



Secondary School News

Coventry Christian Schools

Vol. 13, Issue 11

November 23, 2009

Calendar of Events

November

11/25 No Classes

11/26-27 Thanksgiving Holiday--No School

December

12/4 Parent/Teacher Conferences

12/6 PTO Clothing Drive Ends

12/10 Sports Awards, 7 p.m., PV Gym

12/15 Chorus Concert, 7 p.m.

12/17 Drama Showcase, 7 p.m.

12/18 Drama Field Trip

12/24-1/1 Christmas Break

12/29-Alumni Fellowship

January

1/1--School Closed

1/11--PTO Meeting, 6:30 p.m., PV

1/17--Teacher In-Service, No Classes

1/19-22--High School Semester Exams

1/22--Prospective Family Open House, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

1/22--2nd Quarter Ends

SEE www.coventrychristian.com for sports schedules! Go Eagles!

Give Thanks to Whom?

The following essay was published on the Huffington Post in November 2008 by Christine Haffler, life coach, professional speaker, author, and expert on Generation Y. Share it with your kids and find out what they think of it. It might be an eye opening discussion. See my thoughts following the article. My responses to some of her claims are found in italics throughout the article. The sarcasm should be evident--please forgive me this indulgence.)

-Paul Fisher

"Today's twentysomethings, aka Gen Y, have a reputation for being overly self-focused and entitled. Although there may be some truth to this stereotype, it's neither 100% true nor 100% negative. There are upsides to focusing your awareness on yourself, ESPECIALLY if it has to do with gratitude and appreciation. Around this time of year, it is very common to list all the things you are grateful that you HAVE like health, family, friends, the roof over your head, and so on. But how often does your list of gratitude include statements that are solely about who you ARE? (*How about thanks to God for who he has made me, despite who I was?*)

This Thanksgiving, consider making a list of self-gratitude - spread some love to all those parts of you that are neglected, or shut down, or just not celebrated nearly enough. Thank yourself for having the courage to look for a new job, being open to falling in love, showing compassion to your friends, practicing frugality to achieve more financial balance during this difficult time, demonstrating enthusiasm by going to the gym, expressing creativity, or loving yourself enough to break a bad habit. Acknowledge yourself for the times you have gone out of your comfort zone to take a step toward a goal. Appreciate the moments that have been challenging in your life and be grateful to yourself for getting through them. (*Imagine the thank you list at the front of your next book or at the Academy awards, "I want to thank myself, myself, and also myself for all that I have done to make me who I am!" Very attractive character trait, this self-gratitude.*) Consider what makes you special and be grateful for the unique role you play on this earth. (*While we are all invaluable to our God, to mistakenly convince ourselves that we play a terribly unique and vital role on this earth populated by 4 billion people is a bit delusional and would no doubt explain that entitlement problem!*)

Now the key to all this self-appreciation is to not make it about your ego. Self-gratitude is not meant to inflate your sense of self, but rather to recognize and appreciate who you are separate from what you have or what you do. (*So who I really am has nothing to do with what I actually do? Really?*) Why is this important? Along my own journey and in my work as

a life coach, I've learned that outer experience is a reflection of inner reality. The more accepting of ourselves we are, the more accepting we become of our circumstances no matter what they are. A sense of entitlement and a need for instant gratification simply come from not being fulfilled with who we are on the inside. *(So you are really telling me that if I thank myself for all that I am and provide myself with a delusional view of my own importance to the world, I will actually be less entitled and better equipped to deny myself the gratification I deserve? Really?)*

So begin your gratitude practice today and give yourself the validation you are craving. *(Anybody hearing, "I'm good enough. I'm smart enough. And doggone it, people like me!" We all know that telling ourselves we're worth it definitely means more than hearing it from our Creator or someone we love.)* Don't wait for someone else to do it for you! Even bring appreciation and acceptance to the things you are not that fond of about yourself. For example, I am not a very patient person and I criticize myself for that. But I can bring light and gratitude to this quality simply by shifting my awareness to: "I am grateful that I am aware of my impatience and am practicing slowing down." *(This takes the cake! Wow! So I should even rationalize my shortcomings and sins and instead of focusing on correcting those things, praise myself simply for being aware of them.)*

