

# Palmarium

The Classical Academy exists to assist parents in their mission to develop exemplary citizens equipped with analytical thinking skills, virtuous character, and a passion for learning, all built upon a solid foundation of knowledge.



## Reflections: Some Highlights from the

### ••••• *Palmarium*

This month's *Palmarium* is going to be a little different. As I started thinking about what to kick-off the school year with, I realized that this issue begins the **5<sup>th</sup> year** that TCA has been producing the *Palmarium*. During that time span over 300 pages have been written in the thirty-plus volumes. We've covered many educational topics, provided many inspiring quotes, and addressed nearly all of the *Character Strengths and Virtues* outlined in Christopher Peterson's and Martin Seligman's book.

So, this issue is going to focus on some **highlights** from those previous volumes. There have been many outstanding articles written and I had to leave some great efforts out of this forty-plus page issue. The pages that follow move chronologically through the *Palmarium's* development and give an **excellent snapshot of who we are and what TCA values**. Please enjoy revisiting some of these articles if you've already read them, and if not, I hope these offerings will pique your interest to review old issues and look forward to future volumes. All back-issues of the *Palmarium* can be found on our website at this link: <http://tcatitans.org/cms/One.aspx?portalId=765275&pageId=765286> Thank you for reading. I and all the staff at TCA look forward to a great school year. We appreciate you being a part of The Classical Academy family.

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excellence with honor

- Whole Person Focused
  - Relationship Based
  - Classically Oriented
  - Idea Centered

# Palmarium

The Classical Academy exists to assist parents in their mission to develop exemplary citizens equipped with analytical thinking skills, virtuous character, and a passion for learning, all built upon a solid foundation of knowledge.



## Thoughts on Education from a Founding Father: *John Adams*

from *Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law* 1765

“It should be your care, therefore, and mine, to elevate the minds of our children and exalt their



courage; to accelerate and animate their industry; to excite in them an habitual contempt of meanness, abhorrence of injustice and inhumanity, and an ambition to excel in every capacity, faculty, and virtue. If we suffer their minds to grovel and creep

in infancy, they will grovel all their lives.”

*John Adams*

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- Whole Person Focused
  - Relationship Based
    - Classically Oriented
    - Idea Centered

## The Purpose of the *Palmarium* Newsletter: A Work in Progress

As I thought about a method to get information out to the Academic Services staff and to the TCA academic community I wanted to create a forum for an exchange of ideas, as well as a centralized point for information flow in certain areas such as: Compliance and Accreditation, CCCI (Character, Culture, Curriculum, and Instruction), Student Support Services information, upcoming due dates for DAS staff, and other pertinent topics of interest.

The title has evolved since the idea first came to me. As you can tell from the rest of this page the theme of *masterpiece* is prominent. I wanted to evoke the idea that as we pursue truth, beauty, and goodness in assisting parents in the development of exemplary citizens we are in part striving to create a great work – a masterpiece. What better title for an academic newsletter at a classical school than to use a Latin title. So I turned to none other than one of our Latin experts, Bleys Kueck. I asked Bleys for a word in Latin that means “masterpiece” and after discussing the obvious phrase that most have heard of “magnum opus” and a less known alternative “palmarium” I decided to go the less known route.

For me it fits well . . . “exemplary citizens equipped with analytical thinking skills, virtuous character, and a passion for learning, all built upon a solid foundation of knowledge” . . . deserving of a palm.



### Etymology of a Title

pal'ma:ri.um

literally “*deserving of a palm*”;  
a *masterpiece*; something  
that deserves a prize



Yes, it sure has been a long, hard climb  
Train wheels runnin' through the back of my memory  
When I ran on the hilltop following a pack of wild geese  
Someday, everything is gonna be smooth like a rhapsody  
When I paint my masterpiece . . .

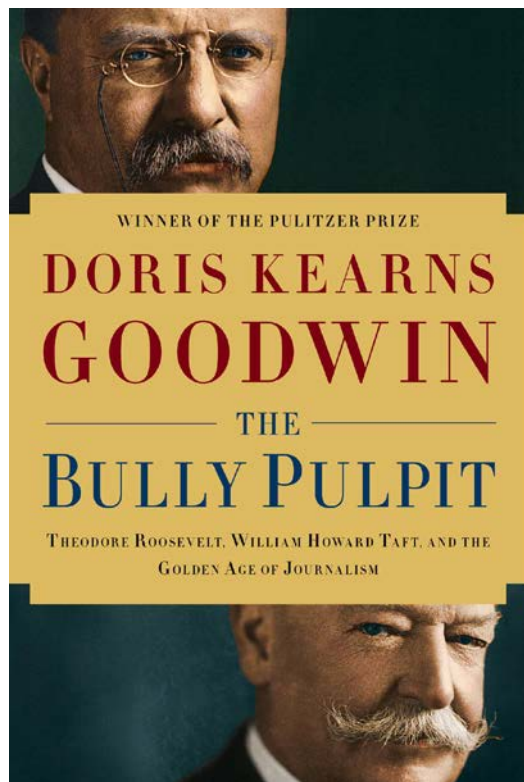
Bob Dylan, *When I Paint My Masterpiece* (1971)

## The Blank Canvas

by Wesley Jolly

For about the past five years I've had a blank canvas hanging from the plantation shutters in my study. That blank canvas greets me each morning as I have prepared for a new day – with students, with family, friends, or just a quiet day alone. The canvas serves as reminder for me that each morning brings a new day, a fresh start – that I begin again with my class, my friends, family, and associates. I may continue a work that has been in progress for years, adding new layers, or begin anew with a fresh palette. There are a few questions I need to consistently ask myself at the end of each day. Is the painting I've created one that I'd want to sign my name to? Is it a work of beauty and goodness? Am I slowly creating my masterpiece so that one day when I look back I'll smile in rhapsodic reflection . . . ?

## TR and Reading: Excerpt from *The Bully Pulpit*



Cover of Doris Kearns Goodwin's latest work, *The Bully Pulpit*. Movie rights have already been obtained for this new title by Steven Spielberg after the success of the movie *Lincoln*, based on Goodwin's previous book, *Team of Rivals*.

Doris Kearns Goodwin writes in *The Bully Pulpit: Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, and the Golden Age of Journalism* - "The breadth of his numerous interests allowed him to draw on knowledge across various disciplines, from zoology to philosophy and religion, from poetry and drama to history and politics.

'My library has been the greatest possible pleasure to me,' he wrote to his parents during his freshman year, 'as whenever I have any spare time I can immediately take up a book. Aunt Annie's present, the 'History of the Civil War,' is extremely interesting.' And once encountered, they were never forgotten. Much later, greeting a Chinese delegation when he was president, he suddenly remembered a book about China read many years before. 'As I talked the pages of the book came before my eyes,' he said and it seemed as though I were able to read the things therein contained.' Taft was continually amazed at how Roosevelt found time to read, snatching moments while waiting for lunch or his next appointment. 'He always carried a book with him to the Executive Office,' Taft noted, 'and although there were but few intervals during business hours, he made the most of them in his reading.' . . .

The habits of mind Roosevelt developed early in his academic career would serve him well throughout his life" (Kearns 43).

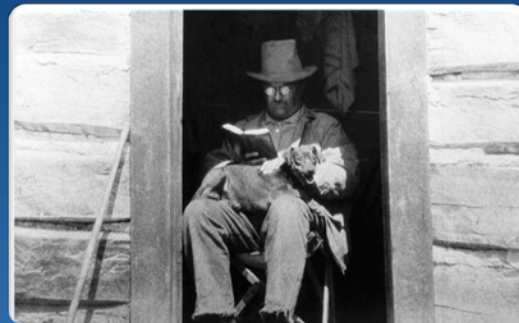
"'It is surprising,' Roosevelt explained, 'how much reading a man can do in time usually wasted'" (Kearns 232).

### Theodore Roosevelt and TCA's Core Values

In TCA's Core Values, our Instructional Philosophy section notes that, "Education is a Life where inspirational ideas and truth are recognized to be the real food for the child's mind and are provided through 'living books' written by experts with a passion for their subject matter . . . (and) original primary and secondary source documents to gain historical and experiential perspectives." TR was a voracious reader in a variety of genres as described below.

The Literacy Company website, when discussing well-known readers, writes "Theodore Roosevelt was known as a very rapid reader and a tireless reviewer of books. Even by today's standards, his reading speed would seem incredible. . . . Roosevelt was also fond of reading favorite books more than once. He even left a list of novels that he had read 'over and over again.' While in the White House, President Theodore Roosevelt was said to read a book everyday before breakfast, and occasionally reading three books in a day" (<http://www.readfaster.com/articles/well-known-speed-readers.asp>).

Edmund Morris, who has written a three-volume biography of TR, stated during an interview detailed in *Presidential Reading* that Roosevelt averaged at least one book per day, reading 3-4 pages per minute, and that he could quote specific details from those books years, even decades later. And TR did not read just in English, but also in German, Italian, and French (<http://www.onthemedial.org/story/154978-presidential-reading/>).

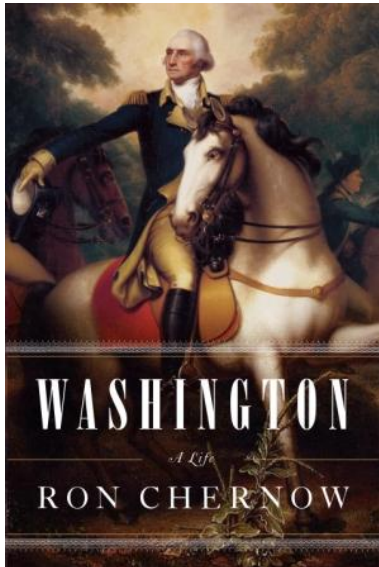


Photograph of Theodore Roosevelt reading a book with his dog Skij. Taken in Colorado in April 1905.

<http://hereandnow.wbur.org/2012/11/06/presidential-reading-list>

## Washington and The Painter: An Excerpt from *George Washington*

“As a portraitist, the garrulous Stuart had perfected the technique to penetrate his subjects’ defenses. He would disarm them with a steady stream of personal anecdotes and irreverent wit, hoping that this glib patter would coax them into self-revelation. In the taciturn George Washington, a man of granite self-control and a stranger to spontaneity, Gilbert Stuart met his match. From boyhood, Washington had struggled to master and conceal his deep emotions. When the wife of the British ambassador later told him that his face showed pleasure at his forthcoming departure from the presidency, Washington grew indignant: ‘You are wrong. My countenance never yet betrayed my feelings!’ He tried to govern his tongue as much as his face: ‘With me it has always been a maxim rather to let my design appear from my works than by my expression.’



Cover of Ron Chernow's 2011 Pulitzer Prize winning biography, *George Washington*.

When Washington swept into his first session with Stuart, the artist was awestruck by the tall, commanding president. Predictably, the more Stuart tried to pry open his secretive personality, the tighter the president clamped it shut. Stuart's opening gambit backfired. ‘Now sir,’ Stuart instructed his sitter, ‘you must let me forget that you are General Washington and that I am Stuart, the painter.’ To which Washington retorted drily that Mr. Stuart need not forget ‘who he is or who General Washington is.’

... Instead of opening up with Stuart, he retreated behind his stolid mask. The scourge of artists, Washington knew how to turn himself into an impenetrable monument long before the obelisk arose in his honor in the nation's capital.

As Washington sought to maintain his defenses, Stuart made the brilliant decision to capture the subtle interplay between his outward calm and his intense hidden emotions, a tension that defined the man. He spied the extraordinary force of personality lurking behind an extremely restrained facade. The mouth might be compressed, the parchment skin drawn tight over ungainly dentures, but Washington's eyes still blazed from his craggy face. In the enduring image that Stuart captured and that ended up on the one-dollar bill – a magnificent statement of

Washington's moral stature and sublime, visionary nature – he also recorded something hard and suspicious in the wary eyes with their penetrating gaze and hooded lids.

With the swift insight of artistic genius, Stuart grew convinced that Washington was not the placid and composed figure he presented to the world. In the words of a mutual acquaintance, Stuart had insisted that ‘there are features in [Washington's] face totally different from what he ever observed in that of any other human being; the sockets of the eyes, for instance, are larger than he ever met with before, and the upper part of the nose broader. All his features, [Stuart] observed, were indicative of the strongest and most ungovernable passions, and had he been born in the forests, it was his opinion that [Washington] would have been the fiercest man among the savage tribes.’ The acquaintance confirmed that Washington's intimates thought him ‘by nature a man of fierce and irritable disposition, but that like Socrates, his judgment and great self-command have always made him appear a man of a different cast in the eyes of the world’ (Chernow xviii-xix).

## **George Washington and Two Distinct Seals**

“George Washington was given this seal to commemorate the laying of the U.S. Capitol's cornerstone. The seal itself, used to place a waxen imprint on documents, is carved from carnelian stone with Washington's initials and coat of arms. It is set in a gold fob, engraved with Masonic symbols and ‘Alexandria Lodge No 22 18th September 1794,’ the first anniversary of the Masonic ceremony in which the cornerstone was laid.”



Interesting Fact: In April 1863, the Great Seal of the Confederate States of America was approved. It featured George Washington, in the center, on horseback dressed in a uniform from the revolutionary era.

*A great history class discussion starter – why would the Confederate States approve such a seal harkening back to George Washington?*



Photograph of George Washington seal, Collection of the U.S. House of Representatives.

