

COUGAR PRINTS

Character | Scholarship | Leadership | Service

A Clean Heart

by Hannah Decolongon, Class of 2016

In the Bible books of I and II Samuel, we learn the story of David. He began his life as a simple shepherd boy, but God called on him to do greater things, even rule over Israel. At the beginning of his reign, when his eyes were on God, David ruled justly, and his subjects loved him. However, David let his gaze drift from God to a woman bathing on her rooftop. The king knew she was married, but he wanted her for himself, so he took her. To cover up this sin, David resorted to arranging for the woman's husband to die in the heat of battle.

When confronted with his adultery, lying, and murder, David admitted his mistakes, and said, "I have sinned against the Lord" (II Samuel 12:13). He then repented of his wrong-doing, asking God to "blot out my transgressions" and "cleanse me from my sin" (Psalm 51:1-2). Finally, David requested that God transform his heart: "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me" (verse 10).

Just like He did with David, God can renew a right spirit in us, even if we mess up over and over. As we begin a new year, remember that if we repent, God's power to forgive and transform our hearts is so vast that "as far as east is from the west, so far does He remove our transgressions from us" (Psalm 103:12).



Pick Me! Pick Me!

by Melissa Salazar, Class of 2012

On a mile-long strip of land called Ebeye found in the Marshall Islands of the Pacific Ocean, my students begin calling me each morning, saying,

"Missaaaaah! Missaaaaah!"

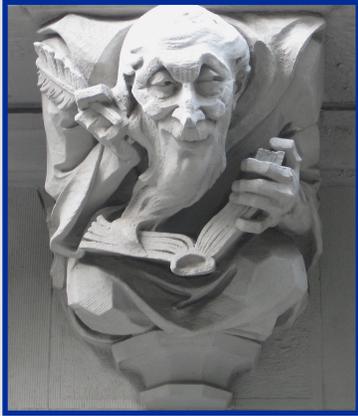
"Miss, come!"

"Missah, I need your help!"

As I rotate through three middle school classrooms and teach fifty-eight students in grades six through eight, my character, my patience, and my energy are constantly tested.

A year ago, during a vespers at Southern Adventist University, God called me to serve Him. I had no idea what He wanted me to do, nor did I know the reason why He picked me in the middle of my college career. I had recently found a spiritual and supportive group





Great Beginnings

In honor of the new year and new beginnings, see how many of these 15 famous works of U.K. and U.S. literature you can identify from reading just the opening lines:

1. "It is a truth universally known that a single man in possession of a great fortune must be in want of a wife."
2. "Call me Ishmael."
3. "When in the course of human events..."
4. "There was once a boy named Milo who didn't know what to do with himself--not just sometimes, but always."
5. "It was love at first sight."
6. "Marley was dead, to begin with. There is no doubt whatever about that."
7. "A squat grey building of only thirty-four stories. Over the main entrance the words, Central London Hatchery and Conditioning Centre, and, in a shield, the World State's motto, Community, Identity, Stability."
8. "It was a pleasure to burn."
9. "All children, except one, grow up."
10. "Dark spruce forest frowned on either side of the frozen waterway."
11. "The sun did not shine, it was too wet to play, so we sat in the house all that cold, cold wet day."
12. "It was a bright cold day in April, and the clocks were striking thirteen."
13. "You better not never tell nobody but God."
14. "Clip-clop-clip-clop, went Small Donkey's hooves as he s-l-o-w-l-y climbed the last hill."
15. "All he could see, in every direction, was water."

Answers on page 6

of friends, and I knew God was directing my life, so I was willing to go anywhere. Furthermore, God was answering my prayers so quickly that I knew the calling to become a student missionary was crystal clear. I was thrilled to finally be able to serve God full-time, but soon found that reality was different from my expectations.

"Missaaaaaaah! I don't get it."

"Can you repeat that again?"

"I can't hear you! What?"

My middle schoolers are nothing like I imagined. Many of them are unable to spell or perform simple multiplication, and most of them would rather "jumbo jumbo" around the island with their friends, wasting time. I have filled my classroom with pictures and quotations to inspire travel, good behavior, and a desire to discover, and I do my best to help them learn.

"Missah! Pick me! Pick me!"

"Missah! I want to write it on the board!"

"Missah! Why can't you hear me?"

