

The Messenger

Washington Christian Academy

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WCA Students Study Journalism

In his 1988 book, *The Prodigal Press*, Marvin Olasky, professor of Journalism at the University of Texas, laments the fact that, "Just as church-bashing is a favorite sport among many reporters, so media-bashing is the pastime of many Christians" (page xii). He, then, explores how Christians can influence the press and "be God's servants in helping to bring the prodigal press home" (page xiv).

WCA students now have the opportunity to learn the skills and insights necessary to be responsible journalists. Last year's class was the first to systematically study the various forms of mass-communication, the role of various peoples in a newsroom, how editorial decisions are made, what are the principles of newsworthiness, and how to write for newspapers. Last April, these students launched *The Paw Print Press*, WCA's student newspaper, which publishes approximately twice a month.

Many of those same pioneering students returned to produce the paper this year, sacrificing their lunch hour, while a new crop receive instruction during their elective period, and have recently honed their writing skills enough to start contributing to the newspaper.

The Paw Print Press has reported on a variety of topics, including WCA's environmental stewardship initiative, current Headmaster Ron Whipple and incoming

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Strategic Work

The WCA Board of Directors is proceeding "full steam ahead" with the plans and projects outlined at the January Society meeting. Work is already underway to implement the objectives of the new Strategic Plan presented there. The number one priority continues to be the search for a new site for the school, to relieve the crowding at our current facility and to allow us to expand our educational program. Pre-contract negotiations and site studies are underway for a piece of property that is currently our best prospect. How abundant are the Lord's gracious blessings to us to provide us with Board members equipped with expertise needed at this hour: expertise in

land acquisition, civil engineering, legal issues, etc. And what good would these skills be to us if they were not embodied in people who love the school enough to devote their resources and hours upon hours of their time to these enormous challenges?

We are also preparing the Capital Campaign to raise funds for the purchase of a new site. We held a workshop on how to plan and execute the campaign, and all Board members also participated in a recent telethon to increase the number of school families who contribute to our annual Academy Fund. The Development Committee is getting ready for a feasibility study, which will precede the actual Capital Campaign.

The Board also recently approved plans formulated by the administrative team to obtain accreditation within the next 5 years from CSI, ACSI, and MSA, and to proceed with the implementation of a distinct Middle School program for grades 6-8. Meanwhile, the Advancement Committee is taking steps to raise enrollment levels in the youngest Lower School grades, and to enhance the overall spirit of community within WCA.

These are major projects, requiring the time and talents of many individuals. Please, continue to pray for God's leading and provision as we tackle each one of our Strategic Plan objectives, and also, please consider how you might participate.

—Howard Bushouse
Board President



Lower School "Destination: Imagination" team in action
(see article on page 4)

Grandparents Day

Grandparents Day was a wonderful experience again for us, a chance to see the children and school in action and to meet the enthusiastic staff and all the smiling faces.

As I come from a background where “religion” was something one decided on when becoming an adult, it warms my heart to see my grandchildren growing up in a God-fearing environment, where God’s truths are emphasized as much as academic achievement, and where relationship with our Creator is stressed instead of religion.

How privileged my grandchildren are to be immersed in Christian love and discipline both at home and school. I am continually impressed how their behavior demonstrates the value of this upbringing. They are indeed growing in rich soil.

This school is an excellent example of many cultures and nationalities existing in harmony and love through obedience to God in Jesus. How I wish the world would learn this lesson! May WCA continue to seek God’s guidance in all their decisions for the sake of the children, for all our sakes, and for God’s glory, which is our reason for being.

—Doris Huber Nusbaum

Grandmother of James, Karen, John, Jared, and Justin Hoobler



A Day at WCA

A day in the life of an administrator can be pretty hectic, filled with a myriad of situations that arise from close to 400 people sharing the same space for seven or eight hours a day. On rare occasions though, no urgent responsibilities are pressing and the administrator is able to stroll through the school as a mere observer, absorbing the activities of teachers and students. On one late February afternoon just such a gift was granted to me...

It was one of those lovely, warmish days we have enjoyed periodically this winter, and some classes had gone outdoors to enjoy the late afternoon sun. The Spanish class was one of these. Teacher and students alike obviously enjoyed a calisthenics workout, with directions being called out in Spanish. On the other blacktop, a PE class was busy honing their skills. On the gassy field around them, excited groups of 4th graders participated in the yearly “Alaskan Iditarod” race. This race, a traditional 4th grade event, features “dog sled” teams that follow the long trek across Alaska (the school grounds), navigate through passes, cross mountain ranges, and negotiate avalanche zones to attain the finish line. I’m not sure who enjoyed it more – the dogsled teams, the teachers, or the

hordes of parents gathered to cheer them on and provide hot chocolate for the journey!

