

EXCEL

SPRING 2009

THE NEWSLETTER FOR FRIENDS & ALUMNI OF REDLANDS CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
www.redlandschristianschool.org

FROM RAY'S DESK

Dear Friends,

As you can well imagine the economy is never far from the minds of school administrators these days. In fact, there are times that I have to admit that it has kept me from a restful night's sleep. Tonight as I write this late into the evening and early into the start of a new day, the economy is doing it again, but somehow tonight it's different.

Tonight instead of worry, there is actually peace. Not peace over the massive debt the government is promoting. Seems obvious to my small mind that debt got us here and more debt won't get us out of this mess. No, tonight, my thoughts are about how rich you and I truly are.

Consider these truths:

- I am so rich I have the right to those unalienable rights; let's see, what are they again? Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.
- I am so rich that I am free to be employed at a faith-based school with no fear of persecution.
- I am so rich, I have the freedom to attend and give to my church.
- I am so rich, I have the freedom to give to other charitable causes.
- I am so rich, I am free to study my Bible anywhere I want to.
- I am so rich, I am free to pray anywhere and at any time.
- I am so rich, I am free to share my God with my staff, my parents, my students, my wife, my son, my son-in-law, my daughter and my two granddaughters and strangers who cross my path.
- I am so rich I am free to enjoy the wonderful harvest of Christian literature at Selah Christian Bookstore.
- I am so rich that I enjoy religious freedom and all the promises God gives of eternal life.

Friend, are you rich? If you are, show it! Show it by giving. "Low on money," you say. Well then, restructure your priorities so there may be more - but realize that most of us are still able to supply most of our wants. "Giving," as an old friend of mine who went on ahead of us to those eternal mansions, once said, "giving, always returns to you, because you can't outgive our faithful God."

Really, truly you don't have treasure to share right now? Okay, fine, there are plenty of places to give your time, and your talent. If you don't think that's true, just ask at your church this weekend. You'll see we are all very RICH!

In Christ,
Ray Leenstra
Psalm 127:1
Malachi 3:8-12

SURFING RCS

by Celeste Wilcox

This year Redlands Christian School has embarked on a new challenge of serving man as if we are serving the Lord. This has become our theme this year and will continue to be a part of our mission as each classroom takes on their various service projects. Here are a few examples of how our students are touching the lives of our community and the world abroad:

2-Day and 3-Day Pre-Kindergarten have adopted Olive Crest, which is a Christian organization that places orphaned children in loving homes. The website of this organization is www.olivecrest.org.

Kindergarten and 5A are sponsoring Guide Dogs of the Desert. We have had the opportunity to meet a gentleman that lost his sight due to an illness. We were able to hear how Chuck has been given sight through his guide dog, Bob.

First Graders are sponsoring "Project Night, Night". They have purchased canvas bags that they are decorating and will then fill with a snuggly blanket, a stuffed animal and some books. Our first graders are donating new or like-new items for the bags. They distributed these bags for Valentine's Day.

5-Day Pre-Kindergarten and 2A are sponsoring Ronald McDonald House. This is a place that houses families who have very ill children in the hospital.

2B is raising money for Bibles in Congo. For the small price of \$6 they are able to send God's Word to people who need to hear God's truth!

3rd graders are making cards for children at Loma Linda Hospital. This ministry makes sure that each child that is in the hospital will receive a note of encouragement at each of their meals.

4B and 5B have adopted Grandparents at The Village at Redlands (Redlands Christian Home) where they are able to interact with the elderly. Their youthful smiles bring joy to those residents. Watching this happen is priceless to witness.

4A is partnering with Mr. Hartog as he prepares to go to the Ukraine again. Our **Middle School** students are taking on the task of keeping Reservoir Road clean and safe for that neighborhood. They are also building 2-3 loft-houses in Mexico. And our **Special Ed** kids continue to bag cereal for Helping Hands Pantry.

As a school we have had the opportunity to touch people in our community through a variety of ways. KidCare backpacks were distributed at Christmas to some very needy children that attend one of our local schools. We collect food each month on campus to distribute to the homeless through Joseph's Storehouse and Helping Hands Pantry. Thanksgiving baskets are given to families in our community through Redlands Family Services, that rarely know where their next meal will come from. Sending cards to our men and women who are serving our country in the military is a great way to encourage them during difficult times. We are also making 14 blankets that will be given to the families that we are building a house in Mexico.

