



NEWS FROM THE VILLAGE

FROM THE DESK OF THE UPPER SCHOOL HEAD

DECEMBER 2021 • ISSUE 4



BUILDING THE HABIT OF CAMPUS STEWARDSHIP

BY CHARLIE MOONEY, UPPER SCHOOL HEAD

Unfortunately, it is not uncommon to find the Upper School Village in a state of disarray after the students have come through. There are often unclaimed lunch boxes, trash, and discarded sweaters strewn about on the picnic tables and on the ground. At schools like Valor, undesired behavior is always an opportunity for habit formation.

Of course, our students do not intentionally leave the Village in this state. It's just a matter of being in a hurry—usually to play as much 9-square as possible at the end of lunch or between classes. Charlotte Mason assigns bad behavior to three categories: ignorance, weakness of the will, or outright rebellion. At school, unwanted behaviors almost always fall into the first two (and less serious) categories. The students simply don't realize they have left a collective mess. Additionally, they have not yet developed the habit of looking for opportunities to clean up the area, even if it isn't their own trash.

In a sincere but lighthearted effort to develop this sort of vision, which sees the opportunities for stewardship, we are instituting "ball jail." Staff members and a committee of responsible rhetoric students will have access to the locked jail. Any time the Village is in disarray, the staff or student committee will simply place the ball in jail without announcement or confrontation.

When students inevitably run to the 9-square court and find the ball in jail, they will have to quickly clean the Village and then ask a staff member or committee member to release the ball. In reality, it takes 20 seconds for 30 students to straighten up the Village.

It is our desire that this will reinforce healthy habits of stewardship to the degree that the jail will eventually remain perpetually empty.

DEC. & JAN. EVENTS

- Noon Release (Fri, 12/3)
- Valor's Got Talent (Fri, 12/10, 4 pm)
- LS Student Party @ Mrs. Mathis' (Fri, 12/10, 5:30 pm)
- RS Semester Exams (Mon-Wed, 12/13 - 12/15)
- Last Day of Semester (Wed, 12/15)
- School Resumes For Students (Wed, 1/5)
- Q2 Report Cards Ready (Mon, 1/10)



Margot (8th grade) entertained festival goers by playing selections from Bach's cello suite during the First Annual Valor Autumn Festival in October.

CLASSICAL CORNER: TRAINING THE AFFECTIONS

BY CHARLIE MOONEY, UPPER SCHOOL HEAD

Education is more than just filling a student's mind with knowledge, as water fills a bucket. If so, it would be a simple question of what goes into the bucket. However, we all know intuitively that there is far more to education than this. Such a view makes the unbiblical assumption that the student's mind is merely a neutral receptacle waiting for the best content to be deposited.

The problem is that students are not neutral vessels. They are corrupted by sin and the resulting fall. In a sense, they are buckets that need to be filled, but they are buckets that are misshapen. They are battered and bent. They are buckets that will reject the good stuff.

(cont. on page 2)

HOUSEKEEPING

Keeping you up to date on miscellaneous information so we can move forward together with confidence and clarity.



- **The gym is now OPEN!** Basketball season has had its first home games in the gym, and the Logic School chapel started using the gym on 11/29.
- **Chapel Day drop off for LS school students** is still 8:00-8:15; however, it is now **at the gym (on Mondays only)**. For more information, see the email sent by Lauren Allbritton on November 17, 2021.
- The LS students are **no longer wearing their PE uniforms all day on Wednesdays**. They will now change in the gym locker room at the beginning and end of PE time.
- All **RS semester exams** will be administered over three days (12/13 - 12/15). On these three days the Rhetoric students will be dismissed at noon. The following courses have cumulative semester exams on those three days: Math, humanities (literature, history), rhetoric, science, and Spanish. The remaining courses will only have standard exams as part of the quarter grade: Bible, composition, equipping, and elective courses.
- Regarding **Logic School semester exams**, 6th graders do not take any semester exams. 7th graders will take semester exams only in second semester (May) in math, science, and humanities. The 8th graders have semester exams for both first and second semesters in math, science, and humanities.
- For students **in K-8, the last day of school (12/15) is a full day of school**.

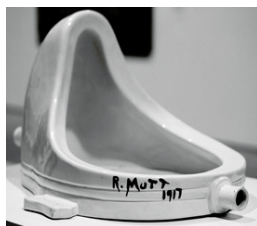


Rhetoric students (L to R: Caleb, Drew, Thomas, and Johnathan) practice their improv skills in the Introduction to Theater course.

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I'll now abandon the bucket analogy because I'm stretching it beyond its usefulness. The human nature is fallen, rebellious, and corrupted to the degree that it doesn't naturally know what is objectively good. This concept is difficult for us to grasp today, because we've become so subjective. The phrase "beauty lies in the eye of the beholder" is the mantra for today. That means beauty is subjectively in the viewer's mind. It is not an objective reality that exists outside of us. To belabor this for one more line: we assume that there is no objective standard that we all know and accept.

However, I think we all know this is not actually true. Some things are objectively true, good, and beautiful while other things are not. Even if we aren't sophisticated enough to articulate it, we know that DuChamp's "Fountain" (a urinal turned 45 degrees and called "art") does not measure up to objective beauty in a way that Van Gogh's "Starry Night" does.



Marcel DuChamp's "Fountain" (left) and Vincent Van Gogh's "Starry Night" (right).

Furthermore, Bach and Rachmaninoff composed music that is objectively more beautiful and 'good' (on a universal scale) than any single song you'll hear on the local radio in the next year. That's not to be snobbish and say there's no place for popular music, art, or literature. There is a place. However, this is what Charlotte Mason called "twaddle". We might call it birthday cake, but we know one can't be sustained by birthday cake. We want our children and students to develop deeper tastes that conform to *the* reality of objective truth, goodness, and beauty that God created.

Forming the affections means submitting ourselves to the objective reality that God created as it presses in on us. Things that are true, good, and beautiful have a way of molding us into the shape of that reality. Lesser things often pull us away from that objective reality and diminish our affections for the good, the true, and the beautiful.

This is why, at Valor, we insist on putting before our students a feast of classic literature, beautiful art, and ancient wisdom (the highest being God's Word itself). By digesting this feast, the students learn to love what is actually lovely. We are shaping their tastes (their affections) in a way that makes them more likely to conform to God's created order. In this, they will acquire wisdom. (**Proverbs 9:10**).