

# STUDENT LIFE

Echoes of the doxology filled the tomb as incoming Juniors and Seniors, parents and staff all paused to sing in the "Treasury of Atreus," a beehive-shaped tomb near Mycenae in Greece this past August. As the Grand Tour followed the footsteps of Paul, Galileo, Michelangelo, and other giants of the Western tradition through Greece and Italy, could there be a more beautiful response than singing God's praises? The Sophomores (left) experienced a similar moment as they sang the doxology in the Lewis and Clark Caverns on their way home



from Yellowstone. The acoustics in Paradise Cavern are breathtaking! Matt Dykstra, who led the Yellowstone trip as well as the 7th grade trip to Mt. St. Helen's, enjoys the opportunities these two trips afford to teach some history along with science. Did you



know, for instance, that Taq, a key enzyme in DNA work in forensics, was discovered in the Yellowstone hot springs, frozen for 20 years, and then rediscovered? Or have you ever wondered how they kept the volcanic ash of Mt. St. Helen's out of the Columbia River? As Mr. Dykstra would say, God's glory is in the details. Praise God for "classrooms on the go," safe returns, and many new reasons to sing.



## post scriptum...

"We have only known the back of the world. We see everything from behind. That is not a tree, but the back of a tree. That is not a cloud, but the back of a cloud. Cannot you see that everything is stooping and hiding a face? If we could only get round in front!"

G. K. Chesterton



## THE



The Oaks  
Education Association  
P.O. Box 141146  
Spokane, WA 99214

# Oaks

A CLASSICAL CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

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**PAID**  
Spokane, WA  
Permit #4

# LOVE, THINK, HONOR



October 2015

FROM THE OAKS CLASSICAL CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

509.536.5955 [www.theoakssca.org](http://www.theoakssca.org)

If you pay attention to the news these days, reports of pain, moral failures, and attacks on Christian values highlight the fact that we live in a 'cut-flower' society. America bloomed out of a Christian culture and has cut itself off from these roots. The flower of America is wilting, but as I watch a tree outside receive a caramel glaze and as a new school year begins, I am optimistic.

The excitement at The Oaks is not born out of an ignorance of current events nor from some pie-in-the-sky sentiment. It comes from a re-read of the Scriptures. Our name, The Oaks, comes from Isaiah 61 which describes Christ as one who brings joy, healing, and liberty to a people who are wilting. He transforms them into "oaks of righteousness," and the passage speaks of these oaks rebuilding "the old ruins" and repairing "the ruined cities." The Oaks' optimism is not rooted in confidence that we are doing what the Government Schools are doing on a smaller budget with better results nor from a belief that we have found a way to guarantee a safe environment and impressive education. We are optimistic because a classical education in a robust Christian culture creates beautiful blooms and rebuilt cities by being connected to the true source of life—Christ. We are about a categorically different endeavor!

Isaiah describes Christ pouring out blessings and changing His people as a result. This is wild, gospel optimism. God's attention to us grows true heart change in us.

So what does this gospel power look like if we fast forward to the time when the current kindergarteners are graduating? How will they shape Spokane for His glory? What will the rebuilt city look like?

The year is 2030. Did your company's long-term corporate strategy succeed? Will you have that mortgage paid off as planned? And what fruit is being produced in the lives of kids who in 2015 were in second grade and in 2030 may be completing their undergraduate degrees and possibly launching into a career?

This gets me excited for the 20<sup>th</sup> year of The Oaks! God has blessed us with a great staff and faculty and our largest enrollment ever. Please join me in re-reading Isaiah 61 and in praying that the Lord's face would continue to shine on our 309 children, 171 families, and 49 staff members as they seek to diligently apply God's appointed means, in wisdom, to bring up the next generation of "oaks of righteousness."

Charlie Dowers, Headmaster

## CAMPUS

We are excited to begin the 20th year of The Oaks! Look for details to come about our upcoming Benefit Auction and a 20th year celebration—both in 2016. For now, please mark your calendars for the annual Christmas program at The Fox Theatre on December 15th at 7pm. We hope to see you there!



Welcoming all pastors to Pastor Appreciation Day on Monday, November 16th from 8-10am. If you are a pastor, please plan to come sing with us at Cantabile, see Grammar School presentations at Memory Period, and enjoy brunch. Please RSVP to The Oaks office at 509-536-5955. If you are not a pastor, please extend this invitation to your local pastor!

