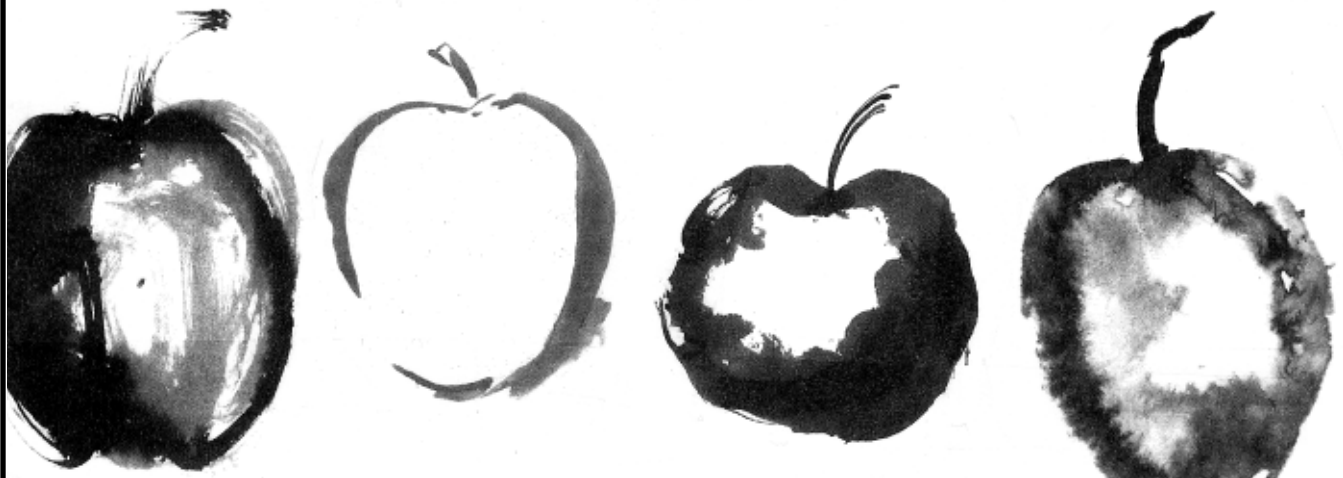


# at Ambleside

THE NEWSLETTER OF AMBLESIDE SCHOOL OF FREDERICKSBURG

14 OCTOBER 2005



FROM OUR PRINCIPAL

## EDUCATION IS A DISCIPLINE

TO BEAR SUCCESS IN ANY ASPECT OF ONE'S LIFE, A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF DISCIPLINE IS NEEDED; discipline to order one self and one's world. Charlotte Mason had spoken this truth all of her life, but it was not until she taught that she saw that children lacked consistent discipline and continued to behave as, "twas their nature to", with little advancement in areas of fault and weakness.

The faults they had, they kept; the virtues they had were exercised just as fitfully as before. The good, meek little girl still told fibs. The bright, generous child was incurably idle. In lessons it was the same thing; the dawdling child went on dawdling, the dull child became no brighter. It was very disappointing (*Home Education*, p.98).

The disappointment came in the lack of advancement of the young people's moral and intellectual power. Yes, the children, no doubt, "got on", a little; they were able to do harder sums and read harder books, but they lacked steady progress in the vital areas of moral and intellectual growth. Where was this advancement to come? Mason looked for guidance in the educational literature of the day, but failed to find an authoritative guide that "embraced the possibilities contained in the human nature of a child, and, at the same time, measured the scope of education" (*Home Education*, p.99). So, she formulated her

thoughts and ideas and devised a philosophy of education, which included "Education is a Discipline" as one of the major tenants. For through this strand of the philosophy, she saw successes in children as the discipline of habit was used as a lever, to advance them in areas of moral and intellectual power.

In order for educators today to bear these same successes, it is important that we too "embrace the possibilities" contained in the human nature of a child. One can readily recall biblical, historical, and present day examples of the accomplished feats of children; from the courageous effort of a shepherd boy in defending his nation to the beautiful cursive of an eight year old in completing her assignment. Created in likeness of the Almighty God, the possibilities are limitless. The potential of every child exceeds our power of measurement.

