

# MODUS VIVENDI

Special Graduation Edition 2006

A Publication of The Bear Creek School

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2006



“I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”

— Philippians 1:3-6

# Head of School

A SEASON OF GREAT CELEBRATION



**By Karen Beman**  
**Interim Head of School**  
**Director, Office of College Advising**

As the academic year draws to a close, the TBCS community has much to celebrate. We all take great joy in the accomplishments of the Class of 2006, and join with our graduates in the hope of what is yet to come.

*"I don't know what the future holds, but I do know who holds the future."*  
E. Stanley Jones

Celebration is in order for the many TBCS students who have been recognized for their outstanding commitment to learning, service and faith. We congratulate each of them on their extraordinary achievements and for their well deserved honors.

## National Merit Scholarship Program

More than one million eleventh graders nationwide, take the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test each year. The top five percent are designated as Commended Students. Nationally, approximately one percent advance to the Semifinalist and Finalist stages, which qualifies them for scholarship consideration by many colleges, universities and private organizations.

### *Commended Seniors*

**Kelli Geiger**                      **Heather Nelson**  
**Nikki Ramsey**                **Kristen Shomber**

### *Senior Finalists*

**Jeff Kiner**                        **Elizabeth Snider**

## Washington Principals' Scholars Program

The Washington Principals' Scholars Program offers high schools the opportunity to recognize the academic achievements of students in the top five percent of their graduating class. The Bear Creek School is pleased to award this distinction to:

**Elizabeth Snider**            **Hayley Hunt**

## Washington State Honors Award Program

This award is given to students who rank in the top ten percent of this year's Washington State high school graduating class. Nominations are submitted based on an index that gives equal weight to high school grades and test scores achieved on the College Board's SAT or the ACT exam. Fifteen TBCS seniors qualified for this state honor, an amazing accomplishment for 63% of this year's Bear Creek senior class! Congratulations to the following students for this statewide recognition.

**Leah Bangs**                      **Kelli Geiger**  
**Peter Heine**                    **Hayley Hunt**  
**Harold Kim**                    **Jeff Kiner**  
**Ali Lavin**                        **Steven Lee**  
**Heather Nelson**              **Juliana Patrick**  
**Inness Pryor**                 **Nikki Ramsey**  
**Kristen Shomber**            **Elizabeth Snider**  
**Daniel Switzer**

## Wendy's High School Heisman Award

This award honors the nation's top high school seniors who best exemplify a supreme "citizen-scholar-athlete." Each student nominated has gone above and beyond expectations to help those in need, enhance their education and pursue their dreams. One TBCS student has been

nominated for this year's Wendy's High School Heisman Award.

**Elizabeth Snider**

## Comcast Scholars

The Comcast Leaders and Achievers Scholarship Program recognizes students who strive to achieve their potential, to be involved in their schools, and to be catalysts for positive change in their communities. This program recognizes students who exemplify these skills and abilities and serve as role models for their fellow students. Our Bear Creek nominee was recently selected as one of the winners of the 2006 Comcast Leaders and Achievers award.

**Elizabeth Snider**

## King County Journal Top Grad Nominees

Each spring the King County Journal recognizes the contributions and talents of local area seniors. Congratulations to the following TBCS students who have been nominated. Selected quotes that follow were submitted from TBCS faculty.

### Academics – Heather Nelson

Heather has an extraordinary mind –the mind of a scholar. She is a classicist to the core. Her driving passion in Latin and the great works truly distinguishes her from her peer group. Her rhetorical skills are sharp and tightly executed. She is often "caught" deep in thought, weighing heavy matters and their potential attributes and consequences. She is deliberate and methodical in her approach to learning. She dissects concepts, norms, and assumptions with great precision; laboring to form her own point of view. She diligently invests in the "process of

knowing.” She is unencumbered by status quo notions. She is a free thinker. *“She dares to dance to a different drummer, adding so much to every discussion.”*

### **Academics – Kelli Geiger**

Kelli Geiger is a serious student with a compassionate heart. She is able to handle the most rigorous academic load and still extend herself in the day-to-day priorities and activities of life at The Bear Creek School. Her writing samples are consistently tight, focused and indicate an ability to pull out key points and relate them to the subtleties of the text. Her classroom participation is engaged. She is comfortable voicing her opinions and is always open to new concepts and ideas. Her written voice is strong and unafraid to tackle new terrain.