A year ago, I imagined I would be calmly imparting wisdom to twenty, eager sixth graders. My students would love learning math, reading, and spelling. They would take turns playing interactive, educational games. My imagination had not accounted for the culture of Ebeye. On the island, most of the population is under the age of twenty-five. With the adults at home or at work, there is no one to watch over the children, who then have free-run of the island. Although I realize that I will directly influence only a few of the island children, I am burdened by the many children who do not attend school due to classroom overcrowding and lack of teachers.

"Why don't you come inside the classroom?"

"Let's get started on your missing work."

"No! Let's do it now, not tomorrow."

As I struggle to motivate and convince my students to begin their work, I have begun to realize that I am no different than most of them. When faced with daily challenges, I find that I, too, struggle. I have to decide to place my faith in God's purpose, and trust that He is using me to accomplish His will. God has faithfully answered my prayers in the past, and He is with me now. As I reflect on my own spiritual life, I realize that my journey with God to Ebeye is similar to the way my students call on me.



"Jesus! Jesus!"
 "God, I need Your help!"
 "God, I don't get it! I don't understand the answer."
 "I can't hear You, Lord. Could You say that again?"
 "God! Pick me! Pick me! I want to serve You."
 "Lord? Can you hear me?"

"Melissa, why don't you talk with Me?"
 "Let's begin our mornings together."
 "No! Let's do it now, not tomorrow."

God continually works to motivate and convince me that I can trust Him to give me the patience and energy to work hard. I may not witness leaps of improvement every day, but God has called me here, and that is reason enough to do my best every moment for every student. He has blessed me with a supportive family and great friends. Every day, I awake to see His love letter to me on my nightstand. He calls my heart each morning, and showers my day with blessings--blessings that I too often overlook, and a love letter that I too often forget to open. Similarly, my students may not see the amount of effort, love, and care I invest in them, but God will bless them. A promise close to my heart this year is found in the New Testament:

*"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart,
 as working for the Lord, not for human masters."
 Colossians 3:23*



Melissa Salazar with other student missionaries singing with Ebeye island children on a Sabbath afternoon

Melissa Salazar, a GAA alumna and National Honor Society member, would love to hear from you, and answer any questions you have about student missionary life. Her email address is MelissaSalazar@southern.edu.

If you would like to help the NHS support Melissa and Ebeye SDA School, we are collecting chapter books for beginning readers and true stories (biography, autobiography, non-fiction) for 5th through 12th grade students. The Ebeye students also need plastic folders to help keep their schoolwork organized. Please leave donations in Ms. Gross' classroom.



Meet Pastor Chris

by Chris Kaatz, Class of 2009

It wasn't too long ago that I was a student at Glendale Adventist Academy. While at GAA, I did my best to help from the most hidden places on campus; however, my teachers had other plans for me. Soon I was performing as part of the music program, and I ran the school sound system. Even with all this leadership experience, it was the last thing I wanted to do with my life.

The summer after I graduated from high school, I started working at Camp Cedar Falls. While I was there, God called. I realized that God had been calling for a while, and that I had been running. I didn't want to go into the ministry like my dad or into education like my mom. At camp, however, God asked me to make a decision: follow my own plans or follow His. I chose to follow God's plans, and I have been incredibly blessed and happy with where these plans have lead me--into both ministry and education!

Since making the decision to follow God's leading, I have devoted my life to youth ministry. Someone once told me that "the youth of our church are not our future, they are our present." Youth have the biggest impact in our churches, and they need both support and guidance. They have great ideas, and need help making their dreams possible.

If it were not for the teachers at GAA and La Sierra University, I would not be the man I am today. As the new chaplain, I want to support our school's young people the way I was supported as a student. I want the students here to know that they have a voice. I want to help them craft their message so that they can be heard.

Book Recommendation

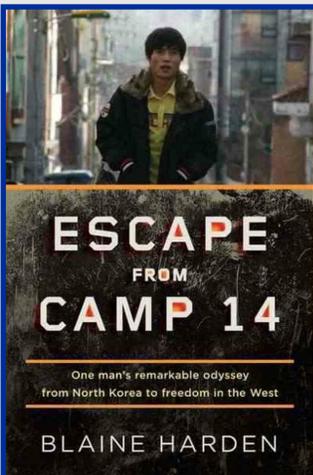
by Adriel Rillera, Class of 2015

A handful of rice is all you have to eat for dinner. To make things worse, that handful must be shared with your mother and brother. Rather than share, you decide to steal all the rice for yourself, and then you inform the guards of your family's plan to escape. By doing this, your family will die, but you may be given more rice to eat.