So start now! Write your own self-reflective gratitude list; acknowledge yourself, your accomplishments, your characteristics, what you have learned, your willingness to make your first Thanksgiving turkey (that's one of mine) or even just the fact that each day you get yourself out of bed. *(Yes, being willing to get out of bed should be celebrated for the act of beauty and courage that it truly is.)* Self appreciation and recognition is not selfish or narcissistic. Rather, it creates a more loving energy field around you; thereby, attracting and radiating more love out to all the people and things you are grateful for. *(I've seen that loving energy field around professional athletes who love themselves very much. Oh yes, it's very attractive! The next time I am telling my wife how right I am, I'll remember to have her read this paragraph so that she knows how much she should love my ego!)*

And as the end of the year approaches, many of us look back at the beginning of the year with all the bright shiny resolutions, and feel a little pang for what we did or did not do. Don't beat yourself up! Every moment, every day, every year we make choices, and if you didn't get to change or move forward with something this year, that doesn't mean you can't next year. Be grateful for your self-awareness, and know that it is never too late to affect change. *(If you fail, celebrate the fact that you know you failed! That in itself is a great accomplishment. You should always be thankful that you can identify failure when you see it! It makes you very special.)*

And as Thanksgiving approaches, remember that practicing gratitude ALL year round is a key to sanity - don't save it all up for turkey day."

Wowwwwwwwwww. Please pardon my informal response to Miss Haffler. The elongated "wow" is really for the students who may read this article. They can read the appropriate tone into the extra w's. This essay would be humorous if it was satirical. If the intent of the essay was to portray the sheer folly of much of Generation X and Generation Y, this would be an effective and insightful piece. In fact, it is meant to be received as sage counsel from a life coach, whatever that is.

As an educator of teenagers, I am regularly astonished at the sense of entitlement and the degree of narcissism expressed in the lifestyles and attitudes of young people. Who can we blame for this problem? When our children come of age, we can blame them. In the meantime, we must take a long hard look at ourselves. Does our family schedule revolve around our children or do their desires and priorities sometimes have to take a back seat to their parents' desires and priorities? Do we knock ourselves out in service to them without expecting them to serve the family too? Are we busy making sure that they have it better than we did? Do we too quickly presume them innocent in conflicts with peers and teachers? Do we let them fail when they have earned failure? Do we feed their ego without providing the tough love that critiques their choices and character? The answers to these questions may point to the reason why our children's generation has such a strong sense of entitlement and why they will most likely be our responsibility long after they should have become independent adults.

Most importantly, we must ask ourselves if we have taught our children from whence comes their worth. Contrary to Miss Haffler's advice, our worth does not come from convincing ourselves that we are worthy through carefully crafted self talk. Some might argue that our worth comes from hard work and success earned through that hard work. While this might be partially true, such a sense of worth can still lead to narcissism. We must teach our

children that their worth is not based upon anyone's conditions. They are worthy because God made them in his image and gave himself completely in the person of Jesus Christ because they are worth it. They must be taught to see faults in themselves, to see how far short of God's will they fall, so that God can redeem them and lift them up to find the sense of worth and contentment that Miss Haffler can only dream of in her wishful thinking. James, the brother of Jesus, would put it this way, "Humble yourself in the sight of the Lord, and he will lift you up in due time." Miss Haffler is right. Practicing gratitude all year round is the key to sanity. The question is, to whom are we giving thanks? In Philippians 4, the apostle Paul writes that the secret of contentment, of peace all year round is in knowing that Jesus Christ is sufficient for us and in living each day with a spirit of humility thanksgiving in our hearts toward God.

