

SCHOOL LIFE

Congratulations to Naomi Kim (11th) who competed at the Eastern Washington regional finals for *Poetry Out Loud*, a national recitation contest. One of the goals for Oaks graduates is to have the ability to reason persuasively and articulate precisely. Studying poetry that reflects truth, beauty, and goodness complements this goal. Naomi presented two selections: Gerard Manley Hopkins' *God's Grandeur*, and *Becoming a Redwood* by Dana Gioia which she described as "quietly powerful." Congratulations also to Justin Cai (9th), runner up, and Phoebe Dierdorff (10th), Sarah Kim (9th), Christa LaVoie (11th), Claire Love (9th), and Kjersti Strandness (10th) offered commendable performances.



Secondary teacher, Bill Stutzman's, new album *Cardinals and Fireflies* is a musical chronicle of the four seasons and his own personal seasons of life. "Cardinals and fireflies," says Bill, "more than any other creatures embody for me the wonder of God's creative splendor." The songs are available on Amazon.

ENROLLMENT

The Oaks welcomes our first Foreign Exchange Students!

After several years of labor, this past August The Oaks was approved to accept Foreign Exchange students. Our hope is that students will have the privilege to interact with many cultures in years to come, widening their vision of how God is working in the world. This past week we were excited to welcome our first foreign exchange students, Sujin and Suhyeon Kwon, to The Oaks, as they joined the 7th grade class. Sujin and Suhyeon are twin girls from Nam-gu in Daegu, South Korea. Their fellow classmates eagerly received them and helped them to adjust, including helping them to choose American names (at their request). Sujin is now known as Cristin, and Suhyeon as Abby. Welcome girls, we are thankful to have you as a part of our Oaks community!



THE

Oaks
 A CLASSICAL CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

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 Education Association
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LOVE, THINK, HONOR



February 2015

FROM THE OAKS CLASSICAL CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

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"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning" (James 1:17). I love this passage and in many ways it summarizes the first semester of this school year.

Recently in a staff meeting, the teachers reflected on Psalm 78 and the 'works of the Lord' that they had witnessed in people at The Oaks. They filled the whiteboard four times over documenting the new students the Lord has brought, examples of students growing in fortitude, insightful questions by students, physical healing, relationships forged with parents and other staff members, and the list went on and on. We also rejoiced in some of the major cultural school-wide events we had shared, from the Christmas Concert at The Fox to field trips, sports tournaments, and George Grant's visit to The Oaks. God has given many good and perfect gifts this year.

We are eager for God's blessing in the second semester as well. How will His good and perfect gifts manifest themselves through the daily routines of school life? What fruit will the Lord bring through the daily shaping forces of the part-

nership of The Oaks and godly parenting? What will be the impact on students as they stand to speak in a complete sentence 10 times a day, for the next 80 days of class? How will speaking these 800 complete sentences shape them? On Friday, March 13th we will hold our *Light the Dark* event to highlight how daily practices such as handwriting, Proverbs memory, and Latin study, specifically equip a senior to present a senior thesis. Please join us for the evening as our students present a play demonstrating not only these facets, but also the culture - laughter, tears, homework and all - in which this process happens.

This semester we welcomed back one of our Secondary Literature Teachers, Amy Kim, who has just completed her journey of cancer treatment. We rejoice together over Amy's healing, because as James reminds us, some of God's greatest gifts to His people are... His people. Chapter 1 continues, "Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures." And Amen! As Jon Amos Comenius, a 17th century classical Christian educator, wrote in his work on teaching, "Would that this were inscribed, not on the doors of temples, not on the title-pages of books, not on the tongues, ears, and eyes of all men, but on their hearts!"

CAMPUS

Light The Dark Drama & Dessert— Friday, March 13th, 7:00 PM— All are invited to this annual community event intended to bless current families and introduce classical Christian education to prospective families through a fresh taste of The Oaks' vision. The evening will begin with a short drama in the sanctuary highlighting the harvest of a student's entire education. Come see how the seeds sown in the grammar and logic schools yield fruit as evidenced in a senior thesis. Immediately following will be a dessert social in the gymnasium, allowing guests the opportunity to ask questions, visit with teachers and secondary students, and fellowship with one another. For more information, or to RSVP for free childcare, please contact Anya Schnell at 536-5955 or anya.schnell@theoakscga.org.



