my decision to leave the company. This caused me a great deal of anxiety about our financial future. I had tried to be faithful to God’s direction—and had made a promise to be generous—but I was now dependent entirely on Him to make this plan work. Our trust in God’s timing and faithfulness was rewarded when an investor equity deal that created a generous financial return was finalized. I followed through on my promise to give away half, creating a giving “nest egg” which is now supporting the work of many organizations and individuals.

Our third lesson was about trust. God had given us clear

direction and a desire for real generosity, so I needed to trade my natural anxiety and need for worldly security for His peace. As a result, He unlocked a new and even more exciting time of generosity in our lives.

TOTAL TRANSFORMATION

Psalm 92:12-14 – The righteous will flourish like a palm tree, they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon; planted in the house of the LORD, they will flourish in the courts of our God. They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green....

Since that time, we have focused on returning God’s faithfulness through giving our LIFE to more than a dozen Christ-centered ministries and organizations. Each day looks very different as we do our best to obey, live generously, and completely trust God for direction.

The final lesson on our journey so far has been the truly transformative power of generosity. The definition of transformational is a transitive verb to change somebody or something completely, especially improving their usefulness. Our mission is now focused on improving our usefulness to God. Our lives have been radically changed from being self-centered individuals to experiencing the amazing joy and fulfillment that comes from generous living.



Master of ceremony Keith Eldridge waits for Amy Niermeyer to advise Angela Burch during the live auction bidding at the Moonlight and Magnolias 2013 Auction. Photo by Jessica Heddenhausen '13

In Gratitude

Thank you to everyone who gave to the annual fund last school year. More than 345 families, grandparents, parents of alumni, faculty, and staff gave a total of \$275,032 to The Fund for Bear Creek. Your support allowed Bear Creek to complete our enhanced campus security plan and make other campus upgrades; fund many field trips and extracurricular activities including Icebreaker, the kindergarten visit to Oxbow Farm, and the annual grade 4 field trip to the State Capitol; and provide financial aid to families who would otherwise be unable to receive the benefits of a Bear Creek education.

Nearly 300 guests enjoyed dinner and fellowship while raising \$142,814 for The Bear Creek School Endowment at our Moonlight and Magnolias 2013 Auction. The Endowment Fund helps to provide long-term financial stability for Bear Creek. The school community procured more than 400 items for the auction, and thanks to the generosity of guests, the Fund-A-Need raised an additional \$56,500 to replace aging overhead projectors with high definition models and fund a tablet pilot program. We are also deeply grateful to the dozens of wonderful and creative volunteers, including parents, students, and grandparents, who spent countless hours helping create the class projects, crafting decorations, preparing items for display, taking photos, greeting and registering guests, cashing, and setting up and cleaning up the event.

These two primary fundraisers play a critical role in transforming a Bear Creek education from excellent to extraordinary. The generosity of the Bear Creek community is inspiring!

Making an Impact

Over the past five years, auction guests have generously raised their bid cards during the Fund-A-Need portion of the event for an amazing grand total of \$316,465, making a significant impact on the educational experience of all students at Bear Creek.

In 2009, guests celebrated science by pledging \$36,625 for the purchase of portable science labs and equipment, including an autoclave, thermal cycler, spectrophotometers, microscopes, and more.

Fund-A-Need focused on the arts in 2010, raising \$57,150 for costumes and other drama materials; musical instruments, recording microphones, and an online teaching aid for beginning band students; and art supplies, including advanced photography equipment.

The generosity overflowed in 2011, when guests donated \$102,009 to create the fitness center, provide mats and a new floor for the Multipurpose Room at Valley Campus, and purchase Lower School field sports gear.

Our "Fund-A-Floor" and "Flora Fund" in 2012 purchased mature trees and bushes for the Valley Campus landscape following the major campus renovation project and re-floored the Commons at Redmond Campus with the \$64,181 raised.

In 2013, guests committed \$56,500 through Fund-A-Need bids to purchase new high definition overhead projectors for each classroom and fund a tablet pilot program.

These enhancements would not have been possible without the generosity of the community. Fund-A-Need projects touch every student at Bear Creek with items purchased for the following school year. This helps ensure a well-rounded educational experience through robust fine and performing arts, athletics, and science programs, with up-to-date equipment and facilities to support the learning needs of our students.



Elisabeth Ersek '12 studies mitochondrial DNA using a thermal cycler which was purchased for the Science Department with funds raised from the auction Fund-A-Need in 2009. Photo by Sini Fernandez

National Honor Society

By Linda Graham, NHS faculty advisor and Upper School physics teacher

The purpose of the National Honor Society is to 1) create enthusiasm for scholarship, 2) stimulate a desire to render service, 3) promote leadership, and 4) develop character in students of secondary schools. When the National Honor Society (NHS) was founded in 1921, the goal was to create an organization that would recognize and encourage academic achievement while also developing other characteristics essential to citizens in a democracy. These ideals of scholarship, character, service, and leadership remain just as relevant today. At Bear Creek, the goals of the NHS dovetail with the vision of the school to “produce graduates of wisdom, compassion, and courage who use their individual gifts to bring truth, beauty, and goodness to the communities in which they live.”

In September of 2001, acting Middle School and Upper School Division Head Greg Stegall approached me to start a Bear Creek chapter of the National Honor Society. A faculty council consisting of Donna Dunn, Judy Loudenback, Rob Sorensen, JoEllen Ramsey, and Phil Dow drafted the bylaws using the model of the national organization, with some modifications to fit the mission of Bear Creek. The first induction of 24 members was held at the Bear Creek Community Church on May 30, 2002. The candlelight ceremony written for the first induction includes Scripture and prose emphasizing truth, scholarship, intellectual character, leadership, and service and continues to be used each spring when new members are inducted.

Enthusiasm for scholarship is important because to be inducted, students must have a minimum 3.30 cumulative GPA. At Bear Creek, NHS advisors are often asked to recommend tutors from the pool of very academically capable students in the organization. Thanks to Carson Baker '10 it has become a tradition to hold an event dubbed “Finals First-Aid” at the end of the semester where NHS members sit at tables in the library during review week to help any students who would like a little extra help as they head into final exams. Every four years the NHS holds a mock political election in conjunction with the presidential elections that always involves finding ways to educate and involve students in the political process. Last spring newly inducted sophomore NHS member Chris Yang organized an informational event for NHS members with a guest speaker to help raise awareness about water shortages globally.

Service is truly the hallmark of NHS at Bear Creek. Over the years, several events have become important service opportunities that the whole school can rally around. Most notably, every fall, usually late October, the NHS partners with Hopelink Food Bank in Redmond to collect food for a week. This event has grown from humble beginnings when we collected only about 2000 pounds to nearly five times that amount coming in for the last few years.

Additionally, the NHS participates in the King County Adopt-A-Road litter cleanup program thanks to the vision of Brendan Smith '07 who got the ball rolling about seven years ago. Once in the fall



**NHS members have adopted this stretch of 116th Street in Redmond.
Photo by Linda Graham**

and again in the spring, NHS members and any other Upper School students willing to collect roadside litter, don hard hats, reflective vests, and gloves to make 116th Street east of Avondale Road a little more beautiful. Another service that the NHS provides twice yearly is a concessions table for the fall and spring Upper School drama productions. Over the years, the money collected has been used to fund equipment for the drama department, the organization Nothing But Nets to protect against malaria, a micro-loan organization called KIVA, and most recently the NHS helped Alex Eppenaue '14 raise money to build a house for a Nicaraguan family she visited on a mission trip this summer.

The NHS is always poised to help empower students and develop their leadership skills as they steer the group toward a common goal. Every year individual student members step forward to make the world a better place through service. In the past, the NHS held a drive for baby clothes and diapers for the Baby Boutique in Seattle; raised money for victims of the flooding in Pakistan through bake sales thanks to Will Stansell '11; made hygiene packets for tsunami victims in Indonesia; donated funds to victims of Hurricane Katrina; cleared brush around the school to aid our facilities department; and most recently, Morgan Cadigan '13 held a Jeans for Teens drive at school last winter in conjunction with the retailer Aeropostale.

The opportunity to serve helps students to further develop character traits such as intellectual tenacity, carefulness, and autonomy in addition to the intellectual curiosity, honesty, and courage that gained them selection in the first place. Thus, membership in the National Honor Society is both an honor and a commitment. It is a privilege to advise this group of outstanding young men and women and to watch them grow into people of wisdom and virtue.

Community Service: Bringing Out Our Best Selves

By Rev. Jeff Gephart, Dean of Students

My back creaked as I stretched and slid off the bed. Walking to the window I caught my first glimpse of the sun. Another glorious day. The roosters had been saying as much for at least an hour already. I felt muscles I forgot I had. It is good to swing a pickaxe every once in a while, right? Ten Bear Creek students and three adults did that and more for a week during last spring's mission trip to the Dominican Republic. Our work project focus was to paint, pour concrete, and apply stucco for a new education wing at Doulos Discovery School (www.doulosdiscovery.org). This school, set in the beautiful natural surroundings of Jarabacoa, is a treasure. The vision for outreach and service in this excellent school is grounded in a vision of Christ's call to make disciples through serving.