We are very proud of our students; there is truly nothing more beautiful than watching them serve the Lord with all their heart. We are called to "let our light shine before others, so that they may see our good works and give glory to our Father who is heaven." I absolutely believe that our students are taking this mission very seriously!

Pages 4-5 Photo Collage of Spiritual Emphasis Week

The week of January 26 - 30, was Spiritual Emphasis Week at Redlands Christian. Chapels, special speakers each day and community service projects brought home to students and staff the importance of serving the Lord cheerfully with our head, heart and hands.

MAKING MUSIC AT RCS

by Kara Niewenhuis and Jill Leonard, RCS Music and Band

REDLANDS CHRISTIAN MUSIC FESTIVAL

On Thursday, February 5 RCS held a Music Festival in the Kindergarten/Pre-Kindergarten area of the campus. Students in band and choir grades 5-8 participated by performing instrumental or vocal solos or ensembles in front of a judge. Our judges were Beth Kimm (vocal), Lisa Nicolay (instrumental), Mark Leonard (vocal/instrumental), and Stephen Moore (piano). Students were judged in areas such as rhythm, technique, interpretation, memorization, and stage deportment; receiving scores and comments from the judge on their performance. Students received ribbons for their performances, Superior (I), Excellent (II), or Good (III). We are so proud of how professional and accomplished our students were! Some students were chosen to move on to the Regional Fine Arts Festival which was held on Tuesday, March 3, at the Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove. Congratulations to those students who excelled and received scores at the top of their categories.

FINE ARTS BOOSTERS ALL SCHOOL ART SHOW

The RCS Fine Arts Boosters (FAB) will be hosting their first Redlands Christian School Art Show for grades Pre-K through 8th. All students are invited to participate in the Art Show. This year the exhibit will be held on Friday, April 17, at Redlands Christian School. An Artist Reception for the Art Show will be held on the evening of the 17th from 6:30-8:30pm. The event will be a fundraiser for the school and will benefit the Fine Arts programs. There is no charge to attend the event and the public is encouraged to attend! FAB members will come to each classroom to explain the event and participation in fuller detail. Please put this fabulous new event on your calendar and plan to attend!

HERITAGE FESTIVAL

The 7th and 8th Grade Concert Band and Concert Choir have the privilege again this year of attending the Heritage Music Festival in Anaheim, CA. The students will leave from school around noon on Friday, May 15 and arrive back on Saturday, May 16. While at the festival, each group will perform for a panel of three professional judges who will give verbal comments, written comments, and scores based on their performances. The students also attend performances of other schools to learn and critique from their observations. Students get to spend some of the day on Saturday at Disneyland; and we end our trip with an exciting Awards Ceremony at Disneyland. Last year both the Concert Band and the Concert Choir received the highest rating, Gold. We hope to continue our excellence this year by earning the top awards again!

HOLLAND FESTIVAL 2009

Saturday, May 2, 2009 is the day! Join us to celebrate the 56th annual Holland Festival. Fifty-six years of memories, friendships, and community. The festivities begin at 10:00 a.m. under the big tent and continue through the Live Auction in the afternoon and on into the evening. Come and reconnect with old friends and new friends. God is so faithful!

RCS WINTER SPORTS

MIDDLE SCHOOL BASEBALL

It is hard to believe but the baseball season for the RCS Cougars has already come and gone. This year saw the Cougars have another highly successful campaign finishing with a league record of 8 wins and 2 losses. This was good enough for 2nd place in the division and a 10th straight trip to the playoffs. In the first round of the playoffs RCS traveled up the Cajon Pass and defeated the Academy of Academic Excellence in a hard fought battle by a score of 11-8. The 2nd round brought perennial powerhouse Woodcrest to the Cougars home field. Our team fought hard but came up just a little short. Down 12-4 going into the bottom of the 7th inning RCS scored 4 runs and left the bases loaded as the last out was made ending the season for the Cougars.