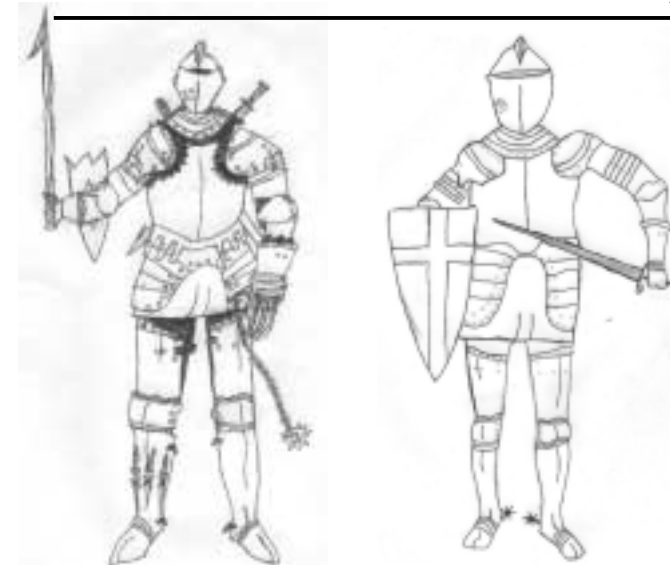
Back inside the building, I dropped by the 5th grade art class of Mrs. VanderHaak. Students were busily working at their tables, and took turns sitting in front of the overhead light’s beam to allow their teacher to draw their profiles from the shadows cast. The 2nd graders were involved in a writing task at their desks under the supervision of a substitute teacher, while “their own” Mrs. Blackwell, along with Mrs. Blackstone, the resource teacher, attended a county meeting as advocates for one of our students in need of testing through county services. Down the hall, 1st graders and Kindergarteners were wrapping up a day-long celebration of the 100th Day of School. The day had been filled with all sorts of activities teaching the concept of 100: counting, ordering, patterning, graphs, hats and placemats with one hundred items on them, one hundred bits of snacks to eat, and even the discovery that it took one hundred steps to walk from their classrooms to my office!

Earlier on this same day, the Lower School had come together to worship in Chapel and to learn more about one of the names of God, “Jehovah Shalom,” the God of Peace. We prayed together for a family in the school who had lost some cousins in a car accident the day before, asking that the God of Peace would be their comfort.

A sense of joy washed over me on this afternoon as I witnessed the body of Christ working together in this place, with each teacher doing his or her part to share with their students the richness of God’s provision for us in every area of endeavor. I am thankful to be a part of this family of God, laboring together at WCA for the education of our covenant children. Come and visit some time, walk around our campus, and enjoy, as I did, what the Lord is doing in our midst!

—Carol Parent

Lower School Principal



Sixth graders complemented their studies on the Middle Ages by drawing knights in art class.

Zack Johnston’s and Soren Kreider’s works are examples.

Development Details

AT THE STARTING LINE

Drama Match. An anonymous patron offered a \$1,000 gift to match gifts designated for our new drama program. This will help cover the costs of our spring production of "Emma," which was not planned when the current year's budget was crafted. \$350 has already been given toward this match.



LAST LAP

Academy Fund Drive. We still need \$25,000 in gifts for the Academy Fund. A chunk of this year's Academy Fund (\$41,000) will flow directly into the Expansion Fund. Your gifts to WCA at this time are advancing Christian education in the metro-Washington area in a substantial way that will bring the benefits of God's rule to our nation through future WCA graduates.

35 Special Friends Match. If your annual giving to WCA has never topped \$5,000, you are eligible for this match. You can earn this match for us by giving \$5,000 before June 30. You will also qualify, if you have already given some and you add more now to reach the \$5,000 level. Three of these matches were offered; two have been claimed and one is still available.

ACROSS THE FINISH LINE

Maureen Match. Completed! Thank you for all these gifts for our athletic program in honor of Maureen Rosetta, our tireless volunteer.



Telethon. The results of our telethon are deeply encouraging to the Board. Of the 110 or so parents reached in two nights of calls, 62% pledged a gift, and another 30% are considering a gift. Checks are still arriving; totals will be in the next *Messenger*.

