

# PALMARIUM

## Parent Survey



The TCA Parent Survey is underway for each of our schools. Please check the communications from your school principals to participate in the short eight question survey. We appreciate your feedback. The survey will close out on Friday, February 26th.

## KINDERGARTEN and 1st GRADE WAITLIST

TCA is now accepting applications for the 2021-2022 school year and word of mouth is our best advertisement. Please forward this information to anyone you know with a child going into Kindergarten and 1st grade (and is age 5 or 6, respectively, on or before June 1) who may be interested in attending TCA. Waitlist applications are available [here](#).

TCA looks to be a skilled and passionate partner in the educational journey of school-age children--a journey toward becoming thoughtful, virtuous, and wise individuals, today and tomorrow. TCA's dedicated faculty cultivates and unleashes the natural curiosity of learners through a stimulating, classically inspired curriculum. We are a relational learning community committed to growing the whole person in mind, body, and spirit, maintaining small class sizes, engaging students' minds through thoughtful questioning and teaching and modeling virtuous character from kindergarten to graduation.

Parents can learn more about TCA's [educational philosophy](#) and read our [Core Values](#) for more about what we believe. Please contact TCA's Registrar at [TCARegistrar@asd20.org](mailto:TCARegistrar@asd20.org) for additional information.



In this month's *WHY I TEACH: Stories from the Classroom* series, Jeremy Reed, High School English and Rhetoric teacher, shares with us about his passion for teaching. In addition former Cottage School Program Principal and TCA Board Member, Becky Van Vleet shares about a new passion. You will also find information on the upcoming *Beyond the Book Club* studies, in addition to other topics of interest.

The Editor





photo by Matthew Stockman/Getty Images

# TCA Alumni Daniel Carlson

TCA Class of 2013 graduate **Daniel Carlson** tied for the NFL scoring title for the 2020 season with 144 total points scored.

Carlson also surpassed Sebastian Janikowski for the Raiders franchise record for the most points scored in a single season.

During the 16-game regular season Carlson made 33 of 35 field goal attempts and 45 of 47 extra points for an impressive 9 points per game season average.

In addition to those impressive results, Daniel also tied his career long field goal of 54 yards and was 19 of 19 in the Raiders new indoor home stadium in Las Vegas.



from the Raiders.com website

## TCA North Construction Progressing



December 22, 2020

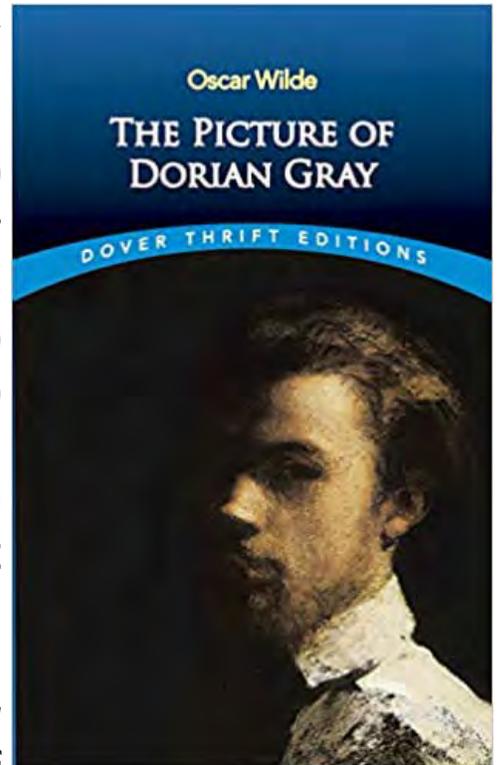


February 10, 2021

## ENGAGING MINDS:

The seventh of nine **Beyond the Book Club** book studies of the school year with staff will be on

**The Picture of Dorian Gray** by Oscar Wilde. The book study sessions last ninety minutes each (and are being held via Zoom this year). Currently, we plan on one session for the Wilde book on **Wednesday, March 10** from 4:30-6:00 pm. Parents are also welcome in our studies. If you'd like to join us for this one or any of the remaining titles listed below send an e-mail to [wjolly@asd20.org](mailto:wjolly@asd20.org) and I'll add you to the RSVP lists. Two



studies remain after Wilde's book. On **Wednesday, April 7** we'll meet to discuss **April 1865: The Month that Saved America** by Jay Winik. We finish the book club readings for the year on **Tuesday-Wednesday, May 4-5**, with the title **The River of**

**Doubt: Theodore Roosevelt's Darkest Journey** by Candice Millard.

The heroes in my life have all been teachers. And, while they all had their specific subject in which they had expertise and passion, these heroes of mine were all loving and joyful and understood that how they treated their students was more essential than what they taught them. This makes them heroes of no less an order than Clark Kent, Mary Poppins, or Wonder Woman. Without laser beams shooting from their eyes, an endless carpetbag of holding, or a lasso of truth, these joyful people loved me and modeled how to best live this life.

