

THE GRACE ACADEMY ROSTRUM

VOL 1 SPRING 2015



GRACE
ACADEMY

Eighth Annual
GRACE ACADEMY
GOLF CLASSIC

Monday, April 13, 2015
8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.



CIMARRON™
• HILLS •

A Jack Nicklaus Signature Golf Course

Raffles, games, auction, and prizes
throughout the event! Registration includes
breakfast, lunch, golf shirt, and gift bag.



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WELCOME TO THE FIRST

ISSUE OF "THE GRACE ACADEMY ROSTRUM."



In the ancient world many towns had a raised platform, called a rostrum, where citizens could stand to make a public speech, perform for a crowd, or receive an award. As we gathered together ideas for this first issue of our magazine, we thought "The Grace Academy Rostrum" would be

an appropriate name given that this is a raised platform of sorts on which we can publically communicate about our school and highlight the accomplishments of individuals within our community. Each day God is being glorified at Grace Academy as we partner with parents to provide their children a distinctly Christ-centered, academically excellent, and classical education as a foundation for life-long learning. In the pages that follow, you will see concrete examples of how this mission is being embodied in the lives of our students and teachers.

There also is a second important sense in which the message of Grace Academy as presented in these pages is proclaimed as from a rostrum. We currently live in a society with many competing voices. Our children hear this sea of voices every day, and unfortunately most of the voices do not point our children toward a life of godliness and academic excellence. Within this culture characterized by moral degradation and educational mediocrity, Grace Academy stands, as on a rostrum, to speak against this tide and proclaim a message of truth, hope, and light into a dark world. By training our students to think well, to love the Lord, to develop the habits of lifelong learners, and to live lives of virtue, we are preparing them to stand in the public square and be witnesses of Christ's truth wherever they go. This edition of the "Rostrum" is a showcase of some exciting things that God is doing each day at Grace Academy. We hope that you enjoy and are blessed by what you see and read.

Soli Deo Gloria,
Dr. David Diener
Head of School

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KINDERGARTEN



Creek Bed Exploration

Each year, the Kindergarten students spend a great deal of time enjoying the wonder of God's creation through a variety of unit studies including the Rock Cycle. Students learn and discuss the common properties that distinguish igneous, metamorphic, and sedimentary rocks. They are able to observe and handle large samples of these rocks in one of our campus gardens. Later, the students have the opportunity to hike through the expansive Grace Academy campus and explore the creek bed for stone treasures. There, they search for rock specimens, fossils, and shells to bring back to the classroom, examine, and classify. On some occasions, a high school science

teacher visits class to help identify a prized rock and talk about how it might have been created. It is our desire that through learning about these rocks students will develop a wonder of science and, even more, awe at the Creator who made them all.

- Teri Jansen

THERE IS NEVER
A SHORTAGE OF
EXCITEMENT
AND DISCOVERY!



JUNIOR & SENIOR *Thesis*



The ancient Greeks and Romans valued highly the art of speaking well. Citizens who wished to promote their ideas not only had to have a deep understanding of the subject matter but also needed to present their thoughts with eloquence and rhetorical skill. The same is true today. Ideas that are communicated well have a greater chance of being heard, understood, and adopted by others.

In Grace Academy's School of Rhetoric, students learn to analyze and eloquently present their ideas, both orally and in writing. One of the ways this is accomplished is through the junior and senior thesis projects. During these years, students at Grace

Academy research, write, present and defend a thesis paper. Students first choose a topic that is currently being discussed in academia, the marketplace, the church, or broader culture and that relates to some aspect of their Grace Academy education. Over the course of the year, students research their topic and develop their own position. They then defend their position by

writing a thesis paper which is 10-15 pages in length for juniors and 15-20 pages in length for seniors. All students must also prepare a bibliography which evidences the research they have drawn from books and peer-reviewed articles to support their arguments. After completing the thesis, students then present and defend their papers publicly.

The junior and senior thesis projects thus equip

DURING THEIR JUNIOR AND SENIOR YEARS, STUDENTS AT GRACE ACADEMY RESEARCH, WRITE, PRESENT, AND DEFEND A THESIS PAPER.

students with the skills they will need to write and speak well as they develop and defend their ideas. They are taught how to research and organize a paper, how to argue persuasively, coherently, and concisely, and how to present and defend their

ideas publicly. They learn to apply the truths of Scripture to their topics and also how to respond to objections and opposing viewpoints. These projects are not easy, but they are an important step in a Grace Academy education that will prepare students for successful writing and speaking in college and throughout their lives.