### **Community Service – Kristen Shomber**

Kristen’s life passion is to serve others. She is selfless, genuine and honest. She has demonstrated a deep spiritual maturity, approachability to the entire community and sensitivity to the workings of God in her life and the lives of others. Her community service projects are literally too broad and numerous to list. Whether they are school focused, community orientated or church affiliated, she brings a deep desire to communicate to others that they are valued and respected.

### **Community Service – Hayley Hunt**

Hayley is highly respected for her hallmark service leadership style. She has committed her heart and soul to the Bear Creek School. From the first day she walked through our doors, we have been a more compassionate, vibrant and purpose driven community. She rolls her shirt sleeves up and is always ready to jump in, no task too

big or small. As a junior and senior year ASB class representative she has lead by inclusion and dedicated hard work.

One of her heart’s desires is to help kids in the field of pediatric orthopedics or neurosurgery. We fully expect to see her, knees bent—eye to eye, with those who desperately need her heart and steady hand. She will be a lifetime humanitarian that has the drive, skill, sensitivity and grace to make a significant difference.

### **Leadership – Elizabeth Snider**

Bess lives and breaths leadership and service—intellectually, in the classroom, athletically on the track and soccer field, compassionately, through local and international missions. As ASB President, she demonstrates an understanding of the complexities of leadership. She leads our community with great skill and discernment. Students highly respect her opinion and are inspired by her commitment to lead by example. She is articulate, decisive and fair. She is careful and considerate, but unafraid to take risks.

Bess drives for excellence yet she is not tainted by the pitfalls of perfectionism. Her core values have been forged by diligent effort, focused determination, and a keen sensitivity to the powerful responsibility to live purposefully. As her ability to impact the world continues to unfold—she will not hesitate to respond to the call and rally an impressive force to join her.

### **Outstanding Scientist – Jeff Kiner**

We often wonder what it would be like to peek into the inner workings of Jeff Kiner’s mind. It must be an extraordinary place! If the world were a photo, Jeff would survey and detect the finer pixel details that link every

contour together. He demonstrates a rare intellectual capacity to absorb and categorize quantities of information across the disciplines. His thought process is intense—always deliberate, calculated and detailed. Jeff’s future is unbridled and limitless. He will make cutting edge applications, no matter the setting. When Jeff is “caught lost in thought” we all know he is most definitely solving complex problems with unique and detailed solutions.

### **Unsung Hero – Nathan Joyner**

Nathan lives in such a modest way. He is selfless, compassionate, and courageous—but what stands above all is that he is a young man of extraordinary integrity. He is a minute-by-minute example of placing others before self. He is trustworthy, loyal and completely committed to the fact that each individual matters deeply!

From behind the scenes of PowerPoint presentations, audio and stage lighting support, community service projects, to teacher support and video technical assistance, Nathan is the can-do guy. He is eternally optimistic and never wavers in his respect and care for others. His motivation is from the heart—with no self interest to satisfy.

He is the only student I have ever known to start his first day of high school with the goal of knowing every other student by name – and succeeding!

Congratulations to all!—Extraordinary accomplishments for the extraordinary class of 2006! We will miss you all. Remember to keep in touch and visit often. May all your days ahead be richly blessed!



# Board of Trustees



By Kurt Maass  
President

Every once in a while there are times or events that remind us of who we are and why what we do is so important. June 16th and 17th were two of those times for me, as TBCS staged its awards day and commencement. As we bring this academic year to a close, I'd like to reflect for a moment on this past year and share a few thoughts about our community.

