

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.

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# PALMARIUM

## TCA Fundraiser Update

For the 2022-23 school year TCA's school-wide fundraiser has been for the **American Cancer Society**. 2 of our 7 schools have completed their efforts with most planned for April and May. At this point just under **\$25,000** has been raised. Excellent work - and thanks to all those that have donated so far. If you'd like to learn more about the organization or donate click on the image below.



## MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

Back in December the new Mental Health Resources page went live on our TCA website as a ready reference source for parents, staff, and students to utilize in case of a crisis situation.

The link [www.tcatitans.org/mentalhealth](http://www.tcatitans.org/mentalhealth) provides resources on a variety of topics. The **foremost resource** however, in all situations needing immediate help related to suicide is the **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline**. This resource is both free and confidential for people in distress, or needing prevention and crisis resources for themselves or a loved one. This new hotline has provided much needed access to individuals, and since the transition to the three digit contact number this hotline has received much greater participation allowing for better assistance of those in need.



In this month's issue you will find the first of two questions from the interview of TCA's founding families back in October. Additionally, details are provided on the last *Beyond the Book Club* study of this school year, parent survey participation results, recent 25th Anniversary celebration events, a K-6 curriculum synopsis, plus a "What I See" article.

The Editor

[WWW.TCATITANS.ORG](http://WWW.TCATITANS.ORG)

SEVEN SCHOOLS • THREE CAMPUSES • ONE VISION

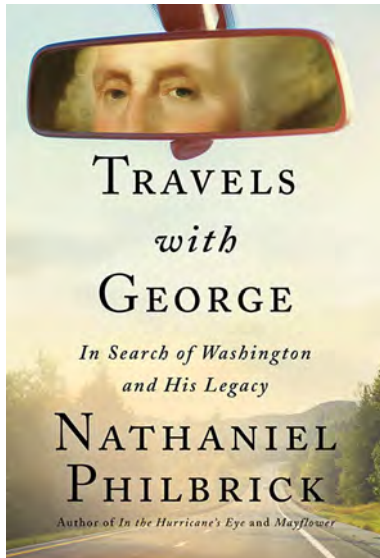
25 Years - Remembering Our Roots



## Travels with George

### Beyond the Book Club Study

The final *Beyond the Book Club* study of the school year will be during the **April 18-20, 2023** timeframe. The 90-minute study sessions will take place at the TCA North Elementary library in the Pikes Peak Room from 4:30-6:00 pm. For this last study of the school year, Wes Jolly,



TCA Director of Academic Services, will lead us through a discussion of *Travels with George: In Search of Washington and His Legacy* by Nathaniel Philbrick. If you'd like to be added to the RSVP invite that goes out about three weeks in advance of the book studies send an e-mail to me at [wjolly@asd20.org](mailto:wjolly@asd20.org) and I'll add you to the list for the final details e-mail. Both staff and parents are invited to participate. The selections for 2023-24 book club will be shared in the May edition of the PALMARIUM.

Beginning in September of this school year I set out on a classroom journey. My hopeful goal - to visit each of our schools on a regular basis (*42 times altogether*) for approximately three hours each. During those visits, I spend 20-25 minutes each, in multiple classrooms, to get a small glimpse of what is taking place each day across our campuses. So far I've been fortunate enough to spend time in over 170 classrooms, from AM Kindergarten to Senior Rhetoric - and all the grades in-between. What have I learned and seen? First off, I see **dedicated,**

