

NEWS FROM REDLANDS CHRISTIAN SCHOOL AND ARROWHEAD CHRISTIAN ACADEMY FALL 2010

threads





LIFE LESSONS

It's easy to limit the idea of school to a daily lesson plan. Students learn about math, science, history and art in their hour-long classes. But sometimes the greatest form of Christian education takes place beyond the classroom where students experience events that teach them how to live for Christ.

Last month our football teams played Big Bear High School. During the junior varsity game, one of our players broke his leg. It was not a mild fracture; it was a compound fracture. And it was serious. Richard Yaross, our coach, asked our players to surround their teammate, take a knee, and pray. Many players and parents from the opposing team joined the circle of prayer in the middle of the football field. The sight of players and parents from both sides was an impressive scene to witness. We were given a unique opportunity to pray at a public school with the opposing team and parents. We put aside our athletic competition. We put aside the differences between public and private education. Together, we prayed as God's people.

From that experience, our students learned that they can turn to God anywhere in a time of need. The people in Big Bear had a chance to see God reflected in the lives of our players and coaches. Everyone there, had a chance to see hearts softened because of the events of the day. God changes things in wonderful ways to reveal His glory. On this day many people learned about the power of God. God was honored and all it took was one broken leg. May the Lord continue to educate us in his ways.

*Nick Sweeney
Superintendent*



MEASURING THE MISSION

RCS will spend this school year preparing for our accreditation renewal with Christian Schools International, scheduled for March of 2011.

For 89 years, we have consistently demonstrated a strong desire to meet or exceed the academic standards of the State of California, while offering a biblical perspective to our students. This Christian world and life view of education emphasizes the sovereignty of God over all things and each student's responsibility to respond with head, heart and hands to love God, self, family, and neighbors. Strong parental support and a dedicated faculty have helped us to succeed in producing outstanding results in both student achievement and faith formation. Our goal is to continue to make improvements in all areas of our school operation. This goal has motivated us to involve ourselves in the accreditation process. We believe that the measurement tool, "Measuring the Mission," best suits the future development of RCS.

The indicators of Christian distinctiveness are embedded within the process of Measuring the Mission, allowing for specific self-assessment opportunities, discussion and articulation. Focus questions, discovery of possible data sources, and documentation of results will strengthen our biblical position that faith is the foundation of Christian learning. Faith is the essential lens for viewing our life and work and helping us to understand all of God's created order.

Our plan is to focus on four major areas:

Leading With Purpose: Measuring our mission, bylaws, governance, policies, etc.

Teaching for Learning: Examining curriculum, instruction and assessment.

Leading for Learning: Evaluating the work done by principals, teachers, and support staff, which focuses on indicators that support our mission, practices, results, and efforts in nurturing a collaborative culture.

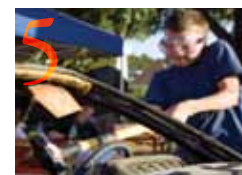
Learning in Community: Focusing on community, shared actions, worship and service.

Please be in prayer for administrative/faculty/parent accreditation teams as they develop our school improvement plan for the next five years.

(Information adapted from "Measuring the Mission" page 7.)

*Ray Leenstra
RCS Administrator*

FEATURES



FAMILY NIGHT
ACA's Family Night is a smashing good time



NURSERY RHYME FESTIVAL
RCS kindergartners make their debut in character



ALUMNI PROFILE
How danger in Afghanistan changed Christian Palermo's life

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BOARD UPDATE

At our strategic planning meeting the question was posed: "What is the most important thing that has to happen this school year?"

Each board member spent 3-5 minutes answering this question which resulted in several important responses:

- passion
- communication
- vigilance
- unity
- excellence in education
- Godly teachers

Several of these touch on our mission statement of promoting "Christ-centered excellence in education while partnering with the church and home to advance God's Kingdom."

The board is focused on accomplishing that mission statement with the help of several committees. We hope that many of our parents will identify a place to serve on one of these committees: Long Range Planning, Finance, Building and Grounds, Education, Endowment, Holland Festival, Golf Tournament, Cirque du ACA, Race Across America, and several ad hoc committees working on special projects such as policy governance and focus groups.