- Celine Duke





Enter the Age of Castles &

HEAR YE! HEAR YE!
CALLING ALL MASONS,
CARPENTERS, AND
FREEMEN OF TALENT...



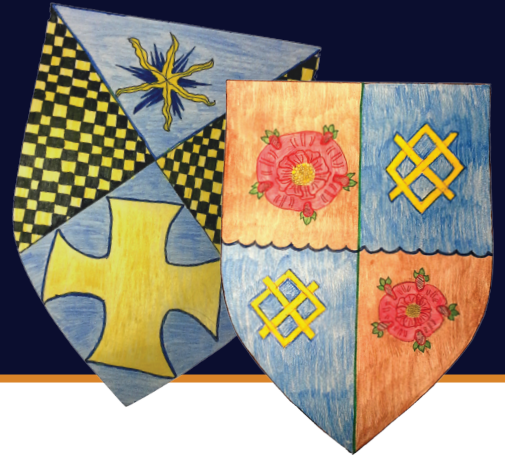
Every year fourth grade students emerge from the Dark Ages and enter into the Age of Castles and Catapults. Students begin by learning about William the Conqueror, his claim to the English throne, and his subsequent victory over King Harold to establish the Normans as the ruling group of England. With William came the feudal system and the feudal hierarchy complete with king, vassal, sub-vassal, knight, freemen, and serfs.

As these lessons leap from the pages of their books, the students relish the opportunity to engage with iconic pieces of medieval life. First, they create their own heraldry shields to identify themselves on the “field of battle” and continue to explore the world of medieval England. The students also create weaponry in the form of catapults and ballista of various sizes. These mighty contraptions are destined to hurl everything from ping-pong balls to large grapefruits across our soccer field on catapult day. Robin Hood day, following the reading of Lincoln-green tales, allows the students a taste of archery and (ginger) ale.

The medieval cultural studies culminate with the building of fantastical castles. The students first engage in a lesson on medieval

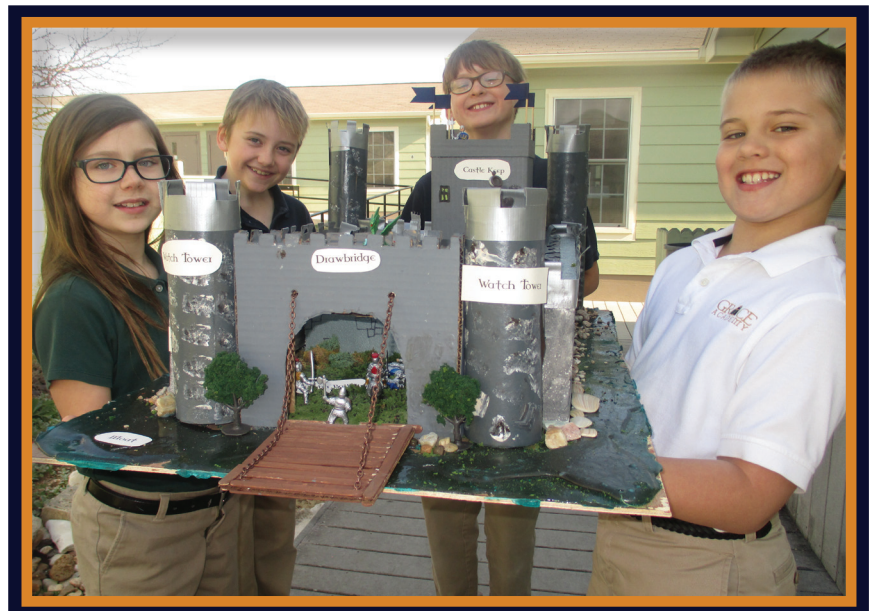


Catapults



architecture with the film “Castle” presented by David Macaulay. Students then divide into teams in order to design and build their own royal fortress. The designs reflect not only the essential elements of medieval castles, but also the great creativity of our students. Math, art, and history all must come together as students engage in hands-on learning. The results each year provide a wonderful display of the love of learning that exists at Grace Academy.

- Leslie Sager



ATHLETICS IN THE *Classical Christian School*



The mission of athletics in the classical Christian school should be to provide a Christ-centered, competitive environment for students in order to develop Christian character in what are sometimes very intense situations. This is an important part of a student's development of commitment, teamwork, self-control, setting and achieving goals, and perseverance.

