

THE CLASSICAL ACADEMY EXISTS TO ASSIST PARENTS IN THEIR MISSION TO DEVELOP EXEMPLARY CITIZENS EQUIPPED WITH ANALYTICAL THINKING SKILLS, VIRTUOUS CHARACTER, AND A PASSION FOR LEARNING, ALL BUILT UPON A SOLID FOUNDATION OF KNOWLEDGE.

PALMARIUM

Wreaths Across America

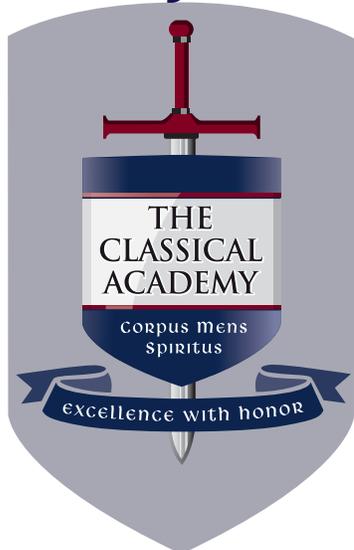
For the past four years TCA has raised funds to place wreaths on veteran's graves. National Wreaths Across America Day is December 16, 2017. The theme for this year is *I'm an American. Yes, I am.* Through the donations of our community, TCA will be able to contribute nearly **350 wreaths** for the nationwide effort this year. Thanks for all your support.



Two State Championships

TCA's Marching Band and Boys Cross Country team won their respective 2A and 3A state championships this past month. This marks the first state championship for our Marching Band and the sixth for Boys Cross Country. TCA's Mason Norman also won the 3A individual cross country title. *Striving to be our best, do our best, and give our best to the world in Mind, Body, and Spirit -- We Are Titans!* Congratulations to all of our students, coaches, and parents for the dedication and hard work that went into these efforts.

Twenty Years



PERSEVERANCE

"You may encounter many defeats, but you must not be defeated. In fact, it may be necessary to encounter the defeats, so you can know who you are, what you can rise from, how you can still come out of it." - **Maya Angelou.** This month our Director of Academic Services shares some thoughts with us about *perseverance* and chasing dreams.

The Editor





Victor Marx Veterans Day

On November 10, Victor Marx, TCA parent, former U.S. Marine, and expert martial artist spoke at our Veterans Day Assembly on **The Value of Veterans**. This assembly is a great reflection of our Core Values and provides an excellent opportunity for the TCA community to pay respect to those who have served our country - many paying the ultimate sacrifice. Known as the "Fastest Gun Disarm Man," Victor's story is one of abuse and trauma that led to his own personal efforts helping other trauma victims, including rescuing children from ISIS through his *All Things Possible* organization. Each veteran received a free copy of Victor's latest film *Triggered* that focuses on post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Scout (*shown below*), a highly specialized Beglian Malinois, also joined Victor at the assembly and was a favorite of the students.



Scout

TCA Wellness Task Force Update

The *Screenagers* film depicting the impact of technology and screen time in today's society was shown four times recently at TCA during October and November. Three showings were for parents and one included secondary teaching staff. We estimate that **275-325 parents** attended the showings. The topic of technology and screen time, in general, continues to be in the news with articles recently published in *The Atlantic*, *TIME*, and the *Wall Street Journal* - just to name a few. Nicholas Carr, the author of *The Shallows: What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains*, was featured a couple times in the film and his work will be the focus of a TCA *Engaging Minds* book study in mid-November. Over twenty staff and parents are scheduled to attend.

WHAT THE INTERNET IS DOING TO OUR BRAINS

THE Nicholas Carr
AUTHOR OF *THE BIG SWITCH*

SHALLOWS

IN THE SPOTLIGHT:



On September 22, the students at East Elementary ran 6,414 laps and raised **\$7,294** for the American Diabetes Association of Southern Colorado.

East Elementary's *Run for the*



American Diabetes Association®

When I Think of Perseverance

by Wesley Jolly, Director of Academic Services

As I sat thinking about perseverance and what it means to me - my mind kept going back to my years as a cadet at the Air Force Academy and the stories I heard throughout my time at the school about one, Captain Lance P. Sijan. And, with Veterans Day, just recently observed, plus the latest Ken Burns documentary on *The Vietnam War* being on the minds of many - the Sijan story keeps resonating with me.