I hope all of our past, present and future families that are called to spend their time, talent, and treasure with ACA/RCS will be able to step back from their busy schedules and give God the Glory for what He has done through His schools to advance His kingdom.



*Matt Thalmayer
Board of Trustees President*

ACA/RCS threads

FALL 2010

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Nick Sweeney, *Superintendent, High School Principal*
Ray Leenstra, *RCS Administrator*
Kathy Barr, *RCS Elementary School Principal*
Mark Witvliet, *ACA/RCS Middle School Principal*
Greg Wojczynski, *ACA Dean of Students*

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EDITOR

Mark Leonard

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS

Crystal Kazmierski
Mark Leonard
Sandi Wagner

DESIGN AND LAYOUT

Crystal Kazmierski
Threads is a quarterly publication of Redlands Christian School and Arrowhead Christian Academy.

Our mission is Christ-centered excellence in education, partnering with the church and home to advance God's Kingdom.

Redlands Christian School
1145 N. Church Street
Redlands, CA 92374
909.793.5172
www.redlandschristianschool.org
Grades Pre-K – 8

Arrowhead Christian Academy
105 Tennessee Street
Redlands, CA 92373
909.793.0601
www.arrowheadchristian.com
Grades 7 – 12



POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

When I accepted the position as Dean of Students, I needed direction in this new role. I read a book on Christian leadership titled, *In the Name of Jesus*, written by Henri Nouwen, to help me define what type of role I should be trying to take on this year. The theme of the book surprised me: in order to be a good leader you have to be a good servant. This is something that I am striving to accomplish in my new position at Arrowhead Christian Academy. In fact, I think that we can all use this lesson in our everyday lives as Christians. We need to learn to be, as the book puts it, “completely irrelevant and stand in this world with nothing to offer but his or her own vulnerability.”

In addition to being servant-leaders, the book also states that we are to proclaim the Gospel together in community and not on our own; for when we accomplish things together, there is no “I” that gets the glory. So far this year, I have had the pleasure of seeing this lesson take place on a daily basis at ACA. There are so many dedicated people at ACA that spend time, energy, and money to insure the success of our school and to provide our students with opportunities to experience Jesus’ love on a daily basis.

In closing, I have definitely been adjusting to the changes involved in going from a classroom to an office but, so far, I am loving my role. This position allows me to serve the school, the faculty, and the students in an entirely different way. I am truly blessed to work with such a wonderful community and I am looking forward to an amazing year at Arrowhead Christian Academy.

Greg Wojczynski
ACA Dean of Students



Family Night BBQ kicks the football season off to a smashing start

MORE BANG FOR YOUR BUCK

All eyes were on him. Lugging an eight-pound sledgehammer, junior class adviser Rick Huizinga slowly circled the vintage Buick Somerset and then struck the rear bumper. Chunks of metal fell to the ground. He stood back and admired his work.

“I am all that is man,” he said.

Huizinga watched student after student flock to the junior class booth on Family Night, Sept. 24, where they traded a ticket for two swings at the rusted brown sedan.

“It was only four bucks to go berserk for a couple of minutes,” Matthew Jordan said.

The bangs and thuds of hammers and bats entertained the crowd and even captivated Edison workers across the fence, but Huizinga wasn’t impressed.

“Most guys would want to smash the car to seem manly and strong. But the boys here are wimpy,” he said as he egged on more challengers.

Meanwhile, across Eagle Park the sweet smell of deep-fried dough beckoned crowds to sample the Oliebollen (a raisin-filled Dutch pastry) at the senior booth.

“We made bank tonight,” senior class vice president Charles Izydorek said. “We said ‘Oliebollen,’ and the Dutch came flocking.”

The 104-degree heat took its toll on the sophomore booth, causing a slew of technical difficulties. For starters, the tires of their ice cream cooler were flat, making the trek through the gravel parking lot to Eagle Park a tad tricky. And then there was the fact that the ice cream never froze. (It helps if the machine blows more than hot air.)

“We even threw in a bag of ice, but it was too little, too late,” ASB adviser Nathan Smith said.

While the sophomores stewed, middle schoolers manipulated the mob as they sought takers for their baked goods.

“I bat my eyes and make people laugh,” James Peterson said. “If they say no, I make puppy dog eyes. That’s when I know I’ve got them.”