Information regarding this historical item obtained from: <http://history.house.gov/HistoricalHighlight/Detail/36120>

## TRUTH, BEAUTY, AND HISTORY THROUGH ART

The Lansdowne painting discussed in the Chernow book, previously mentioned in the newsletter (and pictured below), is part of the *Picturing America* series that the National Endowment for the Humanities provided to more than 56,000 schools in June 2008. TCA received multiple sets of the series to use across our campuses. I and many other teachers have used this resource to spark discussion and to engage students with the artist (and artistic method), the historical period, and the subject depicted. This painting was recently selected to be included in the book entitled *The Smithsonian's History of America in 101 Objects*. In October, I was fortunate to see the actual painting while at a conference in Washington, D.C. Last month, I asked several of our teaching staff to share with the PALMARIUM readers how they would use this image in their classroom.

In our elementary classrooms the following questions and interactions with the artwork would typically occur:

- We would always begin with some text about the painter and his place in culture.
- Students spend time studying the painting and telling back (narrating) what they remember from the image.
- Many times loose recreations of the painting will be done individually or in small groups.
- In late elementary grades students will write on a variety of topics related to the painting – what do they think happened right before, during, or after the scene depicted; what in the painting inspires them or may have inspired others?
  - What message is the painter trying to give us?
  - Does the portrait fit what you already know about the subject?
  - Did he send a message without using words?



Gilbert Stuart's "Lansdowne Portrait" of George Washington (1796)

In our 11<sup>th</sup> grade history classes a normal approach would include:

- The students examine the painting while listening to a reading of the Chernow biographical text.
- Students are asked to write down key items of importance that they see in the picture.
- After a few minutes of reflection, the teacher will go around the room asking students to share two or three points from their notes.
- The discussion would then shift to what do these items mentioned symbolize? What is the greater meaning?
- The result of this effort leads to a lengthier discussion of whether George Washington is more man or myth?

Finally, some samples from our high school art classes:

- The class would discuss the historical context and the purpose of political art through the ages – then the focus would shift to a discussion of principles of design and the elements of art
- How is line used in this artwork?
- How does the artist use line in the artwork to create the composition?
- Why does the artist use this color palette?
- How is color used to create balance?
- How does the artist use contrast to create a focal point?
- How does the background of the work inform the viewer about the subject?
- If the subject of the artwork was not of historical importance would the work still be significant?
- How would this work of art be different if painted today?

by Wesley Jolly

## A Titan's Creed Approved by TCA Board

During the course of the 2013-2014 school year the Character, Culture, Curriculum, and Instruction (CCCI) department has worked with numerous stakeholders at TCA – students, parents, staff at all grade levels, administration, and the Academic Lead Team to create a TCA touchstone document (first mentioned in Volume 2 of the PALMARIUM). The goal was to create a clear statement of what we strive for at TCA that could be embraced by all students, staff, and parents. The intent was not to replace the mission statement, or in any way diminish the core values, but rather have a document that embodies the essence of who we are that is actionable in our daily endeavors. The final document after much thought, review, and reflection (*included on the next page*), was approved by the TCA

Board of Directors on Monday, March 10. As we progressed through the stages of development it became apparent that the touchstone embodies *A Titan's Creed*. During the remainder of the 2013-2014 academic year and as we move into the next school year you will see a dedicated effort to emphasize the creed through a variety of school venues. The support by students, staff, and administration has been extremely positive throughout the entire effort and we encourage all of TCA to embrace this powerful statement.



*The Classical Academy's Class of 2014*



We in this country, in this generation, are, by destiny rather than choice, the watchmen on the walls of world freedom. We ask, therefore, that we may be worthy of our power and responsibility, that we may exercise our strength with wisdom and restraint, and that we may achieve in our time and for all time the ancient vision of 'peace on earth, goodwill toward men.' That must always be our goal, and the righteousness of our cause must always underlie our strength. For as it was written long ago, 'except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.'

*Undelivered luncheon speech, Dallas, Texas November 22, 1963*



President Kennedy and the First Lady in Dallas, TX – November 22, 1963.

# A Titan's Creed

Titans endeavor to recognize and pursue truth, beauty, and goodness.

Titans celebrate virtue in scholarship, relationship, and citizenship.

Titans take ownership of and find joy in learning.

Titans value our responsibilities above our rights.

Titans love, respect, and protect one another.

Striving to be our best, do our best,

And give our best to the world, in

Mind, Body, and Spirit,

**We Are Titans!**



# PALMARIUM – Year Two Focus

During the first year of the PALMARIUM publication the front page each month focused on quotations from great Americans primarily about education. For the next year or two, each month the front page will now relate quotes from various individuals regarding one of the 24 Character Strengths and Virtues listed later in this edition. The book, *Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification* by Christopher Peterson and Martin E. P. Seligman, is being utilized as a framework around which we are further developing our character efforts at TCA. The goal is to utilize the newly minted “A Titan’s Creed (shown below etched in stone and on the back page of this newsletter) and these twenty-four

character strengths as a common language for our TCA community. At times, the hope is to have relevant articles or stories from staff members or others about the topic of the month. For the first edition of this new school year I thought it appropriate to start with the term *perseverance*. The *VIA Institute on Character*, in their document entitled *VIA Classification 2014* (which can be found on their website link listed at the bottom of the page), describes *perseverance* as “[persistence, industriousness]: Finishing what one starts; persisting in a course of action in spite of obstacles; ‘getting it out the door’; taking pleasure in completing tasks.” Join with us as a school community as we journey together in examining these positive character traits over the next couple years.



A Titan’s Creed – entryway at North



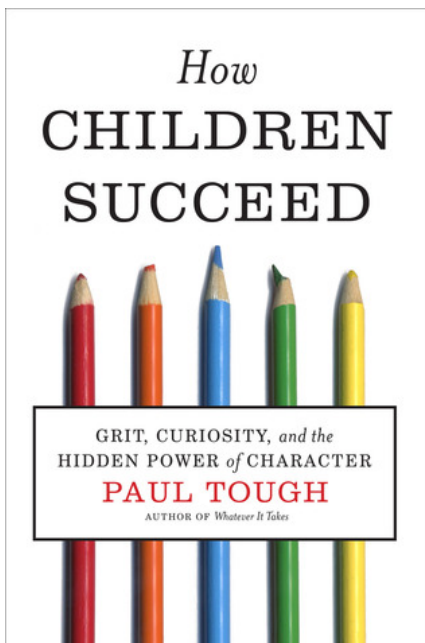
## CHARACTER STRENGTHS

**CLASSIFICATIONS:** The portion of the [viacharacter.org](http://viacharacter.org) website) synthesizes one twenty-four character strengths. The six classification areas are: **Wisdom and Knowledge**, **Courage** (listed below with the four strengths in that area included), **Humanity**, **Justice**, **Temperance**, and **Transcendence**. *Perseverance* discussed briefly via quotations on the first page falls into the **Courage** classification as well as bravery, honesty, and zest. This edition of the PALMARIUM is meant as a brief introduction to some of our efforts regarding character and our expected goal of intentionally, systematically weaving these character strengths and virtues into the TCA classroom. So when you read quotes about a character strength on the front cover of this newsletter or you hear your student or a staff member referring to a specific strength you will have a little background info on the topic.

<b>COURAGE</b>	<b>BRAVERY</b>	<b>PERSEVERANCE</b>	<b>HONESTY</b>	<b>ZEST</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Valor</li> <li>• Not Shrinking from Fear</li> <li>• Speaking Up for What’s Right</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persistence</li> <li>• Industry</li> <li>• Finishing What One Starts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authenticity</li> <li>• Integrity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vitality</li> <li>• Enthusiasm</li> <li>• Vigor</li> <li>• Energy</li> <li>• Feeling Alive</li> </ul>

Peterson, C., & Park, N. (2009). *Classifying and measuring strengths of character*. In S. J. Lopez & C. R. Snyder (Eds), *Oxford handbook of positive psychology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (pp. 25-33. New York: Oxford University Press. [www.viacharacter.org](http://www.viacharacter.org)

Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2004). *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification*. New York: Oxford University Press and Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. [www.viacharacter.org](http://www.viacharacter.org)



### How Children Succeed by Paul Tough

We so hope you found *How Children Succeed* an interesting read this summer and that it spurred some of your own thoughts about relationships with students over the coming years. Few things encourage our own growth like time to process with colleagues that share our life’s work, so we will create some space in the October Conference for small group discussions around some of the research and ideas presented. We look forward to talking together (*Office of Character, Culture, Curriculum, and Instruction – CCCI*).

*“... educators and parents must first recognize that character is at least as important as intellect.”* Angela Duckworth quoted in *How Children Succeed*

## TCA CHARACTER FOCUS: 24 STRENGTHS AND VIRTUES

A critical component of any endeavor a group undertakes is to have a common frame of reference – a common language. That is part of the reason we are using a single book study across all campuses this year (see above) to help contribute to this process. Beginning last year we started examining the 24 character strengths and virtues listed in the word cloud below prepared by the VIA Institute on Character. As we move into the 2014-2015 academic year we will continue this process as we work to embed these into our everyday TCA character framework. It is important as a staff member if you have not completed the VIA Character Strengths survey to do so soon. You can find the survey at the following website: <http://www.viacharacter.org/www/Character-Strengths/VIA-Classification> Again, if you have not taken the time to complete the survey it is a unique tool that can provide insight into your personal interactions and those of your grade level/department teams and it provides standard definitions of each trait. This year the Director of Character, Betsy Brown, will be working with dedicated points of contact, character program leads, at each school campus and the reinstated Character Advisory Team (CAT) with representation from parents, students, teachers, and administration to help guide our school-wide character efforts. As we proceed through the 2014-15 school year we will strive to build upon the natural links between the new “Titan’s Creed” and the listed 24 character strengths and virtues.

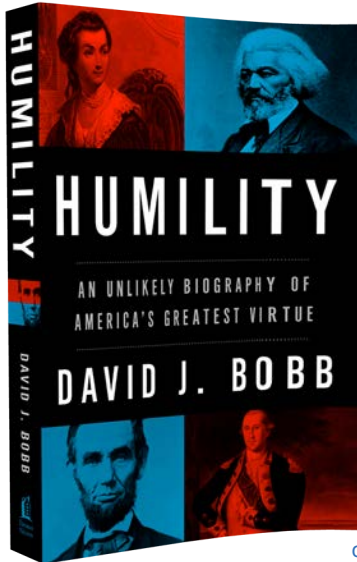


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Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2004). *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification*. New York: Oxford University Press and Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. [www.viacharacter.org](http://www.viacharacter.org)

## Humility: An Unlikely Biography of America's Greatest Virtue by David J. Bobb

The following is quoted directly from the description on the Amazon website of Dr. Bobb's 2013 book. He is currently the Executive Director of Citizen Education at Hillsdale College. I just ordered to add to my personal collection while preparing this latest PALMARIUM edition – *Wes Jolly, TCA Director of Academic Services.*



**There is no formula for becoming humble--not for individuals, and not for nations.**

Benjamin Franklin's dilemma--one he passed on to the young United States--was how to achieve both greatness and humility at once. The humility James Madison learned as a legislator helped him to mold a nation, despite his reputation as a meek, timid, and weak man. The humility of Abigail Adams fed her impossible resilience. Humility of all kinds is deeply ingrained in our American DNA. Our challenge today is to rediscover and reawaken this utterly indispensable, alarmingly dormant national virtue before it's too late.

In *Humility: An Unlikely Biography of America's Greatest Virtue*, Dr. David J. Bobb traces the "crooked line" that is the history of humility in political thought. From Socrates to Augustine to Machiavelli to Lincoln, passionate opinions about the humble ruler are literally all over the map. Having shown classical, medieval, and Christian ideas of humility to be irreconcilable, Dr. Bobb asserts that we as a nation are faced with a difficult choice. A choice we cannot put off any longer.

"The power promised by humility is power over oneself, in self-government," says Dr. Bobb. "[But] humility's strength is obscured by the age of arrogance in which we live." George Washington's humility, as great as it was, cannot substitute for ours today. We must reintegrate this fundamental virtue if there is to be an American future. The rediscovery of humility's strength awaits.

"Setting before us several exemplary models of humble greatness, Bobb convincingly shows that the achievement of true greatness is not contradicted by humility, but perfected only through its cultivation." **Patrick Deneen, Professor of Constitutional Studies, University of Notre Dame**



Humility is not thinking less of yourself,  
it's thinking of yourself less.

Creativity  
 Judgment  
 Honesty  
 Bravery  
 Fairness  
 HUMOR  
 Zest  
 PERSERVERANCE  
 Teamwork  
 Love  
 Kindness  
 Leadership  
 Social Intelligence  
 Love of Learning  
 Forgiveness  
 HOPE  
 PRUDENCE  
 Appreciation of Beauty & Excellence  
 Humility  
 Spirituality  
 SELF-REGULATION  
 Gratitude



## Gratitude: 2014 Veterans Day at TCA



Veterans Day this year was a truly memorable event for all of the TCA community. The TCA North gym was packed with veterans and their families, students from all grades, and other special guests. The oldest living Pearl Harbor survivor Mr. James Downing (pictured below) was the keynote speaker for the morning activities. In August 2014 he celebrated his 101<sup>st</sup> birthday. During his presentation Mr. Downing shared about his experience on the USS *West Virginia* on that fateful day in December 1941 and challenged the students and all those in attendance to keep America strong. As Mr. Downing made his way out of the gymnasium at the end of the event the

spontaneous, lengthy, and truly moving standing ovation touched the hearts of many in attendance.