In Junior High School, it was Dalton Holt, my 8th Grade Camp Counselor and Draftsman instructor. He was also my grandfather. Dalton Holt was a mountain man, both in action and stature. Standing 6-foot-five and looking more at home in the Klondike during the Gold Rush than in civilized society in the 20th century, Grandpa Holt taught me how to boil water over a campfire in a paper bag, how to throw an axe, how to ride and care for a horse, how to appreciate and steward nature, how to love my family, and he did so with a joyful smile and a wry wit. He was a hunter extraordinaire, but he didn't mind that I wasn't. A WWII veteran, who lied about his age to enter the war before he was 18, Dalton was an intelligent, thoughtful man, but right and wrong were remarkably simple concepts for him. Be kind and be joyful, and the rest will take care of itself.

In High School, it was Bob Parker, my Band teacher. When my father left, he exemplified the concept of *in loco parentis*. He saw that I had quit band and that I was more than a bit lost. He saw a young man in pain and without the necessary guidance of a father figure. Mr. Parker (I will never be able to call him Bob) fostered in me the good habits and structure that band provides. He reignited my love for



music, leading to my music minor in college and a love of music which continues today. Meanwhile, he endured and triumphed over leukemia, and (in the end) counted the disease a blessing in his life. He then asked me to be his marching band Drum Major for two years. At that time, I had not yet felt so trusted and valued by someone outside of my family. He joyfully gave me high standards to live up to, teaching me that rules are not restrictions on my happiness but the path to happiness instead.

In College, it was Dr. John Reist, my English professor and pastor. As much Enigma as anything else, Dr. Reist was a much-beloved professor at Hillsdale. Not everyone got him or enjoyed his style of teaching, but Dr. Reist was an absolute force for Truth, Beauty, and Goodness. He would not compromise on the good, the beautiful, and true. He delighted in saying things that took overly-comfortable students out of their comfortable presuppositions. A master storyteller, he taught students by talking around or

## WHY I TEACH: Stories from the Classroom

near his cherished books, relying on his students to do the necessary reading ahead of time...the gall! But, because of this, his classes were more about life than any particular plot or motif. He wanted us to be loved and be loving. He woke me up. He shook me out of my comfortable life. One Fall day, I went to his office for help on a paper, and he said, "Reed, what are you doing?!" I thought, "Boy, my paper must be bad." He wasn't referring to my paper but my life instead. Soon after, he made me his Youth Pastor (not that I was ever comfortable with the title). Suddenly, I was leading a daily afterschool program for the impoverished youth in Litchfield, MI and giving the Youth Moment micro-sermon during worship. Somehow along the way, I also learned how to write. After graduating, Dr. Reist married Reagen and me, which was his last lesson for me...our relationships with our students are never really over and certainly not contained to a

classroom.

Over the course of 42 years, the greatest teacher and hero in my life has been my mother, Sally Reed. Her middle name is Edith, and I don't know what that name means, but Joy would have been a better choice. Throughout her life, from her somewhat humble beginnings, through considerable hardship, and to her present life as a celebrated, retired Kindergarten teacher (who taught everyone in Ludington, MI at some point during her 32+ year career), my mother has emanated joy, imparting it to all. She is the most selfless person I've ever met. She's also the strongest. I try to love my students as she did, striving to reach them where they are presently, not who they will become in the future.

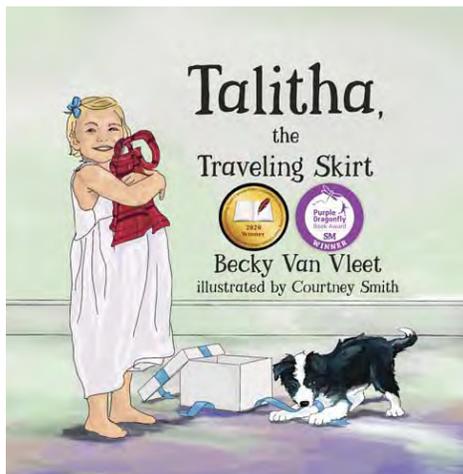
Our world needs heroes. And while it's tempting to daydream about super-speed or a room that cleans itself in song, my heroes are, as Tolkien described, of a more "simple" and "rustic" variety, much more like Samwise Gamgee than Batman. These teachers, these cape-less heroes of mine, lived life in relationship with others and taught me that giving joy and love is far more important than teaching anything else...even *The Brothers Karamazov*. Of course, Dostoevsky's novel is about those very things, but that's another essay.

**Jeremy Reed**  
*Senior English and Rhetoric Teacher*



## An Article Recently Published in *Life After 50* by Anthony Welch

Retired teacher and principal Becky Van Vleet wanted to memorialize the tradition of passing down a family heirloom. As she wrote down its history, the story led her down a new career path as a children's book author.



### The traveling skirt

Omadeen Stuckey, a childhood friend of Van Vleet's mother, gifted a hand-sewn, plaid skirt to her back in 1948. Since then, the little skirt—fit for a 2-year-old—has been worn by Van Vleet and her three sisters, their daughters and now even their granddaughters. As part of the tradition, professional photos were taken of each child wearing the skirt, which has continued on even after Van Vleet's mother passed.

Van Vleet and her husband have four daughters and eight grandchildren. Initially, she considered writing a memoir about the history of the plaid skirt, hoping to share something that her family would enjoy.