First, I can't say enough about our faculty and staff. Serving as board president for this past year, I've had the opportunity to look more closely at our organizational structure, processes, and the members of our team. And while all of us would acknowledge that as an organization we can always improve what we do, I can state with confidence that TBCS is working from a solid foundation and has a bright future.

Our faculty and staff members are an extremely dedicated group of professionals, focused on delivering the highest quality program in the most efficient manner possible. They put in countless hours to create an environment that focuses on delivering a high quality education in a nurturing environment that is steeped in a Christian worldview. Each and every member of the Bear Creek School team is focused on that mission, and each year we continue to improve on what we do. I am exceedingly grateful to the entire TBCS team for their dedication to our mission and to our students. And a special thank you goes to both Karen

Beman and Karen Blankenbeckler for their outstanding leadership in this time of transition.

Any discussion about our faculty and staff would be incomplete without a final thank you to Nancy and Bill Price for their contributions to this community. As founders, builders, they brought this place into being and nurtured its growth for almost 20 years. We are extremely grateful to them for their vision and perseverance. We wish them every blessing in their next ministry, and ask that all members of our community continue to lift them up in their prayers.

Second, I am constantly amazed at the generosity, caring spirit, and dedication of our parent community. As we all know, volunteering is an important part of our culture here at TBCS. Not only is the spirit of giving of time important to continuing to develop a strong community, it is critical to the efficient operations of the school. And the philanthropic attitude demonstrated by our community continues to amaze me. Once again, your generosity has allowed us to meet both our auction and annual fund goals, supporting a variety of programs including financial aid, special projects, and program enhancement while keeping tuition increases to a minimum. Between the auction and the annual fund, you contributed over \$650,000, for which we are extremely and sincerely grateful.

Third, I am so proud of our student body. I had the opportunity to witness the awards assemblies on Friday June 16, and to participate in commencement on Saturday June 17. What a great privilege it is to witness those events, and to see the students of TBCS grow and mature into outstanding young men and women. I was especially impressed by the Class of 2006, including their accomplishments, faith, character, and service. I was moved

by the public tributes the seniors paid to their parents, and for the mutual love and respect they shared. For parents of lower school students who haven't witnessed this yet, plan on bringing your Kleenex box – this was an extremely powerful experience and shows what our students – and their families – are made of.

The highlight of the year for me is commencement. I feel so very fortunate to be able to witness these young men and women of faith and character celebrating the end of their sojourn at TBCS, and preparing to take the next steps on their life's journey. Each of the 24 members of the Class of 2006 will attend college next year, and the training they received and character they developed will reach to the four corners of our country. Rest assured, TBCS is developing a strong and positive reputation in the collegiate world, and our graduates are strong performers. They are going to university with values and beliefs that are activated and will make a positive difference for Christ, wherever they land. And I'm so excited for the 39 members of the Class of 2007 as they lead our student body next year!

Finally, as I said to the graduates at commencement, we end our year looking backwards with appreciation, and perhaps tears, as we contemplate endings. We are present in the moment, and realize and appreciate the blessings we enjoy each and every day. And we look forward, with great anticipation to the future and all the great possibilities and opportunities before us.

We are strong. We are richly blessed by God. I count it a privilege to be part of this work with each and every one of you.

Have a great summer.

# Graduation 2006



The Class of 2006 chose Rick Joyner to be the Faculty Speaker. The following is the Commencement Address that he gave at the graduation ceremony.

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Ladies and gentlemen, guests, friends and graduates of the class of 2006. We are here today to honor you young men and women, to celebrate with you and to tell you goodbye.

You graduates are here today because you have persevered for the past 12 years. As I thought about this, I tried to think of some specific things you have encountered and accomplished.

The list might include your first day at school and all the feelings that caused. Perhaps for some of you, the highlight was that one game or competition where everything felt right and you really played to the best of your ability. Some of you may remember that one class where all of a sudden everything clicked, you knew what it meant and how to do it, or that first prom dress or first manly shave. You might recall one particular ice-breaker, or mission trip, that first dissection, or maybe that first girlfriend or boyfriend.