As we reflect on gratitude this month during the Thanksgiving season it is important that we also continue to reflect on the sacrifices of all those who have served to keep American strong and protect the freedoms we enjoy each day. Our core values document at *The Classical Academy* clearly expresses an appreciation and gratitude for those who have served and for the important place of senior citizens in our community.

**We value the fact that freedom isn't free and honor the sacrifices made by the men and women who serve or have served in the Armed Forces.**

**We value the wisdom and life experience of the senior citizens in our community.**

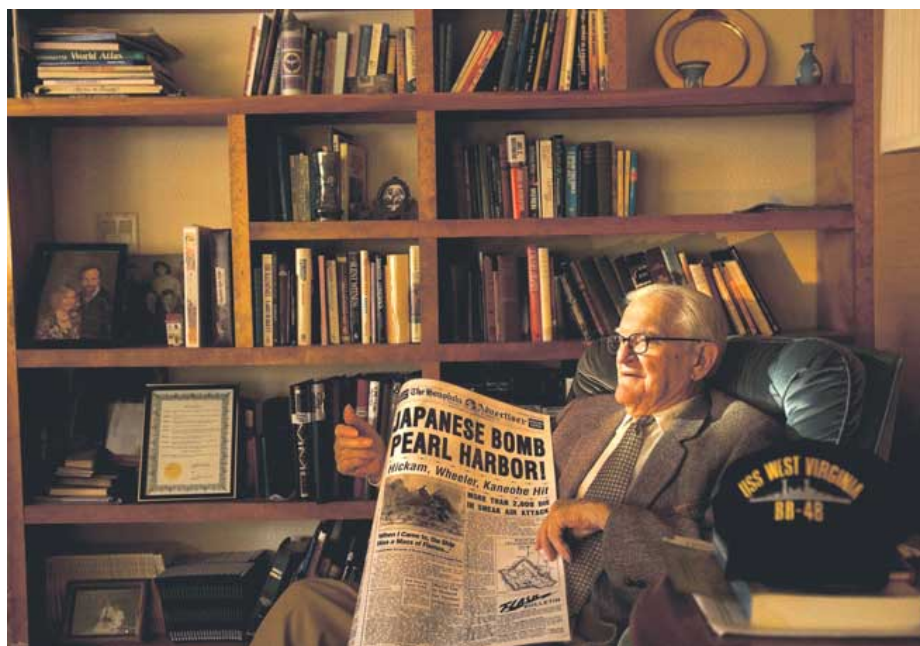


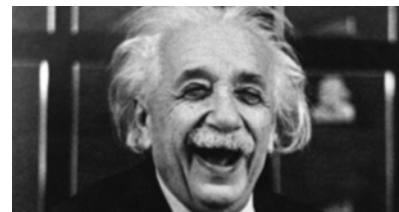
Photo of James Downing included with *The Denver Post* article from December 2013 (photo taken by Cyrus McCrimmon). See article and image at [http://www.denverpost.com/news/ci\\_24673595/pearl-harbor-survivor-100-shares-story-that-fateful](http://www.denverpost.com/news/ci_24673595/pearl-harbor-survivor-100-shares-story-that-fateful)

## CURIOSITY by Rebecca DeMeyer (TCA East Elementary Assistant Principal)

Socrates said, "Wisdom begins in wonder." This quote reminds me of a very special day with my two-year-old nephew at the aquarium. Throughout the day, he continually asked, "What's that? What's that?" as every curious toddler does. We traveled through the building, examining every type of sea life we passed. I couldn't help but smile as his eyes widened when we arrived at the shark tank. He delighted in the simple things at first, but then became interested in the fins, tail, and teeth. In his simple toddler speak he asked, "How shark swim? What shark eats? How many sharks? What called?" My nephew began to ask more and more questions. Not being a shark aficionado, I began to use the resources of the aquarium and the lovely invention of the smart phone. The questions changed to, "What does that say?" On and on he went, as he inquired and waited for a response. Oh, the wonder in his eyes was mesmerizing. We sat for an hour watching the animals swim back and forth. The spirit of wonder and curiosity is born into a child yet as we grow into adulthood it slowly begins to diminish. Having a spirit of curiosity makes us students. His curiosity spurred me to ask, "When was the last time I was this curious? Am I a person that delights in curiosity? Do I encourage my grown children to be curious?"



When we are curious, we learn. When we passionately engage our curiosity, we learn and continue to become more curious. Albert Einstein was a fervently inquisitive child. He indulged in building block and card towers as high as he could and learned to play the violin at an early age. Albert took apart his father's pocket compass at five years old. He was amazed by the fact the no matter where the compass was pointed, the needle always oriented to the north. Einstein said, "I can still remember - or at least believe I remember - that this experience made a deep and lasting impression upon me. Something deeply hidden had to be behind things." This curiosity led Einstein to a fascination with math and physics. He eventually received the Noble Peace Prize in Physics. Many consider Einstein a genius, yet he would say, "I have no special talents. I am only passionately curious." When we feed our curiosity, real learning and growing can take place. Our society is becoming so busy that we do not allow for curiosity in our lives, even as adults. Are you passionately curious? Are you modeling curiosity for your child? Sharpen your mind by finding something to be curious about. The world is your oyster, so keep exploring as it will lead to wisdom and a more enriching life.



THE CLASSICAL ACADEMY

CORPUS MENS SPIRITUS

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### CHARACTER STRENGTHS

chapter on "CURIOSITY" in *Character* write: "Curiosity, interest, novelty-one's intrinsic desire for experience and knowledge. Curiosity involves the active recognition, pursuit, and regulation of one's experience in response to challenging opportunities. . . . [C]uriosity is ubiquitous, manifest in the mundane activities that make our daily lives more fulfilling: being absorbed in the plot of a movie, completing a crossword puzzle without awareness of time passing, opening and reading with eagerness a handwritten letter, watching the flight of a seagull, conversing with an intriguing stranger, . . . listening carefully to a new song on the radio. All individuals experience curiosity, but they differ in its depth and breadth, and in their threshold and willingness to experience it. . . . Greater curiosity-related behaviors and cognitions are consistently associated with greater learning, engagement, and performance in academic settings and work organizations." (see page 125-126 and 135 in the Peterson and Seligman book cited below).

### CLASSIFICATIONS and DEFINITIONS:

In their *Strengths and Virtues*, Peterson and Seligman seeking, and openness to experience represent

Peterson, C., & Park, N. (2009). Classifying and measuring strengths of character. In S. J. Lopez & C. R. Snyder (Eds), *Oxford handbook of positive psychology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (pp. 25-33. New York: Oxford University Press. [www.viacharacter.org](http://www.viacharacter.org)

Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2004). *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification*. New York: Oxford University Press and Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. [www.viacharacter.org](http://www.viacharacter.org)



**CREATIVITY:** Originality; adaptive; ingenuity  
**CURIOSITY:** Interest; novelty-seeking; exploration; openness to experience  
**JUDGMENT:** Critical thinking; thinking things through; open-minded  
**LOVE OF LEARNING:** Mastering new skills & topics; systematically adding to knowledge  
**PERSPECTIVE:** Wisdom; providing wise counsel; taking the big picture view

The important thing is not to stop questioning; curiosity has its own reason for existing. One cannot help but be in awe when contemplating the mysteries of eternity, of life, of the marvelous structure of reality. It is enough if one tries merely to comprehend a little of the mystery every day. The important thing is not to stop questioning; never lose a holy curiosity.

ALBERT EINSTEIN  
*Life Magazine*, May 2, 1955



*Albert Einstein*

## TEAMWORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK *by Susan Nosal*

(Cottage School Program Curriculum and Program Specialist)

For those of you that have endured the difficult task of packing up your parents' home after they have passed, you know all too well the bittersweet flood of memories that wash over you during those days, weeks, months until you lock the door for the last time. Leading up to that moment, you and your siblings take turns sorting through family possessions, laying claim to those that remind you of special times together.

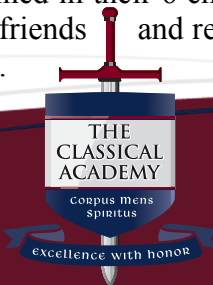
When our family tackled this chore last summer, I found a treasure near and dear to my heart: a small box of handwritten notes, saved by my mother. As I read through the pile, I realized these were the very notes she placed on the kitchen table each day through the years, reminding our busy family of eight to 'pick up a gallon of milk,' 'iron your Scout uniform,' 'mow the lawn before Grandma and Grandpa Edel arrive,' and the most repeated note of all - 'The last one in, lock the door and turn out the lights.'

I wondered why my mother saved this insignificant pile of notes when there were more meaningful items that defined her legacy, such as the delicate heart-shaped locket with a family photo tucked inside. Perhaps she intended for one of her kids to find these kitchen notes after she was gone.

It soon dawned on me why these weren't tossed years ago. These simple notes were reminders of one way Mom helped us pull together as a family, encouraging us to combine our efforts for the good of the group. These notes held great meaning for my mother, a woman who took the idea of teamwork seriously. She believed that when children feel appreciated and valued for their contributions to their family, their sense of teamwork is reinforced.

Through their actions, my parents ingrained in their 6 children, and 12 grandchildren, a deep sense of obligation for each other, while also caring for our friends and relatives, and folks living and working alongside us in our rural community of Bad Axe, Michigan. Ultimately, our family acquired strength in unity.

[continued on next page]



### CHARACTER STRENGTHS

on CITIZENSHIP [Social Responsibility, Peterson and Seligman write:

feeling of identification with and sense of

stretches beyond one's own self interest.

The individual with these strengths has a strong sense of duty, works for the good

of the group rather than for personal gain, is loyal to friends, and can be trusted to pull his or her weight."

**TEAMWORK** is

defined as the cooperative or combined effort of a group of persons working together for a common cause.

The essence of these strengths is **relational**. Individuals are more likely to be loyal to a group and its values if they feel a sense of solidarity

with other members (Clary & Snyder, 1999). To the extent that individuals identify with a group, they are more willing to

forgo individual gain to enhance the collective good (Brewer & Gardner 1996). When young people feel that the community

cares about them and that they have a say in community affairs, they are more likely to identify with the community's goals

and to want to commit to its service (Eccles & Gootman, 202; C.A. Flanagan, in press).

Peterson, C., & Park, N. (2009). Classifying and measuring strengths of character. In S. J. Lopez & C. R. Snyder (Eds), Oxford handbook of positive psychology, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (pp. 25-33. New York: Oxford University Press. [www.viacharacter.org](http://www.viacharacter.org)

Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2004). Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification. New York: Oxford University Press and Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. [www.viacharacter.org](http://www.viacharacter.org)

**CLASSIFICATIONS and DEFINITIONS:** In their chapter Loyalty, Teamwork] in *Character Strengths and Virtues*, "Citizenship, social responsibility, and teamwork represent a obligation to a common good that includes the self but

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JUSTICE

**TEAMWORK:** Citizenship; social responsibility; loyalty  
**FAIRNESS:** Just; not letting feelings bias decisions about others  
**LEADERSHIP:** Organizing group activities; encouraging a group to get things done



## TEAMWORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK (continued from previous page)

Living in a small town gave everyone plenty of opportunities to put teamwork in action. We each made a difference in our school, our troop, our *Marching Hatchets* band and sports teams, our church, our town. We organized the annual Girl Scout candy sale, tidied up the city park prior to Nixon's '74 visit, and spent four evenings in a row, in a smelly horse barn, twisting tissue paper squares through a chicken wire frame to build a football float for the high school homecoming parade. The word "our" was taken seriously by everyone who lived in Bad Axe. When *Kmart* moved into town, we banded together to keep our mom and pop shops open, often paying more for shoes because everyone knew Mr. Buckley always treated his customers right. We bought groceries at the *IGA Foodliner* because it was well known that they paid our high school cashiers and baggers a fair wage. Folks were loyal to *Flannery and Sons* even when better auto deals could be found in Bay City. The quaint downtown shops of Bad Axe transformed themselves into small boutiques and coffee shops, catering to the big city tourists from Detroit. Yet, despite our little town going through these changes, nothing could cause Bad Axe to lose its sense of teamwork. It would never turn out the lights and lock its doors.



Have you seen the movie *20 Feet from Stardom*? This poignant story describes the role of back-up singers, rarely receiving recognition, especially when pursuing a career of their own. They're often cast in the background, accepting a modest role so the singing act can perform at its best. They lend vocals that often rival or even surpass those of the famous singer. I was impressed with the genuine dedication shown by the back-up singers. They enjoyed the aspect of teamwork that their job offered them. Not every singer in the movie was content to be in the shadows for their career, but I do remember some individuals describing the magic of harmonizing their voices, which is what they liked best about their job. Do you know someone who works tirelessly behind the scenes, rarely seeking or getting credit for his or her contribution to a project, yet finds fulfillment in making the pieces fit?

I love to hear a choir. I love the humanity . . . to see the faces of real people devoting themselves to a piece of music. I like the teamwork. It makes me feel optimistic about the human race when I see them cooperating like that.

Paul McCartney

Working together is consistently modeled by our staff at TCA, in and out of the classroom. Yet, how did each of us come to value the idea of a team? How does one learn to stretch beyond his own interests to care about other members of the group? People with a sense of duty to the group pull their own weight without being asked, not because external circumstances force them but because they regard it as what a group member should do. As Coach Dean Smith told Michael Jordan, his freshman year at college, "If you can't pass, you can't play."