Athletics should be used to further a student's overall educational experience. One Grace Academy athlete wrote the following: "One of the greatest challenges that I have put before myself is cross-country. At first, I was just trying to get in shape, but as I got further along in the season I began to apply the same discipline I used when running to my academics and my home life. I not only became a better runner, but I also improved my work ethic."

**"WHATEVER YOUR
HAND FINDS TO DO,
DO IT WITH ALL
YOUR MIGHT."**

ECCLESIASTES 9:10

Athletics gives students the opportunity to be excellent and to give God glory by being a shining light of this biblical principle. The athletic program can also be a witness to the community. Sometimes a school's athletic teams are the only part of a school that the surrounding community sees. What better way to manifest a school's athletic mission than for others to observe how our athletes, coaches, and fans exhibit Christian character?

Grace Academy is continually striving to use these principles in the development of its athletic program.

While our teams have won conference, regional, and state championships in numerous sports, it is never at the expense of the biblical principles we espouse.

An example of our students' commitment to character took place during a recent state volleyball playoff. The Grace girl's volleyball team, who at the time were the two-time defending state champions, had just been eliminated from the playoffs. Instead of packing their bags and leaving the gym, the girls and their parents all stayed for the entire championship game, supporting and cheering on our district rivals in their pursuit of their first state title. What a way for our athletes to manifest God's love.

- P. C. Edwards



WORLD CHANGERS START HERE.

Hannah  Thoms

WHERE ARE YOU NOW?

I am an honors student of the Intercollegiate Studies Institute (ISI), which has bolstered my understanding of America's founding. Through this exceptional student organization, thriving academics can discuss prolific writers and philosophers and sort through ideology with other students and professors from across the nation.

I work as a legislative assistant to Texas House Representative Tony Dale. I am experiencing the legislative process first hand and witnessing how our local government operates. Serving in this position has helped me to realize the important distinctions between state and federal matters and what responsibilities our state government has in addressing the concerns of the people.

I have also participated as a delegate to several diplomatic models. These opportunities have been my brief taste of international diplomacy. It is very exciting to represent another country and present a resolution before a committee. It has also proven a useful contrast to my experience in local politics.



HOW DID GRACE INSPIRE YOU?

Immersion in great literature and the classics was inspiring to me.

The classics are the reference point for Western Civilization, and whether you want to enter into history, philosophy, political science, etc., you will always return to the classics.

HOW DID YOUR GRACE EDUCATION PREPARE YOU?

At Grace Academy I learned how to approach everything from a biblical standpoint and to view life through a Judeo-Christian perspective.

Also, I read Russell Kirk's *Rights and Duties* in my Rhetoric years. That was when I first decided that I enjoyed political theory and political philosophy. Then, during my first semester in college, I applied to ISI and wrote a paper that was inspired by the rights and duties theme.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO STUDENTS WHO CURRENTLY ATTEND GRACE?

Once you enter the collegiate stage, you will be challenged to prove the authenticity of your ethical standards. You will decide if what you have thought about and written about has any substance at all. I think you will find that it overwhelmingly does have a concrete foundation and that you will have a greater peace of mind.

ALUMNI SNAPSHOT

- Grace Academy student from 3rd grade until graduation in 2011
- Business Administration major at Concordia University in Austin, graduating in May, 2015
- Family includes Elizabeth and Vet Thoms and sister Maranatha
- Fan of G. K. Chesterton and Dostoevsky



ROBIN McLAURIN *Teaching with...*



ROBIN McLAURIN IS ONE
OF GRACE ACADEMY'S BELOVED
TEACHERS AND AN ADJUNCT
PROFESSOR OF ART AT NEARBY
MARY HARDIN-BAYLOR UNIVERSITY.

It is under her loving guidance that our art program has grown in form and beauty. Ms. McLaurin is a fount of inspiration with new ideas flowing out of her room and around our campus throughout the school year. The story of her journey as an artist offers a glimpse into the source of these inspirations.

Ms. McLaurin has loved art for as long as she can remember. As a little girl her parents gave her a set of paints for her birthday. Little Robin took this treasure box into her room and began to secretly paint the walls inside her bedroom closet. At first, her mother was not happy to find paint on the walls. Her father, however, recognized a gift blossoming and encouraged her to continue. Before long the entire

bedroom was transformed into a lovely garden with little flowers painted all around the walls. This passion for art would eventually lead her all around the world.