Our Bear Creek team got a chance to learn about service from everyone at the school—students, staff, parents, and teachers. We were deeply impacted by the experience. Bridget McCahill, rising senior at Bear Creek, wrote this about midway through the trip:

"Everything is going by so fast. I turn around and a whole room is painted or another stair is made. It seems like life is just rushing by. All we need is more time. More time to help. More time to build. More time to create. More time to laugh. More time to breathe. More time to smile. More time to talk with the people here. The people are the sweetest. They build relationships because family is their life. They do their best in the work to honor their family and God. The Dominicans care for all of us despite the fact that we are strangers. Our host, Anna, said 'strangers are the friends you haven't met yet.' That quote reigns true throughout these people's daily lives. They all truly treat us as their brothers and sisters in Christ. Like every other mission trip that I've been on, the people always bless me more than I can ever dream of blessing them. They are beautiful children of God and glorify Him through each thing that they do."

Bridget's words resonate with two important truths about service. "All we need is more time." Most times I have led students into engaging service I often hear that phrase. "We just need another week!" "Do we have to go yet?" "Let's change our tickets!" After saying something about how their parents, teachers, and friends will be missing them, I nod my head and wholeheartedly agree. Serving often brings out our best selves. It puts us into a frame of mind of gratitude, of caring, of taking responsibility. We build important relationships with those we meet. We see the world with a new set of eyes. And...

hopefully more often than not, we actually contribute something of lasting value. We make a difference. Who wouldn't want more time for all that?

Dr. Tim Elmore, educator and specialist in adolescent development agrees. He writes in his latest book, *Artificial Maturity*, "Let's face it, any of us can live in a world that's all about 'me.' Children may interact with others and still be almost completely self-absorbed. We must furnish a balance of community service time during which they are generously giving away their time and energy to others. This fosters a mature perspective." (p. 11) Elmore later suggests that to move from artificial maturity to authentic maturity kids need to experience several elements that aid in their maturing process: 1) face-to-face relationships; 2) genuine (as opposed to virtual) projects and experiences; 3) multi-generational exposure; 4) saving money toward a goal; 5) service opportunities; 6) cross-cultural travel; 7) mammoth, real-life challenges and opportunities;

8) participation on a team; 9) age-appropriate mentors; 10) rite of passage experience (pp. 122-128).

My goal is that the service and mission opportunities we participate in have many if not all of Elmore's suggested elements. That is also our hope for students serving at Bear Creek. In the Lower School, students develop class projects. Middle School students experience Community Service Day and enjoy our food packing event with Children of the Nations. Upper School students work on their individual community service hours and can participate in several student-led service opportunities throughout the year. In the Middle School and Upper School we have been expanding

our leadership program to include more opportunities for serving peers and the school community. We are excited about some new initiatives for 2013-2014 which will provide more opportunity and more time to focus on service.

The second feature of service that I have noticed in many contexts is the value of relationship. Bridget wrote: "the people always bless me more than I can ever dream of blessing them." When we serve another person with an openness to who they are, then inevitably we receive. What we receive comes in the form of true relationship. We arrive as strangers, and we are treated as friends. We are blessed to see the world through the eyes of our cross-cultural hosts. We receive the grace of the Holy Spirit as we pray for strength each day to do His work. Teams are blessed by the camaraderie and spiritual fellowship they experience on their trips. In other words, as we seek to serve and give to the people with whom and for whom we serve, we end up receiving so much more through these



Bridget McCahill, junior, and Jimmy Gorzalski, senior, sift sand to make stucco and concrete at Doulos Discovery School. Photo by Elissa Bell



Jessica Bone, sophomore, interacts with a resident at Aegis Living Memory Care Center in Issaquah. Photo by Donna Dunn

relationships. This is why the apostle Paul, quoting Jesus and his divine insight into the true nature of service, said “It is more blessed to give than to receive.” Try as we might, it is difficult to out-give in these service opportunities. More often than not we feel more complete and whole ourselves.

The experience of wanting more time to serve, and being more fully ourselves in relationship while we are serving, is not limited to just service on mission trips. Any time we put aside our needs to look to another we can have this experience. This can be a daily and weekly reality. A large part of successful service experiences is just to keep showing up and keep developing relationships. This is why we encourage students to try out different service opportunities and find what they are passionate about, and then go for it! When one thinks of finding a passion and sticking to it, the late Phil Smart, Sr. comes to mind. Mr. Smart, who passed away in February, was not just a successful businessman in the Puget Sound area (he sold automobiles). He was also a committed volunteer at Seattle Children’s Hospital for over 40 years, consistently showing up to read and spend time with the kids. Smart also wrote two books about the children he served who impacted his life (*Angels Among Us* and *The Real Angels Among Us*).

Recently my wife Kristen and I have been having conversations about how we can make service more central to our family’s life, just as it was for this inspiring leader in our community. We have shared similar conversations with friends, such as Craig and April Chapman (see article in this issue), who are trying to do the same with their children. Our family has enjoyed sponsoring World Vision kids in Swaziland and writing monthly letters to them. Kristen and the boys have joined me in mission trips that I have led with students. Our son Alex has served in a Middle School mission trip at church. But we have longed for more regular and sustainable relationships of service. For example, we have realized there are many needs even in our neighborhood, but we do not even know our neighbors very well—so we should start there! Every now and then, even if you currently serve as a family, it is good to have conversations as a family and find out if you are on track. This is



Casey Mauck and Cassandra Wan, both grade 7, weed saplings at Lake Sammamish State Park. Photo by James Woollard

something we plan to do as we launch the new school year and hopefully find ways to serve more regularly.

It may not involve swinging a pickaxe in a lush mountain village in the Dominican Republic. In fact, our service will be more successful if we start small and close to home. The first step is to simply be quiet and ask God to fill us and lead us. I have these words of Mother Teresa posted on my computer monitor and they remind me of the connection between God’s heart and my heart and a life of service. May they encourage you and me in this new school year:

The fruit of Silence is Prayer
 The fruit of Prayer is Faith
 The fruit of Faith is Love
 The fruit of Love is Service
 The fruit of Service is Peace.

Mother Teresa

Families looking to serve can find many good resources and ideas. Here are a few to get started:

VolunteerMatch—website database of service opportunities searchable by location www.volunteermatch.org
Hopelink—excellent local organization serving families in crisis on the Eastside. Offers excellent opportunities for kids, teens, and adults to serve together. www.hope-link.org
Jubilee Reach—Christ-centered community organization serving the diverse and underprivileged areas of Bellevue. www.jubileereach.org
Union Gospel Mission—long-standing mission in Seattle serving the homeless and hurting. www.ugm.org
Six Seeds—organization promoting service and generosity in families through resources and inspiring stories. www.sixseeds.org
Focus on the Family—articles about service. www.focusonthefamily.com

We are deeply grateful

to everyone who generously supports Bear Creek with a gift of time, talent, and/or treasure. The following list recognizes those who made a financial or in-kind gift in fiscal year 2012-2013 to The Fund for Bear Creek or to the 2013 Moonlight and Magnolias auction. Your generosity helped transform a Bear Creek education from excellent to extraordinary! Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy. If you do find an error, please accept our sincere apology and contact Director of Philanthropy Debbie Marchione at 425-898-1720 ext. 339, so we may correct our records.

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 no matter how small,
 is ever wasted.

– Aesop

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 but the manner in
 which it is bestowed
 - Mahatma Gandhi



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Grizzly Open: Fun and Fellowship on the Fairway

