

ROCKBRIDGE REPORTER

A Newsletter for Rockbridge Academy

February 2005

HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD GET STRAIGHT A'S

by Leslie Collins

Parents in our generation tend to desire a more affluent life style than we experienced as children. We are the wealthiest generation after all, and we go to great lengths to give our children experiences we never had. This is true for our views on education as well. For many of us, the idea of a Christ-centered education is not only too wonderful for us to believe, it's something we want to make the most of for our children. In many ways we are living vicariously through our children. We revel in their successes with them. We feel the pain of their disappointments. This is also seen in our perspective of our children's grades. We might have been average students ourselves, but we want more for our children. Certainly all of the effort involved in their education should produce honor roll students, right?

Rockbridge is, like the mythical Lake Wobegone, the school where all of the children are above average, no?

John Calvin observed that every man has a kingdom in his breast. We were created to be kingdom builders. At any time during the day, we are working steadily to build a kingdom.



“THE SECRET THINGS BELONG TO
THE LORD OUR GOD, BUT THE
THINGS REVEALED BELONG TO US
AND TO OUR CHILDREN
FOREVER...” DEUT. 29:29

But which kingdom? The kingdom of this world? The kingdom in our breast? Or the kingdom of God? Any kingdom which is not His kingdom will crumble and fall. Are our thoughts, words, and deeds building our personal kingdom of success? Are we teaching our children that

their sole purpose in life is to build God's kingdom and that any other quest is meaningless? Are we using every opportunity to show them that they are to pursue His glorious Kingdom, and not our own?

We have a King who has left a treasure for us, an inheritance called knowledge, truth, and understanding. “The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever...” (Deut. 29:29). We are often so eager to understand the secret things—the purpose of the

tsunami, whether we are in the end times, the significance of a horrible dream—that we lose sight of the treasure our King has bestowed upon us; the things revealed. These revealed things are theology, language, math, science, history, literature, music, art, physical education, etc. Each of these bodies of knowledge has been revealed to us by the Master

Teacher. Each of these reflects the intelligence, order, creativity, and beauty of God. Not only are these things revealed to us, they belong to us. And not only us, but our children and their children own them as well. What a powerful motivation for studying, to know and enjoy Him

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more fully. This should be our focus in educating our children. They should know and understand that everything they will ever learn has been graciously given to teach them more about the Lord. Every cell, every atom of this universe proclaims His glory and they have the privilege of finding out how. Such a higher call is this than the GPA-obsessed focus of our culture. So greater is this focus than pressuring our children to achieve for the glory of an academic award.

Academic awards and grades are a practical way of telling children how they are doing. But, occasionally, we may view our children's grades as a measure of how we're doing. Would it be okay for our child to not make the honor roll? Have grades become a building block in our personal kingdom or theirs? This is not the purpose of education, nor the purpose of academic honors. Academic honors are simply a means of praising what is good and excellent as well as a means to encourage us to try a little harder. We need accountability and we need to honor that which is good.

God gives different gifts to every student. Some students do well with little effort. Some struggle to maintain a passing grade. The student who seeks God's glory will receive an eternal reward, regardless of his GPA. The student whose reward is the grade or recognition received will experience little true satisfaction ultimately. The Brazilian runner in the 2004 Olympic marathon understood this principle. His narrow lead in the marathon ended abruptly when a madman from the crowded streets of Athens pushed him to the ground while the

other runners continued the race. The Brazilian quickly got to his feet and amazingly finished in third place. His elation upon entering the arena and earning a bronze medal was unsurpassed. He immediately praised God, kissed the ground, and blessed the crowd with his gratitude. Did he shake his fists at God for allowing the madman to attack him? Did he curse the other runners for passing him? His joy in receiving his country's first medal in the Olympics was not

THE A'S WE SHOULD BE STRIVING TO HELP OUR CHILDREN GET ARE THE A'S OF LOVE: APPROVAL, AFFECTION, APPRECIATION, AND ACCEPTANCE.

tarnished by the difficult circumstances of the race. Perhaps this should be our attitude as we consider our children's education. They have gifts, experiences, trials, and blessings that allow them to perform at their level of success. Are we communicating to them that we are not pleased when their best isn't what we dreamed it would be? Are we shaking our fists at God because He, in His wisdom and providence has given us a child who struggles academically, emotionally, or physically?