Robin did not begin immediately pursuing an art career. Her parents encouraged her to instead pursue something more practical, and she chose education. As an education major in college Robin learned of the opportunity to teach with the Department of Defense Dependent Schools (DoDDS). This position allowed her to teach at a military base in Germany, where she lived within different cultures and experienced their art and music. As Robin visited the great museums and galleries of Europe, she felt again the calling of an artist. When her own children were in high school she earned her MS in Art Education. In 2014, she graduated from the Vermont College of Fine Arts with an MFA in Visual Art. Just as her first degree served as a vehicle for Robin to explore the world's art, the journey that came in pursuing her advanced degrees has given Robin a platform from which to share her art with the world. From this platform Robin has been given the opportunity to let her voice be heard in causes that weigh heavily upon her heart, exemplified by her portfolio selection displayed in this article.



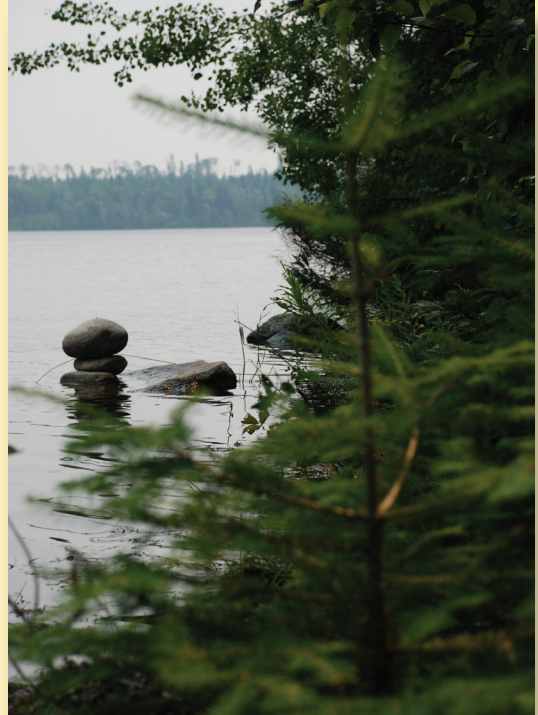
"OBJECTS IN MIRROR ARE CLOSER THAN THEY APPEAR"



a Faithful Art



“REPAIRABLE”



“CALLING ME”

At James Madison University, Robin staged an exhibit titled “Prize Purses” in which she displayed photographs of objects that had helped ex-military wives heal. In addition, Robin is a member of CIVA (Christians in the Visual Arts) and has served as a volunteer photographer for four years for the Heart Gallery. The Heart Gallery works in conjunction with Texas State Adoption Agency to encourage the adoption of foster children, and Robin helps by taking photographs of these foster children.

Most recently, Robin staged an “Oak Galls” exhibition at the Miranda Arts Space Project, a gallery in New York. Along with her art work, Robin presented a lecture on the chemistry of the oak gall in paints. Robin’s continual desire to study art around the world will lead her this summer to the National Gallery of the Cayman Islands where she will serve as Artist in Residence. Here at this national gallery, Robin will give art classes and present her own art exhibit.

The Fine Arts thus have always played an important part of Robin’s life. As she describes:

**“THEY HEIGHTEN MY WALK
WITH CHRIST, MAKING IT AN
INTIMATE STROLL, RUN,
MARATHON.”**

For this reason, more than any other, she is delighted to be able to share her faith and her love of art with the students of Grace Academy. We are incredibly blessed to call her a Grace Academy teacher.

- Karen Moore

SOLI DEO GLORIA





GRACE
ACADEMY

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www.gracetx.org 512.864.9500

UPCOMING EVENTS

-  APRIL 2 GRANDPARENTS DAY
-  APRIL 3-6 EASTER HOLIDAY
-  APRIL 7 SPIRIT NIGHT AT McALISTER'S DELI
-  APRIL 10-11 SCHOOL OF LOGIC RETREAT
-  APRIL 13 GOLF CLASSIC AT CIMARRON HILLS
-  APRIL 16-17 JUNIOR THESIS PRESENTATIONS
-  APRIL 21 TEXAS DAY
-  MAY 1 SENIOR THESIS PRESENTATIONS
-  MAY 22 LAST DAY OF SCHOOL
-  MAY 23 GRADUATION

WORLD CHANGERS START HERE.

GRACE
ACADEMY



PROSPECTIVE PARENT
OPEN HOUSE

APRIL 9, 2015
10 am - 11:30 am

To RSVP or schedule an individual tour please
call or email admissions@gracetx.org