By Sini Fernandez
Photos by Cindy McCahill



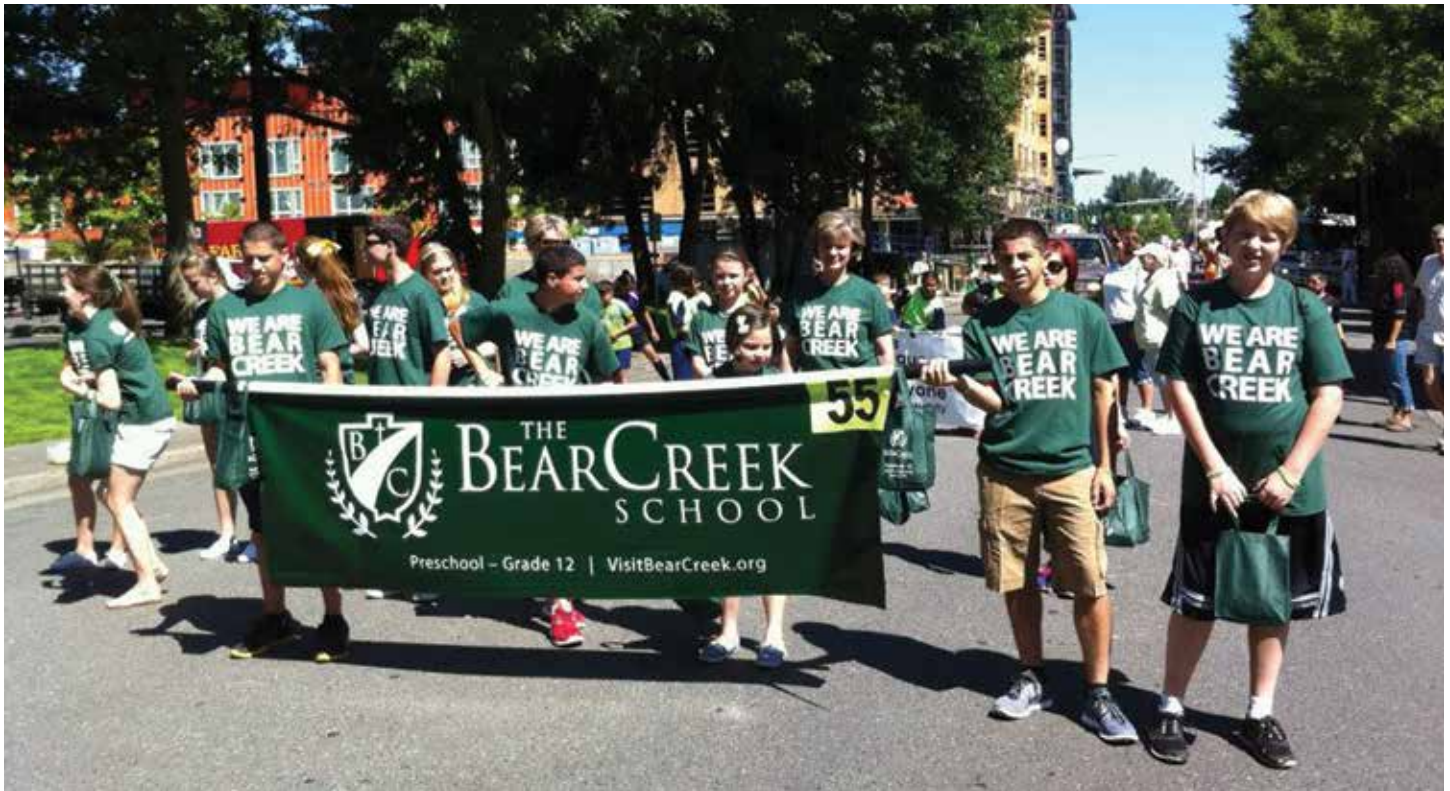
Dean of Students Rev. Jeff Gephart clowns around with his father-in-law John Hastig and best friends from seminary, Jeff Towne and Jeff Lincicome.

The Grizzlies Booster Club hosted the sixth annual Grizzly Open Golf Tournament on June 24, 2013 at the Bear Creek Country Club in Woodinville and raised just over \$22,000 for Bear Creek athletics. The school has already purchased a 12-passenger van which will help transport our student-athletes to and from practices and games this fall. Seventy-two golfers came out to play in the tournament, enjoying a full day of golf, food (boxed lunches and a delicious barbecue dinner), and fellowship on the links. The progressive tee scramble format enabled everyone to have fun, regardless of golf skill. At the dinner banquet, prizes were awarded in three categories: open, co-ed, and student (which included young alumni).

The team of Andy Hayes, John Hayes, grade 8, Jim Conner, and Mike Rose (pictured right) won the open division for the fourth time with a score of 13 under par. In the co-ed division, John Paul and Melissa Isbell and Garth and Shelley Thomas (pictured above right with student volunteer Jill Leszynski,

freshman) won with a score of six under par. In the student division, the threesome of Ricky Olson '12, Eli Sanger '09, and Jeffrey Kettman '07, brought in the lowest score of 11 under par. This year a short live auction was held during dinner in addition to a raffle for items such as tickets to sporting events, wine, and golf gear. Be sure to mark your calendar and plan to participate in the seventh annual Grizzly Open on June 23, 2014.





For the first time this summer, Bear Creek students, parents, and alumni marched together through downtown Redmond in the annual Derby Days parade. Photos by Lucas Mack

Derby Days: Building Brand Awareness

By Lucas Mack

As the crowds gathered on the beautiful sunny summer day on July 13, 2013, a team of Bear Creek parents, students, faculty, and staff joined forces to promote Bear Creek at the Redmond Derby Days. It was the first time Bear Creek has officially participated in the festivities, and a lot of work went into making sure the school was represented well. Give aways? In hand. Brochures? Ready for display. T-shirts emblazoned with “We are Bear Creek?” Worn proudly by each volunteer.

Geared up and ready to go, Bear Creek volunteers greeted hundreds of people who approached the booth to find out exactly who or what The Bear Creek School is all about. Going beyond the typical answer, volunteers were able to give away great promotional items that showcased the personality of Bear Creek. And as people walked up to the booth, they saw the school’s new tagline, “Invested in Students. Intentional in Outcome.” It was clear, Bear Creek is more than an independent school; it is a thriving community.

In addition to the booth, students and recent graduates, along with some parents, proudly walked in the parade holding a banner and handing out candy to parade watchers, chanting “We are Bear Creek. We are Bear Creek.” The brand awareness could not have been better as Bear Creek volunteers gave up their Saturday to work Derby Days.

The purpose of participating in events like Derby Days is to spread

the word about what God is doing at The Bear Creek School so more students can join a community that invests in them personally and desires God’s best for their outcome. Volunteers and staff were thrilled to share the Bear Creek story with all the Derby Days attendees who visited our booth and watched the parade.





Parent Champion Program

By Kathy Keith

Have you ever loved something so much that you wanted everyone in your life to get to experience it, too? That pretty much sums up how I've felt about our experience at The Bear Creek School from the time our son started kindergarten five years ago. When Karen Beman, Vice President of Enrollment, Collegiate, and Alumni Relations, approached me in February of this year about forming an advocacy program for the school, later named "Parent Champions," I couldn't have been more excited! The program is a unique joint effort among administrators from Admissions (Karen Beman and Christie Hazeltine) and Marketing (Lucas Mack), together with current Bear Creek parents with children primarily in the Lower School. While conceptually complete, the program will officially kick off this fall.

The purpose of the Parent Champion program is two-fold. First, to equip natural advocates of the school to maximize the conversations they are already having with other parents in the course of their everyday lives... at the grocery store, the gym, in our churches, and neighborhoods. This type of personal, word-of-mouth marketing is critical and one of the most effective ways of attracting other mission-fit families to our school. It conveys more about the school than a glossy brochure or well-placed advertisement ever could. People are drawn to Bear Creek by other people and their stories.

Second, the program seeks to create a structured feedback loop whereby Parent Champions provide on-the-ground observations, information, and insights from their neighborhoods and communities, as well as from what they're hearing in the hallways. Faculty will then address, respond to, and/or implement these ideas after careful consideration as deemed appropriate. Having such a feedback loop allows the school to not only penetrate neighborhood markets and communities more directly, but also to keep a pulse on information (positive or negative, correct or incorrect) that is circulating and respond accordingly.

For existing parents, it provides a means to present new ideas and have questions or concerns addressed directly by faculty and administration. How often do we see other schools' advertising or programs at some local event and wonder why Bear Creek isn't doing the same? The answer may be that Bear Creek simply isn't aware of the opportunity! That's where we can all help make a difference.

The overall goal of the Parent Champion program is increased awareness of The Bear Creek School. This, in turn, will likely lead to increased enrollment and retention, especially in the younger years (preschool through grade 3). Over time, the funnel of new students in

these lower grades will produce larger overall graduating class sizes in keeping with the school's long-term strategic goals.

Parent Champion committee members have already brought forward ideas for increasing awareness through neighborhood and community events like Kirkland's Summer Concert Series for Kids, an event that each year attracts hundreds of families with preschool age children. Members are being trained and encouraged to use social networking and media tools like Facebook and Twitter to connect the school with friends and neighbors or possible mission-fit families and to promote various school events. Collectively, these efforts will help the school reach those families for whom Bear Creek is just the right fit.

Thus far, Parent Champions have been tapped from the Kirkland and Bellevue areas where data from an independent research study indicated enrollment could significantly grow. Members of the committee include Lisa Diller, Claudia Helm, Sara Perkins, Tricia Schroth, Dan and Laney Shorett, Sharon Singh, and DeNova Weaver. In June 2014 the committee will review and evaluate results to determine whether the program should be extended to other geographic areas. In the meantime, make the most of those conversations...they just might be the link for that family whom God intended to be here all along!



Bear Creek admissions staff greet prospective families at Kirkland's Summer Concert Series for Kids. Photos by Lucas Mack

BEAR CREEK ALUMNI

People of wisdom, compassion, and courage who use their individual gifts to bring truth, beauty, and goodness to the communities in which they live.



Alumni Leadership Committee members Nate Castle '08, Tyler Kowal '04, Alex Higinbotham '07, Abby Gomulkiewicz '11, and Beth Graham '09 (not pictured Michael Davisson '10)

By Tyler Kowal '04

Hello Bear Creek Alumni Community,

This is an exciting year! The Bear Creek School is celebrating its 25th Anniversary. We currently have 459 alumni spread worldwide. As a community, many of us have gone to college, started a career, gotten married, and even had children. We may be working on Wall Street or on Main Street. We have a fantastic opportunity to join this anniversary celebration; it is also a great time to reflect on how Bear Creek played a key role in building the foundation of who we are as people.