In my mind's eye, I see TCA's founding families gathered around a kitchen table voicing their shared vision with deep conviction: "*There must be a better way to educate our children.*" They realized that not one person among them had all the answers, so they pooled their resources to draft the charter for The Classical Academy. Since then, Titans of all ages have benefitted from our founders' uncompromised passion for academic excellence and desire to develop exemplary character in their children and others.

TCA is fortunate that our founders worked well as a viable team, melding their gifts to achieve their unified goal. Their teamwork made their dream work. *[continued on next page]*

## TEAMWORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK (continued)

We veteran TCA-ers consider ourselves lucky to have been part of growing this fine school from the ground up. We continue to cultivate a deeply-rooted tradition of families, staff, and students uniting their talents, expertise, and creativity to support, inspire, and console each other. Together, we help shape policy, improve instruction, and influence everything from curriculum to uniforms to prom playlists. Whether in a small school or small town, those who choose to be involved are afforded the opportunity – and privilege – to truly make a difference in the community they serve.

When asked why he had a team of twenty-one assistants, Thomas Edison answered, “If I could solve all the problems myself, I would.” A powerful message is sent to our students when we promote strength in unity. Simply stated, teamwork is less me and more we.

Let’s do our share to create an effective Titan team. Amazing results can be achieved through collaboration and cooperation. *We may not have it all together, but together we have it all.* ...and we don’t need a note on the kitchen table to remind us of that.

*by Susan Nosal, CSP Curriculum & Program Specialist*



If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.

*African Proverb*



## TEAMWORK Coach Daggett

*Excerpt from Coach Tim Daggett’s speech to our TCA-HS Track team, the night before competing at the 2014 State Championship last spring.*

“There are a lot of different talents in this room. Talent that hasn’t been buried! Talent that is being used for a greater cause than yourself! Talent that is fun to watch! Enjoy your talent. I didn’t always enjoy mine. I didn’t always see it as my calling. Looking back, running was what I was called to. It got me this team, and I love this team. I love my calling. I love watching you run. If this is just your beginning or if it is your end, enjoy your talent. Finish well!

For three days we are going to spend ourselves for this team. For three days your time is not your own. For three days Denver is the only place to be. Be there on time, remember your stuff, and be easy to find. Get out of the sun! Compete like the team that everyone fears because everyone IS afraid of us. Start and finish well!

- |                        |                         |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Who do you race for?   | <b>The team cheers:</b> |
|                        | <b>EACH OTHER!</b>      |
| Who do you start for?  | <b>EACH OTHER!</b>      |
| Who do you finish for? | <b>EACH OTHER!</b>      |
| Who do you jump for?   | <b>EACH OTHER!</b>      |
| Who do you throw for?  | <b>EACH OTHER!</b>      |
| Who do you fly for?    | <b>EACH OTHER!</b>      |

Who do you suffer for? Shared Suffering is shared reward!  
Who do you fight for? We are going to brawl, but we’re made of Iron.

You’re strong! You’re ready for anything! Your coaches are proud of you! Let’s finish our time well in 3A.”

*\*Both Boys and Girls won their 2014 State championships. Both earned their third championship in a row. In total, the TCA Track & Field team has earned 13 State championships. Go Titans!*

# Our Table by Michelle Hindman

*a speech presented to the graduation Class of 2015 at Senior Breakfast*

When I exchange small talk and people ask what I do for a living, I always illustrate the wonderful uniqueness of my job by telling them I “work at a small charter school where I get to teach around a table” instead of desks.

I’m aware that likely the image I put in their minds is something like this [picture to the right]. I admit, I want them to assume I am gracefully facilitating a pristine learning experience, where young adults sit around a polished oak table nodding sagely about Shakespeare like adolescent CEOs.



What I cannot explain to strangers is that on a daily basis, my beloved and bragged-about table looks a little more like this (*see below - don’t worry parents, I had them pose for that picture, they weren’t being rude.*)



I do *not* detail the inexplicable doodles or the spaces pennies can be squashed into; I don’t try to explain how students perfect the slide of a text book along a slightly sticky surface, or that I sometimes scold, “take your feet off the table”, and on one memorable, slightly concerning occasion, “stop crawling under the table, Hudson.”

While I might occasionally long for the quiet dignity of stock photos, I know in my heart, even while scrubbing off hot chocolate stains and brushing away eraser crumbles, that this is what the table should be. Because education is not a black tie affair. It is too precious and too essential to be roped off and perfectly polished. Education, and especially at tiny, quirky TCA, is a family dinner. Or, breakfast.

A table symbolizes both unity and simplicity. While important decisions can be made around them, they are more often simply the place we go to gather for some of life’s basics: being together, and eating. At the small college I went to, the campus pastor used to emphasize the importance of chapels, saying that while you don’t remember every meal you eat, every one is necessary, and you wouldn’t be who you are today without the meals you’ve shared with other people.

The table has always symbolized the unique approach to academics at TCA, especially in the Senior year. I sit down at the table with you, because I am not Michelle Hindman, irrefutable pillar of knowledge, doling out information you’re expected to swallow without question. I am human and

curious and needing conversation too and the table symbolizes that I too want to learn from the text, and also from *you* and your own insights.

Some of you have brought absolute brilliance and generous humor to the table. I have been humbled not only by your academic prowess, but by the strength and love in your lives as you live them. Some of you have brought your personal stories and beliefs, your acknowledgements of the shortcomings of humanity. Some of you have brought your precious honesty in a world full of facades, whether simply admitting you didn't read or that there are questions in life that have no answers. Some of us come to the table with nothing to offer, exhausted beyond thought, discussion of Dostoevsky the last thing on our minds.

But this falls away at the table, because regardless of what we come with or what we might feel we lack, we come together, every day, to laugh, to complain, to listen, to discuss. A very small part of the privilege of my job is helping you understand literature. The real gift is seeing you learn how to listen and how to speak with one another. You have learned how to use your voice to articulate your passions, but yet you have also learned how to listen sincerely and show compassion to others who view the world differently.



I can't thank you enough for restoring hope to me, on a daily basis, not just because you've understood semi-colons and become passionate about Orwell, but because you care for one another, and you've even managed to care for me. Whether you were prepared for it or not, this year you have shared too much around too many tables to remain apathetic. Whether playing super smash or debating absolute truth, your education has evolved to be much more about your shared humanity than your GPAs. You have achieved the remarkable, not just in your academics, but in the development of your characters.

And that's why I don't mind that my table is battered and treated like your own living room furniture and why I've never taken offense if I spy drooping eyelids. Because my most sincere hope is that you've felt welcomed at my table in whatever state you have come to it, with all of your imperfections and mine - because learning is about being better, not just smarter.

Education is not about the content you cover, but who you become in the process. Your learning does not happen in ten page papers or other landmark events. Even formal ceremonies like this only mark an intangible and slow change that has already happened - *growing up* - which has snuck up on you and your parents day-by-day, hour-by-hour. Before you knew it, all of those daily conversations and meals added up and formed you into the person you are, sitting here.

Up until now, you have not chosen who joins your table and your conversation. Your fumbling instructors and your imperfect classmates and your difficult courses have been foisted upon you. And

you have done well, learning far more in your time at TCA than MLA formatting and the exact amount of time it takes to get to the Loaf and back before class. But whatever is next for you, your education will continue, and while you are leaving behind the many tables of TCA, the world is waiting for you to form your own. My question as you continue into the world is this: who will you invite to your table?

I encourage you to expand your table. Welcome those others might not to your conversation. Sometimes those without social graces or your opinions are exactly the voices you need. Be curious, instead of defensive, knowing that what is most precious to you cannot be taken away from a mere discussion. Set your table with generosity. Be forgiving, seek out the whole story, and try to listen. Knowledge will never hurt you and the Truth cannot be overcome, even by your doubts. Be courageous as you fill your table, and be sincere. Cynicism and snobbery are easy and the world doesn't need any more sophists in love with their own voice. Real love and real learning and true conversation take work and risk. Be yourself. Don't worry about the polished-oak-and-blazers-model of education. Let the cracks and the dirt show and invite others to be themselves too.

Most of all, don't be afraid. You will join and leave many tables in life, but while those losses are real, they are never final. This is what we mean when we say we hope students become "life-long learners." Even if we don't trip over you reading Russian novels in the future, we hope you stay forever curious, forever kind, forever willing to admit you were wrong and acknowledge another's genius, willing to push yourself past your limit and then one step further. We trust and believe that the tables you invite others to will be lavishly furnished with critical thought, compassion and creativity. So here's to you, class of 2015 and the magnificent conversations we've shared with you so far. May your table be showered with joy and discovery from this point forward and may the long conversation, your life-long education, continue with great love.



## THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENT OF LEADERSHIP *by Dr. Russ Sojourner (TCA President)*

**If a leader has integrity, nothing else matters. And if a leader doesn't have integrity, nothing else matters.**

Rear Admiral (Retired) Barry Black, Chaplain of the United States Senate

Recently I had the honor and privilege of speaking to our East Elementary 6<sup>th</sup> graders on the topic of leadership. It's a fitting topic, since this particular group of students is known at East as our Titan Leaders. And fitting for me too, as I do my daily best to lead our amazing school.

As I explained to these 6<sup>th</sup> graders, leadership can be a weighty topic. Scores of books have been written on the concept, exploring various questions like "Are leaders born or are they made?" "What are the most important leadership characteristics or traits?" "Do leadership styles change dependent on different situations?" And, "Is there a difference between good/moral leaders and effective/immoral leaders?"

Leadership scholars, theorists, and practitioners even disagree on the very best and most robust definitions of leadership. The 6<sup>th</sup> grade Titan Leaders offered several outstanding definitions, but the one I like the most, and used when teaching leadership at the Air Force Academy many years ago, is by author Peter Northouse, who said, "Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal."

When breaking down the definition above, there are a few key words that stand out to me: an *individual*, *influencing a group*, achieving a *common goal*. And to put it even more succinctly, it's all about the **influence**. That's the piece I'm personally interested in, as a leader at TCA, and also the piece I wanted our young Titan Leaders to explore as I challenged them with the question, "What can we do to be the very best influencers possible?"

For me, the answer isn't all that complicated. Or all that arguable, really. Just listen to the words of a former inspiration of mine – Chaplain of the United States Senate, Rear Admiral (ret) Barry Black, who said, "If a leader has integrity, nothing else matters. And if a leader doesn't have integrity, nothing

[continued on the next page]



### CHARACTER STRENGTHS

on LEADERSHIP in *Character*

"Leadership as a personal quality

and temperament attributes that foster an orientation toward influencing and helping others, directing and motivating their actions toward collective success. Individuals with this predisposition aspire to dominant roles in relationships and social situations. They comfortably manage their own activities and the activities of others in an integrated system. . . . Individuals with this strength are likely to strongly endorse such statements about themselves as the following: I prefer to take on the leadership role in the group; I am often able to plan a course of action for my group; I am often able to motivate others to act in a certain way; I am often able to help others do a task better; I am often able to organize others so that they can work together more effectively; People generally look to me to help solve complex problems; People generally look to me to resolve conflicts and keep a group together; I am often the spokesperson for my group; I generally take the initiative in social situations; I usually take charge in emergencies (414-415)."

Peterson, C., & Park, N. (2009). Classifying and measuring strengths of character. In S. J. Lopez & C. R. Snyder (Eds), *Oxford handbook of positive psychology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (pp. 25-33. New York: Oxford University Press. [www.viacharacter.org](http://www.viacharacter.org)

Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2004). *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification*. New York: Oxford University Press and Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. [www.viacharacter.org](http://www.viacharacter.org)

### CLASSIFICATIONS and DEFINITIONS:

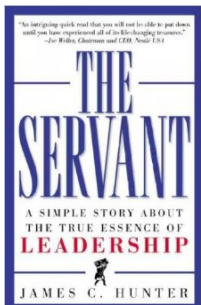
In their chapter *Strengths and Virtues*, Peterson and Seligman write: refers to an integrated constellation of cognitive and



JUSTICE

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## THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENT OF LEADERSHIP (continued from previous page)

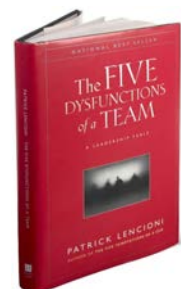


else matters.” In a related way, another great American, former Army General (ret) Norman Schwarzkopf said, “Leadership is a potent combination of strategy and character. But if you must be without one, be without strategy.”

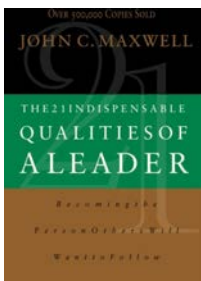
So why is integrity and character so important to a leader’s ability to influence? John Maxwell puts it this way, “Your good character builds trust among your followers. But if you break trust, you forfeit your ability to lead. No leader can break trust with his people and expect to keep influencing them. Trust is the foundation of leadership. Violate this law, and you’re through as a leader.”

And now we’re getting somewhere. Character builds trust. Trust is essential for influence. Influence equals leadership. Simple, right?

While aspiring to be the very best leader I can be, I also consider myself to be a student of leadership and of great leaders. I suppose those go hand in hand – studying leaders and their leadership styles, modeling the best leaders and learning from (and vowing to avoid) the failings of the worst leaders, and then understanding and incorporating positive leadership traits into my own life, as a father, community member, and TCA President. To that end, I’ve read quite a number of case studies and books on the subject of leadership, and two of my favorites use story to bring to life the power of the leader – one titled *The Servant, a Simple Story About the True Essence of Leadership* by James Hunter, and one titled *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team, a Leadership Fable* by Patrick Lencioni. If you too are interested in personal and team leadership, you can’t go wrong by picking up one of these books.



