



The Courier

The Geneva School Parent Newsletter

September 2002

Falling In Love Again

By Michele Lewis

Geneva's Teacher Training 2002 was enough to make me wonder - wonder at such a gifted and dedicated group of people brought together by God's gracious goodness and united by a love for Him and for classical Christian education which seeks to glorify Him. Members of the Board, administration, and teachers met for three wonderful days of presentations and workshops. We were filled with new ideas and inspired once again about the incredible education we seek to provide at Geneva. But you must forgive us if the warm fellowship, great conversation, and delicious meals vie for equal time in our memories.

Board members and teachers opened the first day with presentations about the classical and Christian distinctives of Geneva. Bob Ingram particularly underscored our desire to create virtuous scholars - students filled with wonder about God's creation and a passion to live according to His truth. Crosland Stuart challenged us to generate ten principles of the culture which creates virtuous scholars. She did this using a floral arrangement as a metaphor. This caused some deep thinking and some widely stretched imaginations - just the sort of thing we want to encourage in our students but something which most of us try to avoid. Nevertheless, we managed to come up with an ideal school in which truth, beauty, and goodness reign, and we had a lot of fun in the process.

Carol Reaves turned our thoughts to the classroom with practical advice about creating a classical environment for the most efficacious teaching. Her presentation was a wonderful

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Nota Bene

- September 5:** Study Skills Presentation at the University Club, Winter Park at 7:00 PM. All welcome - see inside for more details
- September 9:** Kick off GPA meeting. Come hear Carlene King talk about Geneva's dialectic and rhetoric English program - more details inside
- September 2:** Labor Day - NO SCHOOL
- September 20:** Progress Reports Sent Home (Grades 3 - 12)

Announcements

Moms in Touch.: Moms from both campuses meet every Monday at 8:30 AM for approximately 45 minutes to pray for The Geneva School - students, parents, teachers, staff and board. Come as you are and join us in the Library at the Grammar School campus.



The first day of school for Catherine Deuchler. She is now at "big-school" with her two brothers. See page four for more pictures of the big day for 31 kindergarteners.

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mixture of anecdotes and practical wisdom, which left us with a final question: In our classrooms, are we building a temple fit for the Lord? Michael Eatmon, a true rhetorician, also reminded us that teaching has a higher purpose: It is not a simple transference of knowledge. It is creating in our students a passion for the beauty of knowledge and a desire to pursue that which is good. It is laid on a foundation of thorough knowledge of the subject, an engaging and challenging presentation, and a clear purpose for the use of knowledge. Michael's presentation was the perfect embodiment of these principles. I and many others left with a passion to teach in such a way.

Laura Grace Alexander reminded us that even with all the skill in the world, our teaching will be empty without a love for the Lord, a love for our families, and a love for our students. Such love is not possible outside of a committed relationship with our Lord. Mike Francis underscored this in a heart-piercing call to spend time with the Lord in daily prayer and Bible study. Laura Grace encouraged us with the grateful acknowledgement that God is good and faithful and will complete the good work he began in us and in Geneva, whatever our failings may be.

The second day included teachers presenting the classical model in practice. We had the opportunity to experience a compressed classical education from the Grammar, through the Dialectic, and on to the Rhetoric. Lessons taught by Carol Reaves and Robin Candeto made it clear that Geneva's kindergarten is no simple-minded Sesame Street! Our children are exposed to the best in music and literature. Another Grammar-stage lesson displayed the key classical element of integration, utilizing music and the Shurley grammar method in the teaching of Latin. Lessons in the Dialectic included a lesson in Logic taught by Michael (which we did not want to end, though it will take a few more lessons to make some of us logical.) In a Math lesson Nan moved well past the usual approach explaining the reasoning by which Pythagoras came up with his famous theory, though even she could not explain why on earth anyone would ever think of such a thing. Miss Futuron wowed us with her phenomenal knowledge of the dates and events of history as she clearly presented it as God's providence worked out in the world. We concluded with English lessons from the Rhetoric taught by Carlene and Dale King. Carlene's breadth and depth of knowledge coupled with a quiet wry humor made us all wish we could sign up for her class. Her ideas for teaching literature to teenagers reared on television and comic books were inspiring. Dale's inspiring knowledge and love of literature, and especially his love of a well-turned phrase, kept us want-

ing more. How can we ask for a better education for our children? There is no better.