I have had the pleasure of serving on the Alumni Leadership Committee for the past year. As a team of six, we are meeting regularly, going back to campus, and working with administrative leadership to form the foundation of our alumni program. There have been lots of discussions on leadership

styles, goals, and much, much more. Our greatest accomplishment to date was developing a purpose statement to help guide us in making decisions, and help grow the alumni connection with the school. Our purpose statement was ratified at our spring meeting and reads:

"The alumni program strives to strengthen the mission of The Bear Creek School by deepening the connection between alumni and the school community by fostering a legacy of active engagement and stewardship."

How do we go about achieving this purpose statement? How do we come together and share our skills and talents to continue the mission of Bear Creek? With these questions in mind, we have developed six guiding pillars to assist us in deepening the connection between alumni and the school community. Our pillars are Community, Networking, Advocacy, Mentoring, Service,

and Philanthropy. Over the next several months we, as the alumni committee, will delve deeper into what these pillars mean to us and how we as alumni can foster them by continuing to build and support the school and advance its mission throughout the world around us.

Many of our alumni have been actively involved on campus by offering their time and talents at school: in the science lab, coaching athletics teams, assisting with drama productions, forensics competitions, and cheer squads, offering insights and wisdom to our seniors, and professional networking with alumni at large. Giving back to Bear Creek is clearly something meaningful for so many.

For me, my best memory of Bear Creek is the community: the building that held our community, the friends, the faculty, and the administration that made up that community. Like in any community there were good days and difficult days, but let me tell you the good days definitely outnumbered and are more memorable than the challenging ones.

1 Corinthians 12 says that we are all interconnected as the body of Christ; it's not possible to survive without each other. We grew up in the community of The Bear Creek School. We made sacrifices to help each other learn and grow, but with those sacrifices we all grew as individuals. I know in my daily life, I continue to sacrifice for the people I work with, my friends, and family in hopes of helping us all to thrive and succeed. We as alumni now have the chance to build an even stronger community, for the current and future students of Bear Creek. Community, like a family or a relationship, requires vision, commitment, forgiveness, and faith. We, as a community, must have a vision to take the risks and grow the community. We must have commitment to foster a legacy of active

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Jennie Baker: Inspiring and Inspired

By Natalie Higashiyama



While most Bear Creek juniors can recall their exact SAT score and the number of times they took the exam to earn that coveted score, Jennie Baker, '02, remembers being so taken by a particular poem that she could barely answer the questions about it on the exam. Today, she still has memorized Matthew Arnold's "To Marguerite: Continued," which confirmed an early passion for poetry that eventually lead to a profession of poetry as a Ph.D.

candidate at University of St. Andrews, Scotland's first and the third oldest university in the English-speaking world.

Jennie's Bear Creek learning began in seventh grade, along with 15 classmates, who studied in the supply closets, changing rooms, and portables located on church grounds. She completed her senior year at a more spacious location, the brand-new Redmond Campus. But far more poignant than the stark changes she underwent in her learning environment are Jennie's fond memories of former teachers Phil Dow and Curt Brannan, along with current biology teacher Donna Dunn and Judy Loudonback, choir director. She compares her Bear Creek education with that of a university because learning was highly collaborative. While her work load outside of the class involved much reading, her time inside the classroom encouraged questions and clarified learning. Jennie reflects on the impact of the "informal learning" like singing in Latin outdoors on a sunny day or visiting a religious place of worship on a field trip. Such experiences etched into her mind that learning at Bear Creek meant "following an interest, researching it, and fitting it into one's learning agenda."

While Jennie remembers wanting to be a writer and to live in Europe, Bear Creek faculty fostered her early love of language. Once she discovered Shakespeare, she never wanted to read anyone else. Jorunn Grobey, a former English teacher, encouraged her to pursue English in college. A potential hire who guest-lectured on Hemingway's *Hills Like White Elephants* "blew my mind. I never realized that literature could be taken apart that way."

Undecided as to a major, Jennie entered the University of California, Berkeley, to take general requirements. Working on the Berkeley Fiction Review and Berkeley Poetry Review clarified her literary goals. In fact, a class called "The End of the Poem" ended up being her thesis topic. Her third year of undergraduate study took her to King's College London to study comparative literary theory, early modern history, and the history of the British Empire, all while working in a beauty salon and living in a flat in Clapham. After returning to Berkeley, she specialized in contemporary literature and completed an undergraduate dissertation on metapoetic symbology across the works of W.B. Yeats.

A post-graduation goal of working in London's publishing world turned into a disappointing job of long days, forty-five minute commutes to the city center, meetings with clients, and expensive rent and travel. Trading her modern flat in London for a cottage in rural Ireland with



Wheeler Hall at UC Berkeley, where most of Jennie's classes were held.

no internet, phone, mobile phone signal, TV, or proper shower, Jennie thought, "I'd made a huge mistake. I didn't know anyone, didn't have my driver's license, and didn't have a job." For three years in Ireland, Jennie almost forgot her dream of becoming a lecturer and writer as she worked as a dishwasher, a corporate trainer for an international sports broadcaster, and an image research assistant for the Titanic museum in Belfast. During this time she wrote her first novel, half of a second novel, started a literary arts group, married, traveled, and earned a teaching certificate which allowed her to teach English, drama, media studies, and religion at the secondary school level.

Jennie's routine of secondary teaching and occasional writing did not ultimately fulfill her desires for a career that could offer progression and shifting goals for the future. She surprised herself when a friend asked, "What do you want to do?" and with speed and certainty she replied, "Go back to school."

After taking the Graduate Record Exam and completing twenty-six applications, Jennie attended the Contemporary British and Irish Poetry conference where she began to imagine herself as a lecturer. But how would she achieve this goal? "At the time I was 27, and I'd set my sights very high in terms of the universities and programmes I applied to. There were no safety schools, and nothing in my application that made me (or anyone else) think I'd be accepted anywhere, at all. I was hugely under-qualified in a very small and competitive field, and the enormity of the task was, at times, overwhelming." Wandering into a panel discussion at the poetry conference, Jennie recognized the lines of a quoted poem with no reference to the author or title. But Jennie knew the line and the poem: Matthew Arnold's "To Marguerite: Continued." She had so many questions for these two famous poets, but they were rushed by a large crowd after their talk, leaving a disappointed Jennie sipping a cup of tea in another lecture room awaiting the next presenter.

Terror filled Jennie as she realized the famous presenter she had just heard had entered her room. She resisted the urge to leave and courageously faced her golden opportunity. He smiled and closed his

laptop as she brought up “To Marguerite” and his quote. What followed was “the best discussion on poetry I’d had to that point: people started to filter in, drawn to the discussion we were having and we realized after a while that we had a bit of a crowd.” Eventually, an off-hand remark about a panel member revealed he taught at University of St. Andrews which lead Jennie to research their program even more and to apply. The first acceptance arrived from Scotland, and “I surprised everyone, including myself, by choosing St. Andrews—I still think I made the right choice.”

After graduating with a master’s with distinction, Jennie wrote several short collections of poems and decided to stay on at University of St. Andrews to earn her Ph.D. The Ph.D. and the autumn of the first year in particular, were “equally inspiring and terrifying, but always exciting. From the second I was accepted, I’ve never doubted that this is what I wanted to do—doing anything else now seems inconceivable, and everything that came before this feels like preparation or waiting for this opportunity.”

Jennie is starting the second year of a three-year Ph.D. program in English literature in the field of contemporary poetry and poetics. Her current research is concerned with poetic closure (the end of a poem) as space, process, and moment. She is exploring how reading and re-reading changes the experience of the poem’s ending as well as how the existential crisis of a poem’s ending can be interrogated using developments in cognitive poetics, reading psychology, pragmatics, and linguistics. Her thesis, aimed partially at proving her closural shift theory will be about 80,000 words without appendices.

To confront her many writing and research demands, Jennie mixes common sense with others’ sage advice. “I think half of writing, like postgrad study, is knowing when to go for a walk. A change of task also sometimes works for me, so if I feel like writing, I’ll write until it feels ‘forced,’ and then I’ll read, or edit or hit the stacks.” Her mentor is always telling her to “write the poem I’m writing, and stop trying to write the one I sat down to write, or want to write. I think there is something to that.” Her ideal day consists of eight to ten hours of uninterrupted concentration. Rather than trying



Kennedy Hall, where Jennie teaches at University of St. Andrews.

to find the perfect schedule or find ways of combating distractions, Jennie goes nocturnal before major deadlines. Literally. “I start my day at 2:30 in the afternoon—coffee, gym or a run, see my friends, housework, and food shopping, then head to my office to start work at 5:00 or 6:00. I work in my office until 8:30 or 9:00 the following morning. I sleep from 9:00 until 2:30, and it all starts again.”

Both resolve and talent reflect in Jennie’s first year review with good recommendations and a big thumbs up from her department. After the Ph.D., she would like to teach contemporary poetry and poetics and the practice of poetry (known otherwise as literary arts or creative writing) at both undergraduate and graduate levels. She has also been in talks with her supervisor about publishing a longer version of her thesis which could be used as a textbook in the rapidly growing number of creative writing and poetics programs. (The only full-length book on poetic closure was a landmark study done in 1968.)