Escape from Camp 14 (2012) by Blaine Harden is the true story of Shin Dong-Hyuk who was born in a North Korean total-control zone internment camp. The only reality he knew was prison camp life: stealing food from parents, informing on others in exchange for rewards, and being forced to perform rigorous manual labor. Shin Dong-Hyuk felt no reservations about turning on his mother and brother. They were planning to escape the prison, and such plans would have resulted in severe beatings or death for him. All Shin wanted was more food. In search of it, he discovered the outside world.

Shin Dong-Hyuk's break for freedom is the only known successful escape from the notorious camp, and he is the only person born in a camp known to have escaped from North Korea. Once he fled North Korea, he owned nothing, and knew nothing of the world. Making friends was impossible because of trust issues, holding down a job became difficult, and going out in public caused paranoia.

Escape from Camp 14 gives graphic insight into Shin Dong-Hyuk's experiences in a North Korean prison camp, his determination to change his circumstances, and struggle to transition into a free society.



Music: God's Gift to Mankind

An Interview with Lucas Marcondes

by Sydnee Nicolas, Class of 2015



Around campus, Lucas Marcondes, a junior and National Honor Society member, is known for his kind heart, strong faith, and love of music. Jameson Matsuda, a senior, notes that "Lucas is one of the most genuine guys you'll ever meet. You will never question whether or not he has your back. And his music skills are off the charts! I'm lucky to call him a friend." Lucas, who plays piano and trumpet and sings bass in choir and chorale, uses his gift of music to bless and inspire.

Why did you start playing piano?

Initially, my older brother started to learn piano when I was five years old. He was learning all these cool pieces, like "Mary Had a Little Lamb," and I wanted to join in on the fun and take lessons, too.

Playing piano is the easiest way to express myself. I like that a piano doesn't always need to be tuned before you can use it; it is there ready for you to sit down and start playing. Even if you are sick and coughing, it wouldn't matter because you don't need strong lungs to play it.

How do you feel music has strengthened your relationship with God?

Music is one of the most powerful forces because it can emphasize emotional rather than logical thinking. In seventh grade, I



dedicated my musical gift to God. Since that moment, I've been carefully selective about my choices of music, because, if I couldn't see God in it, why would I listen to or play it?

What is a memorable experience that you have had while sharing the gift of music?

A memorable experience I had was when I was playing background music for the Eagle Rock Church Soup Kitchen when the National Honor Society was helping serve. I've never done this before, so it was a little awkward at first to play hymns while everyone was eating. But after I began, I looked into the audience and saw many faces turning towards me with looks of appreciation. There were a few people who came up to me when the dinner was finished, and they complimented me on my musicianship. I felt blessed to have the opportunity to help others see God through my piano playing.



When I was about to leave, a man there told me that he was also a musician and had learned how to play the guitar by the grace of God. During one of his compositions, he told me that the Holy Spirit inspired him to write a song, but it sounded terrible and frustrated him. He continued to pray, and decided to tune his E string down to a G, and then the song sounded to him like Jesus' footsteps.

In what ways do you feel that your music helps you glorify God?

I'm not a fan of putting lyrics into my music. I have found that my words can't fully express my feelings of gratitude or praise to the Lord. Another reason is because I can listen to the same song, and think of a million different messages every time I hear it. This can open the door beyond the little box of Christian music and broaden my ministry. When some people come across music with a Christian label, they think it's not for them, and pass it by. I feel the music I write is inspired by God. When someone listens to it, they may feel love, joy, or peace, and these are all Godly characteristics bringing them a step closer to seeing Christ.

Scholarship Opportunity

by Mahta Marefat, Class of 2016

Founded in 1995 to serve students, parents, and schools, CollegeScholarships.com allows 8th grade through graduate school students to search for scholarships specific to grade level and needs. Site users must enter grade point average, graduation year, and state of residency. To narrow a search, students may elect to enter their sex, religion, and heritage. Along with providing links to relevant scholarships, the site also shows the amount and deadline for each scholarship. Also featured are unusual scholarships and scholarships of the month.

Check It Out Online

LaphamsQuarterly.org: website is dedicated to the idea that the study of history is the foundation of all education, whether scientific, literary, political, or economic. Each online issue addresses a topic of current interest and concern—war, religion, money, medicine, nature, crime—and examines it through the events, advice, and counsel of the past.