Or maybe what you think of most today are the friends sitting beside you, friendships that have developed from sitting through hundreds of hours of classes, chapels, or just hanging out. These are friendships that have helped to shape you into the people you are, friendships that have shared the good times as well as the bad.

On a more practical level, we could mention certain other facts of your daily lives during high school. You have each opened your lockers approximately 3600 times, carried approximately 18,000 lbs of books, conjugated a soccer field worth of verbs, memorized enough vocabulary to fill a black hole, and come to love history!

It is good to think back and remember your time here, to take this opportunity to say goodbye to people, to places and to youth; but it is especially important to look forward. Each time that I attend a high school graduation it reminds me of my own. I would guess that is true for all of us sitting here as parents or friends.

The feeling that I most associate with that memory is of unlimited opportunity, a world full of choices; all the paths of life spread out before you. For most of your lives many of the choices have been made for you, but beginning even this year that will become solely your prerogative. Already you have been faced with what to do after graduation; which university to go to, what career to pursue. Before too long

some of you may face the question of who and when to marry.

As I was writing this, I was reminded of an event that I have shared with some of you. One summer when my family was back from Kenya we were at a mall. The kids were small and had never seen anything like it. There was this one candy store, and it was filled with barrels and barrels of glittering candy.

I am sure you can visualize their reaction. As we entered the store, the clerk handed each of the kids a small bucket, not a sack, but a bucket. We told each of the kids they could have so many pieces of candy. The interesting thing was their response. They did not immediately rush in and begin grabbing the nearest candy; they walked all around the store, looked at each and every different kind, then went back and made their choices.

I did not ask them what they based their choices on, but they very obviously did have reasons. Perhaps it was due to the size, or the color of the wrapper, or maybe the smell.



Board President Kurt Maass congratulates the graduating class.

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# Graduation 2006

What I would ask you graduates is who are you, and what will you base your choices and decisions on? Because the simple truth is that with every choice comes consequences.



Five grads line up in preparation for the ceremony; Daniel Switzer, Bess Snider, Hayley Hunt, Jin bok and Leah Bangs

As you move into University next year, you can skip classes and no one will care—but you face the consequence of an F, and possibly the time and expense of retaking the course or of losing a scholarship.

You can make a choice with your money and the consequence may be a debt that will limit your other choices, a debt that will force you to forego other things.

In choosing a career or a spouse a poor choice may leave you with a job you hate going to every morning, or perhaps a life filled with pain and regret.

I hope your choices will be based on more than looks, smell, or the color of the wrapper. As the Greek philosopher

Sophocles said over 2000 years ago, “The greatest griefs are those we cause ourselves.”

I have had the privilege of working with you these last two years. I consider you friends, people I respect and enjoy knowing. We have braved rapids together, talked politics & movies, and laughed with each other.

But I would not be much of a friend or a father, if I did not encourage you to follow God, to make decisions based on Him. As some of you know, I did not become a Christian until I was at the University, so I have had experience making choices without God and I do not recommend it.

That is the choice of waste and emptiness.

I recall reading this statement: “Life is a lot like a coin; you can spend it any way you wish, but you can spend it only once.” There is no magic or algebraic formula for making good or wise choices, but there are some precepts that can be followed.

I would like to offer two for your consideration.

The first is knowing and setting your priorities. All of our decisions reflect our priorities, the more important something is to us, the more we pursue it; the

more we are willing to give up for it. I encourage you graduates; take time, if you haven’t already, to determine your priorities.

To blunder among choices with no direction is to ask for disaster. No longer will you be under the umbrella of your parents’ priorities; you must find and set your own.

As you do this, you must consciously decide if God’s will is of primary concern to you. Will one of your priorities be to seek God? To bring honor to His name? The choices you make will reflect your answer.

A second precept for making wise choices is that of commitment or perseverance. Making a choice is sometimes the



Upper School Head, Linda Hernandez bids farewell to the graduates.



