



The Anderson School

NEWSLETTER

A publication of the Anderson Private School for the Gifted & Talented
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Fall 1998
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PERSPECTIVES

of DR. & MRS. ANDERSON

Whenever parents make an initial contact with us, we frequently encounter problematic concerns that are not really related to the essential needs of their child. They generally intone difficulties related to such things as transportation problems, the purchase of uniforms, supplies and materials or the cost of tuition. If these considerations are conveyed as real barriers to utilizing the resources of this school, we can only respond with our gut-level feeling that, "perhaps, you haven't suffered enough".

For us, as educators, and more importantly as parents, concerns such as these somehow pale in comparison to the anguish we remember after discovering a lack of any genuine programmatic accommodations for meeting the educational and intense emotional needs of our own children. For we have genuinely suffered.

" . . . Perhaps, you haven't suffered enough. "

Let's face the truth. When our children are unhappy we, as parents, are abjectly miserable. For our children embody all our hopes and aspirations. Their

laughter and smiles, their time at play and endless games and their dreams are what keep us, as parents, thriving and able to survive.

Whenever the light of a child's self-esteem grows dim we, somehow, cannot see past today. When the sparkle in a child's eyes goes out, it takes our very breath away. Nothing that we know of is as dreadful to our own spirit as witnessing the destruction of our children, from without or from within.

But there is hope. There are those of us dedicated enough to the liberation of their human spirit to carve a new dimension into the fabric of academic endeavor. And we, who have so despaired, are now prepared to loudly proclaim that the happiness of a child far surpasses any other pretext, pretense or priority. We can plainly see that a well-educated, but miserable adult is a virtually worthless human being. If you need proof, just ask one.

" the happiness of a child far surpasses any other pretext, pretense or priority. "

We can also establish that a happy, well adjusted child is a highly reachable goal. We must, however, take a path less traveled by. And that path leads to a seemingly illogical conclusion - that the best way to get an outstanding education is through the *back door* of

motivation. To approach the assimilation of voluminous data by the human brain a teacher must truly "inspire" a child and place that child in an intensely nurturing, productive and positive environment. The negatives must be removed and motivation become the overriding concern - a focused fine art and studied science.

"A well educated, but miserable adult is a virtually worthless human being. "

Gifted children have no upper limits with regard to creative, academic or aesthetic endeavor. They can become anything they desire or nothing. And all too often they choose the latter. This is a choice they consciously make because the logicity of their intuition sees clearly down a path of fruitless and joyless endeavor. To them it makes good sense not to travel down the path of misery any further than you must. And this logical conclusion is a tribute to their higher level thinking skills that were so flagrantly neglected in school.

And so we find our precious children dropping out - socially, emotionally, mentally or physically. And my question then becomes this - what have we gained? If a child has gone to school for so many years and drops out, in one way or another, what have we really gained?

" They can become anything they desire or nothing. "

Our primary goal is to make our children happy. Any child with high aptitude will learn in the right environment and more importantly in the right frame of mind. Any child! But getting them there may be beyond the ability of highly structured, inflexible, autocratic and boring classroom strictures. If this is your expectation, you may be asking the impossible.

- We cannot solve life's problems except by solving them. - (M. S. Peck)

IMPORTANT DATES

Oct.12-15 Adventure Trip-San Antonio
Oct.16 Holiday (substitute for Oct.12)
Nov.23-27 Thanksgiving / Fall Break
Dec.9-11 Inservice (T.A.G.T. Conf.)
Dec.21-Jan.5 Christmas Holidays
Jan.6 First Day of the Spring Semester

- Man, unlike the animals, has never learned that the sole purpose of life is to enjoy it. - (Samuel Butler)

RUSSIAN / GERMAN NOW OFFERED

We are proud to welcome Larisa Stogsdill to our faculty. Larisa comes to us from Ulyanovsk, Russia where she graduated from the State Pedagogical University with the professional (advanced) degree Specialist in Educational Methods.

In 1990 Larisa won the "Teacher of the Year" Award in competition with educators from more than twenty schools and has authored an article about Russian schools published recently in Education Digest. Her experience includes teaching English, German and Russian at the Middle School and High School levels. Larisa and her husband reside in Weatherford.

- There is no influence so powerful as that of a mother. - (Sarah Hale)

HAM RADIO CLASS

We are again offering students the opportunity to take classes in an effort to secure an amateur radio license for them. Mr. Jim (J.R.) Ewing has graciously consented to conduct the classes again. Last Fall, the entire student body became licensed by the Federal Communications Commission. And our school now has its own "Ham Shack".

- Take your life in your hands and what happens? A terrible thing: no one to blame. - (Erica Jong)

TRIP PLANNED TO THE McDONALD OBSERVATORY

Plans are now firm for our Spring adventure trip to the McDonald Observatory in the beautiful Davis Mountains of West Texas. We will spend the entire week of April 26 - 30 traveling to the observatory and participating in a packed week of astronomical activities.

In addition, there are numerous astronomy-related study trips, video programs and visitations planned. Approximately half of our students are currently enrolled in a six-week astronomy course at T.C.U. These activities will prepare our students for a better appreciation of what we will see and experience at the observatory.

While at McDonald the group will participate in a "star party", a very special guided tour, and we will have one evening with an astronomer for a 4 to 5 hour program with the opportunity to look through the largest telescope. Reservations have been made to stay in the beautiful Indian Lodge. These "adventure" trips allow our students the opportunity to bond together in ways that are simply not available in a typical school environment. They become enthused about learning, have a lot of

fun, and learn to depend upon each other (as "plan B" becomes necessary since the initial plan has abandoned all logic).

- The bird of paradise alights only upon the hand that does not grasp. - (John Berry)

WELCOME TO MELISSA McGEE

One of our newest staff members comes to us from Kids Who Care, where she is the choreographer. At the Anderson School she will provide training in etiquette (Vanderbilt), dress and grooming, and make-up and hair styling. She will instruct the Philosophy for Children Program (Lipman) and teach about early pioneer life (clothing, games, toys, etc.) in preparation for a study trip to the Pioneer School at the Log Cabin Village on October 26.

- Not to decide is to decide. - (H. Cox)

MIKE BEACOM IS MERIT SCHOLAR

Our congratulations to Mike Beacom. He has been named a 1999 National Merit Scholarship Semi-Finalist in the 44th annual merit scholarship competition. This prestigious academic ranking was given to less than one percent (1%) of students taking the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (P.S.A.T.) in Texas.

JOHN HAMMONS IS FOREVER IN OUR HEARTS

We are deeply saddened by the recent loss of one of our dearest friends. Without John Hammons the Anderson School for the Gifted and Talented would not exist. John graciously shared his time, talent, and many hours of labor to make this dream a reality. He will live forever in our hearts.