Good thing cookies don’t melt.

Or teachers for that matter. At least not those who took the plunge in ASB’s dunk tank.

“Each dunk left a disgusting ring of sweat and grass in the tank,” Smith said and winked. “Good thing I got to go first.”

Megan Reade, David Shippee, Douglas Waters



■ “I saved hundreds of dollars on therapy,” English teacher Julie Frey said after taking a whack at the old Buick.
Photo: Megan Reade

■ “Rubber Duckie, you’re the one.” Making dunk time fun, P.E. teacher Lori Breckley emerges from the tank. Amidst the 104 degree heat, she was more than willing to take the plunge.
Photo: Yoon Shik Park

■ Sophomore Mackenzie Magro delivers a painful blow to the retired Buick donated to the junior class. Proceeds will help to fund prom.
Photo: Cody Laliberte

■ Cole Clinton approves his face paint at the freshman booth. Freshmen also sold snow cones.
Photo: Cody Laliberte

GIRLS’ TENNIS DIGS DEEP

After a disheartening start to their season, the players take the long view on the meaning of success

“The players are the program,” former ACA varsity volleyball coach David Han said to the girls’ tennis team. “Each of you has a role to play in building this program for the future.”

Tennis coach Jeff Gordenier brought Han out to talk to the team about their disappointment after losing several matches early on. Han is credited for building a powerful volleyball program at ACA. According to him, it was the work ethic, positive attitude, and leadership of the girls in his program that pushed the team to become a virtual dynasty of success. As he talked to the tennis team, Han cited players like Alyssa DeWaard who played a critical leadership role as a junior on his first team.

“Without people like DeWaard stepping up to play an important role, the program wouldn’t have grown,” he said.

Gordenier is proud of the change in his players.

“Everybody has improved,” freshman, Brooke Sebek said. She plays doubles with junior Stacey Lewis. The pair recently won an exciting tie-breaker against Ontario Christian.

“It was definitely the highlight of my season,” Sebek said.



■ Sophomore Kimberly Blakeslee gets ready to receive a serve during tennis practice. The girls’ tennis team struggled at the start of their season, but received encouragement from other ACA coaches and athletes, which helped them develop a broader view of their road to success.

FALL HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS WRAP-UP

- Varsity Girls’ Volleyball (18-2)
- JV Girls’ Volleyball (12-3)
- Varsity Boys’ Cross Country (NA)
- Varsity Girls’ Cross Country (NA)
- Varsity Football (3-6)
- JV Football (2-7)
- Girls’ Tennis (2-12)



MIDDLE SCHOOL RETREATS

The middle school students at both ACA and RCS traveled into the San Bernardino Forest for spiritual retreats. Our speakers Hylke Hylkema, Nick In't Hout, and Josh Camping focused on the year's theme verse, Matthew 7: 24-25. They challenged the students to take their spiritual foundation seriously. There were times set aside for personal Bible study, corporate worship, small group discussions, and team building activities.

I was encouraged and touched by the hearts and actions of our students during the retreat. During one session students went from friend to friend to pray for each other. Many of our students shared their life struggles and, without fail, another classmate was there ready and willing to join in prayer.

During a time of worship, one young man walked up to another young man, hugged him, and apologized for not always being kind in the past.

Students played basketball, tried their hand at archery, or just hung out and talked. One eighth-grade student sat alone in the peace and quiet of the camp, thought about the events that had transpired, and wrote the following prayer:

*My Lord, My Rock
I love you with all my heart
For you are my solid rock.
I look to you, my Lord, whenever I need you
You are my hope, my Savior
And you are my solid rock
I have built my life on you, for you, Lord
My path follows you; my heart seeks your face
I know that I will never fall far from you
For you are my solid rock.*

*Mark Witvliet
ACA/RCS Middle School Principal*

“FOR HIS GLORY”

Sometimes I hear the argument that football is too much of a physical, knock-down-your-opponent game to be played at a Christian school. Some will say that football by its nature is too brutal for young Christian men to play. It's not just the risk of injury that worries them, but rather the “hurt your opponent” mentality.

As the head coach of the middle school football team at RCS, I believe that football can be God-honoring. For the past several years, the team motto has been “For His Glory.” The team repeats that mantra after each practice and game.