Hayley Hunt shares the joy of the day with her classmates.

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easiest part, but actually carrying out or accomplishing that choice may be far harder. The recent senior projects may have shown you something of this.

You have each made the decision to go to University next year; you have committed yourselves to more years of demanding study. Will you drop out or will you persevere?

Each decision you make will cost you something in commitment. In making wise choices, do not blindly rush in; determine if you are willing and able to bind yourself to the choice, for the time and effort required. Sadly, the world is filled with people who have made choices beyond what they were willing to commit to, and are now enduring the consequences.

Don't make choices that leave no option other than failure. Do not be afraid of failure, but do not blunt your hopes and energy with impossible choices.

As you leave here make choices that allow

you to be a 'good woman or a good man.' As you graduate, you leave behind all residue of childhood; you fully enter into the society of adults.

Enjoy the new freedoms you will have. Taste life, but do so with thought and careful evaluation; spend the coin of your life so that it has value.

You 24 people sitting here represent 18 years of love, hope and care that your parents have given you. You represent the investment your teachers have made. You represent the future- with your own goals, dreams, and gifts. Do not settle for mediocrity, for the finite.

In his book, the Autobiography of God, Lloyd John Olgilvie makes a statement which has stuck with me and I would like to pass on to you. "Either we are in the process of changing the world, or the world is in the process of changing us."

The choices you make, as seen in the test of time, will show what change is taking place in or around you.

I look at you and see smart, thoughtful, capable people. You enjoy life and have made TBCS a better place by your presence; you have made a difference.

Dream big dreams; rescue fair maidens, climb tall mountains, run for President, develop a cure for cancer, compose great music; but do so for more than your own benefit or your own gain. Make a choice for others not just for self.

As so often these past two years, but now for the last time, I stand before you notes in hand. But I offer you no lecture today. Instead I, with those gathered here, commend and congratulate you.

In the next few weeks and months, your lives will be drastically changed, you will be changed. For those of us who have been through this, we understand your uncertainty, we rejoice in your success, we pray for you, and we will miss you.

Choices. Beginning here and now, all the doors are open to you.



The Upper School choir performs together with the class of 2006 for the last time.

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# Senior Class 2006

## Senior Reflections

Each of the graduating senior wrote a 'reflection' on their years at TBCS and the memories they have of their school and classmates. Seven of the graduates were chosen to read their reflections at the graduation ceremony. The following are excerpts from those speeches:



### Heather Linnenkohl

Bildungsroman. According to the dictionary, it means: a novel whose principal subject is the moral, psychological, and intellectual development of a usually youthful main character. Don't worry, this isn't a novel. It's an undersized dissection of a fleeting youthful education.

In the fall of 1993, with my little hand gripping my mother's clothing, I was introduced to school, in the form of Bear Creek. My teacher, Miss Eichler (who, by the way, got married and became Mrs. Clancy) was so friendly and vivacious that any little fears that were being tossed in my head about school soon dissipated.

That was the start of my Bear Creek education, which has consumed the other 76% of my 17 years of being. Other teachers such as Mrs. Whitlock (with her flaming personality and challenges with cancer), Mrs. Little (who was small, even to a fourth grader), Miss Eagle (say it really fast and it sounds like 'mseagull'), Mrs. Addicott (with her enthusiastic joy for life) added to my passions and helped me to grow to love learning. As my new friends and I skipped around the old Woodinville Campus pretending we were horses, or created colorful friendship bracelets promising our friendship forever, new definitions of love and faith were being instilled within me by all of these and many other wonderful teachers.

In the fall of 2006, my life and education will change again, as will those of my fellow classmates. This time my mother won't be there for me to hide behind, and for some reason I am confident that her skirt won't be needed. The time has come to enter a new atmosphere, where few will be nurturing to our beliefs and ideals. For many reasons, boldly I can say that my fellow classmates and I are ready to breach the walls and succeed in all that we do. This new experience, also defined as college, will be the subsequent percentage of my life, which, according to my mom's guidance, will last for four or more years of my life. The prospects laid before us are plentiful, but what we do with those seeds can change the world. Use what we have been blessed with, in the form of teachers and education to honor God.