There was some strong 8th grade leadership on this year's team provided by Michael Veloz, Jared Layel, Trevor Mattson, Jon Lapham, Josh Mobley, and Zach Hodges. These guys made up the heart and soul of the ball club and will surely be missed as they all move on to bigger and better things next year. The good news is that this year's team also featured a strong contingent of 7th graders. Guys like Sean Pena, Nelson Yanes, Alex Verhoeven, Zac Smith, Drew Knight, and Phil Leyden are sure to take the experience from playing on this year's squad and help to make next year's team competitive as well.

Coach Hartog would like to thank his assistants Ron Veloz, James Verhoeven, and Homero Pena, for all their help, hard work, and dedication this year. A big thank you also goes out to scorekeeper Charlene Veloz, and team mom Kris Layel for all that they did for the team as well. And thank you to all the parents who picked up their kids from practice and cheered so faithfully at all our games. We couldn't do it without all your help.

MIDDLE SCHOOL SOFTBALL

The 2008 Middle School softball team entered the season full of optimism behind coaches Billy Nielsen, Sandi Wagner, and Matt DeBoer. Many of the girls began the season with limited experience, but with dedication towards learning fundamentals and great attitudes the team showed great improvement.

"We made some positive steps forward, from where we started as a group to where we ended." DeBoer said.

Team members were: Julia Bennett, Renee Bunch, Laekyn Causey, Emma DeBoer, Cassandra Gutierrez, Haley Mulder, Chandler Stier, Krista Yorgin, Ana Montano, Lauren Olson, Hayley Park, Cierra Stewart, and Hannah Nielsen.

ELEMENTARY SOCCER

Redlands Christian was well represented in the Inland Empire Christian League for soccer this winter. Two 4th grade teams, one 5th grade team, and one 6th grade team each participated in the league. In the 6th grade league, the Redlands Christian team went undefeated for the season. In the 5th grade league, our 5th grade team only lost one game. Both 4th grade teams participated in the 5th grade league as well and did a great job in their games, despite playing teams with older players. Each team learned a lot about soccer and had a great time competing against other schools. Mr. Matt Wiers, Mrs. Melissa Lemm, Ms. Jen Dahlin, and Mrs. Lisa Edge did a fantastic job coaching our teams.

RCS SPRING SPORTS

Tryouts have ended and the Middle School Coed Soccer Team, the Girls Basketball Team and the Boys Basketball Team begin practices the week of March 2nd. There are more than 40 middle school students participating in the spring sport season. Sixth grade basketball will start up during the middle of March. There are many opportunities for our students to push themselves to excel using their bodies to bring glory to God by giving their best in competition.

Coaches include Mr. Matt Wiers for soccer, Mr. Matt De Boer for Boys Basketball and Mr. Mike De Jong for Girls Basketball. The spring looks to be as exciting as the Fall and Winter seasons at Redlands Christian.

GRANDPARENTS AND SPECIAL FRIENDS DAY

Photo Collage of Grandparents Day. Friday, February 13 was Grandparents and Special Friends Day on the RCS Campus. What a blessing to have these wonderful people share our day!

TEAM LEARNING 4 LIFE NEWS

Tour de Canyons is sponsored by Team Learning 4 Life and is a rebirth of a long-time favorite bike race through the Southern California

“Canyon Country”. Tour de Canyons is a family-oriented bicycling event ... fun enough for the entire family to participate together, challenging enough for the competitive, experienced cyclist.

Team Learning 4 Life was organized in 2007 to ride in the Race Across America in June 2008. Team Learning 4 Life’s mission was more than to compete in a world-class bike race; their mission and their passion was to raise funds to support Christian Special Education. This TEAM of 8 men, supported by a crew of 14, and cheered on by thousands of supporters, completed the 3,016 mile course from Oceanside, California to Annapolis, Maryland in 7 days, 15 hours, and 23 minutes! Oh, by the way, they also raised \$132,000 for Christian Special Education. The passion and mission of Team Learning 4 Life lives on with their sponsorship of Tour de Canyons.

Volunteers are Needed! We need 100 volunteers for race day to serve in a variety of capacities. To volunteer please call Celeste Wilcox at (909)528-2401, Cheralyn Nichols at (909)560-6883 or Ron Cook at (909)648-3230.