In the summer of 1982, during Basic Cadet Training, I had an element leader (*an upper-classman in charge of a small group of new basics*) who each night, while we were out in Jacks Valley, would read to a group of ten or so of us, a section from a thick book on prisoners of war (POWs) during Vietnam. The stories were mesmerizing, and really put the training we were going through in perspective. As a young 18-year-old, the struggles I faced were nothing compared to those who we were hearing stories about and the sacrifices they made for our country.

Sijan, and his name, grew more prominent as I moved from the POW readings during basic training and into my four years as a cadet. First there were stories about him, a Class of 1965 graduate, in *Contrails* - the little book of knowledge, from which we had to learn many details. There was a dorm named Sijan Hall (*dedicated in his honor in May 1976*), and a painting in Arnold Hall of this man standing in a flight suit, with the image of the Medal of Honor. It did not take long to learn that he was the first recipient of the Medal of Honor from the Air Force Academy - and to this day he is the only Academy graduate to receive this highest of military honors. He is 1 of only 3,500 Medal of Honor recipients (including 19 double recipients) to receive this award since it was created during the Civil War.

So, for a moment - transport yourself to a spot sitting on the ground in a circle at night, maybe by a campfire, listening to a story about Lance P. Sijan.



Photo recently taken of rock garden at Central Elementary

Fifty years ago, this month, on November 9, 1967 - Captain Lance P. Sijan was shot down over North Vietnam. Before attending the Academy, he was born and raised in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He had originally planned to attend the Naval Academy, but chose the Air Force instead. He played football for three years at USAFA, quitting the team his senior year to focus on his academics.

After graduating in 1965, he attended pilot training and was assigned to Da Nang Air Base, Vietnam. On his 52nd mission in Vietnam, Captain Sijan ejected from his F-4C Phantom after being hit by enemy fire. A search and rescue helicopter attempted to assist in his recovery but had to leave the area half-an-hour after starting the attempt due to enemy fire. Sijan refused the lowering of someone from the helicopter to assist him, not wanting to put someone else in danger. The crew lowered a forest penetrator device during the attempted rescue instead, to no avail.

According to *Air Force Link* "even with no food and very little water [Captain Sijan] managed to avoid capture for 45 days. Because of a serious compound fracture of the left leg, he was unable to walk but did manage to pull himself backward through the jungle. Even with a broken leg, a skull fracture and a mangled right hand he was able to escape after his initial capture. Upon recapture . . . he was 'interrogated' repeatedly, and in spite of his captors' technique of twisting his

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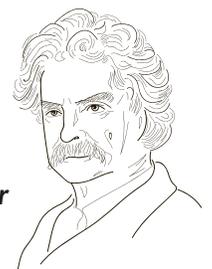
A Few Thoughts on Perseverance

The man who moves mountains begins by carrying away small stones. *Confucius*

Great works are performed not by strength but by perseverance. *Samuel Johnson*

A bend in the road is not the end of the road . . . Unless you fail to make the turn. *Helen Keller*

A few fly bites cannot stop a spirited horse. *Mark Twain*



When I Think of Perseverance [continued from previous page]

damaged right hand he refused to disclose any information but his name" (*Air Force Link* article using sources from the U.S. Air Force Museum and Air Force News Agency is the source for the three background paragraphs above).

Let's momentarily move away from sitting on the ground listening to this story and define *perseverance*. This definition is a combination taken from multiple dictionaries: *steadfastness and persistence in a course of action or purpose, especially in spite of difficulties, obstacles, or discouragement*. In January 1985, the book ***Into the Mouth of the Cat*** by Malcom McConnell was published - I picked up a copy around that time to learn more about this pilot and fellow graduate as I was about to head to helicopter pilot training.