Yet, it is somewhat astounding to see the limiting beliefs in which parents and teachers adhere to in identifying children in a school setting. These beliefs are often concealed in educational and psychological jargon that was suppose to aid in understanding, not to excuse or limit the child in responsibility and maturity. Perhaps a child is given to inattention, moodiness, slothfulness, disorder, or unkindness. Does this mean that he/she is enslaved to these behaviors for life? And

(continued on p. 2)

*Education is not the filling of a bucket but the lighting of a fire.*

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

## Veteran's Day Chapel

Please make plans to attend the sixth annual Veterans Chapel on Wednesday, November 9th, at 8: 20 am. This is a time to honor the men and women who have served our country in the military.

Speakers this year will include Ward Miller, retired Army Colonel and Purple Heart recipient, who served two tours of duty in Vietnam. The Ambleside choir will sing *My Country 'Tis of Thee* and *America the Beautiful*. Boy Scout Troop 351 will serve as color guard and Bill Smallwood will close the ceremony by playing Taps.

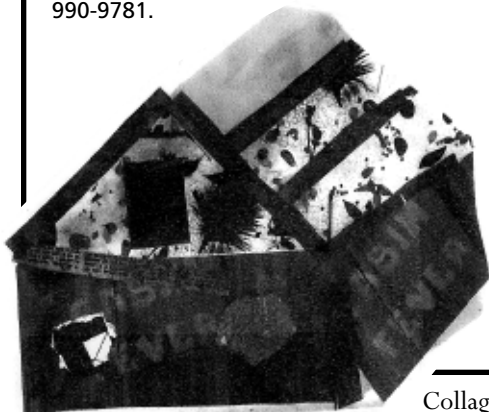
Following the chapel the children grades 5-11 will attend a reception with the veterans and have an opportunity to ask specific questions.

If you have a neighbor or friend that has served in the military, please invite them to attend. Invitations are available in the office.



## New Mom's Coffee

This year's New Mom's Coffee is Monday, October 24, from 8:30 - 10:00 a.m., at the home of Julie Alvarez. All Ambleside moms are invited to come and gather over breakfast to get better acquainted. Invitations will be sent out, complete with event details and directions to Julie's house. Please mark your calendar and plan to enjoy some time with our new moms! Questions? Contact event coordinator, Wendy Boubel, at 990-9781.



Collage Aaron Talley, 5th grade

## *Education is a Discipline* (continued from front page)

that he/she is only behaving as nature dictates? I have seen these limiting beliefs being used by child, parent, and educator to identify the person of the child, rather than being used as knowledge to aid in making strong what was once weak. Taken to the extreme, the child, parent, and educator begin to rationalize behaviors and attitudes of persons in terms of identity, thereby excusing oneself and others for lack of effort or growth in a particular area. When in truth, all persons are subject to weaknesses and faults and, when left alone, become the bane of each of us in our adult years unless divine grace and enlightened human effort intercedes. Charlotte Mason adhered to St. Augustine's steps as a motto to rise above the faults and weaknesses to higher things in the formation of habits: (*Home Education*, p.330).

**"I will":** we determine to exercise that power with a volition which is in itself a step in the execution of that which we will.

**"I can":** we are conscious of power to do that which we perceive we ought to do.

**"I ought":** we have within us a moral judge, to whom we feel ourselves subject, and who points out and requires of us our duty.

**"I am,":** we have the power of knowing ourselves.

Mason also saw the literature of the day lacking in reaching the full scope of education, varied in all its dimensions and relationships. Some educational literature of today reflects much of the same sentiments as we are urged to identify and measure children to find their niche at a younger age, and thereby instruct in a narrow way and to this interest alone, neglecting educating in areas in need of real maturation. "Education is a Discipline" encompasses the full realm of education, taking into account its varied relationships; intellectual, moral, physical, religious, and social, as well as the limitless potential of persons to move in directions of change and growth.

"Education is a Discipline" in a school setting would include the following components: forming habits and training the will. These need to be met with deliberate meditation and instruction for effectiveness in the child's life.

### ***The Formation of Habits:***

Charlotte Mason defines habit as the instrument or tool by which the educator turns out the design already conceived in the child's brain (*Home Education*, p.97). It is the lever to lift a child contrary to his/her nature. Many a child comes into the classroom trained in careful habits of: attending faithfully, waiting patiently, writing neatly, working carefully, acting responsibly, etc. And on the contrary, many a child comes in trained in discourteous ways or left to his/her nature of: disrupting continually, working carelessly, behaving rudely, acting irresponsibly, etc. It is a rare person who would purposefully train a child in discourteous ways. But, children are often "left up to their nature" in hopes of growing "out of it" or in excuse of their youth or individuality. But Charlotte Mason was adamant concerning the aspect of training in habit. She went as far as to say that almost anything could be accomplished through the correct training (*Home Education*, p. 106).