Route #1: Tour de Canyons - Redlands (13 miles)

Route #2: Tour de Canyons - Redlands Ridge (28 miles)

Route #3: Tour de Canyons - Wildwood (62 miles)

Route #4: Tour de Canyons - Redlands/Oak Glen (76 miles)

You can register for Tour de Canyons in three different ways;

1) Online at www.active.com

2) Mail or hand deliver registration to Redlands Christian School

3) At the Redlands Bicycle Classic on March 28 & 29 at the

Team Learning 4 Life booth

Thank you for joining us for a great day! All proceeds (less operating costs) of Team Learning 4 Life’s Tour de Canyons Fun Bike Ride will benefit Christian Special Education.

For More Information: Team Learning 4 Life / Redlands Christian School • 1145 N. Church Street • Redlands, California 92373 • Telephone: 909-793-5172 • FAX: 909-335-9593 • Website: www.teamlearning4life.org

FUNDRAISING, HMMM...

by Ron Cook, Development Director

The Redlands Christian/Arrowhead Christian community is an absolute treasure. Even during these months when personal "treasure" has diminished, evaporated, or gone through melt-down, our community has still rallied with its financial support. The Lord continues to bless daily the lives of our 1,000+ students and their families, and, as well, our schools.

Giving is down, but it hasn't "tanked". The Lord provides some nice surprises for us also in times of adversity --- using His people to show His love for all of us.

We're not going to make any special appeals in this newsletter. Just the facts.

1. Tuition and fees cover about 82% of operating costs.
2. We have to raise \$500-\$600,000 every year.
 - a. The 20th Annual Golf Classic raised \$100,816 on a goal of \$94,000. Praise God!
 - b. The RCS Partners Fund 2008-2009 raised \$73,217 on a goal of \$80,000. (So far). Praise God!
 - c. The Diamond Jubilee raised \$78,000 on a goal of \$80,000.
 - d. The goal for The 56th Annual Holland Festival is \$100,000.
3. Some long-term supporters and donors were not able to give this year, or had to reduce their contributions; we also had some new "surprises" from donors who decided that now was the time to give more and they could. Praise God!
3. Financial assistance requests from families have increased.
4. Our invested endowment funds have dropped in value some 28%, but through wise investment policies and oversight we have not lost as much as most. Praise God.
5. We are blessed with wise, godly men and women who serve on our Board of Trustees, protecting, defending and advancing the cause of Christian education at RCS and ACA. Praise God!
6. Our God is faithful. PRAISE HIM!

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- CHRISTIAN EDUCATION --- especially at Redlands Christian and Arrowhead Christian
- Our students and their families
- Our teachers
- Our administration and Board of Trustees
- Our finances, and especially our fund raising initiatives in challenging economic times

Contact me at any time on any matter related to admissions, enrollment, or fund raising activities at Redlands Christian School and Arrowhead Christian Academy. My cell phone number is 909.648.3230.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IS NOT JUST AN ALTERNATIVE...IT'S A CHOICE

by Ron Cook, Development Director

As we look to re-enrollment, open houses, admissions information nights and advertising for new enrollment at our schools for the 2009-2010 school year, I have become quite introspective. The questions that I ask myself every day include the basic one, "WHY do parents CHOOSE Christian education for their children?"

My "a-ha moment" came when I realized that our parents aren't seeking just an alternative to public schools, but they are very intentionally CHOOSING Christian education for their children.

They are reading the same Holy Bible that I read for instruction as to how we lead our lives here on earth. So, in seeking instruction, we ask the important question: "What is my responsibility as a Christian parent?" The Lord places on our heart His directive (not "suggestion") to us: "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it." (Proverbs 22:6).

WHO is instructing/training/investing seven hours every day with my child?

WHAT instructions are they giving them?

WHAT are the curricula, textbooks, instructional materials teaching?

WHO are the administrators/principals? WHAT leadership do they provide? WHAT is their motivation?

WHO are the coaches, field trip drivers, secretaries, librarians, custodians?

WHO are my child's friends? WHO are their friends' families?

HOW does "head knowledge" connect with "heart" in the classroom?

IS discipline based on "disciple-ing"?