The coaching staff stresses that we do everything for the glory of God, and that includes playing football.

Yes, the teams are taught to be aggressive, to hit and bring down their opponent. However, we teach the players to play within the rules of the game, to pick up their opponents after a play, and to show respect to them. We strive to teach our players Christian principles by representing our faith as a part of the team and on the field.

Being part of a football team surrounded by other Christian young men is a valuable experience for our teams. God calls us to play. He calls us to enjoy sports and to enjoy competition. The way we play can bring honor and glory to God. Even in a physical sport like football, we play “For His Glory.”



*Mike DeJong
RCS Football Coach*



■ Eighth-grader Blake Kellar, followed by Ariana Fuyumuro, navigate the campus through the eyes (and wheels) of the handicapped on Disability Awareness Day Oct. 15. Students practiced rolling over different types of outdoor terrain to experience the challenges of getting around in a wheelchair.
Photo: Megan Reade

DISABILITY AWARENESS DAY

Struggling to make sense of words with letters that are jumbled, backwards, and upside down, ACA's middle school students learned what it is like for a person with dyslexia to read a few sentences. With the help of her colleagues, teacher Debbie Nattress planned and executed Disability Awareness Day. Students rotated from station to station briefly experiencing life with a disability. Students navigated their way through the hallways with blindfolds and wheelchairs. They learned sign language and wrote their names in Braille. They learned about mental disabilities through a series of experiments which included reading a sentence while the page was shaken, or putting together a shape with legos based on blind instructions from a partner. Several students became understandably frustrated with how slowly they progressed with a simulated disability.

ACA is beginning a campaign to raise \$150,000 to launch a special needs program in the next two years. The Race Across America led by board member and parent, Doug Richards will include a team of riders and crew members.

*Debbie Nattress
ACA Math Teacher*

SPORTS UPDATES

ACA football: Under new head coach, Nathan Heuker, the team ended 3-7 for the season. While their record is not what he would like it to be, Heuker said his team has improved from the start of the season, and he's proud of the work they put into getting better.

ACA girls' volleyball: Head coach, David Han laid the foundation for a season of big improvements. Many of the girls had never played the game, but they learned quickly, had a great time, and finished the season 3-7.

RCS boys' and girls' cross country: The boys placed 8th out of 18 teams and the girls are 3rd out of 18 teams. John Whittam, Jeremy Orf, Mimi Sterenberg, Sera Parvin, and Hannah Nielsen have each placed in the top five in several races. The cross country teams are coached by Roger Boersen.

RCS girls' volleyball: The team finished 13-3 this season. Under the leadership of coach, Elizabeth Wojczynski, the girls fought their way into the championship match against Calvary Chapel, Murietta where they lost a tough battle.

RCS football: The football team ended 9-1 for the season and captured their first League Championship since 2001. Mike DeJong is the head coach and is assisted by Tony Bennett, Jeff Thalmayer, and James Verhoeven.

RCS sixth-grade coed softball: Coach, Matt DeBoer led a spirited group of 6th grade boys and girls through a season of coach pitch softball. The team finished with a record of 2-4.

RCS TECHNOLOGY

As a rookie teacher at RCS in 2000 my cache of technology tools included an overhead projector, a television and VCR, a laser disc player, and an “opaque projector.” I had a computer which was useful for word processing and entering grades in an MS-DOS program. We even had the Internet at RCS – on one computer in the teacher's lounge. I was interested in integrating technology, which at the time meant using overhead slides or showing a VHS tape – not exactly exciting tools.

I followed the wisdom of veteran teacher Mark Witvliet who attempted to get our campus computers wired, networked and online. Little did I know this involved working on the roof on a 115 degree summer day. The wiring failed, but our work got the ball rolling, and soon we were online.

With a new computer connected to the Internet and our first campus projector, I integrated more technology into my curriculum. I used PowerPoint presentations and video clips to enhance my lectures. I brought students to the computer lab to create brochures, podcasts, videos, and documentaries. Three years ago we created class blogs. (This year's versions can be found at <http://history7rcs.wordpress.com/> and <http://history8rcs.wordpress.com/>. Feel free to visit and comment.) The blogs promote out-of-class discussions on current issues and give all students a chance to be heard.