So, if straight A's on our children's report cards isn't what we should be focused on, what are the A's under consideration? The A's we should be

striving to help our children achieve are these: Approval, Affection, Appreciation, and Acceptance. This is the model of love that God has for us. He approves us through the work of Jesus Christ. He shows us great love and affection in His sacrifice and daily provision for all that we need. He tells us that He is pleased with us in Christ, and He affirms that no matter what we do, we are accepted in His sight when Jesus is our Savior. This is the kind of love we should give our children. Approval of them whatever their grades are. Approval of their accomplishments no matter how small. Affection to remind them of our constant love even though they may have bombed their Latin test. Appreciation of their extra studying and thankfulness for steps in taking greater responsibility for their work. Acceptance of them, though their work may need improvement. When we set this model before our children, they will be motivated to work hard in the calling God has for them as students. God's glory is reflected when our love for our children motivates them to learn more about the things He has revealed. And this is a far better motivation, a far better reward, and a more worthy pursuit.



Cowpokes, Cory Womack and Jacob Cooley know that you should never get too close to the campfire.

Inclement Weather

What should you do in case of snow or severe weather? Turn your radio dial to either WRBS (FM 95.1) or WBAL (AM 1090). Rockbridge Academy announces all early dismissals or school closings on both of these radio stations. You may also check our website at www.rockbridge.org or call the school office. We will leave a message on our answering machine by 6:00 a.m. to indicate whether or not we will close. As always, we respect your decision to do whatever you feel is necessary for your family.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS NEEDED

Rockbridge Academy is in need of substitute teachers. If you are interested in applying to substitute, please call the school office at 410-923-1171.

House Hunting

The Feeney's are looking for a relatively inexpensive house to purchase in Anne Arundel County. Preferably a single family home, but they are not picky. Please contact Tim Feeney at 410-761-5673 if you know of any possibilities. Thank you for your help.

10TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION!

This year marks Rockbridge Academy's tenth year! Please plan on celebrating with us at the Year-End Celebration Dinner. Mark your calendar for Wednesday, May 11, 2005. We will begin the festivities at 6:30 p.m. at the Newton White Mansion. Formal invitations will be sent out in April.

College Acceptance

Amy Greenip has been accepted to both Grove City and Messiah Colleges.
Way to go, Amy!

Also, Janet Schonhaler was accepted on the spot for one of the two openings the University of Maryland has next year in their oboe program. *Congratulations, Janet!*

Consider giving to Rockbridge Academy. Here's How.

GENERAL GIFTS

General gifts are used to meet the widest possible array of needs at Rockbridge Academy. General gifts are useful because of their flexibility.

DESIGNATED GIFTS

A designated gift can be used to support a specific aspect of Rockbridge Academy's program, such as the athletic program, the science program, or the music program.

MATCHING GIFTS

Many employers have a matching gift program to help their employee's gifts go further. Ask your employer if they have such a program. Rockbridge Academy will be happy to work with your employer to help establish a matching gifts program.

SECURITIES

Gifts such as stocks, bonds, mutual funds, even insurance policies, may be made directly to Rockbridge Academy. Typically, such gifts provide the giver with beneficial tax advantages.

You are encouraged to support Rockbridge Academy through these or other means. To make a gift, please contact the headmaster, Michael McKenna, at:

Rockbridge Academy
911 Generals Highway
Millersville, MD 21108
410-923-1171
www.rockbridge.org





LACROSSE COACHES NEEDED

Rockbridge Academy has openings for qualified lacrosse coaches in the spring 2005 season.

Interested applicants should contact:

Donna Griffith
410-923-1171
410-533-5464
dgriffith@rockbridge.org

Opportunities for Parents

Have you ever asked yourself, "How can I learn more about the classical Christian training my child is receiving?" Well, we have some opportunities for you to do just that!