When one thinks about training in an educational sense, one can easily think in the realm of the extreme with such examples from the past of puritan and Victorian schoolmasters who trained children through the use of fear and force or of present day behaviorists who train through the use of conditioning and manipulation. Such is not the practice we are speaking about concerning "Education is a Discipline". It is instead; training which comprises relationships; relationship with oneself, one's world, one's God, and others.

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*It has always therefore been one of my main endeavors as a teacher to persuade the young that first-hand knowledge is not only more worth acquiring than second-hand knowledge, but is usually much easier and more delightful to acquire.*  
C.S. LEWIS

## *Education is a Discipline* (continued)

The parent and or teacher supplants the child's weakness or affinity through instruction of conscience and the will, along with deliberate effort, that is often painstaking on behalf of both the child and educator to reach the desired outcome. This work of habit expands the scope of a child's education to include the following habits:

**Intellectual Habits of:** Attention, Concentration, Thoroughness, Intellectual Volition, Accuracy, Reflection, and Meditation (*School Education*, p.120), Rapid Mental Effort and Application, Thinking, Imagining, Remembering, and Perfect Execution (*Home Education*, pp.149-160).

**Moral Habits of:** Sweet Thoughts (*School Education*, p.135), Obedience, Truthfulness, Reverence, and Temper (*Home Education*, pp. 160-168).

**Physical Habits of:** Self-restraint, Self-control, Self-discipline, Alertness, Quick Perception, Fortitude, Service, Courage, Prudence, and Chastity (*School Education*, pp.101-112).

**Religious Habits of:** The Thought of God, A Reverent Attitude, Regularity in Devotions, Reading the Bible, Praise, and Sunday-keeping, (*School Education*, pp.140-144).

**Miscellaneous Habits of:** Physical Exercise, Good Manners, and Ear and Voice, (*Home Education*, pp.132-133).

The future character and conduct of our children depends on enlightened human effort in the formation of habits or the children will act as they are "accustomed to." It has been said, "The formation of habits is education, and education is the formation of habits." The children will have habits and we as parents and educators are engaged in forming these habits actively or passively, every day, every hour. We cannot escape. We must face the facts. If I say I am responsible, I might have to say I have been irresponsible.

— MARYELLEN ST. CYR

MOLIÈRE'S

## THE IMAGINARY INVALID



*The Imaginary Invalid* centers on the wealthy and self-indulgent Argan, who is very ill. Or is he? Circling around are various characters seeking to profit from his problems. His wife hopes to see him die in order to inherit his wealth. Various "medical" experts also seek to gain from his ever present malady. To save on medical expenses Argan devises a plan to marry off his daughter, Angelique, to the son of his physician. This is an unfortunate state of affairs for Angelique. The physician's son is an imbecile and Angelique happens to be in love with someone else.

*The upper school play will be presented at the school November 10, 11 and 12 at 7 p.m. with a 2:00 p.m. Saturday matinee on November 12. Seating is limited at each performance. Purchasing your tickets ahead of time assures that you will have a seat on the evening of your choice. Adult tickets are \$10, student tickets are \$7, and children under 12 are free. A family can buy admission for all immediate family members for \$25, regardless of the number of persons in the family. Ticket sales begin Wednesday, October 19, at the school office.*

Molière

## Development of ASI

Did you know Ambleside School of Fredericksburg is a training center as well as a school? In the last five years, over 100 teachers have attended an internship or other training. Why? The vision of Maryellen St.Cyr and Rebekah Brown to develop an educational movement impacting children everywhere. As a result, there are three other schools affiliated with Ambleside: in Virginia, San Angelo and Brazil. These schools use our curriculum, and attend our trainings.

This summer, a new organization was founded to further the Ambleside vision: Ambleside Schools International (ASI). ASI is a non-profit organization with the following mission:

- Promote the Ambleside education model outside Fredericksburg
- Provide support to affiliate schools
- Develop relationships with groups and schools interested in our model
- Help create new schools or adopt existing schools by licensing our curriculum and providing training services to their staff.

