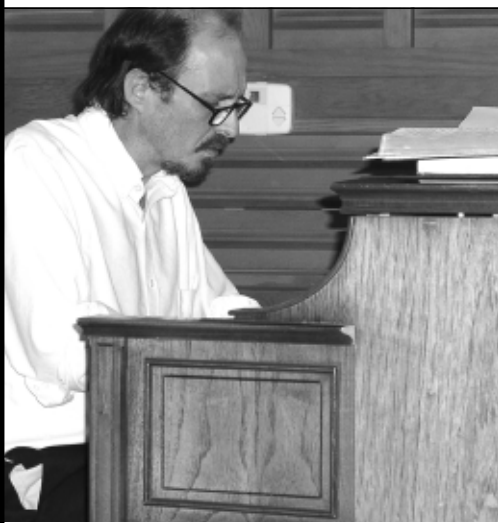


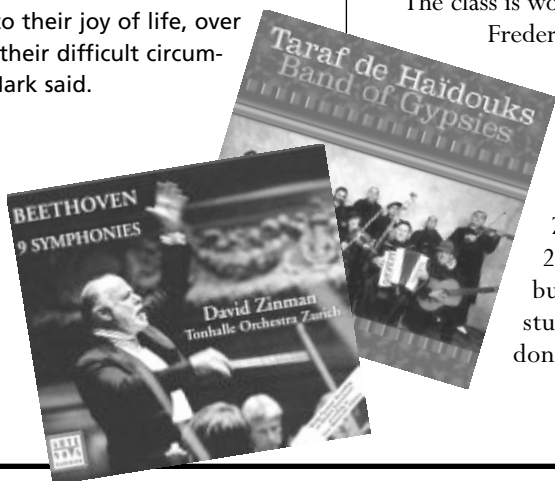
*The question is not, —
how much does the youth know when he finishes his education—
but how much does he care?
And about how many things does he care?
In fact, how large is the room in which he finds his feet set?
And therefore, how full is the life he has before him?*

CHARLOTTE MASON, *SCHOOL EDUCATION*



What's in the CD player:

Beethoven's Nine Symphonies conducted by Sir Roger Norrington and played by the London Players. "They use period instruments and Norrington dares to use the size orchestra Beethoven desires (small by modern standards)." Also, his current favorite CD is by a group of Romanian Gypsies, known as Taraf de Haidouks (Band of Gypsies). "They are actual gypsies and their music is a testimony to their joy of life, over and above their difficult circumstances," Mark said.



IN THE CLASSROOM

Music Philosophy with MARK HEIRHOLZER

This year middle and upper school students are studying music philosophy with Mark Hierholzer, resident composer and music teacher. The class is not only listening to really good versions of symphonies such as Roger Norrington's versions of Beethoven's Nine Symphonies, but it is also discussing great ideas. The class is looking at the communication of music and identifying terms so that they can speak about music together. Mark also desires to show the students that music has a message.

A recent discussion centered on the idea of "What is art?" We are "going to grapple with what good art is," said Mark, who emphasized that there is no reason to pursue anything else besides good art. "Great art captures a sense of objective truth," he said. "It is life giving. (Popular) culture is quite opposite: It gives death." Mark has been musing on a compelling quote: "Culture is theology externalized." He said, "Go into a city and see the billboards and the stadiums and see the objective truth of what God is" to the people of the city. "We are in a cultural depression," said Mark. "Our culture has lost the notion of objective reality and embraced meaninglessness," he said, "Great art cannot thrive in that environment."

He is hoping to teach the students in his class that they have something to say, to share, to create, to give, and that creative genius is not just an expression of self, but something that transcends culture and moves people to a higher place, "the place where we realize our full humanity as God created us to be," Mark said.