To live out fully what God intends in life produces extraordinary results and Jennie is no exception. While she vacations in Ireland and returns to hunker down in her Scottish flat to study, she believes she has discovered her “productive potentiality” while working and living in a university setting. Contemplatively, she regards her Ph.D. as not a program but a lifestyle choice and sign of her commitment.

Courageous resolution and unswerving dedication mark a life that has found a way to harmonize contradiction. “It will probably take me most of my life to achieve the things I want to with my intellectual interests, and my art—and I may never ‘make it’ in the ways I hope to now—success in this field is difficult to achieve, often fleeting, and by no means certain, always dependent on continuing to produce—they say a writer is only as good as their last book. But most people who do this do it for the love of it, and I think I’d rather ‘fail’ doing something I love than succeed at something else.” Ironically, Jennie has found “strange comfort in having a big, mad impossible dream” where she doesn’t “worry about minor set-backs, and measures her progress in decades, not months or years.” Jennie says, “There are days it feels like a burden, and other days it feels like a gift, but overall I’m much happier, and better off, with than without it. I feel lucky every day that I get to spend doing something I love. I hope I never take that for granted.”

Ox-Bow Lake

I know what you are, and what you aren’t.

You are a river that’s trying to be a lake.

At your heart, you desire an island and who

Is to stop you, when you reach a low-lying plain,
From meandering widely? One day, it will happen—
You will choose the direct route, and there will be

Three days of hard rain.

You wish you were still a river, but you are now a lake.
You no longer look for oceans, but try to content yourself
With standing still—with fresh water, moving slow, going
Nowhere. To think, you once found yourself across
This grassy hollow. And the plain you crossed
Is now the bottom of your lake.

Leadership Committee, continued

engagement in the community. We must have forgiveness, learning from each other's mistakes, and faith that the Lord will guide our path.

As Bear Creek enters its 25th year, we as alumni are primed to build on the excellent foundation established during our years at Bear Creek. We have the tools and the ability to serve and strengthen our school community well into the future. We as the Alumni Leadership Team have developed the *25 for 25 Campaign* and are inviting all of our alumni to join us in celebrating the school's 25th anniversary by making a \$25 gift to The Bear Creek School Endowment Fund. I plan to be the first to donate when the campaign officially kicks off in October; I hope you will join me!

Funds contributed to the endowment are permanently set aside and invested for the long-term support of the school. A small percentage of the investment earnings (never the endowment principal) is used annually, but the principal continues to grow each year. The bigger the principal, the higher the earnings, and the more valuable the endowment becomes to the school's long-term success.

We have the potential to visibly grow the Endowment Fund, and with the *25 for 25 Campaign* you can make a difference by supporting the community. Gifts to the endowment really are an investment in the future of Bear Creek and in all our graduates to come. The endowment is the legacy of the past and will help launch the school into the next twenty-five years.

To build our community now, get connected! The alumni committee has built a LinkedIn group, we also have a Facebook and a Twitter (@BearCreek_Alum) page, and we have our own page on the Bear Creek website (tbcs.org/alumni); follow us! Update your contact information to get connected and to help strengthen our community. Look for more information on ways you can participate in alumni activities during this celebratory year.

Tyler Kowal '04

and the Alumni Leadership Committee

CLASS NOTES

Class of 2004

Geoff Baker

Geoff began medical school at Pacific Northwest University (an osteopathic school) last August and life has been an incredible whirlwind since then. "I have been blessed with having met an amazing, godly woman, Allie Davis, who is also a medical student in my same class. We got to know each other well throughout the year, and God used our trials in school to bring us closer together. School has been an amazing opportunity for us, and we love the challenge that the Lord has placed upon our table in order to serve Him. We truly feel fulfilled and blessed. This past summer, I asked Allie to marry me while we were traveling in Europe at Blarney Castle in Cork, Ireland. As we both prepare to enter our second year of school, we look to God to guide us along the road ahead and to help us overcome any obstacles before us to fulfill His purpose in our lives."



Class of 2005

Jessica Linnenkohl

Jessica and her husband welcomed their new daughter, Meike Sequoia, born February 2, 2013; she is healthy and beaming. Jessica describes her family life as "growing together, loving the time together, milking our goat together, making cheeses, learning new German vocabulary with the starting of preschool/kindergarten, at peace with myself, so happy."

Class of 2006

Heather Nelson

Heather recently married John Tutuska at Chapel of the Cross of the Reformed Anglican Church on June 22. Her husband John has a Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Dallas and will be teaching philosophy at Founder's Academy, a classical charter school start-up in Dallas next year. Heather continues to manage social media for University of Dallas.



Inness Pryor

Inness turned 25 in May and celebrated with a picnic in the park and her first tattoo, which reads, "More than yesterday, less than tomorrow," which she thinks of as a promise to grow a little more each day. She traveled to Iceland this summer to pursue an extremely ambitious itinerary, which may include going platinum.

Class of 2007

Katherine Ross

After graduating from the University of Southern California with a double major in psychology and neuroscience, Katherine has moved to San Francisco. She enjoys the beautiful Bay Area and works as a Kaplan MCAT instructor while applying to medical school for the fall of 2014. She continues to salsa dance, hike, and make trips to both Los Angeles and Seattle as often as possible.

Adelaide Tillinghast, Class of 2011

By Karen Beman

Where does the story of a nationally ranked women's cyclist begin? With Adelaide Tillinghast it began as a way to get involved and focus on a stretch goal during her freshman year at American University in Washington, D.C. "I loved running in high school, but I knew that running wasn't a sport I could continue competitively in college," admits Adelaide. "What running did give me was a drive for success, strong lungs, and leadership skills. The first month I arrived at American University I discovered the cycling team and bought my first road bike. Cycling gave me focus during my first year of school and something tangible that I could work towards: becoming a better racer and competitor."

At the collegiate level, the sport of competitive cycling is an exceptionally demanding venture. As an American University athlete, the cycling season begins in early February and ends in late April. On average, the cycling team travels five hours to and from the host university each race weekend. In addition to her university cycling commitments, Adelaide also competes in a field with the top women cyclists in the Mid-Atlantic area.

Working hard eventually paid off. "I started as a Women's Collegiate B rider and this past spring moved up to the top level, Women's A," says Adelaide. She currently competes as a Women's A rider in the Atlantic Collegiate Cycling Conference (ACCC) which is one of eleven conferences within the USA Cycling organization. The top athletes from each division are selected to represent their conference at the National Championship.

In two short years, Adelaide has developed into a highly competitive and successful cyclist who won the silver medal in the individual time trial at the USA National Collegiate Cycling Championship in Ogden, Utah in May. She is the first



cyclist that American University has ever sent to Nationals. "I will never forget the moment I crossed the finish line, feeling like I was going to collapse, when I heard my name loud and clear from the official's deck that I had secured second place in the individual time trial. I couldn't believe that I had pulled it off because I doubted my ability to compete in a national event, but I surprised myself. This triumph is a reminder of my hard work on the bike, but also a constant reminder of the training I must continue in order to improve. Like they say, "it never gets easier, you just pedal faster."

Adelaide is the first to admit that her journey hasn't just been about competing. "What a journey it has been so far, it's hard for me to imagine that only two years ago I had never been on a road bike," she recalls. "Behind the scenes I have met some of my closest friends from AU and riders from other universities. My teammates have helped me become a better racer and consistently push me to improve."

Adelaide's strength as a leader continues to propel her into positions of leadership. She was recently elected as President for the American University Cycling team. When asked if she had any advice for young athletes, she was quick to respond. "Don't be hesitant to try something new, I

would have never discovered the sport of cycling if I hadn't gone out of my comfort zone and purchased my first road bike. Second, if you want something badly enough, a lot of hard work can put you on track for achieving your goals. But, always train with other people because you push yourself much harder than if you train alone. So if your goal is to run a faster 5K, find someone who is a little bit faster than you to train with."

What comes next for our silver medalist? "My next goal is to put in long road miles during the off-season in order to ride strong and comfortably during the collegiate season. The next big race on my radar is Collegiate Road Nationals 2014 in Richmond, VA next May. I have my eye on the gold in the Individual Time Trial."

To find out more about collegiate cycling and follow Adelaide's future cycling events, link to www.usacycling.org.

Cameron Kesinger, Class of 2011

By Emily Schuldt



Cameron Kesinger's strength as a debater during the founding years of the Bear Creek forensics team indicated he would be going places. And most recently, his rhetorical skills and interest in international relations took him to New York to participate in the National Model UN, a conference made up of more than 5,000 university students, who assumed the roles of ambassadors to UN member states in a simulated UN General Assembly.

Against the backdrop of the UN Headquarters, student delegates worked together in committee groups drafting resolutions, debating current issues, and using their skills of diplomacy to artfully advance international cooperation to resolve problems and advance the national interests of the countries they were assigned to represent.

Cameron and his partner delegate stepped into the shoes of the ambassador to Peru and participated in a committee that worked on issues of food security. Kesinger explains that even in a UN simulation, some countries, like Peru, have less negotiating power than more

powerful countries like the United States, China, or Russia.