## WHAT I SEE

by Wes Jolly, Director of Academic Services



**hard-working, passionate, student-focused, self-sacrificing, lovers of learning,** both teachers and tutors, striving everyday to assist in the development of the exemplary citizens we outline in our mission statement. What a joy it is to see the sense of wonder on a first grader's face when they listen to their teacher share a story. How amazing it is to listen to the seniors dive deep in their rhetoric classes contemplating the ten Capstone questions for their senior defense. *What I see* makes me proud to be a part of such a school for the past seventeen years. *What I see* drowns out the divisions, lack of civility, anger, and other elements prevalent way too often in our society today. The focus on what is true, beautiful, and good should give us all pause, everyday. In a world that is driven by soundbites, social media 'likes', negativity, anxiety, and depression at levels we have never seen as a nation - it is a wonderful respite to sit in a young student's classroom and listen - yes, listen - watch, and just be thankful. As part of my classroom visits many times I've taken photos of things that **caught my eye** and I'd like to share some of those with you below and on pages 4-6, later in this volume. These images have each been shared with the classroom teacher and their approval given to share with the larger TCA community. Where I remember the details I include a short description, if not the image will just tell the story. Enjoy for a brief moment some of the things **I see** (continued on pp. 4, 5 & 6).



Erin Yeardon's 1st grade classroom at North Elementary

[transcribed from October 2022 all staff conference]

**R. Sojourner:** What most excites you about TCA on this 25th Anniversary (twenty-five years and a month since we opened our doors)? What most excites you and what would you like these staff members to hear about your excitement for this school and the future of this school?

**V. Brown:** Well, I am going to be real quick. I can see some faces out in the crowd, Coach Daggett, Mr. Knuth, Carrie Stedman...and again, the hard thing about naming names is not naming everybody. But, what excites me is the fingerprints that you have on my kids lives, and this stands the test of time. We've all got stories for that, right? Some of those impacts are immense and there are several stories that illustrate that.

We used to talk about those stories. I think Jim first said that The Classical Academy was an experiment. Well, this experiment was radically successful and I for one am very grateful.

**B. Brown:** It just excites me that TCA exists; that you guys get to do what you are doing every day in the classroom. Just shaping these students', these kids' lives. That is extraordinary in a world where we need this more than ever. Right? We need this sense of character; we need this sense of giving kids foundations, knowing that they do not have to be tossed by the wind.

We live in a world of divisiveness and false realities created by social media. You guys are creating an environment in real life that matters, it means something. So, I am just thrilled that you get

to do that. And I know, as a staff member for six years, I know what that feels like. And kudos to everyone sitting here, so thank you.

**R. Sojourner:** Mary?

**M. Kretchman:** I would say pretty much the same thing as Betsy and Vance. I really prepared this. I am not going off of what they are saying. So, yeah. It is you all. [Gestures to the audience.] You all are why I get excited about TCA and its future. It's your heart, your willingness to come, like Russ said, for probably less than what you could get elsewhere, your heart for the kids, and your passion for your subject matter. And my inspiration stems from those children who hope for certain teachers who think, "Please be you!" You know, I know sometimes if you are passionate about your subject matter you might think, "Oh, they really won't be interested in that." But your kids need to catch your passion and so it is important to go on and really show it. Show your passion for your subject. Be yourself.

## FOUNDERS 25th Anniversary

But I just love the fact that you are here and willing to stand for a philosophy that is so different than other schools and to be part of a rich community. You are sacrificing and there are going to be blows along the way, but it is a noble sacrifice. So, thank you so much. You are why I am excited about the future.

**R. Sojourner:** Thanks, Mary. Jim?

**J. Kretchman:** Well, I am frustrated. I wanted to go last and absolutely everything I had written on my page...was like word for word already said [audience laughs]. We had these questions in advance and this one I gave a lot of thought to. As I was thinking about the present and the future (and there is a danger in us telling old war stories), it is very polite for you all to listen to old people talk about our experiences. Some of them were pretty funny, actually.

But honestly, I had breakfast with James Fradette. And I listened to him. And I honestly went, "Oh my gosh. The passion, the effort that he put in..." I am singling him out, but he is definitely a metaphor of the people who

continue to serve the school and the people who lead the school in the present, is like, you know...it's wonderful. I was so uplifted. I thought, "Wow. The school is still in good hands of people who have passion for so many of the same things we had passion for."

My feelings on this subject are similar to if I had to hand a baby off to somebody to raise or something is going to happen to me and would ask, "I am about to pass away, would you be willing to carry the baton?" This school feels like that in some ways for us.