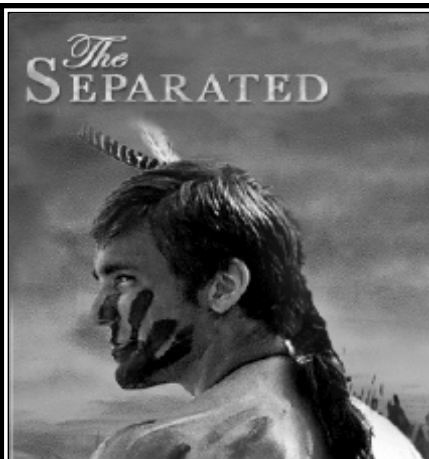
The class is working on creating a musical drama for the February 2006

Fredericksburg Chorale concert. The class is brainstorming ideas for themes and conflicts within the music drama. The drama will be performed through song by the Fredericksburg Chorale, with the possible help of Ambleside students.

Soon Mark will direct the Fredericksburg Chorale, along with Ambleside students at "Dialogues & Dances" at Zion Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall on Saturday, October 22, at 7:30 p.m. This concert will feature the works of Mark, but will also include a set of pieces performed by upper school student Reid Comstock for cello and piano. Admission is free; donations are accepted.

Vision Planning

The Ambleside School Board will be gathering on October 21 and 22 to begin the Vision/Planning process for the next phase of our school's growth. The board will develop a long-term plan covering a minimum of 5 years, setting appropriate goals and milestones. The meetings are just the first of many that will culminate in a plan giving the now and future parent and student community a vision of a Charlotte Mason educational experience at the Ambleside School of Fredericksburg. The Board will also establish a process for receiving input from all interested parents.



Hill Country Film Premiere

Ambleside upper school student Ryan Carrion acted in an independent feature film "The Separated," set and filmed in the Texas Hill Country. The film, a historic fiction inspired by true stories of Indian abductions in the 1880s, will premiere Saturday, Oct. 15th at the Stagecoach Theater in Fredericksburg. Public showings for the film are set for 7 and 9 p.m., with special premiere festivities beginning at 6 p.m. The cast, crew, director and producer will be on hand to meet the public and sign autographs. Tickets are available at the door for \$20 per person. The movie will continue to show at the Stagecoach at the regular admission price for 12 days following the premiere.

MEET JANET WHITEHEAD

When Janet's husband Jimmy took a dream job in mid-February to work as a ranch foreman (out of 64 other candidates) on the 1,000 acre Crabapple Creek Ranch by Enchanted Rock, she faithfully knew that God had a place for her too. "Some friends thought I was crazy for moving here without a job, but I knew my job was not an afterthought," she said. They resigned their positions in Houston, sold their house within 10 days, and moved. They were drawn to a beautiful, tiny church (there former church had 11,000 members) and it was in conversations there that she heard about Ambleside School of Fredericksburg.

After several conversations with Maryellen St. Cyr, Janet took the position of kindergarten teacher, and upper school composition and literature teacher at Ambleside. "I am thoroughly enjoying it," said Janet about teaching. She finds working with the upper school in the afternoons a great compliment to her mornings with the kindergarten. Her kindergarten class just "learned that God wants to spend time with us. What a great thing for a five-year-old to know," she said, wishing she had received that information when she was little.

She loves the morning assemblies at Ambleside. "It is so reassuring to start the day in prayer. I thought I had died and went to Heaven," said Janet, who after almost two decades in public education really values the recognition of a relationship with God and study of his Word during the school day. "I absolutely adore the conversations we get to have when we read a Bible story," said Janet about the time with her kindergarten students.

Janet said she particularly enjoys the emphasis on relationship at the school. "I love the focus on relationships; our relationship with God, with adults, with ideas. That is what gives value and meaning to life, and we are supposed to discuss that (versus a school environment where it is avoided)," she said.

Janet has a 22-year-old daughter, Ashley, who will graduate from Baylor in December, and a 17-year-old son who is finishing up his senior year of high school in Houston. Her son, Matt, is the one who urged her to move to the Hill Country, although they are missing out on daily contact. "I guess that is why they made cell phones," said Janet. Her stepdaughter Amber is a student at Sam Houston State University and her stepdaughter Cara just finished a stint with the Navy and is working in Houston.

Janet loves to run, and be outdoors. The Whiteheads enjoy taking walks, having picnics, visiting with friends, and exploring new roads whether literally or figuratively.

— LESLIE HARPER