To all of my classmates and to the underclassmen here, I encourage you to listen to Paul in 1 Corinthians 9:24 when he says, "Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize."



### Leah Bangs

Bear Creek has been my greenhouse. Within that greenhouse, I (the seedling) have grown deep roots—healthy and strong—and now finally am ready to be transplanted into outside soil (in my case that soil is Western Washington University). The keepers of my greenhouse (Bear Creek teachers and staff) have been merciful and kind. They have nurtured me, but they have also challenged me—they've allowed my environment to get chilly in order to prepare me for the winters to come after my transplantation. Through times of chillingly extreme academic rigor I've learned focus and self-discipline, which will help me to survive when those winters do come.

Logic, ethics, and apologetics have been my fertilizer—not necessarily pleasant smelling, but full of the nutrients needed to become an abundantly fruitful plant. Because I've been fertilized, I continually grow to become a strong and spiritually fruitful plant.

Literature and history have been my refreshing and life-infusing water. They've been the key element to my growth and development. I've passionately related



with characters from classic literature we've read in class, fallen in love with various figures in my European History book (such as Mussolini—I can't resist the fascist dictators), and have been inspired by the thinkers of the Renaissance (now I know that Renaissance Humanism is very different from Secular Humanism).

So here I am about to graduate—about to be moved from my greenhouse into outside soil—and as most every other plant from any greenhouse, I have been prepared to drink more water and soak in more nutrients. But more importantly, in the greenhouse of Bear Creek I've learned my real purpose as a plant—to contribute. When I am transplanted my key purpose will not be to consume, but rather it will be to cleanse the air around me, to provide freshness and to create beauty around me wherever I go. And, oh, what a purpose!



**Hiroyuki Ikeda**

In these five years at The Bear Creek School I learned many things. Moving from Japan to America, knowing nothing about the language or culture, I was scared. I was afraid I was not going to make any friends. I still remember the first day of school, seeing many students that were talking very fast in a different language.

One of the great memories I have is Ice breaker. It is a camp where students get to know each other. Even though I did not speak English very well, students understood what I was trying to say. I remember one night, before lights out, we were all talking together and joking with each other. Then one student said "Hiro, you should come over to my house and hang out!" From there, I started to easily fit into the Bear Creek environment. When I was struggling with homework, all my friends would give me their phone number and tell me to call them when I needed help. Right now I have great friends that I can laugh with and will always support me.

The educational program at TBCS is outstanding because of all the teachers we have. They are not only smart, but humorous, generous and very helpful. When I couldn't speak English they would kindly teach me what the class was doing and help me everyday with it. They would always show their relationship with God and I found it very amazing. By coming to this school it definitely strengthened my belief in God. The teacher would relate God to everyday life and I would never have learned that if I hadn't come to this school. I am happy that there were teachers that encouraged me and told me never to give up. The reason I got this far is because of all the teachers' support.

In these five years not one day was a waste for me. I learned to make moral decisions and to be successful. What a great five years I had at TBCS... I will never forget the teachers and friends that I met. They will always be in my memory and the time I spent with them will help me get through when I am struggling. I am excited to go to college next year and I want to make the right decisions like I learned in TBCS and I'm sure God will lead me to a right path. I thank God for all these experiences I had.



**Bess Snider**

If you think about it, twenty-four is a commanding number. It is the number of hours in a day, the number of pence in an old British florin, the number of furlongs in a league, and the number of black birds baked in a pie for the king. Geoffrey Chaucer wrote twenty-four Canterbury Tales, the Great Wall of China is twenty-four feet high, and pure gold is called twenty-four carat. For all you math lovers out there, twenty-four is the largest number divisible by all numbers less than its square root. More importantly, however, twenty-four is the number of graduating seniors in Bear Creek's Class of 2006.