Just this fall (thanks to the Class of 2009's graduation gift) I received another tool: an interactive white board. I can control my computer from the front of my room, which allows me to go from lecture notes, to an online map, to a video clip, to a blank white board page, and back with just a few clicks. To fully appreciate these boards, stop by my room (or Rebecca Poortenga's at RCS or Nate Heuker's at ACA).

*Matthew Wiers
RCS History Teacher*

TOGETHER WE CAN

Where you invest **your** time, talent and **treasure** can make a difference. Your generosity **is** the foundation for the future of our schools. Today **there** is greater urgency than ever for **your** involvement. You can bless our students, their families and your **heart**. Your gifts **will** make us stronger today and ensure that we will **be** here tomorrow, **also**.

PARTNERS FUND 2010-2011

Partner with us today! See attached envelope for information.





KICK OFF FOR A GREAT YEAR

A long held tradition at Redlands Christian School is to kick off each year with an “all-school” chapel. I particularly enjoy this chapel because so many parents join our student body to start the year, learn of the theme and have a great time of praise and worship. This year we welcomed many new families to our school. Our first through eighth-grade students filled the bleachers along with more than 100 parents. Music teacher Jeff Mercer, along with a great band made up of staff members and parents led us in a glorious time of praise and worship. A group of parents joined their students up front to help with the motions to “Days of Elijah,” getting down on their bellies alongside their children to “surf” for the Lord. Way to go, Jorritsmas and Bueermans.

Ray Leenstra welcomed everyone and introduced the new students and their parents. Guest speaker Matt LeVesque announced our school theme: “Solid Rock, Christ our Firm Foundation – Matthew 7:24-25.” Matt demonstrated the theme with two miniature houses: one constructed on a rock, the other on sand. Two students poured water on the houses and their foundations. What a great visual for our student body to see the house on the rock stand firm in contrast to the house which fell because of the eroding sand. The chapel ended with the song “There is a Rock,” after which the students were dismissed to start the year.

The afterglow of this event for me is talking with parents and enjoying their excitement and anticipation of the school year. We have many great chapels planned. Parents are always welcome.

Kathy Barr
RCS Elementary School Principal

FRIDAYS AT THE POLE

If my people, who are called by my name, will bumble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

2 Chronicles 7:14

With heads bowed and hands clasped, the fifth-graders gather to pray for God to heal our land every Friday morning. The time spent at the flagpole each week is part of a school-wide initiative to focus on serving others (S.U.R.F. Serve with Understanding Respect and Faith). The class chose to serve through prayer for the community, state and nation. In the past, they have picked up trash, visited people in rest homes, and raised money for organizations.

This year’s theme is building lives on the Solid Rock, Jesus Christ. Students are learning that if they want to build their lives on Jesus they need to read God’s Word, attend church and pray. The students are accountable for these three disciplines. They are encouraged to do daily devotions and read one chapter from the Bible each day. They are required to summarize a sermon or Sunday school lesson once a month. They meet at the flag pole every Friday to reinforce the value of prayer. The hope is that encouraging these three disciplines will establish a lifetime of habits to help them become disciples of Jesus so they can have a solid foundation in Him.

In preparation for the prayer project, students researched the names of elected officials in city, state and national government to pray for specifically. Each Friday students pray for our cities, churches, public schools, city agencies and current events.

Parents are welcome to attend Flag Pole Friday at 8:40 a.m. each week.



NURSERY RHYME FESTIVAL

Moms and dads chattered in the kindergarten courtyard as they found a place to sit with a good view. They tested their camcorder batteries, shared stories about their child’s reaction to wearing a costume, and looked for a piece of shade to escape the warm sun. They came to see the annual Kindergarten Nursery Rhyme Festival.

Many people fear being on stage. Their stomachs churn, their hands sweat, and their emotions bubble up to the surface. For some, public speaking, singing, or acting is high on their list of things to avoid. This fear is met and challenged each fall by a new crop of kindergarten students during the annual Nursery Rhyme Festival.

The festival is an RCS kindergarten tradition that was in place before either of the school’s two current kindergarten teachers arrived.

“The parents expect it, and the kids look forward to it since they get to see it in pre-kindergarten,” Kindergarten teacher, Julie Brandenburg said.