But my favorite leadership theorist, speaker, and author is Dr. John Maxwell. In his book *The 21 Indispensable Qualities of a Leader*, Dr. Maxwell explores the bedrock leadership quality of character, explaining what every person (and leader) must know about character:



1. Character is More than Talk. Anyone can say that he has integrity, but action is the real indicator of character. Your character determines who you are. That’s why you can never separate a leader’s character from his actions.

2. Talent is a Gift, but Character is a Choice. We have no control over a lot of things in life. We don’t get to choose our parents, or our birth location or our upbringing. But we do choose our character. In fact, we create it every time we make choices – to cop out or dig out of a hard situation, to bend the truth or stand under the weight of it, or to take the easy money or pay the price.

3. Character Brings Lasting Success with People. True leadership always involves other people. Followers do not trust leaders whose character they know to be flawed, and they will not continue following them.

4. Leaders Cannot Rise Above the Limitations of Their Character. Steven Berglas, psychologist at Harvard Medical School and author of *The Success Syndrome*, says that people who achieve great heights but lack the bedrock of character to sustain them through the stress are headed for disaster.

As I told our 6<sup>th</sup> grade Titan Leaders (and as many had likely already heard from Uncle Ben in the movie *Spiderman*), with great power comes great responsibility. Being leaders at their school, they have the power to use their leadership abilities and positions for good, or not so good. I feel the same way about my own position, and I’m dedicated to using my role as influencer to make our incredibly wonderful school an even better place than it already is. To that end, I’m ever mindful that character is the essential element of leadership, and I’m committed to helping other leaders recognize the same.



# HOPE by Matt Brunk (Junior High History Teacher and Character Lead)

What is hope? Is it more than a popular girl’s name of the Indie culture or a popular TV show? It sounds like a new celebrity fragrance by Taylor Swift marketed toward those going through a midlife crisis. However, with a deeper look it may be single-handedly the most important virtue next to love that the world has ever known. So exactly what is it?

Hope - Expecting the best in the future and working to achieve it; believing that a good future is something that can be brought about — *Character Strengths and Virtues*

Everything that is done in the world is done by hope – Martin Luther



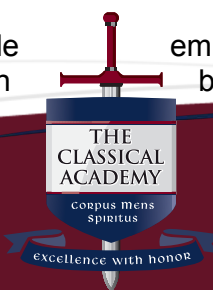
Hope is an essential part of human life. It is the other side of the coin; it is the silver lining; it is the half-full part of the glass. Even the pessimist, has a little hope, for to know the bad outcome the pessimist must know of the good outcome. Hope has been the integral virtue of every successful world leader since the beginning of time. Every human being has hope. Without hope there is no apple pie, baseball, or USA.



Hope was prevalent in the colonies in July 1776. The risk of going to war with one of the largest empires the world had ever seen was clear and Ben Franklin may have said it best: “We must, indeed, all hang together or, most assuredly, we shall all hang separately.” However, it was hope that won the day and the world was forever changed as people took hold of their own destinies around the world by electing leaders to represent their interests and ideas.

Interestingly, hope doesn’t just topple Everything that a person does is driven [continued on the next page]

empires; hope also keeps humanity moving forward. by hope in some way or another. Throughout history



## CHARACTER STRENGTHS

on HOPE [Optimism, Future- and Virtues, Peterson and Seligman orientation represent a cognitive, emotional, and motivational stance toward the future. Thinking about the future, expecting that desired events and outcomes will occur, acting in ways believed to make them more likely, and feeling confident that these will ensue given appropriate efforts sustain good cheer in the here and now and galvanize goal-directed actions. Individuals with this strength would strongly endorse such statements as the following: despite challenges, I always remain hopeful about the future; I always look on the bright side; I am confident that my way of doing things will work out for the best; I believe that good will always triumph over evil; I expect the best; I have a clear picture in my mind about what I want to happen in the future; I have a plan for what I want to be doing 5 years from now; I know that I will succeed with the goals I set for myself; I never go into a game or competition expecting to lose; If I get a bad grade or evaluation, I focus on the next opportunity and plan to do better (569).”

Peterson, C., & Park, N. (2009). Classifying and measuring strengths of character. In S. J. Lopez & C. R. Snyder (Eds), Oxford handbook of positive psychology, 2nd edition (pp. 25-33. New York: Oxford University Press. [www.viacharacter.org](http://www.viacharacter.org)

Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2004). Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification. New York: Oxford University Press and Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. [www.viacharacter.org](http://www.viacharacter.org)

## CLASSIFICATIONS and DEFINITIONS:

In their chapter Mindedness, Future Orientation] in *Character Strengths* write: “Hope, optimism, future-mindedness, and future orientation represent a cognitive, emotional, and motivational stance toward the future. Thinking about the future, expecting that desired events and outcomes will occur, acting in ways believed to make them more likely, and feeling confident that these will ensue given appropriate efforts sustain good cheer in the here and now and galvanize goal-directed actions. Individuals with this strength would strongly endorse such statements as the following: despite challenges, I always remain hopeful about the future; I always look on the bright side; I am confident that my way of doing things will work out for the best; I believe that good will always triumph over evil; I expect the best; I have a clear picture in my mind about what I want to happen in the future; I have a plan for what I want to be doing 5 years from now; I know that I will succeed with the goals I set for myself; I never go into a game or competition expecting to lose; If I get a bad grade or evaluation, I focus on the next opportunity and plan to do better (569).”



- APPRECIATION OF BEAUTY & EXCELLENCE: Awe; wonder; elevation
- GRATITUDE: Thankful for the good; expressing thanks; feeling blessed
- HOPE: Optimism; future-mindedness; future orientation
- HUMOR: Playfulness; bringing smiles to others; lighthearted
- SPIRITUALITY: Religiousness; faith; purpose; meaning



## HOPE (continued from previous page)

the travails of many cultures were battled simply because of hope. For example, in the middle ages, people hoped they survived the bubonic plague and would see at least one child reach the age of adulthood. In the decades immediately following World War II, the hope of parents was that after working hard enough to send a kid off to college that they would choose to do so. In the 1980s and 1990s, the hope was 2.5 kids, a dog (not a cat), and a white picket fence in the suburbs.

Humanity marries and divorces with hope; they take jobs and quit jobs because of hope. Hope is the reason why everyone gets up in the morning – without it there is seemingly little to live for. Children understand hope even if they cannot define it. It's the anticipation and waiting with expectation that surrounds Christmas day, your birthday, or even graduation day.

Adults experience hope in their first job, marriage, buying a house, and even in retirement. Humanity expects things from this life, and those expectations are never fulfilled unless they are surrounded by hope. Hope is the quality that keeps humanity going when things get dim.



Personally, I have found that hope can be many things. One of the most beautiful images of hope was actually a piece of art done by a high school student that I knew years ago. In it there was a single flower, I

believe it was a rose, and it was alive among dried, cracked earth, and off in the distance were storm clouds full of rain. I remember looking at that artwork and realizing that hope is truly at its strongest and brightest when life is difficult. The more difficult and dark life is, the brighter that glimmer of hope becomes. Like the worn out flashlight in a black room, it draws close all who need it.



To be candid, one of the darkest times of my life was last summer in June of 2014, when my wife and I experienced a miscarriage. This came after trying for two years to get pregnant. It was incredibly painful, for both my wife and I, yet incredibly, we were filled with hope. It may sound crazy, but there are two major reasons why hope was imminently present. First, we were surrounded by so many people who loved us and shared similar experiences and yet had kids later on. Second, which cannot be overlooked, my wife can get pregnant! Though not a circumstance I would wish upon anyone, that fact was the small sliver of hope in a sea of darkness that has only grown brighter as time has passed. We are still not pregnant, but oddly enough, that experience has brought us so much closer to each other. We believe that among other things, it was hope that played an important role in that healing. So

much so, that annually we get an ornament to hang on the Christmas tree that defines the year coming to an end. The ornament that we chose was a Willow Tree® Angel holding a small star, and the angel's name is *Hope*.



## VETERANS DAY

The annual TCA Veterans Day Assembly was held on November 11<sup>th</sup> this year and despite the winter weather that morning there was a great turnout to honor our veterans. We were privileged to have Jill Hortman Morris, a Gold Star family member, serve as our guest speaker and share with us about the ultimate sacrifice made by her brother Army Captain John "David" Hortman. Once again this event made for a memorable day for our veterans, students, staff, parents, and community members. Many comments were provided to administration about this inspiring assembly. One veteran commented, "I served 24 years in the USAF and never saw such a rich and respectful Veterans Day Assembly as what I saw at TCA."

[photos listed clockwise: Jill Morris, our guest speaker; Cynthia Storrs recites her poem "Navy Blue"; Eleni McClure shares about TCA board member Col Kathleen Harrington]



## TCA GRADUATE NAMED RHODES SCHOLAR

Emily Mediate (TCA Class of 2011) was recently selected as a 2016 Rhodes Scholar. After an extensive application process reduced the initial 2,000 applicants to 869 endorsed candidates, Emily was one of only 32 selected this year as a Rhodes Scholar.

Emily graduated from the University of Notre Dame in May, and is currently a Kellogg Institute postgraduate International Development Fellow with the Association of Volunteers in International Service (AVSI) in Kampala, Uganda, where she is evaluating a USAID-funded program that aims to improve the well-being of children in HIV-affected families. Emily will begin her studies in evidence-based social intervention policy evaluation (EBSIPE) at Oxford University in the fall of 2016.



Click on the following link to learn more about this prestigious honor: <http://news.nd.edu/news/62739-notre-dames-emily-mediate-named-rhodes-scholar/> and <http://www.rhodesscholar.org>



For the second year in row TCA has joined in the *Wreaths Across America* campaign to place wreaths on the graves of veterans across America. Fundraisers have taken place at TCA in each of the past two years to contribute to this effort. Last year we donated just over 240 wreaths and for 2015 TCA donated nearly 300 wreaths for this worthy cause. The *Wreaths Across America* organization's mission is to *Remember, Honor, and Teach* through the coordination of wreath laying ceremonies at Arlington National Cemetery and other veterans cemeteries in all 50 states on a specified Saturday in December each year. The wreath laying events for this year occurred on Saturday, December 12<sup>th</sup>. Next year the event will take place on December 17, 2016. To find out more about go to: <http://www.wreathscrossamerica.org>



# OLD SCHOOL – SCHOOL

by Wesley Jolly, Director of Academic Services



During some time off this summer I was able to travel to Fairplay, CO and visit this old schoolhouse built in 1879 (originally located in Garo, CO). It was used for over 70 years and from 1912-1913, Mrs. Mamie O’Malia was the teacher in this one room school. Her salary was \$60 per month. The image in the lower left shows the classroom setup. I found it truly fascinating that each side of the student’s desk had moral precepts inscribed that the children were expected to memorize for recitation. On the left side of the desks were: *improve the time, strive-win, try again, and be true*. The right side included: *knowledge is power, patience wins, never give up, and be kind*. Below is a copy of part of the report card and grading scales. Each grade level category consists of 5 components – *scholarship, initiative, attitude, co-operation, and individual improvement*. Citizenship is also a prominent emphasis – on the same level as attendance. My visit made me think – maybe the *old school* ways are still some of the best ways when it comes to education.

**DEFINITION OF GRADES**

**Grade of A (Superior):**

1. Scholarship—Exceeding expectations of instructor.
2. Initiative—Contributions exceeding the assignment.
3. Attitude—Positive benefit to class.
4. Co-operation—Forwarding all group activities.
5. Individual Improvement—Actual and noticeable.

**Grade of B (Above Average):**

1. Scholarship—Accurate and complete.
2. Initiative—Stimulating some desirable achievements.
3. Attitude—Proper and beneficial.
4. Co-operation—Effective in group work.
5. Individual Improvement—Showing marks of progress.

**Grade of C (Average):**

1. Work in general of medium quality.
2. Work quite strong in one or more items but weak in others.

**Grade of D (Below Average):**  
(This grade might be produced by any variety or combination of weaknesses as the definition suggests.)

1. Scholarship—Barely meeting assignments.
2. Initiative—Uncertain, not usually manifest.
3. Attitude—Not objectionable, usually neutral.
4. Co-operation—Not positive nor very effective.
5. Individual Improvement—Slight, not positive.

**Grade of F (Inferior):**

1. This is a failing grade and since it may result from any number of weaknesses, it is not defined.

**Signature of Parent or Guardian**

1st Period \_\_\_\_\_

2nd Period \_\_\_\_\_

3rd Period \_\_\_\_\_

4th Period \_\_\_\_\_

5th Period \_\_\_\_\_

**ATTENDANCE AND CITIZENSHIP**

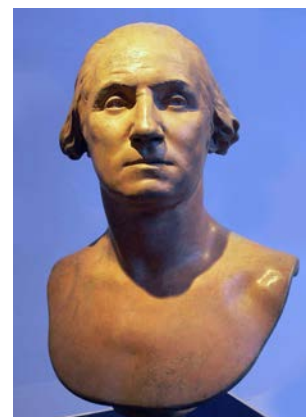
Periods:	1	2	3	Sem.	4	5	6	Year
Days Taught								
Days Absent								
Times Tardy								
Citizenship								



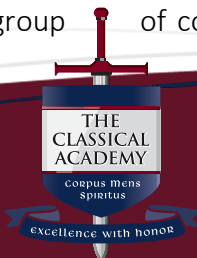
# Prudence and Two British Invasions

by Wesley Jolly (Director of Academic Services)

David and Jeanne Heidler write in their work *Washington's Circle: The Creation of the President*: "On the last afternoon of his presidency, Washington held a formal dinner for foreign dignitaries and department heads. Henrietta Liston sat next to him and later remembered that 'vanity in him was a very limited passion, & **prudence his striking trait**' [emphasis added]. After the last course, Washington filled and raised his glass. 'Ladies and gentlemen,' he said, 'this is the last time I shall drink your health as a public man. I do it with sincerity, and wishing you all possible happiness!' Henrietta Liston wept" (399). When contemplating what to share in an article on prudence I was immediately drawn to our first president George Washington. For me he perfectly embodies my vision, my definition, of prudence. Having recently completed reading the Heidler's excellent book on Washington, Henrietta Liston's words – "prudence his striking trait" – and the image of her weeping as this man she admired stepped away from the leadership of our country was seared in my mind.



