



The Courier

The Geneva School Parent Newsletter

February 2003

A HOME OF OUR OWN

By Bob Ingram, Chairman of the Board

Great news is worth Krispy Kreme donuts, orange juice and congratulatory hugs in the morning carpool lines.

Thursday morning, January 16th, now stands as a historic day in the ten-year history of The Geneva School. The celebration marked the successful conclusion of a six week long Capital Campaign during which we, The Geneva School, raised almost \$2.25 million dollars toward the purchase and refurbishing of our new school building.

To put that into perspective, consider that most institutions hoping to raise the same amount of money will take six weeks just to create the campaign promotional brochure. The actual campaign may last 6-12 months, and oftentimes professional consultants are used to help guarantee the best results. It is both astounding and humbling to realize that our campaign produced such remarkable results in the very short space of six weeks, and that over the holidays when we were all naturally focused upon our families, Christmas and New Year's.

From a different vantage point, the \$2.25 million represents approximately the same amount of money donated over Geneva's first ten years of operation. Recall every spring auction, each year-end Board matching challenge, each Sally Foster wrapping paper drive, every read-a-thon, raffle, golf marathon and Booster Club hot dog and candy bar sold, every Scrip order taken and each hot lunch prepared. Total all the profit from the myriad of people who have labored so faithfully for so long to raise money for the school, and be amazed yet again that this community of people, The Geneva School, accomplished in six weeks what it has taken ten years to achieve through all these efforts combined.



Kellie Harding celebrating with Dayle Seneff

But lest we forget, all those previous fund-raising activities were absolutely necessary for us to be in the position we are today. What it also means is that when you add those donations with our current campaign, the total monies raised in ten years by The Geneva School really amounts to nearly \$4.5 million dollars!! In that first year of 34 students, who would have foreseen this outpouring of generosity?

The only way to account for such faithfulness and generosity is to look beyond the gift and the giver to God Himself. While human achievement is noteworthy, God's unfailing blessings to us through Jesus Christ are praiseworthy. We have been marvelously preserved, protected, and provided for over the last decade. We now stand poised for the future.

Thank you, parents and friends of The Geneva School, for your unprecedented generosity. You are building a legacy that lasts through your investment in Christian classical education.

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In the beginning.....

By Carol Reaves

Frequently, I find myself asked the same questions by parents. First, what is it that brought me to The Geneva School after 27 years of teaching in public and private school? Secondly, how does the classical model of a kindergarten class differ from that of any other Christian school?

What brought me to The Geneva School is simply the pursuit of excellence. Years ago, I became strongly convinced that educators were underestimating a child's learning potential. Curricula with "fill-in-the-blank" short response answers saturated the market. Phonics was being replaced with the "look-say" method, and children were not expected, or taught, how to think.

After visiting The Geneva School and reading Doug Wilson's *Recovering the Lost Tools of Learning* I was encouraged to find others who shared my concern for quality education. I was also impressed that the faculty of Geneva shared my commitment to develop in students a life-long love for learning. As I walked the halls of this nondescript little building, I found rooms housing a Trojan horse, pyramids, jungles and other visuals to enhance learning. I was in search of a school where the learning experience was treasured. I discovered in The Geneva School a precious jewel.

Is a classical kindergarten different? The answer is "Yes!" Kindergarten is part of the Grammar stage of the Trivium, but contains elements of the Dialectic and Rhetoric stages. As in all kindergartens, children learn letter sounds and the correct formation of letters. However, the emphasis of the Geneva kindergarten is not just phonics and decoding words, but also encod-

ing. Most of the students leave our program, spelling over 100 words and writing original books - autobiographies, biographies, "how-to" books, fiction and non-fiction. They see the relationship between the individual letters and the written word and are exposed to the logic of writing. Classics are read to the children so that they may be immersed in the beauty of language. When they model their stories (verbal and written) after

quality literature, they are exposed to an element of the Rhetoric stage.