On the final day teachers were given the opportunity to practice creating history lessons in the classical model. Here was our chance to move into the rhetoric of teaching and what fun we had! Our brains were taxed to the limit trying to find engaging ways to incorporate drama, music, literature and writing into our lessons. We were as excited as we want our students to be and filled with new ideas for our classrooms.

The exceedingly gracious hospitality extended to us by Dayle Seneff was the underpinning for three days of inspiration, preparation, and information, both practical and theoretical. Geneva is a great and worthy ideal, but like all ideals it gets a little tarnished in use. It was great to dust it off and polish it up and as Dale Wayne said, "... fall in love with classical education all over again!" In the excitement and exhaustion and challenge of the days ahead we will always remember the high calling of classical Christian education-to encourage the development of virtuous scholars who seek Truth, Beauty, and Goodness, and who strive to live in a manner worthy of our Lord and Savior.

SOLI DEO GLORIA

Michele Lewis is the 4th grade teacher at The Geneva School and the mother of Kyle, a student in the 10th grade.

***Ever wish your children
had better study skills?***

***Come hear Steve Piscitelli give a
presentation on Study Skills.***

Steve is the author of many books and articles including *I Don't Need This Stuff! Or Do I? A Study Skills and Time Management Book* (Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1997). and "One down three to go," an article about study skills for 9th graders (The Freshman Beacon, Fall 1996).

***September 9th, 7:00 PM
at***

University Club of Winter Park
(Intersection of Park Avenue and Webster Avenue)

***Everyone welcome - please leave your pre-
school and grammar school children at home***

HOW MY GENEVA EDUCATION PREPARED ME FOR LIFE AT COLLEGE

by Caroline Candeto

One year ago this September, I began a new phase of life and education as I entered college at Furman University in Greenville, South Carolina. I remember the excitement and sense of accomplishment that I felt upon graduating from Geneva in May of that year, and the jitters that crept up on me as my summer seemed to vanish into thin air. Was I really about to enter college? What would it be like? Was I ready-socially, spiritually, and academically? I expected my freshman year to be challenging, but I didn't know what challenges to expect. Or, more significantly, if I was prepared to face them.



Caroline on graduation day last year

I soon learned, upon moving into a dorm room, attending a new church, and beginning classes for Fall term, that I was prepared. Although nearly everything about college and everyone at college was new to me, I discovered a surprising level of confidence in new situations that I hadn't known I possessed. It appeared at unexpected moments, such as during my Humanities class, one of Furman's largest lecture courses. After graduating in a class of 7, I entered a class of over 700 freshmen, 125 of whom had registered to take Humanities in the Fall of 2001. An interdisciplinary course taught by English, religion, history, philosophy, and classics professors, Humanities covered the history and literature of Western Civilization from its ancient beginnings through the present day. I'll never forget our first research paper, a literary criticism of one of the many texts we had read; I wrote mine on a section from Homer's *Odyssey*, which Mrs. King had introduced to me in the 8th grade at Geneva. We were on our own to choose the text, do the research, come up with an argument, and write persuasively...except for the countless librarians, tutors, and teaching assistants who seemed to come out of the woodwork in order to ease our anxiety. Well, my classmates' anxiety. It was a funny thing...I never really understood what all of the fuss was about. A similar phenomenon occurred around exam time, when we were

expected to write 2 ½ hours' worth of essays over the content of the entire term: sheer panic. What was going on? My classmates' nervous excitement inspired guilt that I wasn't studying more or growing anxious myself, but then again I never saw a good reason to worry. Our first college paper? 6-7 pages? Essay exams? The *Odyssey*? I had survived (not only survived, I might add, but enjoyed) Mr. Eatmon's philosophy class and Mr. and Mrs. King's English essay tests and papers, and I had taken two high school classes on Rhetoric, the art of persuasive communication. (And did I mention that I first read the *Odyssey* in the eighth grade?) Really, what was there for me to fret about?