After the first shots were fired in April 1775, the revolution that was already underway in the hearts and minds of the many discouraged and dismayed British subjects entered its military phase. The reluctant revolutionaries would band together to repel the first British invasion. In June 1775, the Continental Congress selected George Washington as Commander in Chief of the Continental Army. All odds were against Washington and his fellow revolutionaries. Fortunately, for those in the fight – the odds did not matter. "Rights" and what was viewed as right – mattered more than overwhelming odds. The British were the most powerful nation on earth at the time. For us looking back it is easy sometimes to see results as the natural course but that is a mistaken notion. Contingency makes odds and "what is expected" dissipate in the ether. Now, as one that loves history, studied history, and taught history, it would be easy for me to write much more than is necessary for our interaction today. So let's fast forward – Washington led this fledgling group of colonies – states – to victory against those odds. How? Through prudence. [continued on the next page]



## CHARACTER STRENGTHS

**PRUDENCE** in *Character Strengths and* cognitive orientation to the personal future, helps to achieve the individual's long-term

deliberative concern for the consequences of their actions and decisions, successfully resist impulses and other choices that satisfy shorter term goals at the expense of longer term ones, have flexible and moderate approach to life, and strive for balance among their goals and ends. . . . Individuals with this strength have the following attributes: they take a foresighted stance toward their personal future, thinking and caring about it, planning for it, and holding long-term goals and aspirations; they are skilled at resisting self-defeating impulses and at persisting in beneficial activities that lack immediate appeal; they show a style of thinking about everyday life choices that is reflective, deliberative, and practical; they harmonize the multiple goals and interests that motivate them, forming these into a stable, coherent, and unconflicted form of life. . . . The history of prudence is usually traced back to Aristotle's writings on *phronesis*, a concept that held a central role in his virtue-based ethical system and is usually translated as 'practical reason' or 'practical wisdom' (478-479)."

**CLASSIFICATIONS and DEFINITIONS:** In their chapter on *Virtues*, Peterson and Seligman write: "Prudence is a form of practical reasoning and self-management that goals effectively. Prudent individuals show a farsighted and

Peterson, C., & Park, N. (2009). Classifying and measuring strengths of character. In S. J. Lopez & C. R. Snyder (Eds), *Oxford handbook of positive psychology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (pp. 25-33). New York: Oxford University Press. [www.viacharacter.org](http://www.viacharacter.org)

Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2004). *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification*. New York: Oxford University Press and Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. [www.viacharacter.org](http://www.viacharacter.org)



TEMPERANCE

- FORGIVENESS:** Mercy; accepting others' shortcomings; giving people a second chance
- HUMILITY:** Modesty; letting one's accomplishments speak for themselves
- PRUDENCE:** Careful; cautious; not taking undue risks
- SELF-REGULATION:** Self-control; disciplined; managing impulses & emotions

## Prudence and Two British Invasions (continued from previous page)

Greek philosophy defines four cardinal virtues: prudence, justice, temperance, and courage (fortitude). They also defined the three theological virtues: faith, hope, and charity. Combined these are known as the seven virtues. Many Greek philosophers and Thomas Aquinas would identify prudence as the guiding virtue. Ethan Fishman writes in his essay “Washington’s Leadership: Prudence and the American Presidency”: “Aristotle considered prudence to be the consummate moral talent because of its ability to realize abstract ends through concrete means available to human beings so that they might do the right thing to the right person at the right



time” [in *George Washington: Foundation of Presidential Leadership and Character* edited by Ethan Fishman, et al, 127].

Throughout the War of Independence, Washington led in a way that allowed the “rebellion” to exist – the men under his command – suffering against those odds, in so many ways, lived to fight another day; they were an “army in being.” With the victory at Yorktown, Washington’s leadership was fully validated. Validation of his military leadership paled, however, in comparison to the relinquishing of his commission in December 1783. Had he so desired, Washington could have

been ushered in as king, dictator, head-of-state for life – yet, he returned to civilian life. This act truly made the “revolution” revolutionary.

In 1789, George Washington was called upon again – this time as the first president under the newly ratified Constitution. The job was not on the top of his list of things to do as he would note it had “no enticing charms.” As related in a letter from Alexander Hamilton, described in the Heidler’s work: “Hamilton urged him to accept the presidency. The advice was familiar enough to be dreary. ‘The new government in its commencement may materially depend’ on your acceptance. . . . Hamilton echoed other correspondents but with more presumption: Your country needs you, the new government needs you, only your reputation can give this experiment the chance it needs. And there was an admonition wrapped in adulation: ‘A citizen of so much consequence as yourself . . . has no option but to lend his services if called for’” (5).

Aristotle noted leaders “must be eternal balancers: seeking to reconcile ideals with the sometimes nasty facts of life; striving to establish an equilibrium between expecting too much and accepting too little from politics; struggling to translate morally preferable ideals into politically feasible policies.” [Fishman, 125]. Washington molded a nation, he not only gave the experiment a chance, he set it on a course for greatness. The eight years he served as president shaped the executive departments, the cabinet, the judiciary, and the interplay amongst the three branches. His foresight, the wisdom exhibited, and the ability to take appropriate actions – at the appropriate time are why George Washington, rightfully so, is remembered as the *Father of Our Country*. Prudence was his striking trait and greatest virtue.

But wait a minute the title refers to a *second British invasion*? And as a historian I know that I’m excluding the real “second invasion” in the War of 1812 to jump to the mid-1960s, nearly two centuries after the “first invasion” when the Beatles and other British pop and rock groups led a new onslaught of musical and cultural influence. Although an end date is difficult to pinpoint, many argue the tide of the second “British invasion” was turning by the late 1960s and over by the arrival of the new decade – so it lasted about the same amount of time as the first one. The Beatles, the longest lasting influence from the second invasion, recorded a song,

[continued on the next page]

## Prudence and Two British Invasions (continued from previous page)

“Dear Prudence,” written by John Lennon in 1968 just as the second invasion’s tide started receding. The song was penned while the Beatles were searching for inner peace in India and in actuality is about a person, Prudence Farrow, that was traveling with them during this time. The song is a plea for her to break out of her reclusiveness.

*Dear Prudence, won't you come out to play?  
Dear Prudence, greet the brand new day  
The sun is up, the sky blue  
It's beautiful and so are you  
Dear Prudence, won't you come out to play?*

*Dear Prudence, open your eyes  
Dear Prudence, see the sunny skies  
The wind is low, the birds will sing  
That you are part of everything  
Dear Prudence, won't you open your eyes?*

The first British invasion elevated Washington to immortality – and was a springboard for the prudence we would see exhibited during the war and during his presidency. Nearly two hundred years later, the second invasion left us with a plea for prudence to greet a brand new day. In the time that has passed between the first and second invasions the idea of prudence as classically defined has eroded. The Beatles made a plea to a friend, which I see as a plea, to a broader audience - humanity. Humanity and the world is waiting, I would argue still, for prudence to be re-embraced as the *aruriga virtutum* - “charioteer of the virtues.” Let’s do our part to make it so.



Completed in 1507, the tomb of Francis II, Duke of Brittany, located in the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Nantes, France has four statues on each corner representing the cardinal virtues (courage, justice, temperance, and prudence). Prudence carries in her right hand a compass for direction in action, and her left hand holds a mirror, reflecting back for contemplating the wisdom of the ages. There are also two faces as shown in the image above – a young woman looking forward to the future, and an older man with his eyes gazing upon the wisdom of the past. The face of the woman is modeled upon Anne of Brittany – the wife of Francis II. A poet from the time said *prudence* was her main virtue [information included above was paraphrased from the Wikipedia website entry located at the following link: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tomb\\_of\\_Francis\\_II,\\_Duke\\_of\\_Brittany](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tomb_of_Francis_II,_Duke_of_Brittany)]

## At a Crossroads: Civility – Part 2

by Wesley Jolly, *Director of Academic Services*

*Continued from Vol 30 – September 2016.*

In the news release for the soon to be published 2016 *Civility in America* study when “[a]sked to identify the groups contributing most to the lack of civility in society, both likely voters and the overall public cite politicians, the Internet/social media and the news media as the top three sources – each being named by more than half the respondents.”

The report goes on to state “Americans tend to absolve themselves from contributing to the coarsening of society, saying uncivil behavior is more prevalent the further they get from home. Ninety-four percent say they always or usually act politely and respectfully; 72 percent say the same for the people they know; 56 percent for people in their community. But only 20 percent of respondents think the American people always or usually behave civilly.”

Last month we touched upon some of the generational viewpoints regarding civility. In *Civility in America 2014* results showed that 27% of millennials have quit a job due to a workplace being uncivil and 16% of millennials have moved from a residence because of uncivil neighbors. Likewise, 49% of millennials have stopped buying from a company or advised others (44%) not to buy from a company because of uncivil treatment by a company representative [2014, p. 6]. Interestingly for all generational groups

## Civility in America by the numbers

### INCIVILITY EXPERIENCES

- 17.1 = average number of times Americans encounter incivility in a 7-day week, or 2.4 times per day
- 8.5 = average number of times Americans encounter incivility **in real life/offline** in a week
- 8.6 = average number of times Americans encounter incivility **online** in a week

Of Americans surveyed...

- 50% have ended a friendship because another person was uncivil
- 48% have defriended, blocked or hidden someone online because of uncivil behavior
- 43% expect to experience incivility in the next 24 hours
- 26% have quit a job because it was an uncivil workplace
- 24% have personally experienced cyberbullying (threefold increase since 2011)
- 19% of parents have transferred their child to a different school because of incivility at school

### INCIVILITY PERCEPTIONS

Of Americans surveyed...

- 95% believe we have a civility problem in America
- 87% think it is uncivil to be on a phone while talking with someone else in person
- 81% think uncivil behavior is leading to an increase in violence
- 80% agree that the level of civility won't improve until our government leaders act more civilly
- 71% believe civility is worse compared to a few years ago
- 70% think the Internet encourages uncivil behavior
- 70% think that incivility has risen to crisis levels
- 34% who expect civility to worsen blame Twitter

[taken from page 3 of the *Civility in America 2013* report]



## At a Crossroads: Civility – Part 2 (continued)

(Millenials, GenXers, Boomers, and the Silent Generation) the highest indicated area where individuals claimed personally experiencing incivility was while driving.

With the continual increase in screen devices for communication by all segments of society (smartphones, iPad-type devices, computers, etc.) and the explosion of social media opportunities (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) it is not surprising that perceptions are increasing that those devices/mediums are contributing to greater incivility.

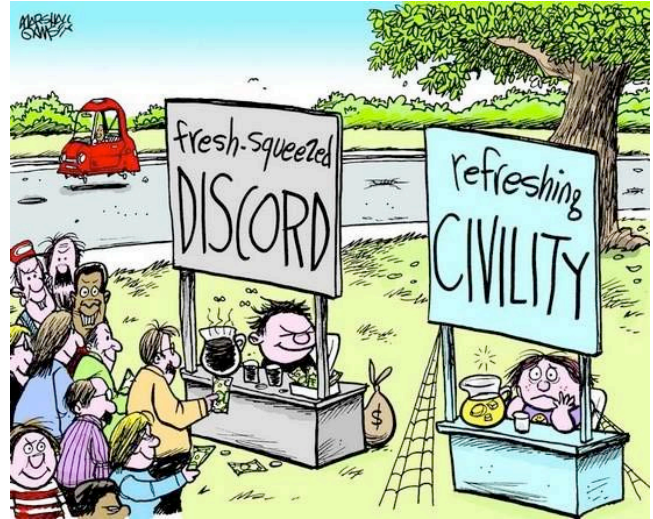
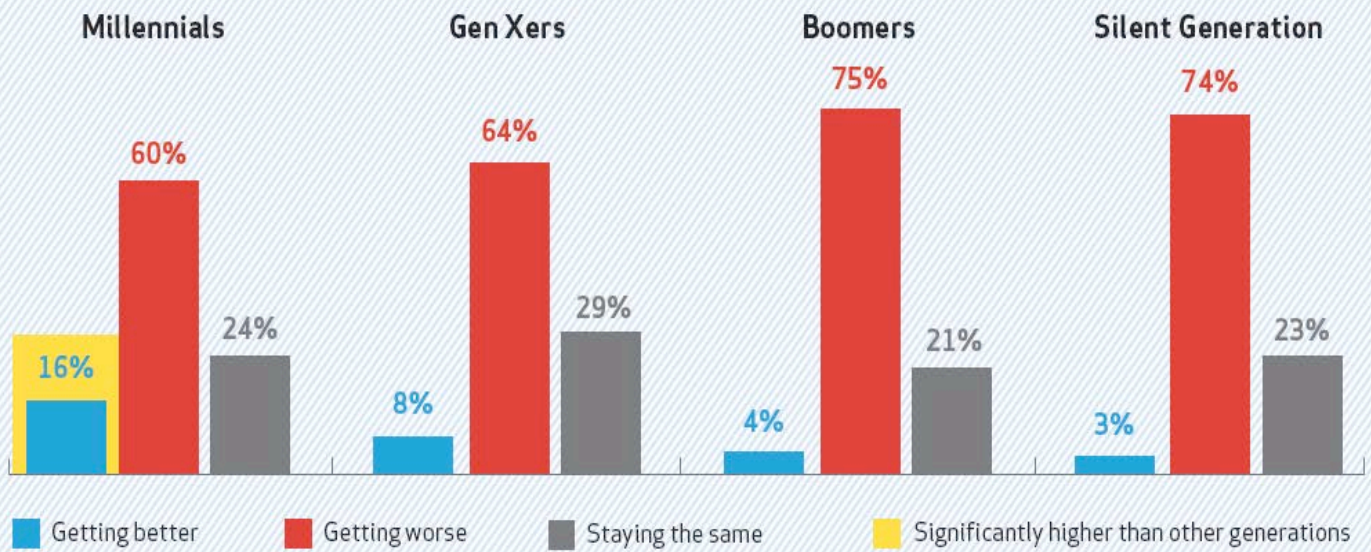


Image created by Marshall Ramsey in *The Clarion Ledger* for a September 19, 2010 article titled "Choosing Civility: The Lemonade Lesson" by Eric Thomas Weber.