What has Geneva taught me? After almost six years at The Geneva School, my suspicions have been confirmed. Children can learn far more than I ever expected. They don't merely learn that cars, trucks and planes are forms of transportation but can point out and explain the parts of a plane from the fuselage to the elevators and ailerons. Throughout the year they are introduced to map skills and are able to name and locate the continents. Daily, I am amazed at their learning capacities and awed by the effectiveness of the classical model of education.

I thank the Lord for giving me the privilege of working with His

precious little ones in a school that exemplifies the philosophy of education enjoyed by Socrates and Augustine. Kindergarten is just the beginning. It lays the foundation for a life-long celebration of learning that continues through the remainder of the Grammar stage, up through the Dialectic and Rhetoric and on into the rest of life.

THE GENEVA SCHOOL : EDUCATING FOR LIFE

Mrs. Reaves has 33 years of teaching experience and has taught kindergarten at Geneva since 1997.



Above: Kindergarteners posing with their very own suitcases underneath their airplane.

Below: A young pilot brings his plane in to land at the Orlando Executive Airport.



MUSIC AT THE GENEVA SCHOOL

Geneva is privileged to have some very talented teachers, not least in the area of music. Robin Candeto, one of the two kindergarten teachers, teaches the kindergarten students; Sara Ingram is teaching first and second grade students; and Randall Van Meggelen teaches grades three through seven.

Kindergarten

Twice a week Robin, who earned her degree in Early Childhood Education from Florida State University and has eight years of experience leading children's choirs, has the privilege of leading the kindergarten in music classes. Each class contains many musical elements that inform and delight young students as well as lay the foundation for continued music education. Kindergarten music classes include singing, fun movement activities, and opportunities to identify and play various rhythm instruments. The children especially enjoy playing individual xylophones. As they learn concepts about rhythm, melody, and musical notation, the children discover new ways to praise God with their voices and instruments. Surely He is smiling when 30 young musicians are singing praises, marching, and playing tambourines, bells, drums, rhythm sticks, tone blocks and other instruments in their rhythm band!

Classical composers are introduced to the young students, and they enjoy listening to many beautiful compositions. As they listen to various instruments in

**Praise Him with stringed instruments and flutes!
Praise Him with loud cymbals;
Praise Him with clashing cymbals!
Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.
Praise the Lord! Psalm 105:4-7**

these classical pieces, they explore the orchestra and its many musical families.

In the fall, students venture to the Orlando Philharmonic Symphony on a field trip. Sheer delight can be seen on the faces of sweet kindergartners as they hear and see a full orchestra, classical ballet and opera selections for perhaps the first time in their lives. The children excitedly spot and identify the various instrument families and are encouraged to close their eyes to fully enjoy the loveliness of the music.

The emphasis of kindergarten music classes is on discovering the beauty of music by hearing it, and experiencing the joy of music by making it - and they have great fun in the process!

First and Second Grade

Sara Ingram has been immersed in music all her life and is renowned for her beautiful singing voice, which we were all privileged to hear during the Christmas Program last December. She sang in choirs all the way through high school and college, being a celebrated member of the Furman Singers at Furman University. Sara was asked to teach the first and second grade classes after a need arose at the beginning of the year. She is very much enjoying the opportunity to share her love of music with these four classes.

Sara began teaching music about a month before the Christmas program and enjoyed learning the songs with the children - especially their very favorite Zulu song "C-yah-hahmbah." Now that the new semester has started, the first and second grade students will cover many of the same themes as Robin covers in kindergarten but at a first and second grade level. The children will learn about rhythm, pitch, melody, and orchestra and instruments. They will also learn about the lives of some famous composers and experience their different composition styles. Games, flash cards, drawing and writing will be used to reinforce concepts covered during music class. The children love to sing



The kindergarten students playing and singing with their instruments



Sara Ingram singing at the Christmas Program

and much will be done to celebrate this love in the children.