ASI is responsible for legally protecting and promoting the Ambleside trademark, the curriculum and other intellectual property. ASI will finance curriculum development that will benefit our school.

The board of ASI consists of Bill and Maryellen St.Cyr, Jon Preston, Greg Morgan and Gerard Migeon, who serves as executive director. Bill and Maryellen conduct all the training sessions and mentoring of the school principals. ASI's goal is to have ten affiliate schools by the end of 2010.

ASI greatly benefits from its close connection to our school and to its families. A tangible benefit is what our children reap being a part of a training center of a larger movement, and being exposed to people of varied places. As Executive Director of ASI, I would like to personally invite you to meet or call me to answer any questions about this important work.

— GERARD MIGEON



Collage *Joseph Mohon, 3rd grade*

## School Calendar

### October

- 14 Charlotte Mason Study Group  
7:30-9 p.m.
- 18 Knopp Nursing Home Visit
- 19 School Pictures
- 22 Fredericksburg Chorale  
"Dialogue & Dances" 7:30 p.m.  
Zion Lutheran Church
- 24 New Mom's Coffee 8:30-10 a.m.

### November

- 1 Academic Evening Campus  
Meeting 5:30 p.m.
- 1 Knopp Nursing Home Visit
- 4 Charlotte Mason Study Group  
7:30-9 p.m.
- 9 Veteran's Chapel 8:30 a.m.
- 10-12 Upper School Play "The  
Imaginary Invalid"
- 15 Knopp Nursing Home Visit
- 16-22 Exams / 12:15 p.m. Dismissal
- 23-25 Thanksgiving Break
- 28 School resumes
- 30-12/2 Internship

## Community Calendar

### October

- 16 Blackburn/Lang Duo,  
Fredericksburg Music Club  
Concert
- 22 Fredericksburg Chorale Concert  
7:30 p.m. Zion Lutheran Church

### November

- 6 German Choir Harvest Fest  
7:00 p.m. St. Joseph's Halle
- 20 Lone Star Brass Quintet

Articles and news items are  
posted on our website:  
[www.amblesideschools.org](http://www.amblesideschools.org)

We welcome your submissions,  
responses, news, or questions.

Send to: [danslie@peoplepc.com](mailto:danslie@peoplepc.com)  
Next newsletter deadline: Dec. 4

## Artspring 2006

Preparation for Artspring is well underway. This year's Artspring is set for Saturday, March 4, at Mansfeldt in Cherry Spring. Mansfeldt is a restored German farmstead, graciously offered to us for the event by Harlan and Dian Stai. Artspring is an evening that brings the Fredericksburg community together to celebrate the creativity of arts with music, fine food and drink, and a display of professional and student art in a gallery setting. Art and art-related goods and services are available for purchase. All proceeds benefit the Ambleside School of Fredericksburg.

### VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Now begins the recruitment of all parents to be a part of the effort. As a school, we do not require fund-raisers such as wrapping paper and candy sales. Instead, we ask that each parent voluntarily take part and share the load in this major endeavor. Please contact Julie Alvarez, Laura Cook, or Marcy Willmann to discuss your area of interest.

### UNDERWRITING

Specifically, Artspring is seeking corporate underwriters to share the costs of the event. If you are interested in supporting us this way, please contact Sloan Gunter.

### DONATIONS

Julie Alvarez is seeking help to acquire donations for the silent and live auctions. Donations in past years have included original art works from oil and watercolor to photography and collage by nationally known Texas artists. In addition to fine art, we are seeking donations of travel packages, music-related items from lessons to instruments, jewelry, textiles, woodworking, culinary goods and services, and other art-related services such as sewing, design, decorating, writing, and landscaping. Please contact Julie at 997-6007.

### INVITATIONS

It is not too early to start thinking about whom you would like to invite to Artspring. Invite your child's grandparents and extended family, friends, art lovers, and those who support your child's education to Artspring. To send a special Artspring invitation, please send their names and addresses to Leslie Bishop at [mizbish@beecreek.net](mailto:mizbish@beecreek.net) or to the school office.

— JULIE ALVAREZ

## Needs

The keyboarding lab is looking for a used machine with Windows 98 or higher capacity. Contact the school office if you have a machine to donate.

The keyboarding class is collecting used printer cartridges to raise money for the computer lab.

*At Ambleside Newsletter*

*Writer/Editor: Dan and Leslie Harper    Layout Design: Candace Morgan*