First, ACCS, the Association of Classical and Christian Schools, will hold its annual conference in Memphis, Tennessee, from June 23-25, 2005. Brochures should be available in the school office next month.

Second, Rockbridge Academy has been approved by the Association of Classical and Christian Schools to conduct Teacher Training for new teachers each summer. We would like to offer this training to our parents as well. Please consider joining us August 9-12, 2005. This training is absolutely FREE to our parents. Look for more details and brochures in March.

ROCKBRIDGE ATHLETICS

This year Rockbridge welcomes back our middle school basketball teams. Both teams have been working hard this season to refine skills and develop a greater understanding and application of offensive and defensive strategy. Highlights for both teams came when Tyler Antkowiak and Melissa Caton scored the season's first points against Greater Grace Christian Academy.

Rockbridge Academy's spring sports season will begin with lacrosse tryouts the first week in March. Our lacrosse program will consist of a middle school team as well as a junior varsity team for both girls and boys in grades five through twelve.

If your child would like to tryout for lacrosse, there is still time to sign up. Please contact Mrs. Griffith before March 1st.



Getting pumped up for the middle school basketball game with Coach Grant Colvin.



Coach Chris Ronk shares some insights with her middle school girls basketball team.

THE IMPORTANCE OF VOCABULARY

by Heidi Stevens

In art class, the students were excited to learn about colonial occupations and to choose an imaginary profession for themselves so that they could paint an authentic-looking colonial sign for our unit on early American art. One enthusiastic student came to me after class and announced that she would like to illustrate the profession of a gelder, which she discovered had something to do with horses and other animals, which she loves. When I read the definition to her and asked her if she was sure she wanted to create an illustration for a "castrator of animals, especially horses," she admitted she really didn't know what "castrate" meant. She was mortified to find out, and quickly looked for a kinder, gentler trade to represent.

SILENT AUCTION & VARIETY SHOW

This year's auction will be in conjunction with our biannual Variety Show. Please make plans to spend the evening with us at New Covenant Church in Arnold on Saturday, April 9, 2005.

PHOTO GALLERY



First graders prepare to feast on authentic Native Indian cuisine.



One little, two little, three little Indians...Damara Dayton, Grace Hulsey, and Lydia Collins.



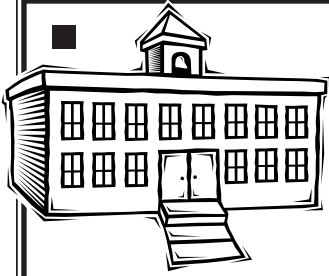
Keeping in step to the Virginia Reel, Bryanna Womack and Bassey James enjoy the ball.



Sampling the grub at the sixth grade cowboy feast are Tim Burkhardt, Nick Cooksey, and Alina Cooper.



Rachel Wallen poses for a portrait at the fifth grade ball.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- FEBRUARY 8CLASS PICTURES
(Grades 9-12 & 3A only)
- FEBRUARY 15Tuition Deposits Due
(Remember—No tuition payment in February)
- FEBRUARY 21SCHOOL CLOSED—Presidents' Day
- FEBRUARY 25Science Fair @ 12:30 p.m.
- MARCH 8Latin Exam—Grades 6-9
- MARCH 18.....SCHOOL CLOSED—Teacher Workday

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

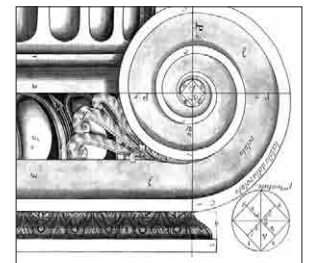
Nothing short of excellence: entreat, beseech, coax, beg, blandish, implore, exhort, cajole, badger, compel students to surpass themselves, because only by reaching for the stars can anyone hope to scale the heights.

—REID BUCKLEY

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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ROCKBRIDGE ACADEMY



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