## ACADEMICS



**Tool of the Trivium: The Art of Memory.** Last school year, each staff member read a 100-year-old book and created a project inspired by their reading. Secondary Latin teacher Eric Indgierd read Hugh of St. Victor's (1096-1141) *Didascalicon* with two other Secondary teachers. Eric created this piece illustrating his method of memorizing a favorite quote. The English translation runs: "A certain wise man, when asked concerning the method and form of study, declared: 'A humble mind, eagerness to inquire, a

quiet life, silent scrutiny, poverty, a foreign soil. These, for many, unlock the hidden places of learning.'" Come and see his framed original in the hall at The Oaks.

**Congratulations to Jaime Munch, an Oaks Junior**, who was elected to Washington's Legislative Youth Advisory Council. As a member of the LYAC, she will attend 4-6 meetings this year in Washington State, and visit Olympia on a Youth Action Day to meet with legislators and testify on bills in regard to Washington's youth. Good work, Jaime!

**Senior Ian Burgess placed among the top 5 percent** of more than 1.5 million students who entered the 2016 PSAT competition by taking the 2014 test. He has been named a Commended Student in the 2016 National Merit Scholarship Program. Congratulations, Ian!

## ENROLLMENT

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow**, for 44 new Grammar School Students and 26 new Secondary Students, for a combined enrollment of 309 students. We have two sixth grade classes this year, and our goal is to add an additional class for each grade in the Grammar School each year, so please continue to spread the word. Praise God for new students!

## RESOURCES

**Introducing the 2015-2016 Oaks Annual Fund.** For the past 20 years, God has caused The Oaks to flourish through the generosity of many of you. Thank you! Two goals for the new Annual Fund are: 1) to communicate where your gifts are going more effectively, and 2) to more clearly define goals for giving. Look for more information coming in the mail soon.

Would your business consider becoming a corporate sponsor for The Oaks? Please call the office at 536-5955 or email Charlie Dowers (charlie.dowers@theoakscga.org) or Jennifer Florence (Jennifer.florence@theoakscga.org) for details. Perks for your business include a table for 8 at The Oaks Benefit Auction, your company name and website link on The Oaks Corporate Sponsors' page, and various printed advertisements throughout the school year.

## ATHLETICS

**Senior Nights for fall sports are coming up quickly:** Tuesday, October 27th for Boys Soccer and Friday, October 30th for Girls Volleyball. Visit [www.theoakscga.org](http://www.theoakscga.org) and click on "Athletics" under "Student Life" for all fall event times and for information about the end-of-season tournaments. Go Oaks!



## TEACHER SPOTLIGHT



As Ben Palpant enters his 17th year teaching literature and art at The Oaks, he is excited to teach the Senior class, which includes his eldest child, Kiale. Over the years, he has led by example in the practice of "faithfulness in the little things." As one parent of three Alumni said, Ben has not only influenced their writing skills and love of literature, "he has taken a deep interest in their well-being—their character and heart—and it is this shepherding of their souls

has made the greatest impact on them." Beth Spurgetis ('09) remembers coming to British Literature on a hard day and Mr. Palpant setting his lesson plans aside to help the class work through their relationships with each other. Zach Lipton ('08) vividly remembers class discussions, particularly a discussion as a Senior about the words "dignity" and "sincerity." As Mr. Palpant anticipates teaching more of his own children and their peers in the future, he is most excited for the culture of creativity growing at The Oaks. With the colors of grace, discipline, and a myriad of talents ready on the palette, he sees remarkable potential to create beauty together.

## ALUMNI

**Chris Walker ('06) recently returned from Europe** where he attended two conferences on 3D printing. Chris is the Founder and CEO of Element Robot, LLC. After building their own Tritium 3D printer for university students, Element Robot pivoted and now serves professional users with Skyforge, a software platform for companies running 3D printers, which can make everything from satellite parts to medical implants. While in England, Chris visited Oaks classmate Kennedy (Catton) Sanderson ('06) and her husband. Kennedy is currently earning her PhD in legal history at Cambridge University. She is studying lawsuits from 1760-1790 that were appealed from Britain's Caribbean and American colonies to the highest court of the British Empire. Chris and Kennedy are pictured right.

