

The Messenger

Washington Christian Academy
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FAREWELL FROM THE HEADMASTER

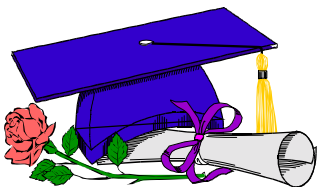
It is only appropriate for me to express to the WCA community my joy, satisfaction, and fulfillment in having served you these past two years. Little did I expect this to be God's direction three years ago as I was completing my tenure in Annapolis. God has blessed us in so many wonderful ways as the result of a community united to accomplish His purposes; the Board, administration, faculty, parents, and students working to meet the mission of this school through a team effort. May this have served as a model of what we can continue to do in the days ahead. WCA is really at the crossroads of a greater dimension of excellence and professionalism, along with a stronger commitment to grow the heart as the Lord desires.

Much still remains to be done as we take on the continued tasks of improvement at every level. In God's

sovereign grace, He has brought Mr. Larry Danner to continue in this leadership role in the years ahead. I am very confident and satisfied with the leadership that both he and the Board will provide.

I have been overwhelmed recently by the expressions of gratitude so many have shared with me, some very creatively! The accomplishments belong to the whole school. God gave me the privilege to serve together with you. Please be assured of my prayers. How I will miss the relationships established with you! Mary Jean and I will keep in touch and look forward to hearing how the Lord has continued to bless the ministry of Washington Christian Academy.

—Ron Whipple
Interim Headmaster



Graduation Reflections

When Susanna was ready for middle school, we wanted to make a choice that would enable her to grow morally, intellectually, and spiritually. We wanted her to be in a place where she could make friends whose values did not conflict with those of our family. In WCA, we found all these things and much more. Because it was such a good experience for Susanna to attend WCA in 7th and 8th grade, she and we chose for her to continue for her high school years even though she was accepted into a prestigious magnet school in our county.

We are thankful for all those that have come into our daughter's life through WCA—friends and their families and the faculty and staff of the school. When we asked her what was best about her years at WCA, Susanna expressed how much she appreciated the individual attention and care she received from all her teachers and coaches and how well they lived the life of faith before her. We know that attending Washington Christian Academy has given our daughter tools to enable her to enter her college life

with a firm foundation of faith and academic excellence.

As we listened to her valedictory address and then to the individual comments of appreciation that she and Hannah Adams, salutatorian, directed to each of their classmates, it was evident that this school does not conform its students to a particular Christian mold. Instead, through example and instruction and by the power of the Holy Spirit, each young person is enabled "to test and approve what God's will is" for his or her life.

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Senior Michael Morrisson receives his diploma from Upper School Principal Jan Adams, Headmaster Ron Whipple, and Board President Howard Bushouse, with the graduating class and the guest speaker Rep. Todd Akin looking on.

Class of 2002: Congratulations!

We celebrated the seniors' graduation from WCA on June 7, at Wallace Presbyterian Church. The Class of 2002 was our largest ever: sixteen smiling seniors, six young women and ten young men, who share a great love for one another. Six members of the class entered WCA as elementary students: Kelly Rosetta, Danny Keegan, and Avi de Silva in Kindergarten, while Michael Morrison, Simon Barreto, and Hannah Adams in first, third, and fourth grade, respectively.

United States Representative (R-Missouri) Todd Akin, delivered the "Charge to the Graduates." Congressman Akin is a graduate of Worcester Polytechnic Institute and Covenant Seminary. He is an elder in the Presbyterian Church in America. The charge was based on Eph 2:10, urging the graduates to pursue the unique work God has set out for each one, remembering that all work is to be done to the glory of God, redeeming His creation. Congressman Akin's address was lively and memorable!

The "Class Reflections" were delivered by Susanna Brockman, valedictorian, and Hannah Adams, salutatorian (these ranks are based on GPA and courses taken). Both graduates emphasized the love and encouragement of the WCA community, and concluded their reflections with words of love and encouragement specifically focused on each one of their fellow graduates.

With the graduation of the Class of 2002, WCA again has fulfilled its stated mission of preparing students to "occupy their places worthily in society, church, and state."