Back to the darkness, sitting on the ground . . . listening to the story of a man that persevered. Lance Sijan was one of the American POWs, out of the estimated 2,500 POWs and Americans reported missing in action (MIA), that did not make it home from Vietnam. But his story was told by those who were with him in Vietnam after he was captured (two fellow Air Force officers made sure his story did not die with him after he succumbed to pneumonia on January 22, 1968). Those reports led to him being awarded our nation's highest honor in March 1976 by President Gerald Ford. The citation reads:

While on a flight over North Vietnam, Capt. Sijan ejected from his disabled aircraft and successfully evaded capture for more than 6 weeks. During this time, he was seriously injured and suffered from shock and extreme weight loss due to lack of food. After being captured by North Vietnamese soldiers, Capt. Sijan was taken to a holding point for subsequent transfer to a prisoner of war camp. In his emaciated and crippled condition, he overpowered 1 of his guards and crawled into the jungle, only to be recaptured after several hours. He was then transferred to another prison camp where he was kept in solitary confinement and interrogated at length. During interrogation, he was severely tortured; however, he did not divulge any information to his captors. Capt. Sijan lapsed into delirium and was placed in the care of another prisoner. During his intermittent periods of consciousness until his death, he never complained of his physical condition and, on several occasions, spoke of future escape attempts. Capt. Sijan's extraordinary heroism and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty at the cost of his life are in keeping with the highest traditions of the U.S. Air Force and reflect great credit upon himself and the U.S. Armed Forces.



Painting of Lance Sijan at United States Air Force Academy

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When I Think of Perseverance [continued from previous page]

Sijan's story still impacts me today - he never gave up, he resisted his captors to the very end - he epitomized *perseverance*. In late October, during a visit to Washington, D.C., for a character conference, I sought out Lance P. Sijan's name on Panel 29E - Line 62 of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (see photo previous page and below).

His story has impacted several of us that work at TCA, as I will relate in two anecdotes from our Director of Operations, Dave Tubb, and our President, Russ Sojourner. Dave shared the following from his parents and their meeting of Lance Sijan's parents:

I don't remember what year we met his parents but we had been parents of Academy cadets for several years and David was now a cadet. We were familiar with Sijan Hall and the fact that Lance was the first Academy Medal of Honor winner and that he was a Wisconsin boy. . . . [The Tubbs belonged to the Wisconsin Air Force Academy Parent's Association and reflected on a dinner event]

We would assemble at a nice eating facility in a motel near Waukesha, WI as there would be a speaker from the Academy attending and usually a cadet from Wisconsin who was doing well. The dinner was informal and you could sit anywhere you wanted to and Mr. and Mrs. Sijan came over and sat with us. What an honor and privilege to have them sit with us but all they could do is talk about the honor and privilege it was to meet us and how special it was to have three sons attend the Air Force Academy [Dave and his two brothers all went to the Academy]. We engaged in conversation throughout the evening and they were always so humble and approachable. To think they had a son who had died in service, was a Medal of Honor recipient and had a dormitory named after their son and they were honored to meet us! They were just your common mom and pop like us whose son had been fortunate enough to attend the Academy and then go on and serve with distinction.



I do not remember our conversation but I remember the people!

When I asked Dr. Sojourner whether Lance Sijan and his story had an impact on him he shared:

I was a cadet at the United States Air Force Academy for four years, from 1980-1984. For all four years, I lived in a dormitory called Sijan Hall. Early on at the Academy I knew Sijan Hall was named after an AF Academy grad and Medal of Honor winner who had died in the Vietnam War - his first name was Lance - but for a full year or so, that was pretty much all I knew about this man Sijan. And then, in the summer between my freshman and sophomore years, I went through a program called SERE - Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape. One of the more grueling aspects of that SERE program was the "opportunity" to spend a couple days in a simulated prisoner of war (POW) camp. The 40 or so hours spent as a "prisoner" in that camp was the toughest, most demeaning, arduous, tiring, and mentally and physically taxing time of my entire life. To this day - that POW camp and the associated survival training was the toughest thing I've ever gone through. As our time in the camp was winding down, when the prisoners were about to be "liberated", the Camp "Commandant" told us the story of Air Force Lt Lance Peter Sijan. I had big tears in my eyes when the Commandant finished the story of the AF officer named Sijan - the man who wouldn't be broken, the man who wouldn't betray his country, the man who wouldn't give up - the man who gave the ultimate sacrifice, honorably, for his country. Those tears (okay, I was actually crying like a baby) were partly because I was soon to be released from the camp, but mostly because I was so moved when I fully realized what it meant to be worthy of the Medal of Honor. My experiences paled in comparison to Sijan's, but I at least had a taste of his journey, and his sacrifice. I went on to work as a mentor/leader in that same POW camp during several of my summers at the Academy, partly in honor of Lance Sijan - because I truly desired to be part of helping young cadets understand his legacy. And so, in the summer of 1985, Lance Peter Sijan became one of my heroes. He still is today, 32+ years later. I can only hope and wish that in similar circumstances, that I might be as courageous, honorable, physically and morally strong, and self-sacrificing.