"I wanted to write something about that family tradition and preserve the memory," she said.

But as she started writing about the intergenerational skirt, the story expanded. She contacted an editor, who suggested she turn it into a children's book.

By the summer of 2019, Van Vleet published her first children's book based on the little skirt titled, "Talitha, the Traveling Skirt." It won second place in the general category at the 2020 Purple Dragonfly Book Awards.

"I've learned a lot. I had no idea what all went on in the publishing industry, so I feel like I branched out with my own personal learning," Van Vleet said. "It reminded me that I'm a lifelong learner."

She didn't stop there. This past September, Van Vleet published her second book, "Harvey, the Traveling Harmonica," also inspired by a true family story.

The book honors Van Vleet's father, who she said, "played tunes on his harmonica sweeter than candy!"



Her third children's book continues the traveling series and is due out in 2021.

"I have really enjoyed getting the books in my own hands and reading them to my grandchildren. I've enjoyed hearing about others purchasing them for their children and getting some good feedback," Van Vleet said.

### Educator turned author

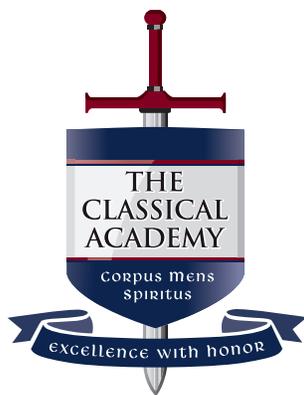
Van Vleet taught for 15 years before serving as principal for The Classical Academy's Cottage School Program in Colorado Springs, where she worked for another nine years.

"When I was teaching, I was really into promoting reading," Van Vleet said. "I feel like that's important for children today to read good quality books."

She encouraged parents to read to children at home, to take them to the library and to have family reading time every day. She sees her writing as an extension of that passion, and taking up this new endeavor in her 60s has infused Van Vleet with both enthusiasm and excitement.

"My own love of reading and being able to write these books has been very joyful for me," Van Vleet said.

Currently, Van Vleet is expanding her writing horizons beyond children's books. She has already completed a rough draft of a young adult novel based on her father, Walter Troyan.



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Please find a link to the article and website by [clicking here](#).

[continued on top of next page]

[continued from previous page] **Passing on Family Traditions**

Troyan served in the Navy on the USS Denver during World War II. As part of her research, she's read all the ship's deck logs and other Navy accounts from the war. Van Vleet's best resource for the book, however, has been listening to recordings she made of her father recalling his time in the Navy. The two-hour cassette recording was made back in 1991, long before Van Vleet had any writing aspirations.

"He had a good mind and a good memory, so I asked him to sit down with me and tell me all his stories and recollections from being on USS Denver. It was a gold mine for his personal stories, his close calls with death and how he quit high school because he wanted to serve his country," Van Vleet said.

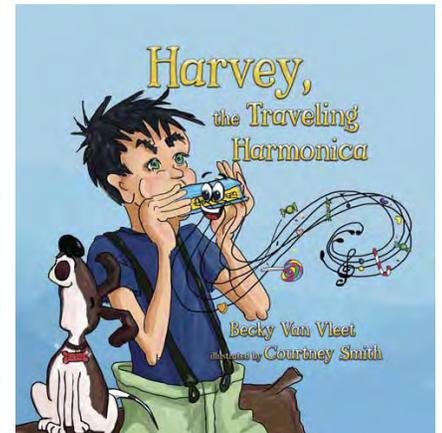
She started research for the book in 2019. The stay-at-home orders for COVID-19 helped her dig into her research even further, and she hopes to publish the book in 2021.

"My goal with this book is for the reader to come away with an appreciation of patriotism, and the sacrifices of the young teenagers who dropped out of high school to fight in a war for their country," Van Vleet explained.

Writing has provided another hobby for her to enjoy during retirement, along with gardening, oil painting, hiking and biking. In addition to her book and novel writing, Van Vleet posts regular blogs on her website [www.beckyvanvleet.com](http://www.beckyvanvleet.com).

She encourages others to likewise try something they've never done before, no matter their age. Especially if it's something they've also wanted to do.

"No matter what your age, it's never too late," Van Vleet said. "If you want to try something new and you're in your older years, I'd encourage people to take that step and make their dream come true."



## TCA Advancement: THANK YOU for a Great December!

Thanks SO much for all you've done this school year, and especially regarding donations in December! This year we were able to develop our largest ever matching gift challenge of \$64,000, and because of your generosity we raised over \$225,000! That's the most we've ever raised to close out a calendar year at TCA! With your ongoing support we're able to continue the outstanding education you have come to expect.



I can't overstate the difference your gifts make to our teachers, staff, and your children! Thank you again! And if you'd like to make a donation, just click the "Our Kids" icon above to give today.

**We Are Titans!**  
Russ Sojourner  
TCA President

TCA staff photo from our 20 Year celebration a few years back



## Senate Chaplain Barry Black Rear Admiral (Retired)



“words matter, and the  
power of life and  
death is in the tongue”

*from joint session prayer 2021*