Here are the colleges and universities where our seniors are heading:

Hannah Adams—University of Virginia
Simon Barreto—New York University
Susanna Brockman—Barnard College/Columbia Univ.
Avinesh "Avi" De Silva—American University
William "B.J." Henley—Campbell University
Alaine "Lainey" Holiday—University of Maryland
Edward "Danny" Keegan—Univ. of Missouri/Honors
Julius Maina—Virginia Polytechnic Institute
Sean McGovern—Montgomery College
Michael Morrison—Montgomery College
Charles "Ched" Nunez—George Washington University
Emily O'Dell—Grove City College
Joel Powers—Montgomery College
Kelly Rosetta—Campbell University
Ambika Sathya—University of Maryland/Honors
Christopher Smith—Florida International University

—Jan Adams
Upper School Principal



REFLECTION

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As Paul instructed the Colossians, each has been challenged "just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught..."

We are glad Susanna could affirm these words from Psalm 119 to be what she has received and what she and her classmates will carry with them as they leave WCA.

"Teach me, O LORD, to follow your decrees; then I will keep them to the end. / Give me understanding, and I will keep your law and obey it with all my heart. / Direct me in the path of your commands, for there I find delight. / Turn my heart toward your statutes and not toward selfish gain. / Turn my eyes away from worthless things; preserve my life according to your word." Psalm 119:33-37

—Melanie Brockman
Parent



Panda, a 24"x24" mosaic made by the second graders for our annual Fine Arts Festival

Man of the Hour —for Two Years

As I think about the school year coming to an end, not having to carpool, fix lunches, or go to various school activities, I am also reminded of something else that's coming to an end. Our "interim" headmaster Ron Whipple will be leaving us. As a former member of WCA Board of Directors, I have had the opportunity to work more closely with Ron than many in our community. I got to see not only the friendly, courteous, helpful side of Ron, but also his working side, that of a professional headmaster. But the term "professional" does not really adequately describe Ron.

Ron represented the staff to the Board and represented

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May Society Meeting

The WCA Society had its annual spring meeting, a full and productive session, on May 20. Ron Whipple gave his farewell State of the School report. He is completing his term as Headmaster of WCA at the end of June. Ron thanked the entire school community for their support over the past two years, and commended all the administrators and faculty for the team effort that has resulted in so many accomplishments.

The Board presented the annual Volunteer of the Year award to the Moms-in-Touch prayer group that meets every week to pray for the school, students, staff, parents, and country. The members of the group are Peggy Cairns, Nancy Engen, and Geri Low.

In its annual election of Board members, the Society elected Karen Brown, Tee Clark, Carey Hoobler, and Daniel “Hank” Williams, and re-elected Don Drew, whose current term is expiring this year. We extend our deepest thanks and appreciation to these new members for their willingness to serve, and also to our retiring members, Paul DiPiazza and Al Minite, for their many years of faithful service to WCA.

A most exciting item of business was the report from the Board’s Site Planning Committee on the search for a permanent site for WCA. In the past several months, the committee has closely studied a 60-acre plot of undeveloped land near Olney. After hearing a detailed presentation on the characteristics of this property and a proposal to put it under contract, the Society authorized the Board, by a nearly unanimous vote, to continue the necessary feasibility studies, proceed with contract negotiations, and purchase the property within the next four years, if appropriate. We thank God for providing us with this tremendous opportunity to allow us to further strengthen and expand WCA within the metropolitan area. We ask for your continued prayers. —Howard Bushouse
President of the WCA Board



Orca Whale, *papier-mâché* sculpture by Talia Henderson, 7th grade

Golden Retriever Puppy, *papier-mâché* sculpture by Kristen Seymour, 7th grade



Development Details

Many of you—and many of whom had no graduating seniors—were present at graduation and remember the intense ownership the community demonstrated toward those beloved young people. They belong to us, the community of faith, and we have given our all to bring them to this point. Graduation at WCA is affecting in a way that demonstrates exactly what we are about and why so many Christians have given so generously since 1953 to make this happen. The teacher-student relationship in our school community is more than a professional-client relationship. God calls all of us to unite for the good of these young people who must take the baton from us in His earthly kingdom.

Our community continues to respond to that call. We have had a good year in development, now almost finished. The fiscal year ends on June 30. In summary:

Seeking \$140,000 in undesignated gifts for our **Academy Fund**, we have \$133,580 so far. That includes the **Telethon** gifts, which are still arriving (pledges now due!). From this year’s Academy Fund, \$41,000 is being set aside for the Expansion Fund.