DaedalusBooks.com: website offers quality books, music, and movies at prices up to 90% off manufacturer's suggested retail. One of the nation's oldest book remainder stores, Daedalus carries titles in a wide range of subjects and genres, virtually guaranteeing that there is something for everyone, especially the independent reader and listener. The inventory is curated by bibliophiles and is constantly changing, so each visit to the website offers a fresh selection of worthy reads and low-priced titles.



That's Puntastic!

by Mahta Marefat, Class of 2016

Question: How do you organize a space party?

Answer: You planet.

The person who named the umbrella meant to call it "brella," but hesitated.

Question: How does a lightbulb greet his friends?

Answer: "Watts up?"

Question: Which Founding Father like to rock out the most?

Answer: BenJAMMIN' Franklin

A daycare center called the police for assistance because a three-year-old was resisting a rest.

Question: Why is your nose in the middle of your face?

Answer: Because it is the scenter.

Plateaus are the highest form of flattery.

Question: What happened when the Italian chef died?

Answer: He pasta way.

I've decided to freeze myself to -273 degrees Celsius. I should be OK.

Great Beginnings: Answers

Quiz on page 2

1. *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) Jane Austen
2. *Moby Dick* (1851) Herman Melville
3. U.S. Declaration of Independence (1776) Thomas Jefferson
4. *The Phantom Tollbooth* (1961) Norton Juster
5. *Catch-22* (1961) Joseph Heller
6. *A Christmas Carol* (1843) Charles Dickens
7. *Brave New World* (1932) Aldous Huxley
8. *Fahrenheit 451* (1953) Ray Bradbury
9. *Peter Pan* (1911) James Matthew Barrie
10. *White Fang* (1906) Jack London
11. *Cat in the Hat* (1957) Theodor Seuss Geisel (Dr. Seuss)
12. *1984* (1949) Eric Arthur Blair (George Orwell)
13. *The Color Purple* (1982) Alice Walker
14. *My Bible Friends: "Small Donkey"* (1962) Etta Belle Fowler
15. *Unbroken* (2010) Laura Hillenbrand

What is one of your favorite Bible verses about music?

Isaiah 29:13 says, "These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far away from me. The worship of me is only taught by the commandment of men." I feel like this verse applies to me. When I play, compose, or write music, I should keep in mind that I'm not playing for myself. I shouldn't ever be given praise just because I am a musician.

How do you plan to incorporate music into your life beyond high school?

I am certain that I will be using my talents for ministry. I'd like to see myself collaborating with other artists, composing more music, possibly joining or forming a music group, and I will continue to use my talents to serve the church, as I do today.

Holiday Hopes

By Mahta Marefat, Class of 2016

While most of us received numerous gifts from our parents this past Christmas season, there were many children who received nothing. While we sat in our warm houses, protected from the low temperatures and rain, some children spent the holidays outside in the cold, wet, concrete jungle that is Los Angeles.

Over 60,000 homeless children live in Los Angeles County. These children seldom receive anything for Christmas, and they have learned to hope for little during the holiday season.



Since 1985, Homeless Health Care Los Angeles (HHCLA) has reached out to help at-risk, homeless children. During the holiday season, children, along with their parents, visit HHCLA headquarters to receive Christmas presents.

Every December, the GAA Drama Department assists HHCLA in that effort by hosting a Toy Drive. The Toy Drive helps spread hope, love, and Christmas cheer to the homeless children of Los Angeles. Each year,

the Drama Department is able to collect more toys than the year before--stuffed animals, dolls, and games. Each year, more children are able to receive gifts for Christmas.

The Gift of Education

by Marla Mallari, Class of 2015



National Honor Society (NHS) members wanted to give a gift for Christmas. As students thought about what type of present they could give, they realized that the gift of an education is one of the most valuable.

NHS turned to Adventist Southeast Asia Projects (ASAP) for ideas. According to the non-profit's website at ASAPMinistries.org, this organization has a passion for reaching people living in the "war-torn, economically depressed countries in Southeast Asia" who "often suffer from poverty, hunger, disease, governmental oppression, and lack of education."

Last year, Ms. Gross, an NHS Adviser, spent Spring Break in Cambodia and Laos as a member of an ASAP mission trip. She worked with schools and children sponsored by ASAP donors, and saw the great need first-hand. In Cambodia, one of the poorest countries in the world, many children are turned away from schools because they cannot afford to purchase a uniform. Without access to an education, the children are less able to live a fulfilling life, when, as they grow older, they do not qualify for steady employment and good jobs.