Capt. Lance P. Sijan

This is but one example of perseverance and there are many more like it that maybe have impacted you. As you, figuratively, get up from the ground from our evening campfire discussion, brushing off the dirt as you stand - think of the Sijan's in your life, share them with your children, your students, your friends, and help keep us focused on the many stories of perseverance we have encountered, and how those stories can impact and shape our lives. **Lance P. Sijan: April 13, 1942 - January 22, 1968.**

PLATO AND PETTY

by Wesley Jolly, Director of Academic Services

this article is adapted from a presentation given to the Elementary teaching staff during the October 10th In-Service

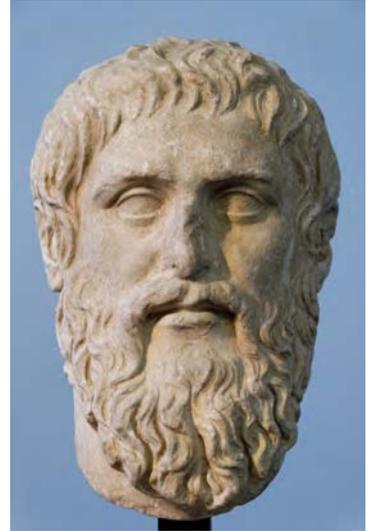
First off – let me just say thank you. Thank you for all you do. Over the last two years I would estimate that I have been in nearly 400 different classrooms and seen first-hand **the GREAT things you do for our students – each and every day.**

I miss the classroom – I miss the interactions with students, the discussions, and the sharing of dreams. That is what I'm going to talk with you about for a few minutes this morning. You can call it my **PLATO and PETTY** talk because it gets at the heart of those things I just mentioned that I miss about the classroom.

One of the biggest things I miss was the banter with students as they showed up to class each day – for you see one of the main ways I tried to connect (*from this old guy to teenagers*) was through music and music's connection with history. As the school year progressed - students that sometimes just didn't seem to fit in would talk to me about a song – or suggest a song for a particular topic. Russ's recent "marble" talks have made me reflect on that – what did I do with the time, and what would I do differently, if I could do it all over again.

You can find much **Truth, Beauty, and Goodness** in a novel, a poem, or a song. For many that know me - several of those songs used in the classroom were written by **Bob Dylan** and **Tom Petty**. Not only did those songs give insight about a certain topic of history – they gave insight into me.

Plato said: **"Follow your dream as long as you live, do not lessen the time of following desire, for wasting time is an abomination of the spirit."**



Okay, *the wasting of time* line from Plato is a whole topic in and of itself related to the - what are you "going to do with your time" and the Josh Shipp marble discussion. I want to focus, however, on the "follow your dream" element of Plato's quote.

In April 1989, I had graduated from the Air Force Academy a little less than three years earlier and was approaching my third wedding anniversary – and believe me I still had lots to learn about the Air Force and about marriage. **I had dreams** though --- dreams of one day possibly commanding a helicopter unit like the one I was flying with in South Dakota --- and another one of one day returning to teach history at the Air Force Academy, and then maybe follow in the footsteps of my high school history teacher. And that same spring, Tom Petty released his first solo album titled **Full Moon Fever** that many would eventually label a "masterpiece" and *Rolling Stone* magazine would rank as one of the top 100 albums of the 1980s.

So how in the world does a Tom Petty album fit in with Plato . . . truth, beauty, and goodness . . . and a marble. Well, let me just read you a few of the song titles from that particular album: *Free Fallin'*, *I Won't Back Down*, *Love is a Long Road*, *A Face in the Crowd*, *Runnin' Down a Dream*, and *Depending on You*. Several of those songs are the "put the top down on a convertible – crank the volume – and sing as loud as you possibly can" songs – and I've done that with some of them. And the words also hit home . . . it would probably be better to play the songs (and believe me I'm not a singer, so I'll spare you that this morning), instead I'm just going to read a sampling of the lyrics (with some commentary). *continued on next page*



Help TCA continue moving forward in our 20th year. Please consider donating to our kids future.