During the Fall I also took an art appreciation course taught by art, music and theatre professors. Many of the works we viewed or listened to I had already been exposed to during my time at Geneva, and some of them I had seen in person on Geneva Europe trips. As an intended French major, I also took two upper-level French courses during the year, and was again shocked by how much of the language I was already familiar with, and confident in. At the same time, of course, I realized how much I had yet to learn, but what I knew already was quite encouraging!

This confidence, which I believe is a direct result of my classical Christian education at Geneva, manifested itself most significantly when I was forced to confront issues of faith-challenges to my distinctly Christian worldview. I discovered, because I was separated from the familiarity of the "Christian bubble" that was my home for 18 years, that I truly believe what I was taught to believe. I became immensely grateful for the Reformed Christian worldview that was instilled in me during my most formative years, and I felt prepared to articulate it when the opportunity arose (and it did). Although my mother will tell you that I would rather have a tooth pulled than speak in public, several of my classes involved giving oral presentations of some sort, and once again, I believe that I was one of the most well-prepared and confident students who spoke. Thank you, Mr. Eatmon and Mr. King! What a gift they gave to me during my years at Geneva.

One of the questions that I have often been asked regard

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ing my experience at Geneva and the transition into the much larger, and secular, environment of a private college, is if Geneva's small size was a disadvantage. Was I too sheltered? Not at all. In fact, this year I will be moving from the 2,700 students of Furman to the over 37,000 undergraduate students who attend the University of Central Florida here in Orlando. While I was, and am, eager now to enter the larger and more diverse "ocean" that is the world, I am ready to do so only because I first spent time, lots of time, swimming in a small but crystal-clear pond here my vision was unimpeded by the muck of skewed philosophies, and where I was protected, until I had developed effective defenses against them, from the sharks and killer whales of false religion. I may be a single little fish, but oh, have I learned how to swim!

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SINGLE LITTLE
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Caroline was a member of Geneva's first graduating class of 2001. She is the daughter of Robin Candeto, one half of our talented duo of kindergarten teachers.



Above: Karena Robinson has her name tag attached by Agnes Cavalli, one of the kindergarten aides.
Below: Davis Stewart and Tony Burtrum play together



Calling All Photographers

In order to be more proactive in documenting the lives of our students at school, we would like to have a parent volunteer from each class to be the "Designated Photographer." This person would be responsible for taking photographs throughout the year - in the classroom, on field trips, on the playground, in the art-room etc. At the end of the year we plan to make class videos using these photographs, as a keepsake for the students.



If you are interested please talk to Sarah Cloke (407-673-4541 or SarahClope@mindspring.com)



Above: Mrs. Candeto's class play with manipulatives as everyone arrives for the first day of school

Below: Savannah Harding, with her mom Kellie, is excited to be beginning kindergarten



The First Day of School for 31 kindergarteners

GENEVA'S SUCCESS IN AP EXAMS

The results of AP tests given to Geneva students last May are in, and congratulations are in order. A grade of "5" is described in AP publications as that of a student "extremely well qualified"; the grade of "5" is also equivalent to an A or A+ in college courses. Katy Maynard, a senior, received a "5" on the English Language and Composition exam; and Heather Wayne, a junior at the time, received a "5" in English Literature and Composition. A grade of "4" - also commendable - was awarded to Jeb Beates and Katy Fridsma (both juniors at the time) in English Literature and Composition. Katy Maynard also received a "4" in this category.

Two of our students - Katy Maynard and Cam Medlin (both seniors) - prepared for the AP Calculus test by working independently with an on-line course. They both received "4's" on this very difficult exam.

This was Geneva's second year to offer AP courses and also its second year to receive a number of "4's" and "5's." Having graded AP English Literature for the past two years, I (Mrs. Carlene King) cannot emphasize enough how rarely the graders award these high marks.

The Geneva School Scrip Program

It is the start of another year and once again we will be selling gift certificates from many local and national merchants.

For those of you new to the School, let me take this opportunity to explain how the Scrip program works.