Some of you have given directly to the **Expansion Fund**: \$8,175 this year. **Gifts in honor of Mr. Whipple** are arriving daily, most designated for this fund.

Grandparents met the goal of \$5,400 given to purchase some needed equipment for visual technology projects. The **Endowment Fund** has received \$1,845.

Other designated giving is currently at \$34,060. That includes the gifts for this year’s matching opportunities, both completed: The **Maureen Match** for athletics, and the **Drama Match**. It is not too late to claim the third **35 Special Friends** matching offer for a gift of \$5,000 from someone who has not previously given at that level.

PTF has also had a good year financially. We thank you for the many helping hands that had part in achieving these results:

Sally Foster gift wrap: \$7,748 for athletics

Holiday Bazaar: \$3,287 for PTF expenses and events

Promise Tree Auction: \$23,000 for tuition assistance.

On the subject of numbers, 56 young people have now graduated from 12th grade in our school. Many more have graduated in past years from 6th grade or 8th grade. And of course many children have been with us just for some years and then moved or left the school. God has worked through this institution to shape each student in ways we can’t always see. But they are out there, living their lives, better equipped because of us to love their families, serve in their churches, and help others. Thanks to all of you over these many years who have sacrificed to make it possible for this school to be used by the Lord in such marvelous ways.

—Robin U. Gropp
Director of Development

the Board to the staff. He gave timely in-depth reports, had profound insights, made valuable suggestions, and exercised remarkable oversight of all school activities. With his vast experience, he helped the school prepare for accreditation, helped us assess where we were and where we wanted to go, facilitated communication and understanding between the various groups in our school, and so much more.

This proficiency of skills became his trademark. No longer could Board members gain the sympathy of others for their long hours at Board meetings, because Ron streamlined everything. As far as I am concerned Ron represents the gold standard for headmastership.

It is also in part to Ron's credit that we have been fortunate enough to find Larry Danner, our new headmaster, thanks to Ron's extensive contacts in the Christian school community and his ability to attract quality candidates.

Often when I would go into the school before classes started, I would find Ron sitting on the bench outside the office, greeting everyone with a big friendly smile. Recently, I kidded him about sitting outside the Principal's office, as if he were in trouble again. He agreed, and said, "They might even kick me out permanently." Well, nothing could be further from the truth. During his short two-year tenure with us at WCA, he brought professionalism, order, and healing. In turn, he will be taking our affection, our concerns, and our prayers with him, as he seeks to follow God's leading.

Thank you, Ron, for all that you are. We are better off for having met you. May God's grace continue to be with you and your wife, always.

—Zoltan Korossy
Former Board Member, Parent

Emma...

...Like unto Gourmet Chocolate

Have you ever had the unforgettable experience of being treated to a whole plate of Swiss chocolates? You are there at the chocolatier. Some benefactor has graciously allowed you to sample any flavor you choose. Carefully, you select a variety and sit down to sample them with your friend. You take tiny bites, not wishing to overwhelm your palate. Each piece is savored.

That's the best comparison I can think of for the WCA Players' rendition of "Emma." (Jane Austen's novel was rendered as a script for the stage by Sandra F. Asher.) The play was directed by Amanda Westly, new to WCA but certainly not new to theater. This being our first full-length high school play, you might expect a performance that was somewhat indelicate in flavor. We all know the anxiety of wondering if a child we love will turn in a weak



Nathan Hoeksema (Mr. Knightly) and Leah Boisen (Emma)

performance and subsequently require copious amounts of encouragement to comfort their bruised egos. In the case of "Emma," this never happened.

From the moment Lizzie Keegan stepped onto the stage as the genial Jane Austen, till Erica Gropp, as Harriet Smith, was escorted away by her somewhat understationed suitor (Julius Maina as Robert Martin), the audience was treated to morsel after morsel of subtly delicious social interaction, humorous exchange, awkward happenstance, and delightful romance. And all of this in the beautiful Regency period costumes made or found by Donna Boisen!