Views on cyberbullying from the *Civility in America 2014* report:

### Cyberbullying in society is...



## At a Crossroads: Civility – Part 2 (continued)

So let’s step back in time – a time before there were smartphones and tablets and instant communication. A time where it took weeks or months for messages to travel from one person to another. By the time George Washington had reached the age of sixteen in the late 1740s he had copied by hand the 110 *Rules of Civility & Decent Behavior in Company and Conversation*. Those rules were based upon the writings of French Jesuits in 1595. Richard Brookhiser writes in his book *Founding Father: Rediscovering George Washington* that because of his foundation in the *rules of civility* “when the company for whom the decent behavior was to be performed expanded to the nation, Washington was ready. Parson Weems got this right, when he wrote that it was ‘no wonder every body honoured him who honoured every body’ [see reference *Foundations Magazine: Ideas to Build Your Life On – Rules of Civility & Decent Behavior* (rights obtained to utilize this [link](#))].



If you have time, I’d recommend you click on the link above and read the 110 *Rules of Civility* that Washington copied to improve his penmanship. Even 400 plus years after they were first developed many would agree these maxims would still serve us well today. I’ll include a few examples – that if we followed, just possibly, in the line of reasoning of Malcom Gladwell, maybe such a series of small actions can make a big difference in our civility “tipping point.”

- Rule #1** Every Action done in Company, ought to be with Some Sign of Respect, to those that are Present.
- Rule #14** Turn not your Back to others especially in Speaking . . .
- Rule #50** Be not hasty to believe flying Reports to the Disparagement of any.

Two topics, written about centuries ago, appear to speak directly to two areas many consider lacking in civility today – cellphone use and cursing.

### Rule #18

**Read no Letters, Books, or Papers in Company but when there is a Necessity for the doing of it you must ask leave . . .**



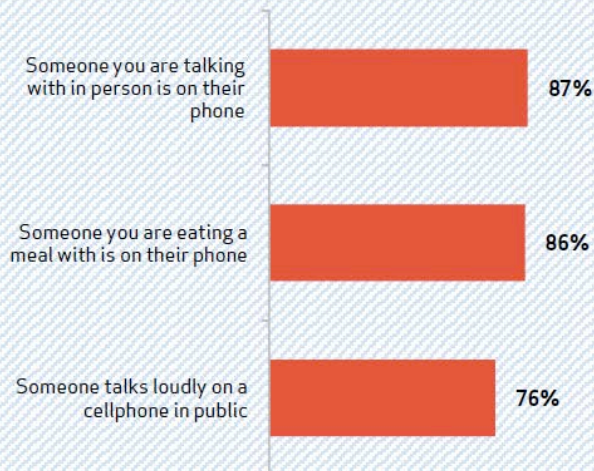
## At a Crossroads: Civility – Part 2

### Incivility in American life: cellphones

One area we took a closer look at this year was cellphone incivility. About one-third of Americans who expect civility to worsen blame cellphones/smartphones (34%).

The majority of Americans consider rude cellphone behavior uncivil. These behaviors include using a phone while speaking with someone else (87%) or while having a meal (86%), and talking loudly on a cellphone in public (76%). Americans ages 50 years and older are significantly more likely than those under 50 to consider these behaviors uncivil.

% Americans who consider it uncivil when...

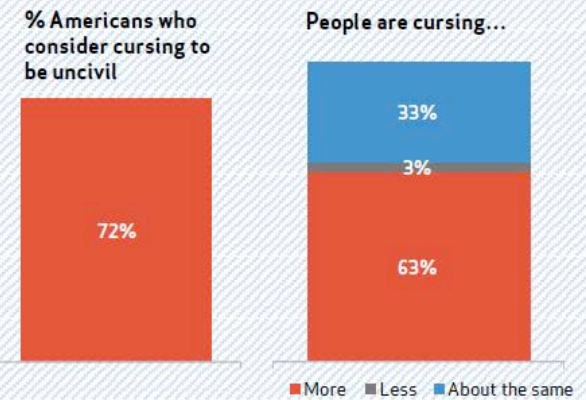


### Rule #49

Use no Reproachful Language against any one neither Curse nor Revile.

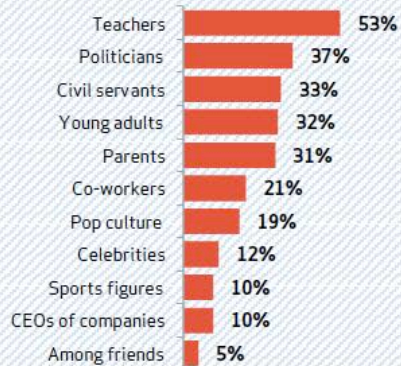
### Incivility in American life: cursing

Just as we released Civility in America 2012, news spread of a Massachusetts town that approved a fine for cursing in public. We investigated perceptions of profanity this year to see if Americans overall hold this kind of language in similar contempt. Nearly three-quarters of Americans (72%) believe cursing is uncivil and nearly two-thirds (63%) find people cursing more today than in the past. Those 50 years and older are significantly more likely than those younger than 50 years old to consider cursing uncivil (81% vs. 68%).



Regardless of age, Americans have the least tolerance for teachers cursing (53%) and the most for cursing among friends (5%). Cursing by politicians is also regarded negatively. Cursing by celebrities (12%) and sports figures (10%) appears to be taken for granted as the norm and is more widely accepted.

Cursing is most uncivil when it's done by...



## At a Crossroads: Civility – Part 2 (continued)

In the 2013 *Civility in America* survey “[w]hen asked to define civility in their own words, survey respondents most frequently answered with variations of, ‘Treat others with respect.’ Following this Golden Rule when communicating and interacting with others is the first step toward improving our nation’s civility crisis” [12]. The concept of the Golden Rule is found in nearly every religion and for many is a part of one’s ethical code. The idea of treating others as you’d like to be treated yourself – stares each of us in the face as we stand at the crossroads of civility. Will we choose to follow the path of so many in our society today and fail to live up to the expectations of an exemplary citizen, or will we embody good citizenship and live by *rules of civility* that guided such men as the Father of our Country, George Washington? The choice is ours and we have opportunities to demonstrate it everyday – on the highways, standing in line at the grocery store, by our word choice, in our Facebook posts and tweets. As we continue to discuss *character strengths and virtues* this year, and into the future at TCA, let’s remember that character and civility go hand-in-hand. To claim virtue without civility is simply hypocritical. We can do better, we must do better – our culture has embraced a lack of civility – let’s be counter-cultural and re-engage with those fundamental rules of behavior and discourse.

The final rule of civility that George Washington would transcribe when working on his penmanship was Rule #110. It states - Labor to

keep alive in your breast that little spark of celestial fire called conscience. As I read back through all the rules of civility and thought about the part we each play in contributing to a more civil society I was reminded of the Mark Twain quote included in Volume 27 of the PALMARIUM this past April. Twain remarked, “It is by the goodness of God that in our country we have those three unspeakably precious things: freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, and the prudence never to practice either of them.”



I would personally like to thank Michelle Guida from the New York City branch **Weber Shandwick** for granting permission to use their *Civility in America* publications and info-graphics in this and September’s volumes of the PALMARIUM.

# George Washington

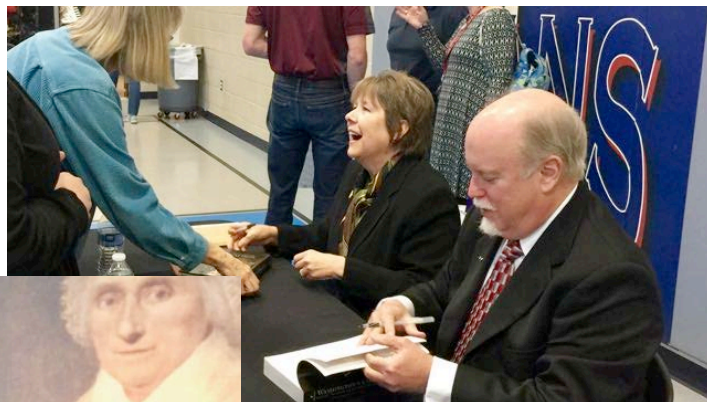
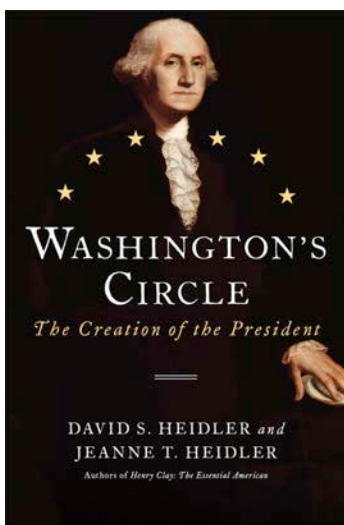
## The Hero as a Virtuous Leader

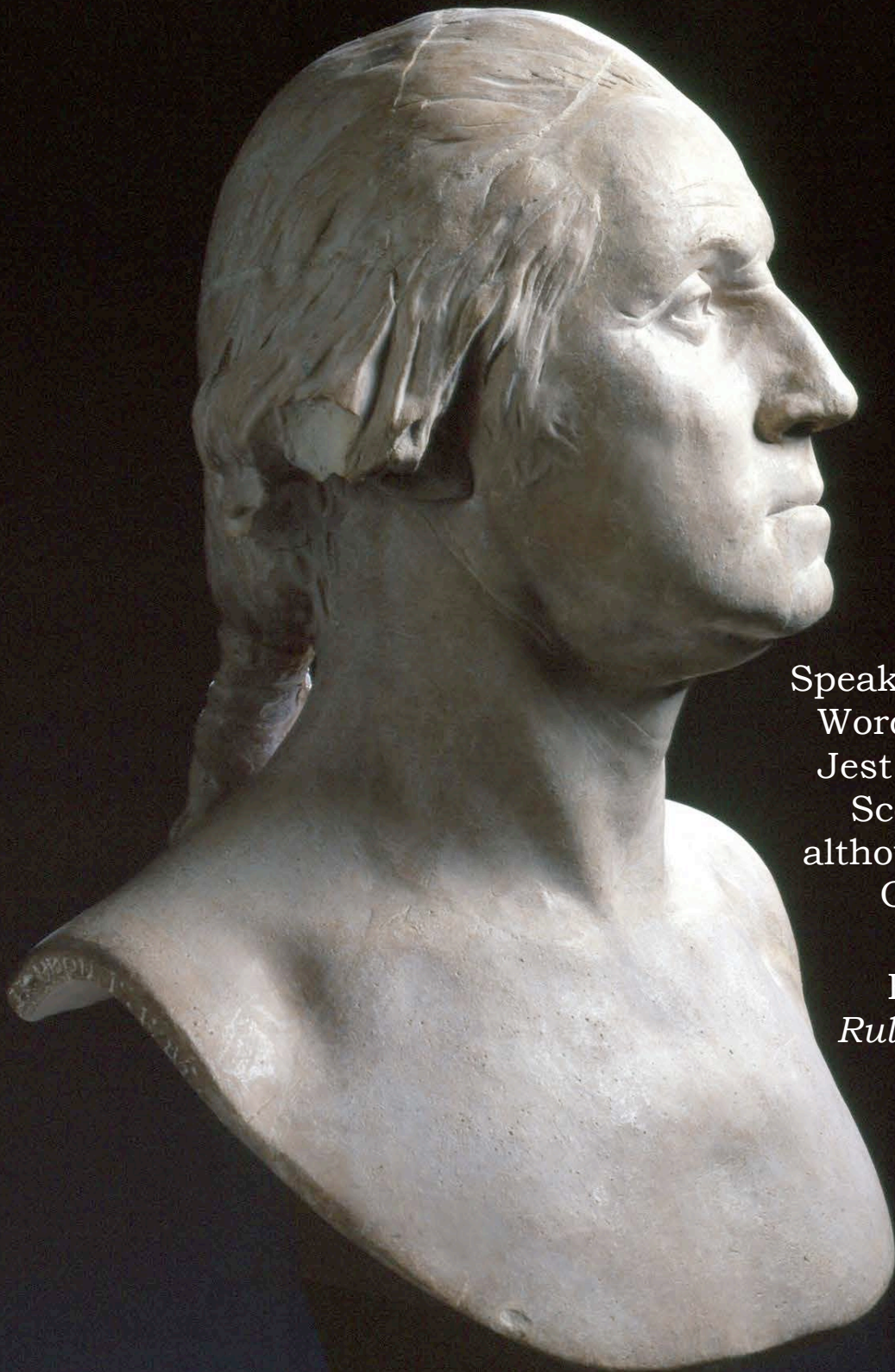


On October 10<sup>th</sup>, TCA welcomed **Jeanne and David Heidler** as our guest speakers for the kick-off of our annual October Conference. Teaching staff, and many others at TCA, had been reading their work *Washington's Circle: The Creation of the President* since the end of last

school year. Their presentation titled *George Washington: The Hero as a Virtuous Leader* focused on Washington's character traits, his leadership qualities, and the importance of his role in the founding our country. The ninety-minute session was well received by those in attendance. After a question and answer period with the authors, staff met in twenty-five

different groups to discuss the book and overall K-12 character implementation at TCA.