Nursery rhymes are part of our culture, Brandenburg explained. They are part of the story-telling literature that has been passed down from European societies from the 18th and 19th centuries. Brandenburg pointed out that the lyrics are silly, and some are only marginally appropriate for children. But there’s a reason for this. Most of our traditional nursery rhymes weren’t written for children. They were often a form of political satire.

Three Blind Mice, for example is said to refer to Queen Mary I and her persecution of Protestants. The three blind mice in the story are not mice at all, but represent three protestant noblemen accused and convicted of plotting against the Queen. While she did not blind or dismember the noblemen as the rhyme suggests, she did have them burned at the stake.

Aside from tradition, learning nursery rhymes provides a number of educational benefits to children. They help children memorize lyrics and introduce them to a number of literary techniques like rhyme, alliteration, and metaphor. Some early childhood educators find that using nursery rhymes helps children learn to read. When students are familiar with the lyrics, teachers are able to connect what kids already know to the words on the page.

By presenting the nursery rhyme curriculum as a stage performance, Brandenburg

Teaching kids how to listen and follow directions is a big part of what we do in kindergarten

and Jeffers combine the literature with lessons in public performance and following directions. “Teaching kids how to listen and follow directions is a big part of what we do in kindergarten,” Brandenburg said. “And they’re learning about acting and story-telling.”

For many of these young students, the completion of the festival marks their first successful stage performance. And it is almost certain that at least one of them will crave the spotlight again after being bitten by the acting bug.

Mark Leonard
Director of Communications

WHEN GOD LAUGHS ... START COOKING



Sixteen years ago, I was sure that I was going to be a stay-at-home mama until my last child was out of high school. We scrimped and saved so that I could send our three sons to Christian schools. I thought I'd have another six years at home. God laughed at my plans.

I'd tell the teachers on the first day of elementary and middle school, "You keep my kids for seven hours each day, and I'll keep my sanity. I don't want to hear from anyone unless there is a lung being coughed up. Then, and only then, will I drive out here to pick them up

early."

High school was an entirely different animal. While drop-

"Oh cool," I said. "I wonder who the teacher will be."

I called the next day and found out that the position was still open. I applied. I had six years left on my stay-at-home mom plan, but God had something different in mind for me.

Now, I am a teacher at ACA.

As a teacher, I see more clearly the kind of education our children are getting. They are in wonderful, God-fearing, loving hands. Before I joined the faculty, I knew the teachers cared for the students. Now I get to see it in real time. When kids need help with homework, they get it. When they need to talk to someone, there is an available ear. When they need prayer, heads are bowed. What a blessing to work in an environment so rich with the spirit of God, community, and selfless giving.

Sandra Shaver
International Cuisine Teacher

*I thought I'd have another six years at home.
God laughed at my plans.*

ping off my kids I felt a tug at my heart. I could hear a clock ticking off the hours, minutes, and seconds that I had left with my young men. Time had flown by. In the parking lot, I saw another mom with the same melancholy look on her face, and I knew that I was home. This was a community of people who hear the same clock. These were my people.

I got involved in ACA's parent activities. I joined the Booster Club, helped serve and feed the football team, and made wonderful friends. I got to know my children's teachers. I learned that this community is unlike any other school community. It's close knit. It's meaningful. It's patient, kind, and loving. It's serious about educating children and preparing them for their future. Being a parent of an ACA student is something to be proud of. When I tell people where my kids go to school they often say, "Oh, I hear that's a great school!"

Last spring, my son William was choosing his courses for the following year and he read about a new class being offered called "International Cuisine." He said, "Hey Mom, look at this! There's a cooking class being offered."

■ Sandra Shaver (a full-blooded Italian) shows junior Libby Quanstrom how to knead bread in the new international cuisine class. Shaver's kitchen wafts aromas of garlic and fresh bread throughout the halls. Her after school cafe "Our Daily Bread" serves fresh pesto pizza and sandwiches along with a place to study for a while. Shaver's mantra? "If anyone leaves my room hungry, it's their own fault."

Photos: Christian Davis, Joanna Sowell



THAT FRIDAY MORNING

Spiritual Emphasis Week provides significance and revival through daily chapels, prayer and praise



■ Spiritual life adviser Scott Blakey prays with Kylie Egle after the final chapel of Spiritual Emphasis Week. Teachers and staff remained after chapel to pray with students individually and in small groups.