"As a country with less negotiating power, it was necessary to find other countries with similar interests to ours," Cameron explains. Delegates formed blocs based on geographical region or level of economic development and formed alliances within those blocs. "Eventually, we would find enough countries with similar interests and would negotiate how to address all of our concerns in a larger group. This required a lot of individual discretion because in negotiation, you have to judge what is acceptable to sacrifice for the sake of a larger group and what is absolutely necessary."

The opportunity to participate in the National Model UN in New York came through Cameron's participation in Macalester Model UN, a student-led group at Macalester College, where he just finished his sophomore year. He joined the campus group to sharpen the skills he had begun to develop through the forensics team at Bear Creek and to complement his classroom learning in International Studies.

Through his experience at the National Model UN Conference in New

York representing Peru, he has learned that negotiation is truly a delicate art – one that often requires diplomats to give a back-seat to their own personal views.

Reflecting on this challenge, Cameron states, "It's difficult to fight passionately for an issue that your country advocates if you don't support it personally." In the long term, Cameron would like to work in international law in a way that is more closely linked to people and practical change. He has also enjoyed the work in asylum law that he has engaged in with a professor at Macalester.

Though a career in diplomacy may not be Cameron's future long-term choice, he emphatically states, "I wouldn't change my Model UN experience for anything and am looking forward to two more exciting years with the Macalester team."

Class of 2007 continued

Alex Higinbotham

Alex lives near Alki Beach with roommates Mac Graham '07 and Easton Thomas '05. He is still working in the medical equipment sales industry, and is excited to call himself a Husky this fall as he pursues his MBA at UW's Foster School of Business.

Class of 2008

Kyle Dunn

Kyle married his sweetheart Olga on August 3 at the University of Washington where they met. The happy couple now resides in Salt Lake City, serving college students with Reformed University Fellowship at the University of Utah. "God has been gracious to us and we are happy to know and serve Him."



Tin-Yu (Todd) Lien

Tin-Yu has been working as a research assistant in a pulmonary laboratory at Seattle Children's Research Institute and as a medical interpreter at various hospitals since last November. He recently traveled to Europe to participate in a choir tour with the University of Washington as a UW alumnus, where they sang in the Latvian Song Festival. This summer he also traveled to New York as one of the 35 selected individuals from Seattle Talent to compete in the New York International Modeling and Talent Association competition as a singer/model/actor. He plans to attend PIMA Medical Institute for its respiratory therapy program this fall before applying to medical school.



Class of 2009

John Geiger

John has recently completed his bachelor's of music degree in French horn performance at Central Washington University. He has accepted a performance assistantship at the University of Colorado, Boulder for the fall, where he will pursue his master's in French horn performance.

Christopher Pattillo

Christopher graduated from California Polytechnic in June. Next he will begin a doctoral program in organic chemistry at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Class of 2010

Megan Cheever

For about a year and a half, Megan has been working alongside Academy of Art University alumnus Christopher Solis in the creation of his indie card game "Terroria Tactics." The project began with a small team of artists, but has since expanded into a slightly bigger team including people who have worked with big companies and titles such as "Magic: The Gathering" and "Wizards of the Coast." As lead artist, Megan's work leads the overall art style—whimsical, cartoony, and colorful. It has been a great experience for Megan to be part of building something from the ground up and to help someone realize his dream. If all goes according to plan, the game went to the printer in August and will be on the market in December.



Katelyn Culbert-O'Leary

Katelyn attends The Montessori Institute of the Pacific Northwest and is earning her Montessori Certificate for ages 15 months to 3 years old. She is an intern in a toddler classroom at Issaquah Montessori and hopes to have her own class within the next year. She will also be finishing her degree at Bellevue College and transferring to WSU this year.

Angela Martucci

Angela spent fall semester 2012 abroad at Gonzaga's campus in Florence, Italy. During her time abroad, Angela explored six different countries and immersed herself into the Italian culture, enjoying all the Italian food, wine, and people. After spring semester in Spokane, she spent the summer working as a social media and public relations intern for Carnation Farmers Market. Her job entailed writing their weekly newsletter, planning events, photographing the market, and updating their many social media sites. She has also enjoyed every weekend camping, biking, hiking, and traveling around Washington with her boyfriend, Chris, and family. Angela traveled to Ireland with her family in August. In the fall, Angela will return to Gonzaga to complete her senior year and graduate in May 2014 with a degree in public relations with a minor in advertising. Angela will work as a public relations intern for Make-A-Wish Spokane this fall and hopes to grant a wish for a wish-kid during her internship.



David Jacobson, Class of 2004

By Karen Beman



David Jacobson on the set of *The Butler*

WHITE, COLORED, WHITE ONLY are iconic words that capture the tenor of a country divided by race, tradition, and gut-wrenching brutality. In 1952 Eugene Allen is interviewed for a job at the White House. He is a black man and the job title is pantry man.

What promises to be one of the blockbuster films of the fall season, *The Butler* starring Forest Whitaker, Oprah Winfrey, John Cusack, Robin Williams, and Jane Fonda also lists among the distinguished, David Jacobson, who co-produced the film along with Pam Williams.

The film is inspired by the life journey of Eugene Allen, who served as the White House butler for eight presidents, from the Truman through the Reagan administrations. The originator of the film, Laura Ziskin (*The Amazing Spider-Man*, *Dinner with Friends*, *Pretty Woman*)

had optioned the underlying story from a 2008 *Washington Post* article written by Wil Haygood, and hired Danny Strong to write the script. Her untimely death in 2011 would have dramatically altered the film's course if it hadn't been for the passion and dedication of Pam Williams and Jacobson.

"I was incredibly blessed to be mentored by Laura," reflects David. "I was involved very early on when the project was set up at Columbia Pictures. After she passed away and her producing partner Pam Williams decided to continue to move the film forward independently, I remained committed to the project. It was a deeply personal commitment for both of us. I could not be more proud of what we accomplished for Laura. For me this was a passion project in the truest sense."

The experience also put David to an extraordinary test. "I wanted to prove to myself that I could roll up my sleeves and learn this independent film business on a limited scale that had massive ambition to it. The project itself was an unbelievably tough one to tackle, but that type of thing never caused Laura or those close to her to shy away from challenges."

During filming, David connected with an exceptional cast and crew including Lee Daniels, director. One of the great highlights was meeting the real-life butler's son Charles, who traveled from Washington, D.C. to visit the set. Joined by Forest Whitaker, David spent time discussing the value of the film and how much it meant to the Allen family and how "true to form" Forest's interpretation of Eugene Allen was.

"The impact of this film will hopefully lie in the profoundly unique and authentic perspective it offers. I had never seen a film like this or been afforded such an intimate peak into the home-life of an African-American family dealing with both the changes of the civil rights movement and the everyday, American business of raising a family. Lee Daniels really grounded it in the African-American experience and gave the entire film a rich vernacular that was very gritty and authentic."



David Jacobson with President George H. W. Bush

Additionally, David sees a critical impact of the film expressed by early film-goers. "Some of the best, most rewarding feedback we've received is from African-American audience members who say the film is spot-on in depicting how their families grew up and how their home lives felt, tasted, and sounded. I love that. Seeing things from a new perspective is incredibly important and will hopefully reveal how universal our story really is."

For David, working on a project of this scale and persevering through enormous obstacles was affirming of so much and on so many levels. "The entire process of getting this film made—or any film made for that matter—has been one of doubt, struggle, faith, hard work, failure, good timing, great luck, and everything in between. It has been a five year journey since it all really started, so I've experienced every emotion you can imagine associated with it. The film business is populated by some of the most incredible people of faith in the world—though you would not categorize them as religious or faithful or pious—they're all dreamers and you just have to not take no for an answer for a long time and take beating after

beating for a long time until your faith or your spirit results in something that is finally produced. So it is kind of surreal to come out on the other side of that, but certainly very affirming and very humbling.”

David’s contributions to the project primarily focused on structuring and raising over \$30 million in independent financing, assistance with on-set production, through all principal photography in Louisiana, and coordinating the postproduction and delivery to The Weinstein Company, which distributed the film.

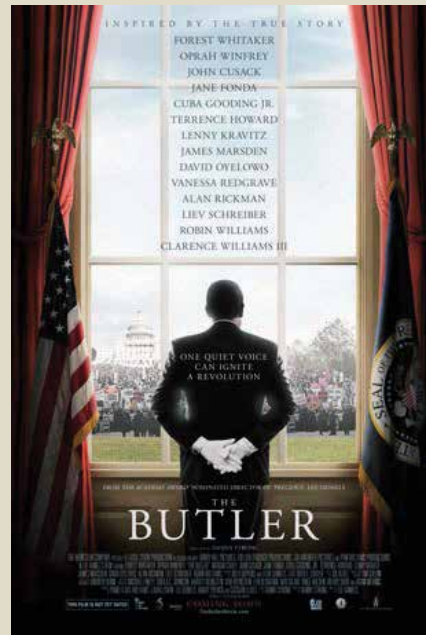
David hopes to keep making films of all budget ranges, but for the immediate future he plans to target projects under \$30 million, seek financing, and sell to interested studios. Currently David is working on a hip-hop and break dance-themed documentary called *Shake the Dust* with fellow Biola alumnus, Adam Sjöberg. He is also developing two additional films and raising capital and slate financing for a production company venture. *The Butler* was shot on the outskirts of New Orleans and David plans to bring his films back down to Louisiana.

