

# THE SIGNET



SUMMER 2014 | VOLUME 14 | ISSUE 2

## From the Head of School

### The Future of Education at Phil-Mont Excellence for God's Glory

Who likes change? Who wants to give up a comfortable routine to try something new? Yet in the previous two Signet articles, we described the kind of changes that we are planning for at Phil-Mont, as we move forward with the future of education. So what motivates us to overcome our inertia and to learn new ways of doing things? What drives this paradigm shift? The primary answer is so that we can pursue excellence in education, for the glory of God. More specifically, we are doing this so that each student can master each subject, under Christ's Lordship, and be better equipped for serving God in the world.

But what is the Biblical foundation for attempting to make a school a place of excellence? Consider the following points:

*The Triune God is excellent in all that He is and all that He does.*

In Genesis 1:31, we read that God saw all that He had made, and that it was very good. Every aspect of His handiwork was excellent. The Bible tells us that the Lord's works are perfect (Deut. 32:4), that the Lord Almighty is excellent in His wisdom (Isa. 28:29), and that His Word is flawless (2 Sam. 22:31). Therefore we are called upon to praise Him according to His excellent greatness! (Ps. 150:2).

*God's redemption of sinners is portrayed as the most excellent plan.*

In addition to the cascading phrases which describe God's salvation of sinners in passages such as Romans 8:28–39 and Ephesians 1:3–14, the Old Testament prophecies and the New Testament pictures concerning the Lord's redemption are couched in lavish imageries of excellence. Isaiah 25:6 declares that *"on this mountain the LORD Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine—the best of meats and the finest of wines."* (Ezekiel 47:1–12) portrays salvation as an ever-increasing river that produces fruit, healing, and transformation. The father in the parable of the prodigal son/elder brother spares no expense in welcoming his lost son: *"Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet."* (Luke 15:22). And when Jesus performs His first public miracle, He turns the water into the best wine (John 2:10). Every aspect of God's redemptive work reflects His excellence.

*God has made us in His image to pursue and to reflect His excellence.*

Having been made in God's image and likeness (Gen. 1:26), we are to exercise a dominion over the earth that imitates God's excellence. Men like Daniel exemplify the kind of excellence that God desires from His people. *"Now Daniel so distinguished himself among the administrators and the satraps by his exceptional qualities that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom."* (Dan. 6:3). Daniel excelled for 60 years as a believer working in a foreign land, and is a model for the kind of Phil-Mont graduate we would love to see, who is equipped

over



The Elementary Worship Grant Art Project (see article on page 8)

spiritually, intellectually, and professionally to live out the gospel in a pagan world.

Or consider the excellent wife of Proverbs 12:4 and 31:10–31, whose character is worth far more than rubies, and who pursues excellence in her business and her home. She is a wonderful example of a woman who, by fearing the Lord, excels in her marriage, in her family, and in her career.

In addition, each believer is called to pursue and reflect God's excellence. We are to excel in building up the church (1 Cor. 14:12), and we should excel in the grace of giving (2 Cor. 8:7). Christians are to make the best use of the opportunities God gives us (Eph. 5:16; Col. 4:5), and are to ponder whatever is excellent in God's creation: "*Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.*" (Phil. 4:8)

Therefore, the way in which young men and

women are to learn at Phil-Mont should reflect the excellence of our Creator God.

*God's Word gives us certain cautions and encouragements in our pursuit of excellence.*

Our pursuit of excellence in education must be shaped by the warnings and the promises of Scripture, lest we make excellence an end in itself. So, for example, Reuben had once excelled in honor and power, but his moral failure ended that blessing (Gen. 49:3–4). Job 28:28 reminds us that wisdom cannot be bought with money; so though excellence in education can sometimes be costly, it cannot be obtained with mere dollars.

We are also warned of the temptation of thinking that the pursuit of excellence somehow earns us merit in God's eyes, as if bolstering learning at Phil-Mont would give us bragging rights with God! Isaiah 64:6 says "...all our righteous acts are like filthy rags." The truth is that those who do excel will have a stronger

temptation to fall into this trap.