Third - Seventh Grade

Randall Van Meggelen who teaches music to grades three through seven also teaches Bible to ninth and tenth grade

students and history to seventh graders. This is his first year at The Geneva School, and he considers it a great privilege to be a part of a very special community, and to labor alongside parents in the education of their children.

Randall, having grown up surrounded by classical music and the great hymns of the faith, learned early to appreciate the aesthetic beauty of fine music, and to see music as a choice means of expressing that which we hold to be good and true. He learned that music is an indispensable means by which we worship our Creator and Redeemer. Randall began piano lessons at the age of seven and throughout his teenage years took annual examinations through the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto. He pursued music studies at Covenant College, where he earned a B.A. in music (piano emphasis) and a B.A. in Sociology. He is currently working towards an M.A. in Theological Studies at Reformed Theological Seminary. Randall has taught music and Bible in Christian schools in Toronto and Florida for over 13 years. He has also been a church music director for ten years, currently directing music at Immanuel Presbyterian Church in DeLand, and continues to teach piano lessons.

The three main elements of Geneva's music program for the third through seventh grade are:

Music History and Literature: In line with Geneva's integrated curriculum, the students explore the music of various historical periods that, with the exception of seventh grade, correspond with their history curriculum. They consider the significance of key names, terms, dates, places, and events.

3rd grade: Ancient: The contributions of Greek and Roman cultures to the development of Western classical music, music in the Old and New Testament.

4th grade: Medieval and Renaissance: The music of Western Europe from 450-1600 A.D.

5th grade: Baroque and Classical: Western music from 1600-1870.

6th grade: Romantic and Modern: Western music from 1870 to the present day.

7th grade: General survey of the history of Western music.

Elements of Music: The students study basic elements, such as notation, rhythm, melody, harmony, texture, and form.

Applied Music: Students express music through such mediums as singing, recorder, tone chime, movement, clapping, percussion, and composition.

The highlights of last semester included attending the Orlando Symphony Orchestra Youth Concert Series and our annual Christmas Program.

The symphony highlighted the music of Mozart through the present, and about one month was spent familiarizing the students with the various pieces the



Mr. Van Meggelen conducting musicians and singers at the Christmas Program



Sixth grade students learning how to play the tone chimes

symphony would play, the composers, and important background and music information.

Soon thereafter preparations began for the Christmas program. Randall has a love of mass choirs, and envisioned a school-wide choir, including faculty members, singing the majority of the selections. This lofty goal was partially reached with the entire school singing some of the opening and closing selections. Several selections were also enjoyed by individual and combined classes. The Christmas program represented an integrated approach at its best and included some Latin music, poignant readings from the ninth - twelve grade drama class, faculty and staff participation, some instrumental accompaniment by students, solos by students, faculty and staff, slides of art work, and even ballet. It is hoped that next year's Christmas program will include even more instrumental accompaniment and school-wide readings.

This semester students will sink their teeth into history, theory and non-vocal forms of applied music. Also, the third through seventh grade classes, regardless of the historical period they are studying, will learn to identify a general repertoire of classical standards throughout history. These standards will be arranged with lyrics which will reinforce the

basic facts about the pieces, including the composer's name, the title, background information, and other musical concepts. By the end of the year, students will be able to identify over 25 songs by composer and title.

Another field trip, similar to the Orlando Symphony, is also being explored for the spring semester.

Looking To The Future

The music facility at the new property will greatly enhance Geneva's music program. The added room size alone will be a great improvement. It will give the School plenty of room to store and use the small, but growing repertoire of music and instruments, including basic percussion instruments, several xylophones, hand chimes, recorders, and keyboards. The room will be a true "music room," with insulated sound-proof walls, possibly a tiered floor plan, a quality sound system, and other audio-visual equipment.

Future possibilities are exciting to ponder. Whether in the next few years Geneva develops a choral program or even a band program, the new facility will adequately serve its needs.