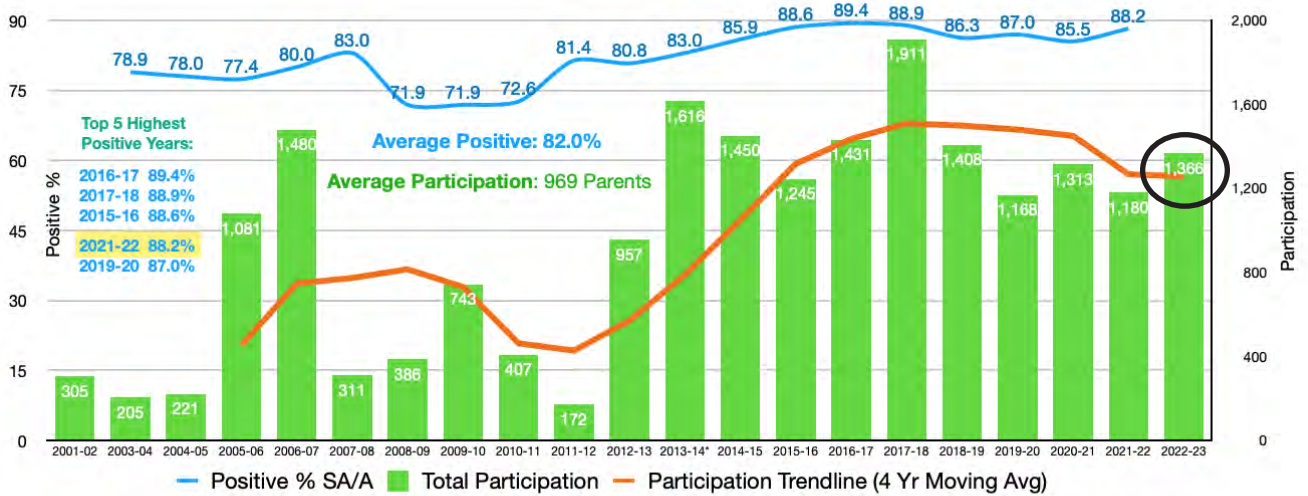
The reputation that the school has, is again, because of the people who work here and serve here. I think a lot of people who sign up just saw our passion. We were excited about something. They probably thought, "I don't really quite know what you are talking about, but dog gone, I am on board. I love where you are at."

I still see the enthusiasm, passion, and I don't know what the next 25 years hold, but I have been thankful to have had Russ step into this role as President. I am very excited for these Board members who I spent some time with recently. People have started to pick our brains about what we cared about. I don't feel very articulate right now because there is a lot of emotion, but I feel a particularly overwhelming sense of gratitude. Thank you for all you do.



TCA'S CORE VALUES DOCUMENT

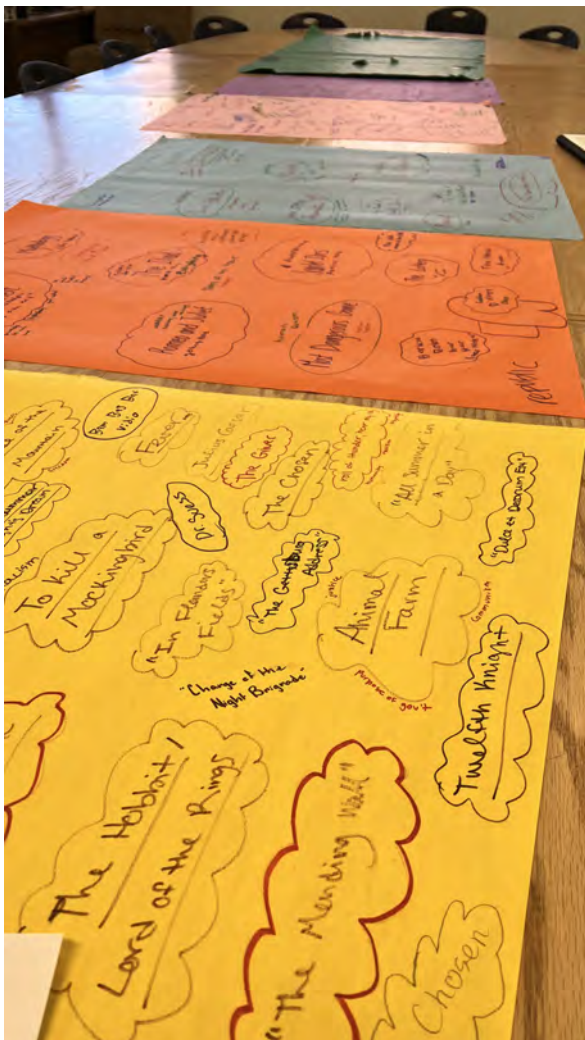
**Parent Survey - 1,366 Participants  
THANK YOU to Our Community**