God Rest Ye Merry Christmas Concert— Headmaster Charlie Dowers opened this year's Christmas concert with this prayer to our Savior: "May [the students'] love and affection for You and the beauty of Your praises ever increase. Use this evening to fatten our souls." God indeed poured out His blessing! With The Fox Theater provided as a venue, there was plenty of seating to accommodate an audience of almost thirteen-hundred. Guests were able to enjoy the beautiful music showcasing the fruit of God's word dwelling richly in Oaks students.

ATHLETICS

As the hosts of this year's Mountain Christian League Varsity Basketball Tournament (Feb. 5th-7th) we were reminded why we have an Athletic Program at The Oaks; Athletics reveals and shapes character. Hosting also presented the opportunity to build school culture; the first girls game occurred during school hours and the entire student body attended in order to cheer them on from the stands. On the court, both the Boys' and Girls' Teams advanced to compete for 3rd place. The Boys battled and won the 3rd place trophy, while the girls were defeated after they "played their hearts out" as Coach Ramah Mannan said, landing them in 4th place. We are thankful for the way athletics sharpens and reveals character, and are proud of our players, coaches, and fans. Thank you to all the volunteers and to Ben Tate for his administrative efforts in hosting this event.



ACADEMICS

Musical Instruments Around the World— Five or six years ago, in an effort to bolster the geography curriculum at The Oaks, each grade in the Grammar school (1st-6th) was assigned a continent of the world to study throughout the year. The growing curriculum has now extended into an annual event called "Geography Day." On Geography Day (March 27th), students study a theme across each nation, and the classrooms are transformed into their respective world continent for a tour. This year, the Sophomore Geography class will help our Grammar School teachers introduce students to traditional instruments around the world through live demonstrations, traditional folk songs, and more!

What might feminism have to do with the Second Great Awakening? Our Seniors are currently wrestling with this and various other topics as they prepare their Senior Thesis. This event is the culmination of a graduate's journey through the grammar, logic, and rhetoric stages of their Oaks education. Students write, memorize, deliver, and defend their thesis in

front of classmates, a panel of judges, and a myriad of school parents. The Thesis Defenses will be held on The Oaks campus this year, making it easier for school parents to come sample the fruit of the education they are sowing for their own children. As March 30th-April 2nd approach, a schedule of seniors' topics and presentation times will be posted on the school website.

History Emphasis Days—April 8-10— In The Oaks History program, the study of Western Civilization, including its science, art, and literature, is central to a student's understanding of our current age in America. Each year, secondary students take a hiatus from their regular classes to focus in on a certain period of Western Civilization. This year, they will study the Roaring Twenties and 1930's.

"Grandparents Day is an event we eagerly anticipate every year" says Oaks Grandparent Judy Palpant. "We relish getting to visit each classroom and enter into the community of the Oaks." Please mark your calendars for May 1st to join us for a luncheon and classroom presentations featuring your grandchild!

BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Merrill Miller and his wife of 32 years, Debbie, began their pursuit of classical Christian education in Wenatchee, WA where Merrill was one of three men who founded The River Academy. Desiring to provide their youngest, Natalie, with the same classical education as her older sisters, they moved to Spokane in 2001, enrolling Allegra ('06), Stacey ('08), and Natalie ('10) at The Oaks.

Merrill served as Secretary to the Oaks Board for several years, and has recently returned to serve as Treasurer. We are grateful to have Merrill back on the Board and to have two of his daughters, Allegra and Stacey, on our teaching staff. Merrill is starting his 34th year working for Northwest Farm Credit Services. He enjoys reading, singing with his family, and exploring the wonders of God's creation. Debbie keeps the home humming and also teaches piano to several Oaks students. They attend Christ The King Church here in Spokane. Thank you for your service Merrill!

RESOURCES

"There is one who scatters, yet increases more...The generous soul shall be made rich, and he who waters will be watered himself." -Proverbs 11:24a, 25

Thank you to the many people who responded to The Oaks year-end giving request by giving to The Oaks out of the overflow of their hearts. The Oaks received over \$57,000 this school year. We thank God for this blessing and continue to trust Him for the additional \$57,950 that are needed for the financial assistance fund.

post scriptum...

Read James 1:17-18 again in light of your children:

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures."

And here is the rest of Comenius' quote on this passage: "Would that this could be done to all who undertake the task of educating men, that they might learn to appreciate the dignity of the task and of their own excellence, and might bring all means to bear on the perfect realization of their divinity."