Christmas Program held on December 12, 2002

Math from Mrs. Mann's Perspective

MRS. MANN'S MATHEMATICAL MASTERMINDS

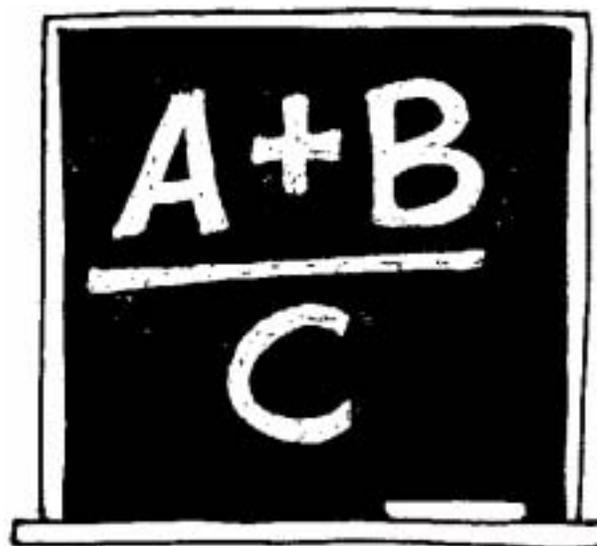
Mrs. Mann's Mathematical Masterminds have completed the first semester with flying colors. Various activities have been incorporated into their courses to both challenge and excite them. They enjoyed Metric Day on 10-10-2002, by participating in the Mini-Metric Olympics. The events they competed in included the cotton ball shotput, the plastic straw javelin throw, and the paper plate discus throw. After estimating the distance in metric units, the person whose actual measure was closest was deemed the winner. The highlight of the day was a Greek luncheon, where students feasted upon Greek salads, pita bread, hummus, moussaka, olives and feta cheese.



Popular with most students, "Mann Madness" is held prior to each chapter test to aid the students in their review of the material to be tested on the following day. Following the theme of the Jeopardy show, students are divided into teams to compete in completing math problems they have recently studied. The score is determined by totaling the "Mann Money" they have received, and winners are awarded packets of M & M's as prizes.

Other projects completed this semester include Kaleidoscope Labryinths, Latitude and Longitude projects, Systems of Equations, Cartesian Cartoons, a Metric Scavenger Hunt, and a Chocolate Chip Cookie Lab. In the second semester, we are looking forward to "Pi Day," on or around March 14 (3.14), where students will bring a pie to share with their class along with interesting facts about pi. We also plan to repeat the canoe trip that was initiated last year on the Wekiva River to bring the algebraic formula "distance = rate x time" to life.

There is never a dull moment in the Wonderful World of Mathematics.



MU ALPHA THETA

On Monday, January 13, 2003, the second induction of our Mu Alpha Theta chapter took place at the Dialectic and Rhetoric campus. Mu Alpha Theta is an international mathematics society whose principal purpose is to stimulate a deeper and more effective interest in mathematics. As their primary service project, members provide math tutoring for other students. The new members were announced at chapel on Monday, January 13, where Mr. Michael Eatmon was the guest speaker. A luncheon was hosted later that day to welcome and congratulate the new inductees. To be eligible for membership, a student must have completed four semesters of college preparatory mathematics with distinction, and either be enrolled in a fifth semester or have completed a fifth semester with distinction. The new members are: (tenth grade) Kyle Roth, Casey Vaughn, and Danielle Wayne; (eleventh grade) Brenna McConnell, Rachael Pennington, and John Ritchie; and (twelfth grade) Clare Skinner and Scott Wilson. They join the following current members: President: Todd Bledsoe; Vice President: Heather Wayne; Secretary: Katie Fridsma; Treasurer: Gingie Maynard; Jeb Beates, Victor Boyer, Stephanie Cuffel, and Steve Minegar. Mrs. Mann is the faculty sponsor. Congratulations to these fine students.

Nan Mann has been a part of the Geneva faculty since 1998 and currently teaches Pre-algebra, Algebra I and Algebra II to seventh through eleventh grade students.