When asked what advice might be valuable for students exploring film and media arts, David offered the following perspective. “I think the media and entertainment business is one of the most exciting and accessible areas available to students and young people. It’s all about marrying your passion with a skill set and certainly both can be developed while you’re still in high school. If you love watching movies and studying stories, then watch movies and study stories and read as much as you can—like it’s your job. If the business side of things makes you curious and is interesting to you, then stay for the end credits of every movie you go see. Search online and look up the producers you see on screen, and the production companies and studios, and all of the different department personnel and find out what they do.”

“I still love to sit through the credits of every movie I see because it allows me to see how they put that film together—where they shot, how large the crew was, how much they

must have spent on music licensing, which lawyers negotiated their deals, whether they used a completion bond, if they had foreign pre-sales, etc. The film business in particular is becoming more and more accessible and is very much an area in which you can self-educate. I have a book list that I give each of my interns and a lot of them have gone on to get top jobs assisting studio executives, producers, and directors in Hollywood, so reading everything you can about the business and educating yourself is hugely important.”

The Butler premiered in mid–August and did incredibly well at the box office; exceeding initial projections and taking the number one spot on the charts during the debut weekend, and grossing over \$8.32 million on opening night.



Class of 2011

Morgan Tompkins

This fall Morgan will begin her junior year at Washington State University, where she is studying human development with a minor in psychology. She still wakesurfs, and works for a wakesurf company on Lake Sammamish in the summer.

Miaoyi Zeng

Miaoyi has been interning at a classical music management company called Alliance Artist Management this summer in New York. She works on marketing rostered artists to China, inviting local presenting organizations to artists’ concerts, sending out contracts and sales materials, and updating databases. As a part of her internship, she assisted with the Imani Winds Chamber Music Festival at Juilliard School this past summer. She also gives 30 piano students private lessons on a weekly basis in Brooklyn, NY. She was accepted to a four-year program at the Zicklin School of Business at Baruch College of City University of New York, where she plans to pursue a bachelor degree in business.

Class of 2012

Alexander Beare

Alexander studies computer science at Gonzaga University. He also plays trumpet in the Gonzaga Pep Band, with which he traveled to both the West Coast Conference tournament in Las Vegas and the second round of the NCAA tournament in Salt Lake City. He also participates in the Gonzaga club Ultimate Frisbee team and Gonzaga’s improvisational team.

Danielle Isbell, Class of 2012

By Karen Beman



Danielle Isbell with John Dearduff

What is the value of Christian higher education? Based on her years at Bear Creek and a freshman course at Belmont University, Danielle Isbell has produced a thought-provoking perspective on the value of Christian higher education. She was selected as one of nine honors students chosen from various colleges invited to present a white paper at

the T.H. Olbricht Christian Scholars' Conference at Lipscomb University in Nashville last June. The mission of the Christian Scholars' Conference (CSC) is to create and nurture an intellectual and Christian community that joins individuals and institutions to stimulate networks of scholarly dialogue and collaboration.

Danielle reflects on her paper:

"The biggest impact I see is that this topic and paper forces teachers and educators to think practically about the link between teaching and Christianity. It is one thing to say that everything we do ought to be used for the glory of God, but it is another to actually think about how that can happen on a day-to-day basis. A lot of my paper revolves around teachers making these connections and being ready for them, not necessarily lecturing on inorganic connections to the Gospel. I believe so strongly that God is found in all things, and that He uses every experience to teach us. We just need to be seeking Him. So as far as shaping curriculum, I don't know if it would change much. But in seeking how what we learn relates to God, there are an abundance of connections. I firmly believe that if the one who teaches the course deeply seeks these, the vision and even the power of what is taught can be strengthened and deepened.

"One thing I have really learned is that by participating whole-heartedly in the things I love, opportunities have arisen that fit perfectly within what I want to do with my life. I could never have set a goal of presenting at the CSC (I didn't even know it existed), but it has been one of the most rewarding things I've been a part of. God takes our passions and allows us to use them for His glory often in ways we could never have predicted."

The Value of Christian Higher Education

By Danielle Isbell

Light indiscriminately falls to the earth to reveal all it touches. Particles of light linger on the tops of trees and waves break through to illuminate what is below. We don't live in a transparent or opaque world; we live in a translucent place full of both light and shadow. The manipulation of light is beautiful. If light were to fall directly to the earth as it travels unperturbed in space, there would be no twinkling stars, Northern lights, rainbows, or morning clouds. The way the earth perceives light is much like the way humans understand existence—imperfect and indirect. But there is a beauty to the imperfection of our attempts to understand. Our pursuit of knowledge—especially in Christian higher education—ought to be full of awe and humility; for the ability to reason is a gift and the incompleteness of every answer renders faith and reminds us that our comprehension of the world remains incomplete.

With this foundation of awe and humility, we have to understand that Christ is the most relevant aspect of life and so in all parts of education, from business to religion, Christ cannot be seen as separate from any course. This holistic approach to Christian education seems like an impossible ideal that is unachievable in the modern day university. I'm not going to claim that it is completely attainable, but there are ways to bring the reality of Christ into various aspects of education without seeming contrived or shallow.

Firstly, education needs to be seen as a partnership between students and teachers in which a teacher pushes students to discover and understand truth. Jesus is in all truth¹ and He delights in our honest pursuit of discovering what is true². The way humans seek spiritual truth requires more faith than the way we pursue an education. But Jesus links the truth in our studies and the truth of our faith. Through learning of his world, we can better understand Christ because He is in both the truth of our studies and the truth of faith. Therefore, He can enter every classroom by means of our pursuit to find truth.

Secondly, it is essential for instructors to connect course material to their own faith before guiding students through the class. Students are perceptive and we can discern the teachers who deeply care about their subject, and even faith, without explicit demonstrations of these things. For example, in classes that concern ethics—such as business or law—teachers ought to consider how various principles relate directly to Christian ethics. In classes such as science or math, teachers should reflect on how the interworking of creation reflects the mind of God. In English courses, instructors should contemplate how analyses and examples of the human experience relate to our own lives as individuals seeking purpose and God. It is not difficult to consider how or what we learn connects to the one who gave us the ability to learn.

Personally, my desire to be an English major began as my fascination for the power of words started to grow. Well-chosen words

1 John 14:6

2 Amos 5:4

can make me cry and laugh; they edify and develop my mind. My teachers were Christians, but they did not set aside time to discuss how Jesus is relevant to Raskolnikov's madness or how a well-written essay connects to the gospel. But English classes force me to confront difficult topics I may never experience for myself. This has grown my ability to empathize and to love others—the highest of Jesus' commands. It has caused me to be cautious in how I use words, and to be honest in my all that I write—from essays to fiction. It has stretched and grown my mind so that my faith can also deepen. The more I learn of others' experiences—whether fiction or nonfiction—the more convinced I am of our need for the gospel. These connections were not made for me, but made by me with the help of invested teachers.

Teachers should not plan lectures about faith, but integrate the true presence of Jesus in all parts of the course. In my experience, planned discussions about faith become forced. Teachers need to explore the links between faith and academia before they teach their subject so that when the connections between our Creator and our studies emerge, they can be discussed in a genuine and seamless manner.

There are slightly different criteria for my vision of Christian higher education regarding classes that pertain directly to Christianity. Christian scholars must have awe at the gift of understanding and must study with the humility of realizing there will be no perfect proof of Jesus' resurrection. But we have to see Christian education as necessary. It can give substance to our faith so that in relating to God, Christianity is not merely an emotional interaction with a spiritual being, but rather a motivating, eternally saving, contemplated, studied, and purpose-giving way of life that Christians know how to defend. In order to deeply grasp the foggy parts of Christianity, it is important to deal with issues of our faith and how studying our faith is relevant to today.

Nothing should be 'off-topic' or inappropriate to question because God has accounted for everything in the world and therefore, in a Christian's exploration of the world through education, there are no topics that we should shy away from. Those who do not believe in Christian doctrine are not going to question easy things, but they will directly target the areas of our faith that personally challenge the Christian the most. I want Christian higher education to push me to consider these questions in a real and a practical way, for if my professors don't require me to deal with these issues, the world certainly will. Let me share a few of my own experiences.

Throughout the year, I have had opportunity to meet other students from different schools and areas of the United States. In asking others about their worldviews, my own faith has been called the opium of the masses, a "crutch," a form of conformity, an ignorant stance, a view that works for me, and useless by people whom I care about. These comments have altered the way I view several statements common among Christians.

In church a couple of weeks ago, the pastor said something along the lines of "Knowledge and learning don't matter in the end, what matters is that people love Jesus." He has a point, but I found myself analyzing the implications of this statement. I believe this common phrase has to do with why Christianity has become "weak." While

some report that 78.3% of Americans call themselves Christian,³ a more in-depth study reveals that only 12% of congregates who attend mainline churches view Christianity as the only way to salvation.⁴ Because Christians emphasize the love of Christ above any other doctrine, and because the modern view of love lacks any connotation with discipline, many refuse to accept one of the most foundational statements of Jesus Christ: "I am the way the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."⁵

Without the belief that Jesus is the only way to heaven, I am left with a religion that is merely a comfort for my fears and an unnecessary way to salvation. This is not something I would base my life upon. God did not design His creation to worship Him this way.