The self-sacrificing model of Jesus Christ in Philippians 2:5–11 reminds us that excellence in God's eyes is granted only by His grace to those who humble themselves and let Him exalt them. Let us not seek for self-exaltation when we pursue excellence.

Finally, Paul's admonitions in Romans 14:3–4, 19, and 15:1–2 tell us that those who excel must guard against an attitude of elitism and of looking down on those who may not have excelled to the same degree or in the same ways. Phil-Mont must strive to be both exceptional and accepting. By God's grace we must combine excellence with humility, in the classroom and on the basketball court.

Let us pursue excellence in education, for the glory of God, so that each student will be better equipped for serving God in the world.

*Donald Beebe, Head of School  
Louis Pronnicki, Board President*

## Spring Fever at Phil-Mont

*Will Liegel*

**Spring Fever.** At many schools, it's an annual event. Students weary from the rigors of winter are often tempted to drift away and "mail in" those last muggy weeks of the year. Yes, Spring Fever. However, at Phil-Mont, Spring is more like a time for *Dance Fever*. Lots of students enjoy loads of exciting activities, from the elementary grades on up.

The **Eastern Breezes Spring Fine Arts Festival** featured hundreds of art pieces throughout the school created by students from kindergarten right through Senior Advanced Placement. A three-level vocal concert and matching band concert, a Jazz night, and a Library Writing Slam filled three exciting evenings. A final all-day Saturday event exploded with one acts, Shakespeare, blacklight theatre, food, hallway dragons, improv, instrumental and vocal solos, and a full musical production of *Scheherazade*.

**Service Day** allows the high schoolers to give back to the Academy. After devotions with senior



The Fine Arts Festival





Clockwise from top left: Service Day, the Race for Education, Field Day and the Carnival. Service Day pictures courtesy of Elizabeth Cole '14.

dad and hospital chaplain Wendell Scanterbury, a rousing game show lovingly called “The Toilet Bowl,” and some careful instructions, groups of students cleaned the building and grounds. Scrubbing walls, organizing the stage, polishing windows, and even policing the creek that runs through the grounds. Food sale monies and field game fees were added to Honor Society funds earned throughout the year and then donated to Esperanza (Hope) Urban Health Ministry—over \$1200 dollars raised!

The first annual **Phil-Mont Carnival** was presented by the parents of Families for Phil-Mont. Giant hamster balls, “human bowling,” and a dozen skill games complete with tickets and a prize table made for a great time under clear blue skies. Funnel cakes, water ice, and cotton candy were fit finishes to hot dogs and hamburgers, enjoyed while watching police and fire truck demonstrations. And Mr. Beebe doubled everyone’s pleasure by perching in a very active dunking booth!

A year of preparation, mailings, sponsorships, and training leads to the **Spring Race for Education**. The youngest students run in the early morning alongside staff, the Falcon, and high school volunteers while the upper schools pour out onto the trails just before lunch. Every lap gets a wristband hole-punch and the promise of funds raised for the Academy. This year the funds have been designated to enhance the chapel auditorium: a new sound system, enhancement of lighting, and curtain repairs. That day a barbecue lunch was prepared by our seniors and the last Friday of May an assembly was held to honor student participation and to announce the total earned: over \$28,000!

**Field Day** lets the elementary students take to the Phil-Mont hills and fields. Blue and White Teams battle for points in all kinds of team activities that stretch them mentally and physically: 100 yard dash, kick/throw station, relay races, an obstacle course, balloon toss, basketball shoot and tug of war! Led by PMCA

alumnus Physical Education instructor Bill DeHeer, this year the victory shout goes out to the White Team.

Well, that provides just five examples of the *fevered spring* of Phil-Mont. There were also end of year events for clubs and activities, Spring Sports Awards, a sophomore-sponsored Blacklight Dance, and middle and high school academic awards assemblies. Yearbooks arrived to fill with autographs, the *Vanguard* Literary Art Journal went on sale, the annual theatre party revealed our coming season, the AP exams were held, and, of course, lectures, classes, test and finals proceeded as planned. Certainly lots of resting done after graduation, but May and June at the Academy bustle with activity, emotion, and excellence.