Faculty/ Board vs. Students Basketball Game



Friday, February 28



First Presbyterian Church, Maitland

Come and enjoy dinner before the game
Dinner will be served from 6 p.m.
The Game will start at about 7:15 p.m.

The Geneva School Annual Auction Saturday, April 5, 2003 6:30 p.m.

All Saints Episcopal Church, Winter Park

Two things make an auction a success - lots of quality items to auction and lots of people to bid on them. Please mark your calendars and begin to think of friends, family members and business associates you can invite to this event.

Do you personally have an item or service you would be willing to donate?

Do you know an individual or company you would be willing to ask to donate a service or item?

Do you know a contact person within a company, but you are hesitant to ask them for a donation?

We will gladly send them a letter requesting a donation.

If you have an idea for an auction item, but wonder how we could use it, call Amelia Kapur at school.

Do you have an idea for an auction item but are unable to procure it yourself? Let Amelia know, and maybe someone else will be able to run with your idea.

Included in this mailing are a number of introduction letters, on Geneva letterhead, and some donation forms. Please use these letters when approaching potential donors. If you are successful in procuring a donation, please turn in a donation form to the School office. This enables the School to keep track of the many donations.

ALL PROCEEDS WILL GO TOWARDS THE NEW FACILITY

Geneva Parents Association

TO ENRICH THE LIFE OF THE GENEVA SCHOOL THROUGH PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

by Gordon Cloke - GPA President

Since I last wrote this column, a great deal has happened at The Geneva School. The December GPA meeting was canceled to make room for a special parent meeting at the proposed new property in Casselberry. Since that time, almost \$2.25M has been raised in a capital campaign that will help ensure that The Geneva School has a place of its own by the beginning of the next school year. As someone who cares deeply for The Geneva School, who believes passionately in the classical Christian education that is being provided and who has a massive personal interest in the shape of four enrolled students, I thank God for all of you who took the opportunity to give or pledge. I have visions of Moira (my kindergartner) in graduation robes...

These events unfortunately meant that we did not have the opportunity to hear from Coach Dan Harger and John Maynard (Chair of the Sports Committee) about the Geneva athletic program. This will now be rescheduled for a future meeting, perhaps even within this school year. At the January GPA meeting, some of you had the privilege of hearing Reverend Russ Kapusinski (who currently teaches Bible to our Dialectic students) speak about Reformed Theology and its relation to Classical Education. I wish you all could have heard Russ articulate the school's fervent desire to immerse all our students in a gospel world-view and equip them to take that gospel to the world and the next generation. If you would like a taped copy of that session please contact either me or Sarah. We will also try and get it on the web site.

At the February GPA meeting we have a special treat in store - Carol Reaves and Robin Candeto will be talking about the Classical Kindergarten. In my opinion, Geneva provides the finest and most remarkable kindergarten experience anywhere in the Orlando area (and probably beyond). This is a great opportunity to hear about how it is done, and about the philosophy of education that makes it so successful. Bring your friends to hear from two remarkable teachers about a program that provides a benchmark in excellence.

The spring of 2003 brings many opportunities for parents to remain involved in the life of The Geneva School, including our annual spring auction event, with participation from students and parents at every grade level. Please consider how you can get involved, whether it be in a school-wide event such as the auction, or in the work in store to relocate to a new facility, or in your child's classroom. The enthusiastic participation of Geneva parents continues to be a key distinctive and success factor for The Geneva School.

If you have any questions about the Geneva Parents Association, or how you can get involved, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Gordon Cloke

President, Geneva Parents Association, 2002-2003

Nota Bene

- February 10:** GPA Meeting - 7:00 p.m. Grammar School Campus. Special Kindergarten Presentation
- February 17:** NO SCHOOL - Presidents' Day
- February 21:** Progress Reports Sent Home (Grades 3 - 12)
- February 28:** Faculty/Board vs. Students Basketball Game - 6 p.m. First Presbyterian Church, Maitland

Announcements

Moms in Touch: Moms from both campuses meet every Monday at 8:30 a.m. for an hour 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.