Speak not injurious  
Words neither in  
Jest nor Earnest  
Scoff at none  
although they give  
Occasion.

Rule #65  
*Rules of Civility*

# Open-Mindedness

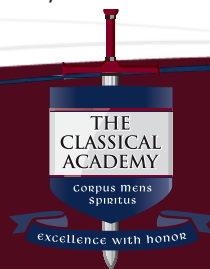
by Amy Nelson (East Elementary Principal)

*Open-Mindedness* and *Critical Thinking* come under the character trait of *Judgment* in the VIA 24 Character Strengths and Virtues. *Judgment* is defined as, thinking things through and examining them from all sides; not jumping to conclusions; being able to change one's mind in light of evidence; weighing all evidence fairly.

At TCA, this character trait is one we hope to instill in all our students. Our Core Values state: *We value an education that fosters rich creativity, complex analytical thinking, and discernment while exploring the marketplace of ideas.*

We want our students to be able to understand truth, so that they can weigh new ideas critically, against an objective standard. Aristotle said, "It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it." If a student is educated in the formative years on the ideals of truth, beauty, and goodness, that student is able to have a standard to measure new ideas against. We hope our students can entertain a wide variety of new thoughts as they go through life, without

[continued on the next page]



## CHARACTER STRENGTHS CLASSIFICATIONS and

in *Character Strengths and Virtues*, Peterson and search actively for evidence against one's favored when it is available. Its opposite has been called think in ways that favor one's current views (cf. mindedness arises from the massive evidence that people are biased in favor of ideas that are already strong in their minds. The term *bias* means that people's thoughts and judgments are compared to an ideal standard, a normative model. For most of the research in this field, the normative standard is one of fairness to ideas, regardless of one's initial views. Often this normative standard is difficult to define. For example, many of our beliefs are more likely to be true than false, so we have good reason – on this basis alone – to think that any given belief is likely to be true. Open-mindedness does not require us to believe in extrasensory perception on the basis of one statistically significant demonstration; nor does it require us to spend time examining the details of this demonstration. . . . The claim that open-mindedness is a strength of character is thus based on evidence that it counteracts a pervasive weakness in thinking, the tendency to favor ideas that are strong (Perkins, Bushey, & Faraday, 1986). Active open-minded thinking is an example of what virtue ethicists call a *corrective virtue*, and what it specifically corrects is the widespread *myside bias*" (144-145).

## DEFINITIONS:

In their chapter on OPEN-MINDEDNESS Seligman write: "Open-mindedness is the willingness to beliefs, plans, or goals, and to weigh such evidence fairly *myside bias*, which refers to the pervasive tendency to Greenwald, 1980). . . . The importance of open-mindedness arises from the massive evidence that people are biased in favor of ideas that are already strong in their minds. The term *bias* means that people's thoughts and judgments are compared to an ideal standard, a normative model. For most of the research in this field, the normative standard is one of fairness to ideas, regardless of one's initial views. Often this normative standard is difficult to define. For example, many of our beliefs are more likely to be true than false, so we have good reason – on this basis alone – to think that any given belief is likely to be true. Open-mindedness does not require us to believe in extrasensory perception on the basis of one statistically significant demonstration; nor does it require us to spend time examining the details of this demonstration. . . . The claim that open-mindedness is a strength of character is thus based on evidence that it counteracts a pervasive weakness in thinking, the tendency to favor ideas that are strong (Perkins, Bushey, & Faraday, 1986). Active open-minded thinking is an example of what virtue ethicists call a *corrective virtue*, and what it specifically corrects is the widespread *myside bias*" (144-145).

Peterson, C., & Park, N. (2009). Classifying and measuring strengths of character. In S. J. Lopez & C. R. Snyder (Eds), *Oxford handbook of positive psychology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (pp. 25-33. New York: Oxford University Press. [www.viacharacter.org](http://www.viacharacter.org)

Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2004). *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification*. New York: Oxford University Press and Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. [www.viacharacter.org](http://www.viacharacter.org)



- CREATIVITY:** Originality; adaptive; ingenuity
- CURIOSITY:** Interest; novelty-seeking; exploration; openness to experience
- JUDGMENT:** Critical thinking; thinking things through; open-minded
- LOVE OF LEARNING:** Mastering new skills & topics; systematically adding to knowledge
- PERSPECTIVE:** Wisdom; providing wise counsel; taking the big picture view

## Open-Mindedness *[continued]*

feeling the need to accept them, unless those thoughts meet the standard of truth.

As we help students to develop in their critical thinking, we help them to recognize the voices in the culture that are trying to persuade them. Good judgment is persuadable in light of new evidence, not merely to emotion. It is right to yield to principle, but not simply to give in to pressure or emotional appeal. G.K. Chesterton stated, "merely having an open mind is nothing. The object of opening the mind, as of opening the mouth is to shut it again on something solid." Being open-minded is not agreeing with every new thought, but finding what is true, what is solid, in the new idea and closing your mind around that. Good judgment then allows you to incorporate the true idea as a new element of your thinking.



Open-mindedness can help us practice *civility* as well. How do we interact and converse with those with whom we disagree? Can we see things from another's point of view, even if we believe they are wrong? The first two *Palmarium* issues this year focused on this idea of *civility* in our culture. At times, it seems as if we have lost the ability to have a meaningful argument. Argument comes from the Latin word *arguere*, meaning to make clear or prove. An argument was a series of statements to present reasons for someone to accept a conclusion. How are you at arguing? Can you argue about an issue without attacking the person with whom you disagree? Can you respect the person while disagreeing with them?

In Washington's *rules of civility*, mentioned in previous articles, two of the rules speak to this point.

40. Strive not with your Superiors in argument, but always Submit your Judgment to others with Modesty.
69. If two contend together take not the part of either unconstrained; and be not obstinate in your own Opinion, in Things indifferent be of the Major Side.

These rules speak to the way we interact in matters of disagreement. They encourage us to be humble when sharing our judgment, and be ready to entertain the other's opinions.

Our 6<sup>th</sup> graders were recently discussing a topic where students were sharing different opinions. One of the young men said, "I don't agree with your opinion, but I can understand why you would feel that way." What a beautiful example of open-mindedness and good judgment.





## The Shape of Vitality: A Zest Beyond Soap Commercials

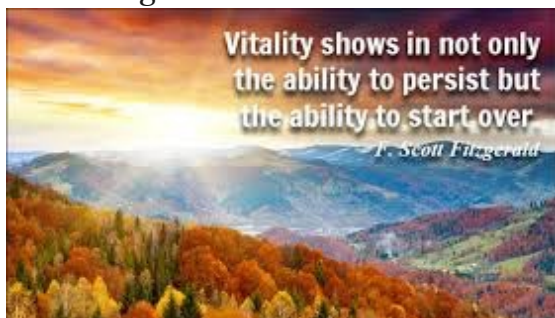
by Bruce Casson, College Pathways History Teacher

**“Do stuff, be clenched, curious. Not waiting for inspiration's shove or society's kiss on your forehead. Pay attention. It's all about paying attention; attention is vitality. It connects you with others. It makes you eager.” (Susan Sontag)**

In our everyday imagination, “vitality” seems to be one of those character strengths that we just *know* when we see it. It's the effervescent grandmother who runs half-marathons, or the passionate artist friend excitedly chattering on about his next oil painting. Vitality connotes vigor, energy, and youthful spirit—that healthy glow associated with mental muscularity and power. Vitality radiates pizzazz, like the emotional feel of those old “Zestfully clean” or Irish Spring soap commercials, or the ads for high-powered energy drinks. Vitality is life in caffeinated, unadulterated bliss. It's what we all yearn for at the end of an exhausting, trying week.



To the ancient world, this sort of Red Bull exuberance used to define vitality—limiting it to physical health or sparkling eyes—might seem a somewhat shallow way to capture its essence. Eastern philosophies of China and India saw vitality as a sort of energy that animated all living things, and even our Greek and Roman ancestors in the West saw it as a vital force that fueled good living. The English word comes from the Latin *vita*, meaning life, and for the Romans, vitality was the active, sustaining vigor that lets an individual or an institution live and grow. People can have vitality, but so can governments or democracies, or places of learning.



So what's the secret for sustaining or growing vitality? Experts argue that true vitality involves nurturing both biological needs *and* less obvious essentials. Dan Buettner, a *National Geographic* Fellow, spent the past decade scouring the world for individuals who live “extraordinarily long, healthy lives.” In his bestselling book *The Blue Zones of Happiness*, writer Catherine Guthrie reports, Buettner and his team single out four vitality pockets, or “Blue Zones,” that

are examples of successful aging: Okinawa, Japan; Sardinia, Italy; Loma Linda, California; and the rural village of Nicoya in western Costa Rica. In each Zone, the lifestyles and joy for living of the population, the author reveals, added to the length and vitality of their lives. While diet and activity played a role in longevity (including in Sardinian men, whose rate of living to the age of 100 is 10 times that of developed countries), Buettner noticed that several intangible things—a sense of life purpose, a cultivating of family and community bonds, a habit of keeping promises to others, and an investing in religious practices—were common characteristics that seemed to contribute powerfully to the vitality of those living in these Blue Zones. (For Dan Buettner's interesting TED talk go to [https://www.ted.com/talks/dan\\_buettner\\_how\\_to\\_live\\_to\\_be\\_100](https://www.ted.com/talks/dan_buettner_how_to_live_to_be_100))

## *The Shape of Vitality: A Zest Beyond Soap Commercials* [continued]



Buettner's discoveries may not be perfect (and the causes of longevity are complex), but they shed light on some fascinating features that seem to mark a life full of vitality and meaning. Like individuals, communities and institutions need active, healthy vigor to thrive and grow. Vitality, or "zest," as related in *Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification* by Christopher Seligman and Martin E.P. Seligman, thrives in communities the same way it does with the individual: when the community has a sense of purpose, finds joy in cultivating relationships, and

honors its promises to a clear mission. Community Zest needs enthusiasm, intentional direction, a dash of humor and fun, and a sense for the sheer adventure.

Buettner and other experts, says Guthrie, offer several practical ways to enhance our vitality (beyond a wholesome diet, exercise, and Irish Spring soap):

- 1) **Get outside.** The energetic elders in Okinawa, Costa Rica and other Blue Zones enjoyed life surrounded by nature. In Colorado Springs we have an embarrassment of natural riches (hiking trails, hills and mountains, rivers, and walking paths) nearby.
- 2) **Cultivate community.** Relationships, especially those that are close-knit, have been correlated with physical well-being, a sense of optimism, and purpose. They allow us to share stories, wrestle with ideas, fail and forgive, and laugh. Faith communities, social groups, and volunteer organizations create interconnectedness through shared values, Buettner found.
- 3) **Be a lifelong learner.** A cornerstone of TCA's mission, "finding the joy in [continued] learning" improves mental well-being, models intellectual curiosity, and celebrates scholarship.
- 4) **Calm down.** Chronic stress releases cortisol and epinephrine (sometimes called "stress hormones") that can damage cells, tissues, and organ systems, and create cardiovascular and respiratory problems. We know this intuitively, but we oftentimes forget the toll stress takes on us physiologically.
- 5) **Honor your promises.** Each time we break a promise, whether to a loved one or to ourselves, we lose a sense of connection with our own values. Keeping promises cultivates community and fosters trust and self-respect.
- 6) **Plug "energy leaks."** Notice where you are losing energy, and reevaluate parts of your life that can drain vitality and diminish a sense of purpose.
- 7) **Don't skimp on sleep.** That timeless mom advice. Chronic sleep deprivation increases your odds of suffering from both heart disease and diabetes, and reduces your immunity and ability to cope with everyday challenges.



Jessica Lahey

PLEASE JOIN US TO HEAR

**JESSICA LAHEY**

SPEAK TO OUR PARENT  
COMMUNITY AT THE  
**TCA NORTH GYM**

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 14**

**7:00 - 8:30 PM**

WE EXPECT A LARGE CROWD; PLEASE ARRIVE EARLY AND  
CARPOOL, IF POSSIBLE, OR USE OUR SHUTTLE SERVICE  
FROM THE EAST CAMPUS (MORE DETAILS TO COME)

