

# 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 from our First President: *George Washington*



Painting by Ken Corbett, 1997.

*Light reading (by this, I mean books of little importance) may amuse for the moment but leaves nothing solid behind* [letter to George Washington Parke Custis – November 13, 1796].

At this auspicious period, the United States came into existence as a nation, and if their citizens should not be completely free and happy, the fault will be entirely their own [*Circular to the States* - June 8, 1783].

It is infinitely better to have a *few* good men than *many* indifferent ones [letter to James McHenry – August 10, 1798].

There is but one straight course, and that is to seek truth and pursue it steadily [letter to Edmund Randolph – July 31, 1795].

Few men have virtue to withstand the highest bidder [letter to Robert Howe – August 17, 1779].

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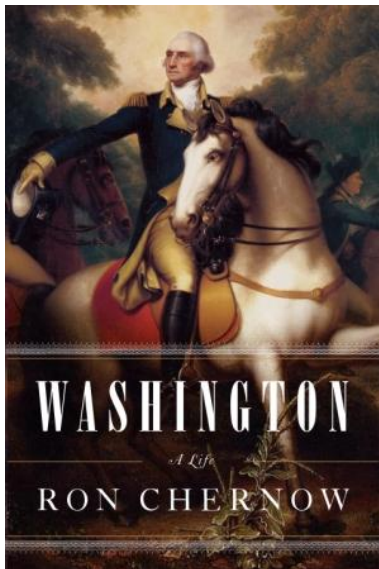
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- Whole Person Focused
  - Relationship Based
    - Classically Oriented
    - Idea Centered

## 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



## TCA Evacuation Drill

The objective of The Classical Academy's Evacuation and Reunification Drill on January 6, 2014 is for all staff to experience the

evacuation and reunification process, provide for student accountability, familiarize staff with the site and specific layout of the evacuation location, exercise ASD20 and TCA roles and responsibilities, and build a team that is confident in handling a crisis - ensuring the safety of all students and staff. All campuses (except the Cottage School Program) will participate on this day. Administrators at the Cottage School Program will follow-up with a walk-through and procedures discussion on January 7. Of the six schools participating on January 6, no students will be impacted, since students do not return from the holiday break until January 7 at those campuses. The schedule for the day is included in the image to the right. Please review the schedule and plan accordingly - a lunch break will not be provided until after the buses return to TCA from the exercise. Only breakfast will be provided for staff that morning. Lunch will be on your own in the afternoon.

Micro Schedule January 6	
7:45-8:15	Breakfast
8:15-8:45	Dr. Coulter's Mid-Year Remarks
8:45-9:45	Drill Overview
9:45-10:00	Break
10:00-10:30	Evacuation Drill
10:30-12:00	Reunification Drill
12:00-12:30	Debrief and Q&A Session
12:30-1:00	Buses Return to TCA



The TCA board approved the creation of a temporary joint Board and Administration subcommittee to research the affects that Common Core standards will have on the TCA educational philosophy and Core Values. The subcommittee consists of the following members: *Steve Palmer* (board), *Dr. Kathleen Harrington* (board), *Executive Director* (rep), *Wesley Jolly* (DAS), *Dorothy Simpson* (CCCI), *Blake Galvin* (CCCI), *Don Stump* (principal), *Sean Shields* (principal), and *Bob Swanson* (recorder). The group presented a draft TCA resolution and supporting documentation to the board at the December 9<sup>th</sup> board meeting. **At the January 13<sup>th</sup> TCA Board Meeting, the board is expected to consider and approve a resolution that will be made available to the TCA community and other interested parties.**



**1-877-542-SAFE**

Taken from the Safe2Tell® website: "Safe2Tell® provides young people a way to report any threatening behaviors or activities endangering themselves or someone they know, in a way that keeps them safe and anonymous. Safe2Tell® is a 501c3 not-for-profit organization based on the Colorado Prevention Initiative for School Safety with initial funding from The Colorado Trust. The program focuses on kids and the issues

they face today. This program was based on the Columbine Commission Report's recommendation that students need a safe and anonymous way to keep lines of communication open. They realized that tragedies could be prevented if young people had a way to tell someone what they know without fearing retaliation. The anonymity of all Safe2Tell® reports is protected by C.R.S. 07-197. This means the reporting party remains unknown by Colorado state law, signed by Governor Bill Ritter on May 3, 2007. Now, using Safe2Tell®, they only have to make a call to make a difference. By calling 1-877-542-7243 or submitting a tip through this website, young people can help anyone who is in trouble or prevent a tragedy." The Safe2Tell® website can be found at: <http://safe2tell.org>





# Upcoming DAS Meetings and Due Dates:

## ALT Meetings:

Pending: new second semester ALT meeting dates will be forwarded to staff by Friday, January 3<sup>rd</sup>.

## Due Dates and Upcoming Events:

- Dec 20 - Jan 5: **Winter Break for Staff**
- Jan 6: Safety and Security – Evacuation Exercise (no students)
- Jan 8: Common Core Subcommittee Meeting (9:00-10:30 am)
- Jan 8: Board Working Session – Strategic Plan (CCCI)
- Jan 13: Touchstone Working Group Meeting (3:00-4:00 pm)
- Jan 13: TCA Board Meeting (6:00-10:00 pm)
- Jan 15: *Strategic Plan* - ALT input (led by SLT + CCCI)
- Jan 16: CP/CSP Waitlist Orientation Meeting (6:30-8:00 pm)
- Jan 17: **End of first semester**
- Jan 20: **Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday** – no school
- Jan 31: Quarterly Policy Reviews due (see spreadsheet)
- Feb 5: Board Working Session – Strategic Plan
- Feb 10: TCA Board Meeting (6:00-10:00 pm)
- Feb 17: **Presidents’ Day** – no school
- Mar 5: Board Working Session - Strategic Plan
- Mar 10: TCA Board Meeting (6:00-10:00 pm)
- Mar 12: *Strategic Plan* - ALT input (led by ELT and SLT)
- Mar 24-28: **Spring Break for Staff**
- Apr 9: Board Working Session – Strategic Plan
- Apr 14: TCA Board Meeting (6:00-10:00 pm)

*Please stay aware of the due dates listed on this page of the newsletter. It will help us make sure we are up-to-date on all upcoming requirements/suspenses. See compliance and accreditation specifics in the next column.*



## Compliance and Accreditation Corner

Check here for updates on compliance and accreditation items as we move through the year:

### SAC BUSINESS TO COMPLETE:

- SAC minutes to Cheri for Absolutes notebook
- Review of SAC bylaws (Cheri)
- SAC to approve bylaw changes

### ITEMS DUE IN FUTURE:

- **Site Plan Training with D20** in *Spring 2014* (coordinate with Cheri)
- **Final Contact Time** - Cheri will submit *April 30, 2014*
- **Update Site Plans with new D20 Format** - Cheri to complete by *April 30, 2014*
- **Updated Site Plans** due to Cheri by *May 28, 2014*
- **Absolutes Notebook** – Cheri will streamline process & gather appropriate information – due *May 31, 2014*