PARENT SURVEY: Participation Numbers and Positive Ratings (Strongly Agree / Agree) Percentages on TCA-Wide Questions (includes homework and uniform in years asked)

**WHAT I SEE (continued)**

Shown below and on pages 5 and 6 are a few snapshots of the things I see during my visits to our TCA classrooms.



[above] Jennifer Donahoo's Kindergarten classroom at North Elementary (made me grimace a little when I did the math of how old I'd be when they graduate); [left] Ben Los's 12th grade Rhetoric class brainstorming for the senior capstone project.

WHAT I SEE Images from the Classroom



1st grade art projects at North Elementary (above)

(below) Michelle Heeter's 1st grade classroom at Central Elementary



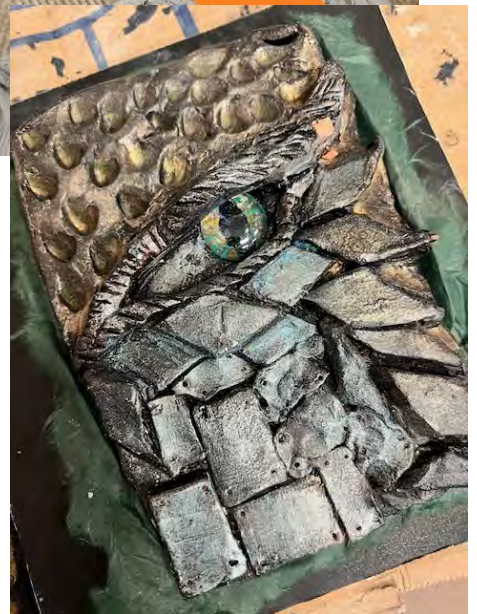
Michelle Dalrymple's Art classroom at Cottage School