Yes, we are small in number, but we are large in character. Of course, we cannot take all of the credit. In fact, we cannot take any of the credit. We are indebted to Bear Creek for providing a place where we could safely and slowly shape each others' lives. Proverbs 27:17 says: "As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another." This is the work of the Holy Spirit in our school and in our class.

Once upon a time, we were the class that no teacher wanted to teach (with the exception, perhaps, of Mrs. Hernandez who has somehow always found a way

# Senior Class 2006

to cheer us on.) We were troublemakers. We were always tardy. We were teenagers. And we still are teenagers. But now we are “mature” teenagers. At some point in our high school years, we broke out of our ugly shell and became a class of young men and women genuinely seeking the call of Christ. Somewhere along the line, we realized that our differences and our willingness to push the limits should be strengths, not weaknesses. We learned to respect the uniqueness and the diversity of the gifts that each of us contributes to our senior class. We make each other stronger. We are the small but mighty seniors.



**Nathan Joyner**

My time at Bear Creek has been a unique experience compared to the rest of my life. My early childhood was far different from the last four years of my adolescence, being a guest in a country that was not the home of my family, and moving into the land that generations of Joyners have blessed for two centuries. Early in ninth grade a classmate asked me if I had ever been on a mission trip. My childhood was a mission trip. Upon my arrival to your, and now my country, I was greeted with questions like ‘isn’t

it great to be home?’ I found it strange that they could not understand that I was 10,000 miles from my home. This is why, from my first day, I have had the perspective of a visitor, experiencing your routines and traditions for the first time, and why I believe that I have a unique view of Bear Creek.

At the end of my high school experience I have a lot to look back on; years of education and life experiences. In anticipation of university just months away I find myself evaluating my time spent at Bear Creek more than ever. Mostly I think of the time I have wasted. It is no secret that this part of America, meaning Washington State and parts of the whole Northwest, are infamous for insincerity and fondness for shallow, meaningless greetings that stem from overcrowded schedules, loss of community and lack of real interpersonal intimacy. While our school suffers from these symptoms in many ways, individuals throughout my time here have stood out to me as making an effort, or rather taking the time to value individuals and to offer meaningful sincerity to those around them.

The very first time I entered this building I was approached by Jocelyn Dunn, a wonderful friend to many people here. Jocelyn made sure that I knew her name, that she knew mine, and the part that I am still touched by today, she made sure that I knew that she considered me to be worth her time. I knew someone. I had a friend who cared about me.

After three years in this culture I was disappointed to realize one day, after I asked someone how they were, or rather after I said “how’s it going,” a common form of hello here, that I never even paused to hear their answer. And so, near the end of my junior year, I recommitted my self to truly caring about the people

that I interacted with, to be sincere with my words and to give my time freely, as it had been given to me by so many people who made me feel like I was a part of their community. I began to be sincere with others, and in turn I received sincerity.

And so, among many incredible life lessons that I have learned at Bear Creek, I have truly learned that I must value every person that I encounter as a gift from God, someone that I should be honored to have the pleasure of getting to know.



**Ashley Karns**

In life, there are two kinds of people: the talkers, and the quiet ones.

I’ve always been in that second category. I remember in 8<sup>th</sup> grade when we had to say the first word that came to our minds about each person. Almost everyone said quiet for me. And it hurt, because it was then that I realized that the people I knew and saw everyday didn’t know me. It wasn’t until this year that I’ve started to come to grips with this. In school I’ve always been quiet, but anyone who truly

knows me and sees me outside of school knows that I am not.

I've discovered it's not bad to be quiet. Quiet just means you take more time to listen, observe, and think. Quiet does not mean you don't pay attention, but the opposite for those who are normally shy. My perspective on quiet has changed so much over the years since 8<sup>th</sup> grade—little did anyone know that by saying one simple word, they would change me—though it has taken a while.