Photo: Cody Lalberte

Silence. It's not exactly what you expect to hear in a high school hallway on a Friday. But the senior hallway was silent at the conclusion of Spiritual Emphasis Week, Oct. 11-15. More and more students trailed out of chapel from the middle school gym, each prayed for individually by faculty members as they left. As students stepped into the hallway for break, their voices did not exceed a soft murmur. Some were fazed, others were in tears, and a few prayed with each other in the hallways. All of this was a sign that God was at work.

It was decided this year that Spiritual Life would no longer be given a class period for chapel planning. Rather there would be hours spent after school unrolling the tarps that would cover the gym floor. Hours spent setting up sound equipment and hundreds of metal chairs. Hours spent in prayer and God's Word.

For most students, the weekly chapel serves as a time to set aside the drama of life to praise our Lord through song and prayer and to hear a message. But for some, it's nothing more than a routine. A chore. Something we have to go to every Tuesday at precisely 9:01 a.m.

Initially, students were glad to have chapel every day during Spiritual Emphasis Week. And for "good" reason. Six fewer minutes of class, you say? Sounds great. Maybe even missing a quiz or two. But as the week progressed, chapel transformed from a simple convenience to a time of spiritual transformation.

On Tuesday senior Bradlee Locke talked with the students about how Christians need to live God's word. His message is not something we can just read and put aside. We need to demonstrate our love for Christ by showing love to others. Ministering to others doesn't require us to work in an impoverished third-world country. The ministry starts at home.

That Thursday, senior Sarah Stromwell shared an emotional message about how she coped with the death of her dad. She did not turn against God during the disarray but used it to strengthen her relationship with him. He has a plan for everything, and her dad was in his presence, looking down on her as she spoke. She concluded her message, and was met by the comfort and support of faculty members standing in the back, her mother in tears.

The following day, the spiritual life team put on a concert of prayer. For an hour students humbled themselves and worshiped God through song and prayer. They broke into small groups, to pray for their teachers and classmates. They prayed about whatever was on their hearts. The praise team strummed guitars quietly as students gathered together to connect with God. This was what the spiritual life team was after. Students no longer saw chapel as a class-free period, but rather as a time to worship. Many of those whose hearts were hardened against God began to question their stance with Him. Some even prayed for God to come back into their lives and to renew them for His purpose. The spiritual life team had accomplished its goal: to let God work wonders through the student body. It only took 56 minutes on a Friday morning for a spiritual revival to take place.

Douglas Waters
ACA Junior

The spiritual life team had accomplished its goal: to let God work wonders through the student body

RCS events

NOV. 17-19
Parent/Teacher Conferences

NOV. 19
No School

NOV. 22-26
Thanksgiving Break

DEC. 13
Christmas Concert

DEC. 17
Dismiss at Noon

DEC. 20-31
Christmas Break

JAN. 17
MLK Day – No School

JAN. 18-21
Middle School Semester Exams

JAN. 24-28
Spiritual Emphasis Week

JAN. 28
Service Day

FEB. 14-25
Re-Enrollment Weeks

FEB. 18
Grandparent's Day (Dismiss at Noon)

FEB. 21
President's Day – No School

FEB. 28
New Family Open House

ACA events

NOV. 18
Jazz Band Performance

NOV. 22-26
Thanksgiving Break

NOV. 28
Jazz Band Performance

DEC. 1-4
High School Play

DEC. 7
ACAF Meeting

DEC. 9-10
Jazz Band Performances

DEC. 15
Choir Concert

DEC. 20-31
Christmas Break

JAN. 4
ACAF Meeting

JAN. 6
College Financial Aid Night

JAN. 10
Eighth-Grade Open House

JAN. 17
MLK Da – No School

JAN. 18-21
Semester Exams

FEB. 1
ACAF Meeting

FEB. 12
Work Day

FEB. 14-25
Re-Enrollment Weeks

FEB. 21
President's Day – No School

FEB. 26
Cirque Du Aca



Haley Mulder rehearses for her role as Mrs. Warwick, the mother of the murdered invalid. Mulder had to age about 50 years for her character. Her voice and movements are convincingly older. Freshman Will Shaw plays Michael Starkwedder (the unexpected guest). "I don't think Will had a clue what he was getting into when he auditioned," director Crystal Kazmierski said. "Be prepared to be amazed!"