Math classroom at College Pathways



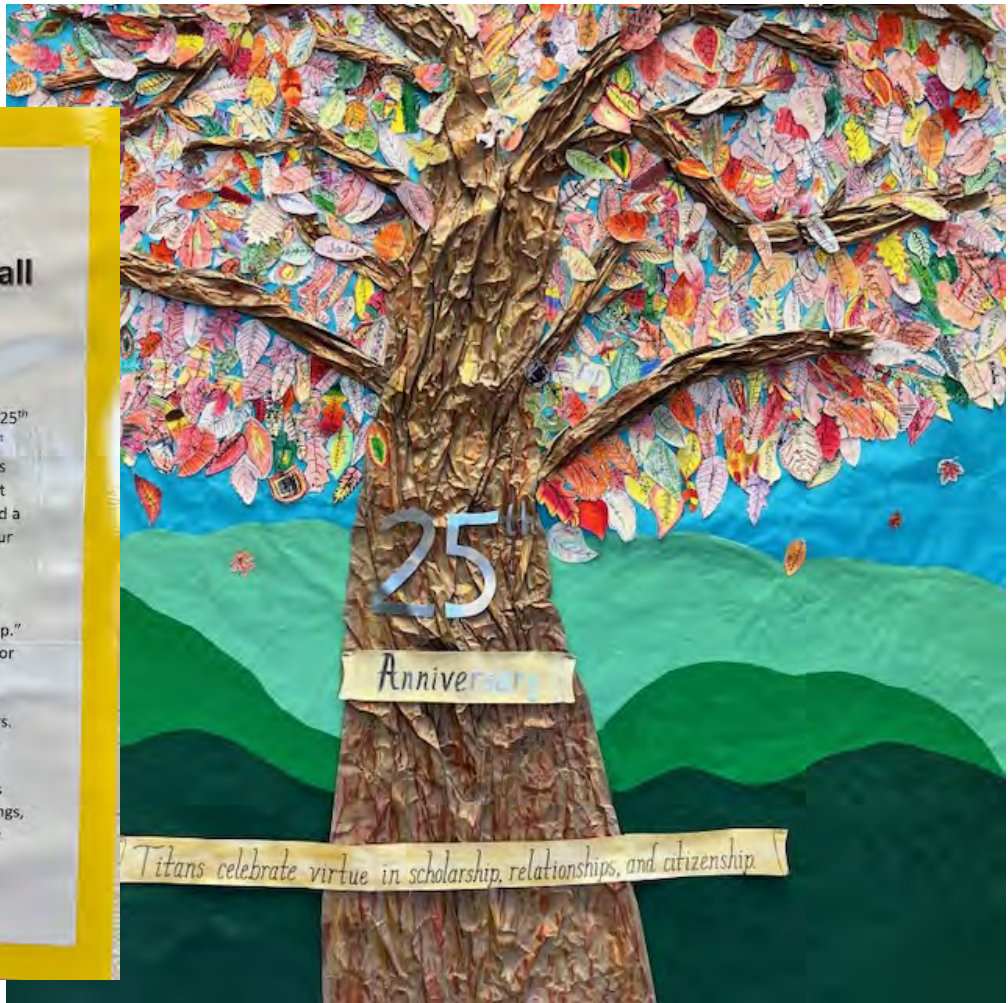
Shanah Leaf's Art classroom at Junior High



**Central Elementary  
1st-6th grade art project**

**25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
Character Tree of Fall  
Colors**

The Classical Academy is celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> year as a school this year. Students in 1<sup>st</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grade art classes created this colorful fall character tree. Each student started by drawing a fall leaf, then added a character word to their leaf, based on our class discussion. We talked about our character focus for this year, from our Titan's creed, "Titans celebrate virtue in scholarship, relationships, and citizenship." We also discussed our character virtue for the year—humanity: showing love and kindness, displaying social intelligence—knowing yourself so you can know others. Students thought about all the ways we show our fellow titans we care about them—kind acts, asking how someone is doing, being considerate of others' feelings, and following the golden rule. When we work together to create community, everyone feels valued and respected.



**Worldview Panel Speakers** for Senior Rhetoric classes

**WHAT I SEE Images from the Classroom**

From the moment our students begin their journey at TCA they are welcomed and have a spot saved at a table with a feast of rich, transformative, and insightful ideas. Almost immediately the creation of a grand tapestry of ideas has begun.

In kindergarten, our students' foundation is built with exposure to concepts such as the human body, the founding fathers, and an introduction to the world around them through stories and fairy tales, nature studies and picture studies, and discovering numbers and how they are used to count. These are fascinating subjects to those just beginning their journeys. Lifelong friendships are formed with Dr. Seuss, Chicken Little, Winnie the Pooh, and Tigger too!

Moving on, the feast in first grade continues to develop and information is shared about the sun, moon and stars, ancient civilizations such as the Aztec, Inca and Maya, and cultural stories including the Chinese little red riding hood, Lon Po Po. Our little ones actually don their archaeologist clothing and dig for ancient artifacts. So, fossils and hidden gems must be more than just pictures in books. And on the subject of books, let's not forget the monumental task of developing the skill of reading, which is critical to the journey they are just beginning.

Second graders hone the taste for big ideas by delving into studies of major world religions and ancient civilizations such as Greece and China. Already tastes have matured in a deeper understanding of the foundation of the U.S. government and the expansion west. Pioneer life is real as the joys and trials of life in the big woods for Laura are shared by all. In fitting for a discussion on a feast, understanding of the human body is also expanded as digestion becomes more than just a big word, but how we physically fuel our bodies.