Usually, a drama troupe will find themselves relying on a few talented performers. Supporting roles attempt to "prop-up" the main characters. But under Mrs. Westly's able directing, every role was performed with a richness and distinction that one might expect from experienced actors. This was true all the way from the dozing Henry Woodhouse, (Sarah Huntzinger), the "incidental" servants (Allison Dixon and James Hoobler), to the happy newlyweds, Mr. Weston (Jason Morse) and the gracious Mrs. Weston (Deborah George), the very convincing Miss Bates (Stacy Van Dyke), and her nearly deaf mother, Mrs. Bates (Amy Austin). We will not soon forget the obsequious Mr. Elton, (Luke Johnston), or his fabulously vain wife, (Lainey Holiday-ohh, those pearls!).

It was fitting for the lovely Jane Fairfax, (Lauren Minite) to marry the dashing Frank Churchill (Trevor Morse), and who wouldn't want to marry the princely Mr. Knightly (Nathan Hoeksema)? But in every box of chocolates there is a favorite, and Leah Boisen's portrayal of the proud and eminent Emma was mine.

Special kudos to the amazingly competent student crew: Properties Manager Eleanor Campbell, Sound Manager Matthew Bushouse, Stage Manager Marisa

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Another Farewell

We must also unfortunately say goodbye to George Sanker this year and send him into his bright future with our blessing. But not without a backward glance at what he has meant to WCA and how he happened to come here.

Mr. Sanker came to WCA in 1997 after teaching at Gonzaga College High School, because he found our mission attractive. He has served as coach, Athletic Director, and teacher of math, geography, and theology. Of a naturally theological bent of mind, he takes great pleasure in analyzing academic material and cultural phenomena with students to ascertain their underlying assumptions. His students have been learning to “think Christianly.” He has won the hearts of students and colleagues while constantly challenging each of us to strive harder toward godliness.

In 2000-01, he left WCA to serve as Director of the Best Men program for inner city teenagers under Elayne Bennett. But after one year, Mr. Sanker chose to return to his teaching position at WCA, as he is convinced that the task of educating, discipling, and disciplining young people can best succeed in the context of a covenant community, where teachers and parents share a commitment to the revealed truth. Character education, he says, doesn’t occur in a vacuum, or even in a classroom alone. It occurs in a family and in a larger community where beliefs and commitments are shared.

He deeply appreciates that WCA was founded specially for and attached to the covenant community in

the DC metro area. Today, the WCA community includes 240 Christian families from dozens of churches, and many other Christians who don’t have a student at WCA but want to be involved with the future of the Church. This is exactly the kind of environment in which a man like George Sanker can have a significant impact on the lives of children and teenagers, to equip them to “occupy their places worthily,” as our mission states, and to attract others to the mercies of God.

Nevertheless, God has called him elsewhere for the next few years. In September, Mr. Sanker will be beginning work on his Ph.D. in sociology at the University of Virginia, with a focus on moral education.

We all have been encouraged and enriched by the fine mind and large heart of this dear friend, and we will hope to honor him by carrying forward the same mission that drew him, all for God’s glory.

—Robin U. Gropp



George Sanker exploring the Scriptures with students



A State Capitol Page

Annapolis is the powerhouse of our state, where our local House of Representatives and Senators meet to decide on important as well as trivial issues that affect us, the citizens of Maryland. But when they meet every day as a group, they need pages to be on hand for menial tasks.

A poster on WCA’s bulletin board advertised openings for pages in Annapolis. I applied, competing against students in all Montgomery County. I had to write essays on government topics, and I was thrilled when I got the acceptance letter to page for two weeks.

Those two weeks were unbelievably exciting. I was assigned to the House, a lively place with 121 House members. During the sessions, the delegates talked on their phones, typed and reviewed material on laptops, ate snacks, bantered with each other, listened to the speakers, and voted on bills.

A light lit on a switchboard at the front of the room when a delegate needed the services of a page. I got to bring beverages, make photocopies of roll-call votes, send

faxes, get signatures, and deliver laptops, cell phones, and messages.

Before the sessions each day, I updated the delegates’ bill books, and put in committee reports and calendars. It was long and tedious work to go through notebooks and bring up to date about a million papers each day, but I also got to sit in the delegates’ chairs and see interesting things kept in their desks. It was thrilling to see and talk to famous politicians every day. I met Paris Glendening, saw Cal Ripken, attended a meeting led by Kathleen Townsend, and was on television twice.