Imaging 2002. Grandparents have once again shown their generosity toward our students with their gifts for this year's project. We have exactly met the goal of \$5,400 to cover the costs of a video projector, a digital video camera, and an iMac to run iMovie. Next year, students will benefit from visual teaching (Internet sites, Power Point programs, etc.). They will also be able to make and edit movies. Expect creativity! We wish our grandparents could hear the students and teachers shouting, "Thank you!"

THE BIG ENCHILADA

In these days, the big issue at WCA is, of course, the need for a new campus. The Board continues to scour the area for sites, and is currently pursuing a contract on a particular site. Real news is just out of reach, however, for this issue of *The Messenger*. (We hope the June issue will be really exciting!)

The Expansion Fund is the means to that goal, and it does continue to receive gifts. Some of you designate your gifts for this fund, and some of our general Academy Fund giving is channeled that way, also. Currently, the fund is enabling us to seek expert help in assessing sites: traffic and sewer studies, legal assistance, etc. Support this effort with your prayers and gifts.

—Robin U. Gropp
Director of Advancement

Telethon



"Hi, my name is Doug Bratt, I'm on the Board of Directors at our Washington Christian Academy, and I wonder if you have a few minutes to talk to me." So began two evenings of challenging, interesting, and gratifying adventure a couple of weeks ago. For we, Board members, had the privilege of conducting a telethon to raise support among our parents for the Academy Fund.

The adventure was *challenging*, because it's never easy to ask for money, even for such a great cause as Washington Christian Academy. I fully realize that many of our families must give sacrificially simply to pay the tuition to enroll their children in our school. As a result, many who give to our Academy Fund must give even more sacrificially, perhaps even going without some extras to do so. I also considered this telethon a challenge because it is so important for our school's future economic health to have broadened parental support.

At the same time, our telethon adventure was *interesting* because it gave me the privilege to talk to so many genuinely interested and interesting people. Everyone was cordial. Many asked questions about what the Lord is doing at WCA, and several of them enthusiastically talked about the importance of a Christ-centered education.

However, my strongest impression of my telethon adventure will always be one of deep *encouragement*. Everyone to whom I talked was excited about what God is doing in and through our school. Some people were eager to share some wonderful specific things our teachers, staff and administrators have done.

While not everyone could give to our Academy Fund at this time, everyone understood the need for charitable giving to move our school forward into the future God has planned for us. This encouraged me, not only to make more telephone calls on those evenings, but also to continue my part in the ministry that is our Washington Christian Academy. Our parents' warmth, enthusiasm, and generosity made this a telethon adventure I'd be willing to be a part of more often.

—Doug Bratt
Board member

How to Handle Money

Our mission is to educate covenant children...so that they may occupy their places worthily in society, church and state. Part of this education for the juniors includes learning money management from a biblical perspective. In my class, the students learn how to make a budget (including tithing), how to write a check and balance a checkbook, how to do their income taxes, and, best of all, how not to misuse credit cards. They study how to select a college, a major within a college and then, how to pay for it. They also learn how to complete a FAFSA form, so their parents won't have to agonize over it.

In class, they even struggle over making practical decisions: whether to order pizza for dinner or to boil some water and eat a serving of Rama noodles, or, should they drive to the movies or take the bus? The answer? It all depends on how much is left in the budget for the pizza, or for the gas, or for the movie.

One of the greatest joys of teaching this class is to see the excitement of students over their newly acquired skill, when a senior runs up to me in the hall and shouts, "Mrs. Arnoult, I just wrote my first check!" Teaching the students responsible money management is another way WCA partners with the parents.

—Margaret Arnoult, C.P.A.
Business Manager

Destination: Imagination

On March 16, three teams from WCA joined hundreds of other students from all over Montgomery County at Gaithersburg High School for the annual "Destination: Imagination," formerly "Odyssey of the Mind," competition. "Destination: Imagination" requires creativity and teamwork. Teams are judged in two areas: one is an "instant challenge," where teams are given 5 minutes to work out a solution to a problem, and the other one is a short play, solving specific problems that are given out months in advance. For example, one team must produce a humorous eight-minute skit about the adventures of a group of tourists in a foreign country. They must include some information about that country, a humorous character, a prop that transforms into something different during the play, a discussion between two characters over differing interpretations of the same event, and they must incorporate a piece of art they have created themselves. The seven members of the team must create this skit without any outside help. The "coach" is only there to supervise.