Oh how I wish Miss Heffler would stop coaching our young people. Her message is enticing, and it leads our children down a destructive path of self-centeredness that separates them from the peace they could have in God, with God, and with others because of God. She has appeared on nearly all of the morning news shows and is regularly scheduled to speak on university campuses in outreach efforts hosted by student life committees, but our children do not have to sit at her feet to be lured into her way of thinking. Let's make sure our parenting and the influences that we bring to bear on our children every day are giving them a healthy view of themselves and a healthy helping of gratitude toward God and others rather than self.

Sports Awards Coming

The sports awards ceremony is scheduled for Thursday, December 10, 7 p.m., in the Pleasantview gym. Everyone is invited to come out and celebrate the accomplishments and spirit of our interscholastic sports program. Cross country, volleyball, and soccer teams will be recognized and individual awards will be announced. There will be refreshments provided. Whether you have children in the sports program or not, come out and celebrate CCS. You should have received an email with more details last week.

College Planning Timeline Distributed

Parents of juniors should ask their children for the college planning timeline that was distributed in the college planning seminar on Monday, November 23. If you have questions, let Mr. Fisher know.

Concession Stand Volunteers Needed

We need volunteers to help with the concession stand at our home basketball games. Mrs. Selena Knepp has agreed to chair the concession stand effort, but in addition to volunteers, she needs folks to donate some items to help make the concession stand a success. The following items are needed: baked goods, small plates, bowls, spoons, napkins, drinks, and hamburger/hot dog rolls. Please email (lenabean38@comcast.net) Mrs. Knepp or call (610-367-6560) her if you can donate something or would like to volunteer your time.

More Details about the PTO Used Clothing/Linens/Toys Drive

As promised, here is more information regarding this easy opportunity to support our PTO as they support our children. On Sunday, December 6, a truck will come to the Pleasantview campus to pick up the following items:

- Wearable used clothing (for all ages)
- Shoes
- Belts, pocket books, purses
- Linens, pillows
- Stuffed animals
- Hard toys

The PTO/HSCA will receive a donation for the total poundage of our donations (.13 per pound for clothing and toys and .15 per pound for shoes). All clothing items must be in well-tied plastic bags. Shoes must be in separate bags, and hard toys must be in boxes. Donations may be dropped off on Saturday, December 5 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and Sunday, December 6, 1 to 3 p.m.

Band To Play, Monday, December 14

The band will be the opening act at The Hill School Center for the Performing Arts on Monday evening, December 14, 6:30 p.m. The elementary musical will follow at 7 p.m.

Secondary Chorus Concert, December 15

The secondary choral concert is scheduled for Tuesday, December 15. Come out and enjoy music that is certain to get you into the Christmas spirit. Mrs. Baumgarten and the chorus students have been working hard and are eager to perform before a large crowd!

Drama Showcase, December 17

Don't forget to mark your calendars for the fall drama showcase, which is sure to be a blast. The drama students will be performing on Thursday evening, December 17, 7 p.m., at Pleasantview.

Parent/Teacher Conference--Sign Up Now

With progress reports coming home November 20, conferences are scheduled for December 4. Be certain to plan ahead so that you can get off of work to come speak with your child's teachers. An appointment reservation form was attached with the previous newsletter. If you need another, let us know. Be certain to return your form as soon as possible so that we can confirm an appointment time that will work for you. Simply write your last name in the boxes that correspond to the teachers you would like to see and the times you would like to see them.

Upcoming Academic Assessments/Projects:

November 30-December 7

Middle School

Day	5th	6th	7th	8th
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday	Bible quiz			
Thursday			Math test	Science quiz; Spelling quiz
Friday	Conferences	Conferences	Conferences	Conferences
Monday, 12/7				

High School

Day	9th	10th	11th	12th
Monday				

Day	9th	10th	11th	12th
Tuesday				<i>Metamorphosis Quiz</i> (World. Lit)
Wednesday				
Thursday		Irving quiz, Amer. Lit.		Unit 2 exam, World Lit.
Friday	Conferences	Conferences	Conferences	Conferences
Monday, 12/7				