The feast at times can be overwhelming, but oh so delicious! In third grade, students will continue to enjoy old favorites as well as new dishes in the study of Ancient Rome but also the Vikings. By studying the perseverance of these civilizations and their tenacity, long division needs no tears because students have developed an understanding that life can be a challenge, but we have traits that allow us to adapt and rise to those challenges. Exploration, discovery, and making connections inspire students as they study explorers from the late 1400s to 1600s and their impact on the world around them.



The tapestry is half formed at this point, but each individual thread is essential to the whole. If pieces are missing or changes are made, the final product will not be as the artist planned.

By fourth grade, already our students have a wealth of knowledge, and the connections are endless; students have developed a craving for rich, meaty ideas and no predigested material will do. It makes sense to study a time period called "the Middle Ages", because students recognize a large portion of ancient history, yet also more modern times such as the 1700's, so of course there should be a middle time with kings and queens. When else would the princes and princesses of the earlier fairy tales have lived? Colonial times come to life in the study of the Fever of 1793 and the development of the United States government. There is also a further understanding of the human body, and that hearts and lungs are necessary for every interaction.

It's beautiful to see the fifth grade students relish and enjoy a true understanding of the word "Renaissance" meaning re-birth as they know the ideas and truths that the Europeans were harkening back to in Ancient Greece and Rome. Why wouldn't we want to ask questions, seek truth, and strengthen our understanding? Captain Bowditch is a perfect example of how questioning leads to change and improvement for the world. The students who have been exposed to these ideas recognize there is more to the world than what we see, and Copernicus and Galileo are familiar names at this point. The idea of the solar system doesn't shock and amaze, it greets them with open arms and says, "Hello my friend, there's more to know than you can even imagine. What else do you wonder?"

As the feast of elementary school comes to a close, the 6th graders are excited and thrilled to review and know more about the myths they heard before and go on a new journey with Odysseus and his men. The battles they studied are confirmed (yes there really were war elephants), and they hear familiar names which bring back memories of high schoolers guiding them to battle on the field in an earlier time. Isaac Newton brings back fond memories of that strange word gravity, and the life cycles studied earlier are now applied to stars... so many moments of wonder, times of inspiration, and thoughts that spurred questions have all been because of the rich and varied curriculum that is critically chosen, specifically spiraled, and intentionally implemented.

We, as teachers at TCA, are blessed to prepare and present the feast together. As a chef who enjoys seeing restaurant patrons partake of the feast, we as educators have the blessing of being present at the moment students build connections and understand more of the world around them. Our job is not to focus on one year in a student's life, but to realize that we are part of the creation of a stunning tapestry of ideas, and when we work together, and stick to our purposefully picked curriculum, we in turn are helping to create the final product. We are forming the minds and shaping the character of students and sending them off to continue their development as they are comfortably seated at the Socratic discussion tables in secondary classrooms. As our mission statement says The Classical Academy exists to assist parents in their mission to develop exemplary citizens equipped with analytical thinking skills, virtuous character, and passion for learning, all built upon a solid foundation of knowledge [written by Mentor Teacher, Jessica Powell].