Sixth grade was a tough year for me. Some things happened in my life outside of school, one of which was being faced with my first experience of putting a beloved pet down in November of that school year. I also had just moved schools; from the only school I could remember to one completely unknown to me. I moved to Bear Creek in the second quarter of the year; an awkward time to move.

Bear Creek was unlike any school I knew about. It was welcoming and friendly. It was full of people who cared. There was a tangible Christian atmosphere. I have had so many opportunities to ground my faith here, from class discussions to talking with teachers and friends. They were always there for me to lean on when I needed support.

We have grown together so much as a class over the years – from 6<sup>th</sup> grade to becoming teenagers and growing up in our high school years. You guys have given me many good memories that I will always remember.

So what does all this have to do with what I said about being quiet? Everything. You slowly started pulling me out of my shell, and while I am still quiet, it is a different kind of quiet. It's no longer the shy, timid, awkward quiet. Each class is unique in

its own way. We have the bold ones, the really bold ones, the people you could talk to all day, and the quiet listeners. If there are too many of any one type, it throws things off. There is a delicate balance to things. We truly have a beautifully diverse class, and that has made all the difference.



### Inness Pryor

I was just starting ninth grade when I first came to The Bear Creek School. For those of you fortunate enough to have attended Bear Creek since... forever... Bear Creek might not seem so exceptional, it may seem simply normal. But it is extraordinary.

I came here from a large public middle school, impersonal, undisciplined and overwhelming. There were bright spots, of course—a few caring teachers, a handful of close friends. But the sense of the student population was always flavored with a feeling of trying to survive. Not to thrive, just survive. And it's difficult to learn in a survival environment. For example, my mother bought me a rolling backpack because I was a small person, and hauling my pack of textbooks back and forth was so hard

for me. As I walked down the hall to my classes each day, the older students would kick my backpack the whole way. It felt like a gauntlet. What was worse, the administration did nothing to correct this, and so I dreaded just making my way to class every day. My mother started researching private schools and attended a Bear Creek open house. The beautiful, clean campus, the warm greetings from the staff, and the joyful presentation from the faculty convinced her immediately that Bear Creek was exactly right for a student who just wanted to learn and needed a safe, happy, and loving atmosphere to learn in.

While my sister, Taite, fell in love with the school the first week, I experienced culture shock. I was moved from a place of indifference and hostility to a place where faculty and students alike valued integrity, intelligence and kindness. There was no mistaking the efforts to reflect the love of God in our human interactions. It seemed like entering paradise. I could pay attention to my schoolwork and not my wellbeing—for that was assumed for us.

Our teachers challenged and encouraged us, and were kind on our not-so-good days. We read the classics and studied logic and pursued physical vitality in sports. We read history and spoke French and conducted experiments and created art. We traveled, we sang, we acted, we socialized with our peers, and all of this under the care of our parents, faculty, staff, and administrators.

Bear Creek felt as much like a family as a place to learn. And even though I could have rolled a backpack down the hall every day without one kick, the thoughtfulness here extends much further, to small things like having an extra set of textbooks at home from which to study. I am honored to be graduating from such a special place.



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**Modus Vivendi** is a publication for The Bear Creek School community, past and present. Article suggestions should be sent to [modusvivendi@tbcs.org](mailto:modusvivendi@tbcs.org).

Thank you to Rick Joyner and the class of 2006 for their contributions to this issue.



Humanities • Sciences  
Honor • Discipline

**Modus Vivendi** is translated as *a manner of living or a way of life*. TBCS 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.

## LOOKING AHEAD

### August

- 21 US Fall sports begin
- 30 New Family Ice Cream Social  
Redmond Campus
- 31 New Family Ice Cream Social  
Valley Campus

### September

- 5 First day of school  
Parent orientation  
8:45am (both campuses)
- 6-8 M/U Icebreakers and trips
- 9 Sports Kick-Off Tailgate
- 19 MS Curriculum night
- 21 LS Curriculum night (Valley)
- 23 M/U Grade Level BBQ
- 26 LS Curriculum night (Redmond)
- 28 US Curriculum night

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 develop into the individual God intends.