At Redlands Christian School and Arrowhead Christian Academy we know the answers to these questions. The questions and the answers are foundational. They define us. I believe this is WHY parents CHOOSE to entrust their children to us, and, why they CHOOSE to become a part of this Christian Community.

How important is all of this? Well, read Proverbs 22:6 again. How important is all of this in the lives of the children, parents, grandparents, families that we serve at RCS and ACA? Here it is out of the mouth and heart of one of our parents as they re-enrolled their children for the next school year:

"(During these very tough economic times)...my wife and I have discussed and prayed earnestly, and right now we have only two (material) priorities...holding on to our house and keeping our kids in Christian school...everything else is just stuff."

SPRING HOUSE CLEANING?

THINK SECOND LIFE THRIFT STORE

Second Life Thrift Store, located right across the street from Redlands Christian School, can turn your good quality, slightly used cast-offs into cash for RCS. Good used clothing in all shapes, sizes and colors is especially needed --- including infants, childrens, shoes, and accessories. Second Life will also accept good, used furnishings and household items.

(At this time it cannot accept computers, computer accessories, or television sets).

Second Life Thrift Store is a North Redlands ministry serving many families who cannot afford to shop for "new" items for their families. It is also a ministry that financially supports Redlands Christian School and The Village at Redlands (Redlands Christian Home) with its profits.

Second Life Thrift Store will gratefully accept all of your donations from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday at it's back receiving door.

PARTNERS FUND 2008-2009

If you missed the opportunity to participate in this year's Partners Fund campaign, here is one last chance. As of this writing we have raised \$73,217 or 91% of our \$80,000 goal for this year. Every dollar raised in the Partners Fund goes directly to financially support families in need with tuition assistance; as you may assume, the need for assistance this year has grown. We have already allocated all \$80,000, so meeting our goal is critical. Clip this form and send your check to: PARTNERS FUND, P.O. Box 7672, Redlands, CA 92375. Thank you for "**Partnering with a Purpose**" with us!

HIGH SCHOOL REGISTRATION AT ARROWHEAD CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

Current RCS eighth grade students Zach Hodges, Justin Thalmayer, Chandler Stier and Emma DeBoer sport their new "ACA-Class of 2013" sweatshirts upon completing their enrollment process at ACA for next year. It's a great gift to be able to have our own high school to move on to after nine great years of preparation at RCS. RCS eighth grade graduation for these students is June 11, 2009 - they begin their high school career at ACA on August 24, 2009. We wish all of our graduating eighth graders a high school career filled with God's love and grace.

HERITAGE SOCIETY DINNER

**Tuesday, May 26, 2009 • 6:00 p.m. • The Village Center
The Village at Redlands (Redlands Christian Home)**

We welcome all friends of Redlands Christian School who have included Redlands Christian School in their will or estate plan, or who have contributed to the RCS Endowment Fund. These are the members of the RCS Heritage Society. Prospective members, or friends who are interested in finding out more about the Heritage Society and including RCS in their estate plan are also most welcome to attend. We have an excellent program planned with great food and fellowship. If you have any questions about this event or estate planning please call Ron Cook, Director of Development, at 909-648-3230.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

APRIL 2009

- 3 Friendship Games (dismiss at noon) & Report Cards go home
- 6-10 Spring Break (No School)
- 17 Fine Arts Boosters All School Art Show
- 20-24 Book Fair in the Library

MAY 2009

- 1 Minimum Day (dismiss at noon) to prepare for Holland Festival
- 2 56th Annual Holland Festival
- 15-16 Concert Band and Choir to Heritage Festival in Anaheim
- 23 Tour de Canyons Bicycle Event - Team Learning 4 Life
- 25 No School - Memorial Day
- 26 Heritage Society Dinner at The Village at Redlands 6:00 p.m.
- 28 Band and Choir Concert at The River Christian Reformed Church

JUNE 2009

- 4 7th & 8th Grade Awards Night
- 8 Pre-K 3-Day Last Day of School
- 9 Pre-K 2-Day and 5-Day Last Day of School
- 10 Kindergarten Graduation 10:00 a.m.
- 11 Last Day of School for Grades 1-8
- 11 8th Grade Graduation at The River CRC 4:00 p.m.