Our Kids.
Their Future.
Our Challenge.

20 Years and Counting

Click on the image above to donate now!

PLATO AND PETTY [continued from previous page]

Free Fallin'

She's a good girl, loves her mama
Loves Jesus and America too
She's a good girl, crazy 'bout Elvis
Loves horses and her boyfriend too

[getting to know your students – what do they like]

I Won't Back Down

No I'll stand my ground
Won't be turned around
And I'll keep this world from dragging me down
I am gonna stand my ground
And I won't back down

[knowing what you believe and why you believe it]

Love Is A Long Road

[the title speaks for itself]

A Face In The Crowd

Out of a dream, out of the sky
Into my heart, into my life
And you were just a face in the crowd
You were just a face in the crowd
Out in the street, thinking out loud,
A face in the crowd

[make sure our students are *not* just a face in the crowd]

Depending On You

[another one that the title speaks for itself]

And I've specifically left one set of lyrics out from that 1989 album. When I heard that Tom Petty had passed away this past Monday – all that kept going through my mind were his songs. Over and over again I heard **Runnin' Down a Dream** ---

Runnin' Down a Dream

It was a beautiful day, the sun beat down
I had the radio on, I was drivin'
Trees flew by, me and Del were singin' little Runaway
I was flyin'

Yeah runnin' down a dream
That never would come to me
Workin' on a mystery, goin' wherever it leads
Runnin' down a dream

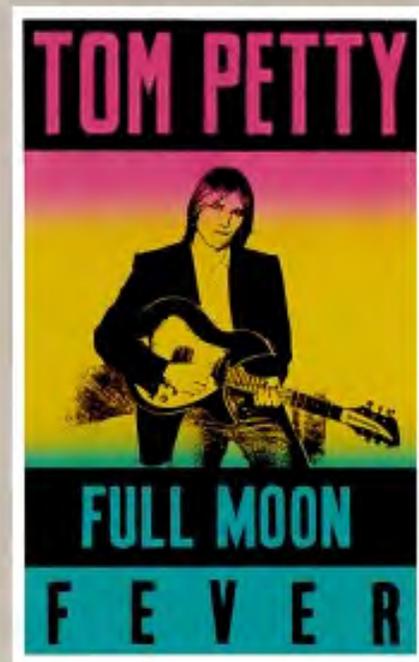
I felt so good like anything was possible
I hit cruise control and rubbed my eyes
The last three days the rain was unstoppable
It was always cold, no sunshine

Yeah runnin' down a dream
That never would come to me
Workin' on a mystery, goin' wherever it leads
Runnin' down a dream

I simply could not shake that this is what it is all about as a teacher – helping kids run down their dreams. And as I reflected further upon that record - the preparing them not to

back down (*knowing what they believe and why*), making them realize that they can depend on people, and finally that they are not just a face in the crowd – also ring so true for our profession. I rarely post anything on Facebook but late last Monday night I just had to do so – to acknowledge his impact – because Tom Petty's music was the soundtrack – a chronicle – of my life.

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PLATO AND PETTY [continued from previous page]



I was actually learning how to teach people to fly helicopters while listening to Tom Petty's *Learning to Fly*.

On May 29, 2017, Memorial Day - the Monday night after TCA's graduation, I went to Red Rocks to see Tom Petty on his 40th Anniversary tour. **He sang nineteen songs that night and four of them were from his album that was released that spring of 1989.** I called Jill, my wife, from the venue – (she's not a big Petty fan like me) – and in the course of the conversation she asked if I got a t-shirt. I told her “no” – that they were outrageously priced. She told me I should consider getting one – that there was a good chance I'd never get to see him again. That night as I was preparing to leave I picked up a t-shirt. I'm really glad I did. Moral of that story – **guys listen to your wives.**

I close today with the simple message to **deliberately show love and care for your students** – sometimes that can be as easy as sharing a song or a personal story, or in my case a personal story through a song. Make connections – let your passion be contagious – cultivate curiosity – **and encourage our students to always keep running down their dreams.**