The university is a place where Jesus can use education to strengthen faith and produce hope. Faith without study is like a seed with no soil. Education allows faith to grow, for we will never understand all of the mysteries of our faith. Education and logic did not convert me to Christianity—Jesus did that. But without education, I would have abandoned my faith long ago. Education is how we understand the translucent way that light echoes about our world. Christian higher education is a beautiful and necessary part of glorifying God.

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Scriptural references (ESV)

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

For thus says the Lord to the house of Israel: "Seek me and live"

3 "The Global Religious Landscape," pewforum.org, last modified December 18, 2012, <http://www.pewforum.org/global-religious-landscape-christians.aspx/>.

4 "Portrait of: Mainline Churches," pewforum.org, last modified 2010, <http://religions.pewforum.org/portraits#>

5 John 14:6

Jacob Imam, Class of 2012

By Karen Beman

On June 18 Jacob Imam boarded a Boeing 767 jet bound for the Middle East, via Rome. In less than 24 hours he would venture through a special section of the Vatican to attend an audience with Pope Francis. The visit was in part sponsored by Bethlehem University and Reunion of Agencies to Oriental Churches (ROACO). ROACO is a committee which unites funding agencies from various countries around the world to provide funding assistance in different areas of life: worship buildings to scholarships, houses of study, and formation of social and health care facilities.

During the Papal address, Pope Francis commended the Eastern Christians for suffering for the name of Christ and exhorted them to continue to keep the faith. The opportunity to meet the Pope was an extraordinary experience for Jacob; one few will ever experience in a lifetime." His words were encouraging and his passion startling." True to Jacob's gregarious style, his introduction to the Pontiff was memorable for both men.

"When I shook his hand I showed him how to do a sic 'em, the main cheer of Baylor University. I figured that everyone in the world needs to hear about and know two things: the good news of the gospel and how to do Baylor University's specialty sic 'em. Pope Francis already knew about the former, so I blessed him with the latter." As Jacob reflected on this rare opportunity to greet the head of the Roman Catholic Church, he was taken by his humble, yet powerful presence. "He truly is an incredible man—a leader that the church truly needs at this time. A leader who any Christian, no matter what denomination, can look to as an example."

Jacob traveled to the Middle East to study Arabic for the summer at Hebrew University in Jerusalem. He is of Palestinian descent and he was compelled to study and absorb culture, context, and the complexity of faith and heritage. His primary motivations were two-fold. "First, it is one of the best universities in the world and they have a phenomenal language department. Second, I wanted to be among the Israeli people."

"I wanted to learn who these people are, who have a rich history of being used by God. I wanted to learn how to live amongst them and befriend them so that they may have a different view of Arabs and especially Palestinians."

When asked about his observations regarding the way faith in action is expressed, Jacob was quick to respond. "It is far from being the 'Holy Land.' Tradition is so strong. People don't want to depart from calling themselves a Christian, or Muslim, or Jew because they don't want to lose their family or national identity. Many Christians have not reconciled that worship is not a place, but rather the person of Jesus Christ." Jacob has struggled with the realization that for many "there is no action to their faith. There is no reality in the fact that God had the temple destroyed for a reason, ushering



in the Spirit of God to reside in believers and not a building." There are a number of evangelical churches, some are growing and are remarkably passionate about the life of Jesus, but the workers are few and it does not appear that they are doing well. "I'm sharing Jesus' love and forgiveness here a lot."

As a scholar, the opportunity for Jacob to study at Hebrew University has been rewarding and challenging. "We are learning about 100 words a day and I can speak somewhat decently with people on the street." After years of Latin and Ancient Greek, "It's nice to finally learn a spoken language!"

University classes were comprised of 13 students, half of whom were Jewish and the other half were from all over the world, including Barbados, Switzerland, Britain, Russia, Canada, Denmark, and of course, the U.S. The Arabic immersion experience was an intense exposure to language acquisition. During the month of July, Jacob spent at least 5 hours per day studying Arabic, in what is roughly equivalent to a year's worth of coursework. "Giving impromptu speeches and demonstrating my ability to discuss politics and other topics in Arabic is awesome!"

As the Fourth of July approached, Jacob was very cognizant of being an American. "I didn't think I'd be able to celebrate independence with the same excitement this year but I was sure wrong. I was invited to the Independence Day celebration at the U.S. Consulate in Jerusalem. There I was able to meet the Consul General himself as well as many other consuls general from many different countries. It was a wonderful event where many people from literally all over the world came together to celebrate America."

As a result of his many conversations that evening, Jacob is hopeful that they might lead to future internships. He will be exploring possibilities with the UN in Jerusalem and also the U.S. Consulate in Jerusalem. "I would love to live in the Middle East one day, so this might be a step in that direction."

Jacob returned to Baylor University in August to continue his undergraduate studies in classics, philosophy, and Middle Eastern studies.

IN MEMORIAM

The Three Rs: One Final Lesson

By Alicia Williams

When one hears or uses the phrase, “the three Rs,” it typically refers to reading, writing, and arithmetic. When asked to write about my friend Linda Hernandez, three Rs did come to mind, but not the three Rs you might expect. Of course anyone who knew Linda knows that one of those Rs is indeed for **reading**. Linda loved books. She craved books. She devoured books, and she shared books. In the last few years of her life, I had the privilege of meeting with her over bottomless cups of coffee and, you guessed it, books. We were giddy over what we were currently reading and couldn’t wait to share a particularly poignant passage, and often read aloud to one another. I can tell you that the childlike awe of having books read aloud to you does not fade with adulthood. Oh yes, and what sheer volume of books! Linda may have had books stacked to the rafters, but she was also a techno-geek. While she espoused the many virtues of her Kindle, about a month before her passing I reluctantly confessed I had run out of space for my books and that my seldom-used oven and dishwasher made for nice, tidy bookshelves. She laughed—that breathy, infectious laugh that at times I still hear, and at more times I miss. Linda, you were right, I should get a Kindle.

To summarize the first part of the lesson—the first R—reading: read often, read across genres, and read aloud.

The second R is not for writing (although Linda did teach composition for several years at Bear Creek and certainly had a flare for words) is for **respect**. What Linda understood as much as anyone is that we are flawed, but that we are also created in the image of God, and for that reason we are to treat one another with respect and dignity. We talked about this often, and although I may not impart this as eloquently as Linda might have, our conversations explored deeply the idea that to understand, with the heart and mind, that a person’s perspective is informed by his or her own unique talents, both God-given and life-learned, and by his or her experiences, is to acknowledge a person’s dignity. And if respect is the foundation of our understanding, then kindness is the ballast. Linda was known to quote Plato, “*Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle.*”

In summary, the second part of the lesson—the second R—respect: acknowledge one another’s gifts, don’t be quick to judge, be kind and treat one another with dignity, lift one another up—show respect.

The third R is for **resilience**. Upon Linda’s passing, many were surprised to hear just how long she had suffered from a slow, debilitating disease. The word resilience was spoken often following her passing and during her memorial service. When Linda said, “Oh, you’re stronger

than you think,” which she often did, she was speaking firsthand.

Linda was the consummate English teacher, and it was only after a considerable amount of persuasion (and maybe some arm wrestling) that she reluctantly agreed to take on the Upper School Division Head position at Bear Creek. Being a high school principal is not easy. Ask anyone who has held the position! With every turn, whether health-related or over the agony of a particularly difficult decision, if Linda got knocked down, she got right back up. This was remarkable to me as I watched her deal with a variety of challenging issues.

It was several months after Linda retired that she invited me to that first coffee, and that was the beginning of a precious friendship. I treasured those coffee dates, and I can tell you that as her illness

advanced, her sense of fashion did not leave her. Hair done? Check. Lipstick? Check. Those oh-so-chic Gucci shades, check, and we were off to the patio for our reading. As I watched her body fail over that last year, her mind remained sharp. In addition to books, Linda gushed about students, pedagogy, curriculum—and did I mention students? She had a deep love for students as was evidenced by the many tributes from former students who flooded social media with touching memories upon hearing of her passing. In her last days at the UW Medical Center as scads of doctors and students filed into her room, she quizzed the med students about their classes and what field of medicine they were studying, encouraging them with a “Hang in there. You’re going to be a great doctor.” They may not have known at the time, but they were being taught by a great teacher—this tiny, valiant woman—forever a teacher.

So, the lesson culminates with the last R—resilience—you are stronger than you think.

I am a grateful student of the school of Linda Hernandez, and although I cannot say that I have graduated, I can say that the lesson of the three Rs reminds me to read broadly and often; be respectful and kind; and each day, to pick myself up, dust myself off, and start all over again.



Linda Hernandez began her career at The Bear Creek School as a parent volunteer, teaching study skills while her daughter Laura ('01) was in Middle School. She then began teaching English composition and literature while chairing the English Department. She became the Upper School Division Head in 2005 and retired in 2008. In retirement, Linda consulted with other educational organizations, advised students on college application essays, and was a Senior Capstone Project mentor. After a long illness, Linda went on to her reward on April 16, 2013.



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