Instead of asking Geneva families to spend additional money on items they may not want or need, the Scrip program enables you to help the School's fundraising efforts whenever you make your normal, everyday purchases. Scrip consists of gift certificates from local and national merchants and is used in their stores just like cash. When you purchase Scrip from The Geneva School, we earn a percentage of every purchase made. In essence, local and national merchants are rewarding your loyalty by making contributions back to the School. Now, money that will be spent anyway is generating financial support for The Geneva School.



A good example of a store you may frequent regularly is Hollywood Video. A \$10 gift card for Hollywood Video costs the School \$8.50. This is where the fundraising element of the program comes in. You pay the full face value (not a penny more) for the gift card and the School makes a profit of \$1.50.

The beauty of this fund-raiser is that - if you participate - you can give money to the school without ever having to take it from your giving budget.

Once a month you will receive a Scrip Order Form with a deadline for you to return it to the School with a check. The deadline is usually a Monday, and the order is placed the very next day. The gift certificates arrive at the School on Thursday morning, and they are ready for you to pick up that afternoon.

Last year the money raised through the Scrip Program helped send some of our new teachers to the Logos School Classical Teaching Conference in Idaho this past summer. This year we will once again be raising money for teacher training.

Geneva Parents Association

TO ENRICH THE LIFE OF THE GENEVA SCHOOL THROUGH PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

by Gordon Cloke - GPA President

Welcome new parents, and welcome back to all returning parents! I have rather predictably decided that this article would provide a great opportunity to introduce or remind everyone what the GPA is all about.

Who or what is the GPA?

Every Geneva parent is automatically a member of the Geneva Parents Association - no additional fee required! As such every parent is positively encouraged to participate actively in the life of the School and in the day-to-day education of their children. Opportunities to get involved in your child's classroom, in field trips, projects and events abound at The Geneva School, and this participation is highly coveted by the faculty and administration.

Almost all of this involvement is spontaneous and initiated directly by individual parents. However, a GPA Committee is also formed each year in order to coordinate and facilitate as required, and also to focus on participation in school-wide events and activities (such as the school Christmas program or Auction). The committee is comprised of at least one parent representative from each grade level (not necessarily the "Room Mom," who works closely with the class teacher) and is coordinated by a President who is elected each spring.

What does it do?

In addition to the ongoing parental involvement described above, involvement in the GPA includes the following areas:

- Overseeing the annual nomination and election of a parent governor to The Geneva School Board
- Working directly with the administration (and separate committees) to coordinate parental involvement in school-wide events and activities
- Making sure that our teachers feel appreciated by the parents
- Keeping abreast of current needs within the school and recruiting parents with the required talents

An additional overarching priority of the GPA is to help ensure that there is a smooth flow of communication between parents and the School. The monthly GPA meetings provide an excellent opportunity to catch up on the latest school news, ask questions and discuss matters of common interest.

How can I get involved?

First and foremost, stay involved in the day-to-day education of your child. Keep in regular communication with your child's teacher. Look for opportunities to participate actively in the classroom or to help with field trips and special projects.

Secondly, plan to attend the monthly GPA meeting, which is usually held on the second Monday of each month at the Grammar School campus at 7 p.m. The meetings are always announced in the Courier and by email.

This year the GPA will also host some special parent evenings that include presentations on the classical model and opportunities to interact with the Board. The first of these will on September 9th and will feature Mrs. Carlene King with a presentation of the extraordinary English program offered in the Geneva Dialectic and Rhetoric classes. Look out for details in your email!

Thirdly, consider becoming a GPA grade representative and playing a more active role in the GPA committee. You will be asked to communicate and help coordinate the involvement of the parents in your grade in school-wide activities. It is an excellent way to jump into the mainstream of the Geneva community.

Gordon Cloke

President, Geneva Parents Association 2002-2003

**TO ENRICH THE LIFE OF
THE GENEVA SCHOOL THROUGH
PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

The Geneva Parents Association
is delighted to present at its September meeting
**A Classical Presentation with
Carlene King**

Mrs. Carlene King will present the wonders of the dialectic and rhetoric English program at TGS. The books read; in and out of classroom activities; how the work matures through the grades; field trips; and much more.

**Monday, September 9th, at 7:00 p.m.
Grammar School Campus**