Our 7th grade team placed third in their division, so they will continue in the state competition. The team members are Ryan Bratt, Evan Kuester, Talia Henderson, Marchelle Mullings, Emily Vander Haak, Lara Linden,

and Kamille Turner, under Diane Bratt's coaching. Our middle school team, coached by Robin Turner, tied for 4th place in their division. The third WCA team, the elementary team, coached by Bette Vander Haak, placed 10th overall, but their play tied for 5th place.

"Destination: Imagination" provides our students with an opportunity to try their wings in public performance and teamwork, and it stretches their imagination. We thank our coaches and other volunteers, Winnie Langelaar, Sharon Calloway, Stephanie Hazzard, and Kitty Robinson for making this possible. We also desire to encourage others to join, so more students may benefit from this great experience.

—Diane Bratt
Teacher



"Hockey player" by 2nd grader Kendrick Sanker, drawn in Art class during the Olympic Games.

JOURNALISM —continued from front page

Headmaster Larry Danner, Wildcat sports, the latest technological fads, the Christmas Bazaar, tips on finding summer jobs, and a point-counterpoint debate over the Harry Potter film. Editors Lainey Holiday and Gloria Chan have penned editorials examining WCA's crisis readiness in the wake of the 9-11 terrorists attacks, and the somewhat competing cultures of sports and academics in the Upper School. The paper also features movie, book and restaurant reviews.

My 13 years working in broadcast journalism and public relations benefit students as we discuss many "real world" scenarios, watch videotapes of nightly newscasts, critique feature stories, discuss the media's role in covering the war in Afghanistan, view and discuss films, etc. We also study C. John Sommerville's book, *How the News Makes Us Dumb*, which discerns between information for its own sake, which saturates our culture, versus true knowledge, which can inspire and transform.

Please, encourage these students as they pursue knowledge and skills in this important field, which lacks sufficient Christian participation. Our hope is that we can train more young people each year to be God's servants in this arena.

—Karen Frank
Journalism Teacher



WCA on Stage

In early May, we will witness our first school-sponsored full-length high school drama production, a stage adaptation of Jane Austen's *Emma*. Written by Sandra Fenichel Asher, the two-act play features a cast of 16, and will run approximately two hours. We will have an intermission, during which refreshments can be purchased.

The story, set in an isolated village in England in the early 1800s, focuses on a young woman's matchmaking efforts in her circle of friends and relations. We find a social-climbing minister, a talkative neighbor, a couple of quirky old folks, and many other interesting characters in this humorous tale.

Our students are being ably directed by an experienced actress, Amanda Westly, a member of Fourth Presbyterian Church. Mrs. Westly brought the WCA drama club into being in November, and had students onstage by December with *A Charlie Brown Christmas* (performed at WCA and at the Fourth Presbyterian School).

We also have help from Donna Boisen, step-mom of one of our players, and very experienced in things theatrical. She is designing our costumes. Board president Howard Bushouse, and our aftercare program director Sharon Calloway will handle the lights. Other parents, students, and teachers are helping with tasks as varied as painting sets, scouring attics and thrift shops for props, designing posters, typing programs, sewing costumes, and creating hairdos. I am doing my best to coordinate all these parallel activities.

WCA students have long loved to be on stage. Recollections of the early days of Washington Christian School fondly mention the spring plays performed on the porch of our first school building, the "little white house." When we moved to the current building with the luxury of a stage, we could do much more. Former Board member Linda Harrison was involved in many of the plays during those years, including *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*. Current students and school parents have fond memories of all-school Christmas or spring productions of *It's Cool in the Furnace*, *Pilgrim's Progress*, *The Perils of Pauline*, *A Midnight Clear*, *G.T. and the Halo Express*, and others. At the same time, the high school, in its Silver Spring Christian Academy days, used to feature a talent show at an annual fund raising spaghetti dinner.

In the mid-1990s, then-aftercare director Joyce Wardrick sponsored an after-school drama club, led by an outside director. Five members of the Emma cast and crew acted in one or more of their productions, which included *Pecos Bill*, *Slue-Foot Sue*, and *The Dirty Dan Gang*, a Christmas play called *One Clear Star*, and a stage adaptation of C.S. Lewis' *The Magician's Nephew*. As part

of WCA's Shakespeare focus last year, our students performed a scene from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and won an award for insightful interpretation at the Folger Theatre's Shakespearean Festival.

Our current cast is simply thrilled at the opportunity to be onstage. Actors and stagehands range from 8th-12th grades. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could have a real auditorium in which some of them can perform before they graduate!