To help these children, NHS members selected ASAP Project #302: Equip One Child with Basic School Supplies. A donation of only \$30.00 gives one child a school uniform, a pair of shoes, a school backpack, and classroom supplies for an entire year.

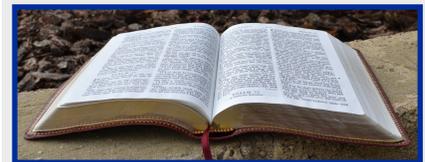
The fourteen-member NHS accepted the challenge to donate at least \$10.00 each, and then found family and friends willing to match donations until everyone sponsored at least one child. With the help of generous families and compassionate classmates, NHS raised \$485.00 in one week's time. These donations will gift 16 children with an education in 2015.



Save the Date

How will you celebrate, commemorate, or take action for these January events?

- 01 New Year's Day
- 01 Emancipation Proclamation (1863)
- 01 Ellis Island Day
- 01 First Rose Bowl Game (1902)
- 13 Poetry at Work Day
- 15 Martin Luther King, Jr.'s BDay (1929)
- 15 National Hat Day
- 16 Religious Freedom Day
- 18 Thesaurus Day
- 18 Winnie the Pooh Day
- 21 Share a Hug Day
- 23 Gold Discovered in CA (1848)
- 23 National Handwriting Day
- 24 Give a Compliment Day
- 26 Bubble Wrap Appreciation Day
- 27 Holocaust Remembrance Day
- 29 Solve a Puzzle Day



Religious Freedom Day

by Roxanne Ferrolino, Class of 2015

On 16 January 1786, the Virginia General Assembly adopted the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom. In the statute's preamble, Thomas Jefferson writes that "Almighty God hath created the mind free," and "all attempts to influence it" by civil authorities only "beget habits of hypocrisy and meanness." Furthermore, any government attempt to limit religious freedom or to combine church and state violates the "natural rights of mankind." Jefferson's statute led directly to the religious freedom clauses in the United States Constitution's First Amendment.

Though this day has been recognized officially by the U.S. Government, it does not get the attention it truly deserves. In December 2014, thousands of people marched in the capital of Papua New Guinea to celebrate their religious freedom. While the Adventist-affiliated International Religious Liberty Association hosted the celebration, people of many Christian denominations participated. The march itself is a prime example of individuals being grateful for their religious freedom, something we take for granted in our country.

Instead of taking a single day to stop and recognize the freedom we have to worship the way we please and when we please, we should always remember how fortunate we are to have this freedom.

Special Thanks

We would like to thank the family whose anonymous donation made it possible for us to print and mail a hard copy version of the January 2015 issue. Your generosity and your support has made it possible for student voices to find a wider audience.

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Cougar Prints

Cougar Prints is sponsored by the Glendale Adventist Academy chapter of the National Honor Society. The publication is committed to sharing positive examples of character, scholarship, leadership, and service found at the school, in the community, and among the alumni. Cougar Prints is available in digital format at GlendaleAcademy.org.

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Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

Philippians 4:8 KJV

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January Calendar

05 School Resumes

07 NHS Information

Packets Due (download from school website)

07 Home Game

Basketball Girls v Hillcrest (4:00 p.m.)

12 Home Game

Basketball v Newbury (G 4:00/B 6:00 p.m.)

14-15 Auditions for Home & School Talent Festival

15 Home Game Soccer Girls v Milken (4:30 p.m. at GSC)

15 Home Game Basketball Boys v Community (5:30 p.m.)

16 Minimum Day

19 No School/Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday

20 NHS Induction Introductions Due (email to Ms. Gross)

22 Home Game Basketball Girls v Milken (4:00 p.m.)

25 SAT

26 B Classes Monday

27 Home Game Basketball v Pacifica (G 4:00/B 5:30 p.m.)

27 School Board Constituency Meeting

28-31 Bible Conference

29 Home Game Basketball Girls v Canoga Park (4:00 p.m.)

29 Home Game Soccer Girls v Yeshiva (4:30 p.m. at GSC)

29 Home Game Basketball Boys v Holy Martyrs (5:30 p.m.)

Talk to Us

If you know of a story that could be part of this publication, please share it with us at

CougarPrints@GlendaleAcademy.org.

We would like to feature service activities, class projects, art, poetry, essays, alumni achievement, book recommendations, great websites and apps, and more. If you have supportive comments to share or if you would like to underwrite the printing and mailing of an up-coming issue, we would love to hear from you, too.