Photos: Mark Leonard

THE UNEXPECTED GUEST

ACA's fine arts department will present Agatha Christie's "The Unexpected Guest" Dec. 1, 2, 3 and 4 at 7:30 p.m.

Set in a foggy estate in Wales, this murder mystery thriller opens as a stranger walks into a house to find a man murdered and his wife standing over him with a gun. The woman is dazed and her confession unconvincing. So the unexpected guest helps her devise a plot to blame the murder on an intruder. As each scene unfolds, a Pandora's box of loves and hates, suspicions and intrigues is opened to the night air.

According to the London Evening News: "The impact is tremendous ... Just when the murder seems solved ... Miss Christie pulls her almighty knockout punch. I admit her complete victory."

The play stars newcomer Will Shaw in the title role, Joanna Sowell as the wife of the deceased, and Cameron Wilson as the inspector. Featured performers include Katie Elgersma, David Franco, Rachel Kyle, Haley Mulder, Jake Naman, David Shippee and Kaley Sue Thompson.

Tickets can be reserved by calling 909-335-3594 beginning Nov. 22. Tickets will be available for purchase in room 111 beginning Nov. 29. All seats are \$10. Reserved tickets that are not picked up ahead of time will be held until 7 p.m. on the night of the show.



CAPTURING AFGHANISTAN

Christian Palermo sets a new course for his life

"The whole thing went bad. I can't go into the details. All I can tell you is that it went bad."

Most missions in Afghanistan last fewer than 10 hours. They are done under the cover of darkness. When the sun comes up, the soldiers get into a chopper and head back to base. But this mission was designed to last 48 hours.

"On a 48-hour mission like this, we're supposed to get resupplied halfway through," Army Specialist and RCS alum Christian Palermo said. "The resupply bird never came."

Palermo is remembered at RCS for his gentle personality. He smiles easily and is quick to return the favor when people give him a hard time. The youngest of three boys, after graduating from high school he found himself looking for direction.

"The army fell into my lap at the right moment," he said.

In February 2009 he began training as a military photographer and videographer.

He wanted to go to Afghanistan to do something with his training. Last spring, he got his chance. His superior officer told him and a fellow photographer that one of them would be deployed. They had 14 hours to shoot, edit, and produce a video on a topic of their choice. The photographer with the better video would be sent to Afghanistan with a special operations unit.

Palermo filmed and produced a short video that reflected the heritage of our country and the way that our culture passes that heritage on to succeeding generations through education.

His superior officer was impressed. He was told to prepare to go to the Middle East.

On a typical day, Palermo would board a Blackhawk or Chinook helicopter in the early evening with a team of soldiers. They'd fly to a hot spot for the day's mission where he would document everything with photography. They'd returned in the wee hours before the sun rose. Palermo said he would get some chow, go to the gym, and watch a movie to help him sleep. "It's hard to sleep when you're dealing with some of the things you see out here," he said.

During that 48-hour mission, Palermo and his unit walked for the first 24 hours. The temperature was 120 degrees, and they were short on water. In spite of the grapes and pomegranates they ate as they walked, they became dehydrated.

"It was painful," he said. "When we finally returned to base, we needed IVs for fluid."

Palermo's experience in Afghanistan changed his prayer life dramatically.

"Being in danger makes you realize that you need God more than ever. You have no choice but to pray."

Palermo is now back in the U.S., but he is

Being in danger makes you realize that you need God more than ever. You have no choice but to pray.

The timing couldn't have been better. The eighth-grade class from RCS was in Washington D.C. on their annual trip, just a couple hours from where Palermo was stationed.

"I drove to D.C. to meet [Mark] Witvliet and his students," he said.

In a few hours with the RCS students,

looking forward to his next deployment. While home, he is eager to enjoy sushi and some well earned R and R. And he has a message for Mark. Witvliet.

"When we meet on the basketball court, I will own and annihilate you like the Lakers own the Pistons."

*Mark Leonard
Director of Communications*





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**FEBRUARY 26, 2011
MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

Flemingo
The Eagle has landed!