# 25th Anniversary Celebration

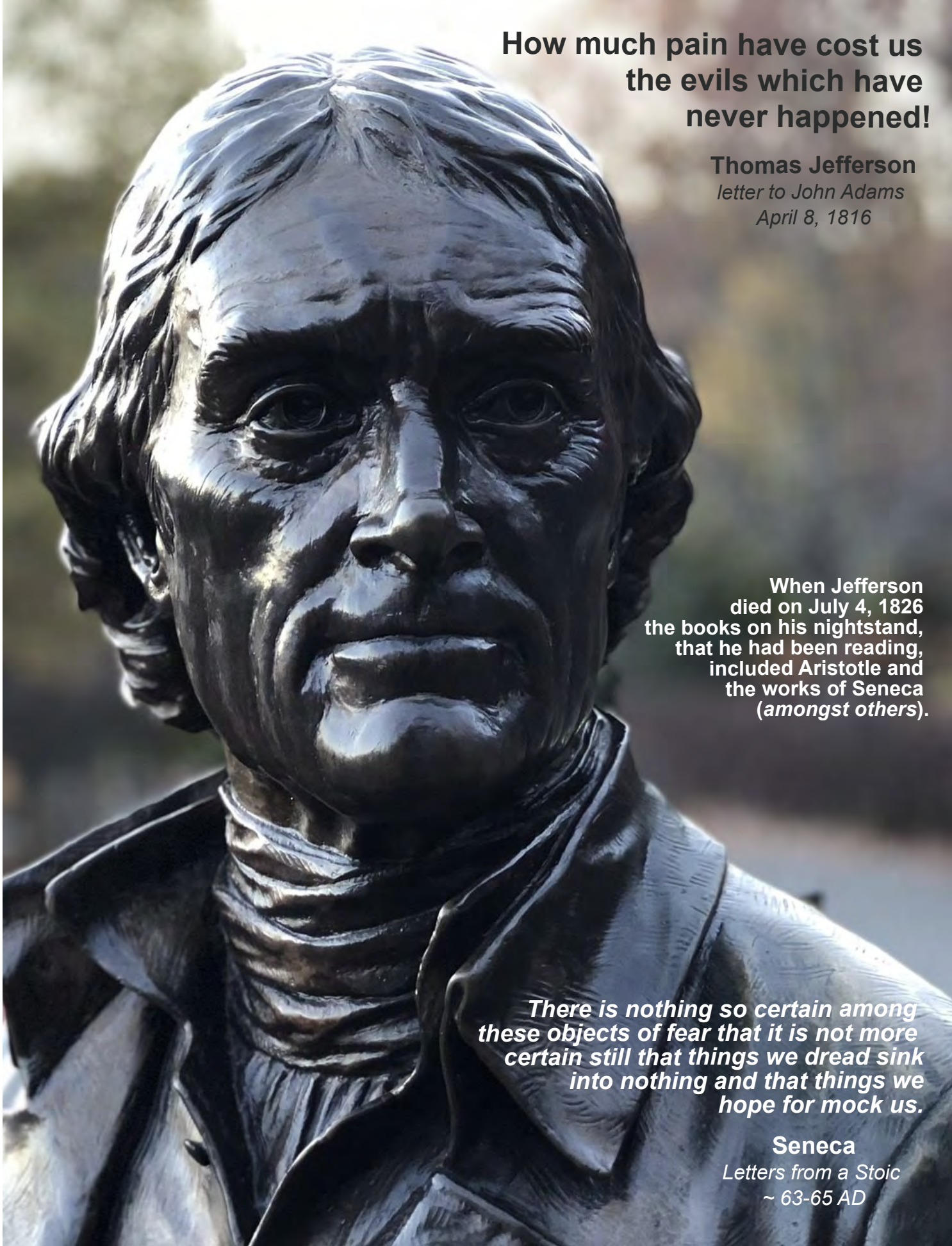


On February 16, 2023 TCA hosted **Daniel Carlson**, TCA graduate, and NFL kicker of the Las Vegas Raiders, along with nationally recognized author, speaker and parenting expert **Michele Borba**, as part of our 25th Anniversary celebration. Both guests were able to address our community on several occasions - Daniel Carlson spoke to our high school students and kicked off the Parent Academy. Dr. Borba addressed our parents on valuable topics from her latest book **Thrivers** on

Thursday evening and then inspired our staff on Friday morning. The Thursday evening festivities concluded with a dessert reception in the North Commons.







**How much pain have cost us  
the evils which have  
never happened!**

**Thomas Jefferson**  
*letter to John Adams*  
April 8, 1816

When Jefferson died on July 4, 1826 the books on his nightstand, that he had been reading, included Aristotle and the works of Seneca (amongst others).

*There is nothing so certain among these objects of fear that it is not more certain still that things we dread sink into nothing and that things we hope for mock us.*

**Seneca**  
*Letters from a Stoic*  
~ 63-65 AD