Wearing the gray jacket and the picture ID of a page, I also enjoyed unlimited access to anywhere in the State Capitol Building, office buildings, private committee rooms, restricted lounges, the Governor’s Mansion, etc. It was interesting to see in the newspaper what the representatives talked about the previous day. Another highlight included going to hearings. I felt privileged to be there in the midst of the legislative process.

Now, I understand a lot more about politics (the good and bad), and how exactly laws are adopted. This is another reason I am thankful to WCA for providing me with such an outstanding opportunity.

—Lainey Holiday
Senior

Holiday, and Prompter Jenny Cairns, for a job well done.

Many thanks also to the Production Staff: Music Consultant Vicki Fanara; Hair Designer Patricia DiPiazza and others; Lighting Designer Howard Bushouse; Costume Designer Donna Boisen; Production Manager Nancy Keegan.

One final note of gratitude to the anonymous donor who established a matching grant for the Drama Club, and to the thirteen donor families who matched that grant. I am sure I speak for us all when I say I can't wait for the next box of chocolate!

—Marilyn Hoobler
Parent



A decorated head, Dark Butterfly,
by Erin Watley, 11th grade

From *Here* and *There*

Kindergarteners watched **12 chicks hatch** in an incubator in their classroom. They visited the National Zoo, the Maplelawn Dairy Farm, and a dentist's office. Several parents and relatives (Mrs. VanVeldhuisen, a nurse, Dr. Pearson, a dentist, Mr. Holmes, a lawyer, and Mr. Johnson, computer expert) came to talk about their **professions** to the students.

Mrs. Robinson, 3rd grade teacher, shared with her students that she participated in a retreat, and their theme was God's faithfulness. One of her students softly began singing the hymn, "Great is Thy Faithfulness," and soon the whole class joined in. This kind of **spontaneous singing** occurred several times during the year, one of the blessings of being in a Christian school.

4th grade teacher **Mrs. Robinson** started on chemotherapy for recently diagnosed lymphoma. Mrs. Verbrugge, one of our previous teachers, is substituting for her in the classroom, while the school community organized practical ways to help her and her family at her home.

4th graders and their parents went to the traditional end-of-the-year **Orioles game**. They are also studying the starry sky, making observations of the phases of the moon and the locations of the constellations.

5th graders visited the **Sandy Spring Museum** to enrich their studies of the Underground Railroad.

The school-wide annual **Fine Arts Festival** exhibited the many talents God has blessed our students with. The few samples in this issue give a glimpse of these.

Upper school students signed up already for next year's **electives**, which include computer graphics, chorus, jazz band, journalism, yearbook, several levels of art, Latin, etc.

9th–12th graders had a three-day camping trip, visiting several **battlefields and historical sites** to enrich their studies on the Civil War.

Gillian Lee and Alexandra Havrilishyn scored 1st and 2nd among the 147 Maryland students who took the **National German Exam** (comparable to German SAT II).

Two of our seniors, Susanna Brockman and Danny Keegan, were designated **Commended Scholars** in the National Merit Scholarship Program.

Coach Simons presented the **Most Improved Player** and the **Christian Character** awards to selected students during the Upper School Award Ceremony, on June 5. See the WCA website for the complete list of these students of the Varsity Baseball, Varsity Tennis, Varsity Track and Field, and Middle School Girl's Softball teams.

Coach Simons, our Athletics Director is leaving WCA to join a missionary team in Hong Kong to teach 7th grade science, math and P.E. We thank him for his faithful work among us, and pray for God's blessings for him.

Many WCA students made time to pray for our nation and its leaders on the **National Day of Prayer**, on May 2. Moms-in-Touch would like this event become an annual tradition of our school. Plans are already in the works for next year.

Position Opening for Development Assistant

Part-time. A "people person" with desktop publishing skills and commitment to the WCA mission.
Call Robin Gropp at school if interested.

To Ponder

Summer is a very important time to nourish the souls of our children with good books. Good books must be well-written, but how can we decide about the moral quality of a book? Here are two aspects to ponder.

"Bad books always lie. They lie most of all about the human condition." —Walker Percy

"No book is really worth reading at the age of ten, which is not equally (and often far more) worth reading at the age of fifty." —C.S. Lewis, "On Stories"

Coram Deo