—Nancy Keegan

Librarian (and Production Manager for Emma)

Saturday, April 27

7:00 p.m.

Einstein High School



The Promise Tree Auction

Plan to attend this memorable, adult-only event, and invite grandparents, friends, and neighbors. This is a great way to introduce others to WCA. There is no admission charge.

Catalogue - Each school family and faculty member has received a catalogue. We encourage you to look through it and familiarize yourself with the wonderful items we have this year. If you did not receive a catalogue or would like one for your guest, additional copies are available in the school office.

Class Baskets - Our Room Parents are putting together fabulous baskets from each grade or class.

Donations - If you have not made a donation and wish to do so, please fill out a Donation Form in the school office or contact Jean Visy, and your item will be included in the Addendum. Baked items are especially needed. If you have a special entrée, pie, cake or other specialty that you could make for the winning bidder, it would make a great auction contribution.

Door Prize - New this year, we will have a Door Prize drawing for a \$700 tuition credit for the 2002-03 school year. Upon registration, each individual attending will be given the opportunity to enter the drawing. If the winner does not have a child at WCA, this credit may be applied to the child of his/her choice or donated to the Tuition Assistance Fund. The winner must be present to win!

Don't miss this fun and memorable evening!!

—Jean Visy

Parent, Promise Tree Auction Coordinator

From Here and There

Pre-K and Kindergarten had the traditional “**100th Day of School**,” with many activities involving the number 100, including learning Psalm 100.

2nd graders evaluated **what kindness means** in various literary stories, through the lens of biblical principles. Here are some comments on the stories. On *The North Wind and the Sun*, “By being gentle to others, good things happen.” On *Clara Barton*, “Jesus teaches us that we should help others feel better.” On *Mushroom in the Rain*, “We should share, and help each other in hard times.” On *The Camel’s Nose*, “We should be kind by stopping bad things before they start.” Now, that’s mature understanding!

4th grade had the annual “**Alaskan**” **Iditarod race** (see Mrs. Parent’s article).

5th graders had **poem readings/recitations**, with parents invited to be the audience. They also assembled the traditional **Maryland cake** from the separately prepared and properly decorated counties.

The various **names of God** are the topics of the weekly Lower School Chapel, prepared by a different class each time.

10th grade visited the **FDR Memorial** as they studied the Great Depression Era in History. Then, they looked at the European Middle Ages Paintings exhibit at the **National Art Gallery**, and the mosaics of the **National Shrine of Immaculate Conception** to enrich their Theology studies on how the Reformation and Renaissance influenced the mindset of the people.

The yearly **college preparation workshop**, led by Upper School Principal Mrs. Adams, attracted dozens of 10th and 11th graders and their parents. This WCA service is truly unique, and is in line with the serious commitment of WCA to prepare our students for college not only academically, physically, and spiritually, but also practically. See also Mrs. Arnoult’s article on the financial preparation of our students.

Driver’s Education class will be offered to our qualifying students, as in past years.

Model United Nations had 30 students from WCA at their annual meeting at Catholic University. The students enjoyed the three-day event, worked hard in committees, learned to appreciate the complexity of political decisions, and earned the organizers’ compliment for their good behavior. Avi DeSilva was nominated “Best Delegate,” and first time participant Luke Johnston received “Honorable Mention.”

Model Arab League will meet at Georgetown University with 15 WCA students attending, led by Lainey Holiday. Among the different topics, the Palestinian affairs will be discussed. Avi is going to chair the Joint Defense Committee.

Our **new yearbook** is under construction, and it may be preordered now. Photographs, as well as support via special messages, ads, and one-liners are welcome.

WCA basketball teams are enjoying a very successful season. The results and the schedule of games are posted on the Athletic bulletin board, as well as on the web. Come to the games and support our teams!



“Shoe,” charcoal drawing by Kyle Grumbine, 6th grade.

Senior trip preparations are under way. Our Seniors are selling brownies and pizza to help finance their end-of-high-school trip to Myrtle Beach in June.

Mr. Sanker will start his doctorate studies at the University of Virginia next school year. We rejoice over his success, but we surely will miss him.



To Ponder

Who touches a Boy, by the Master’s plan
Is shaping the course of the future man.
Father or mother or teacher or priest,
Friend or stranger or saint or beast,
Is dealing with one who is living seed,
And may be the man whom the world shall need.

—Author unknown

Coram Deo