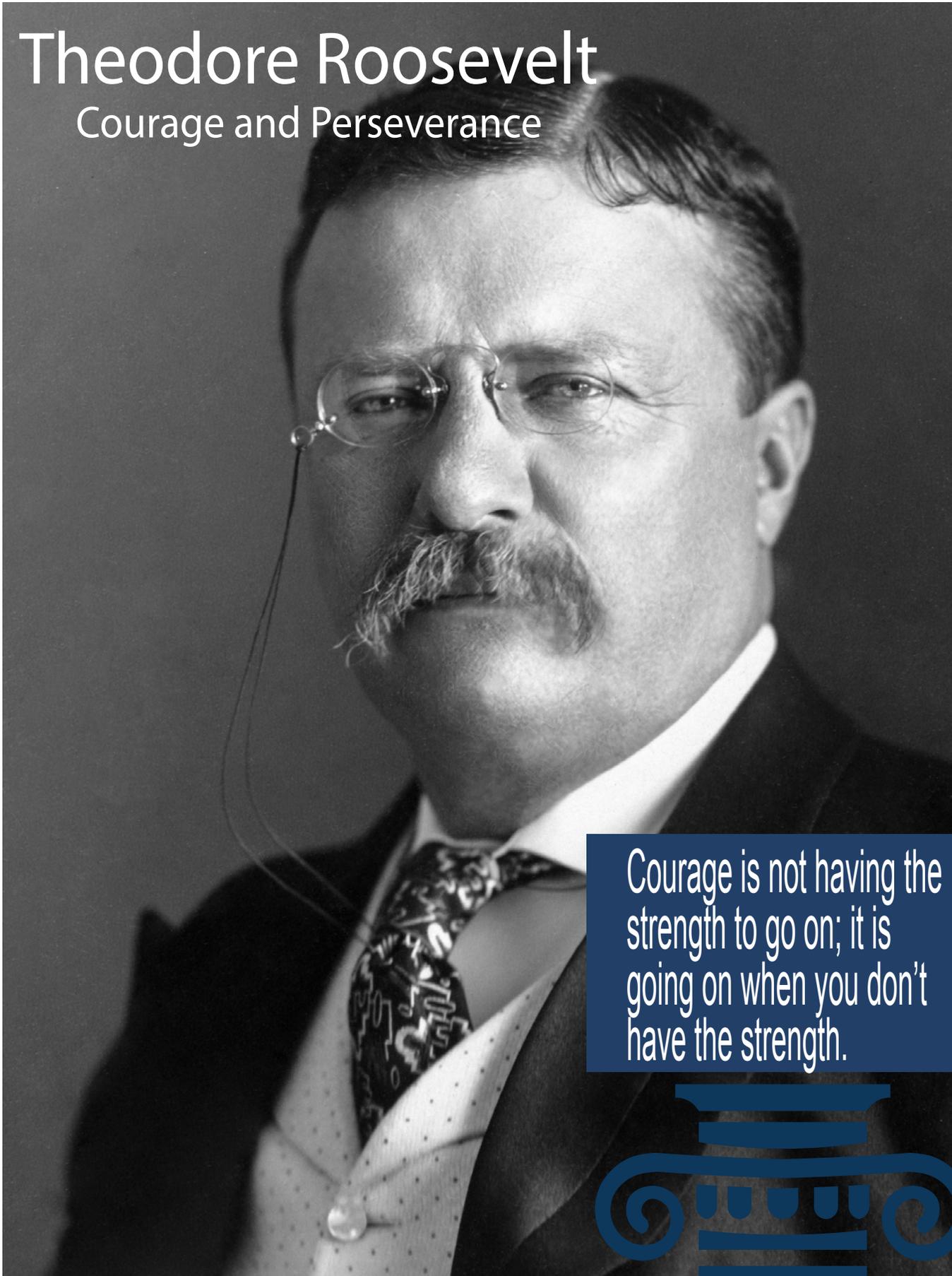
And grab the t-shirt when you get the chance.



Photo taken at Red Rocks Amphitheatre, Morrison, CO on May 29, 2017 by Wes Jolly

Theodore Roosevelt

Courage and Perseverance



Courage is not having the strength to go on; it is going on when you don't have the strength.

Theodore Roosevelt