# CONGRATULATIONS

**JUSTIN DELMER ANTHONY**



Temple University  
Temple University Academic Scholarship  
Graduated with Honors\*\*  
Attended PMCA Grades 1-12

**ESAHAK GHEBREHIWOT AREFAINE**



Drexel University  
Drexel University Endowed Grant  
Drexel University Endowed Scholarship  
Verburg Scholarship  
Treasurer, PMCA Student Council  
Attended PMCA Grades 1-12

**MICAH BENJAMIN BALDEZ**



Appointment to United States  
Coast Guard Academy  
Graduated with High Honors\*  
Attended PMCA Grades 1-12

**SETH WALLACE BRANDENBURG**



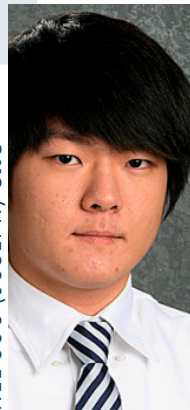
Drexel University  
Drexel University Endowed Grant  
Drexel University Endowed Scholarship  
Dragon Alumni Scholarship  
Attended PMCA Grades 1-12

**KATELYN SARAH BROWN**



Waynesburg University  
Waynesburg University Scholarship

**HEE SOO (JOSEPH) CHU**



Pennsylvania State University  
PMCA German Award  
National German Honor Society  
PMCA National Honor Society  
Graduated with Honors\*\*

**ELIZABETH JEAN COLE**



Messiah College  
Co-Editor, PMCA *Philotheon*  
Vice President, PMCA Interact  
2014 Community Spirit Award, Rotary  
Club of Springfield Township

**RACHEL LYNN DiBENEDETTO**



Montgomery County Community College  
PMCA Board of Trustees Award  
PMCA Not To Us Award  
2014 "Service Above Self" Award, Rotary  
Club of Springfield Township  
PMCA National Honor Society  
President, PMCA Interact  
Graduation with High Honors\*  
Attended PMCA Grades 1-12

**ZACHARY GLENN DOLTON**



Messiah College  
PMCA Coaches' Cup  
Messiah College Provost's Scholarship  
PMCA National Honor Society  
Graduation with Honors\*\*

\*HIGH HONORS DENOTES A GPA OF 3.90 OR ABOVE

\*\*HONORS DENOTES A GPA OF 3.50 - 3.89



# CLASS OF 2014

**MATILDA SARA ENNIS**



Alma College  
 PMCA Samuel and Ethel S. Parker Memorial Award  
 Alma College Dean's Scholarship  
 Alma College Summit Scholarship  
 Alma College Distinguished  
 Federation of United States Teachers and Adjudicators for Highland Dancing - Harry Farrar IV Memorial Scholarship for College Bound Students  
 Scottish Arts Performance Scholarship  
 Alma College Highland Award  
 PMCA National Honor Society  
 William Penn Charter National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution 2013 Award  
 Graduated with Honors\*\*  
 Attended PMCA Grades 1-12

**OLIVIA JUSTINE GLOVER**



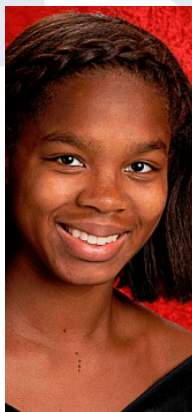
Ursinus College  
 Ursinus College Legacy Scholarship  
 Ursinus College Scholarship  
 Ursinus College Fund  
 Secretary, PMCA National Honor Society  
 Graduated with Honors\*\*

**JANA YOUNG GOODMAN**



Kutztown University  
 PMCA Coaches' Cup Award  
 Kutztown University Women's Basketball Athletic Scholarship  
 Prudential Spirit of Community Awards - President's Volunteer Service Award  
 Regional Representative for Poetry Out Loud National Competition

**SIERRA NE'COLE GREEN**



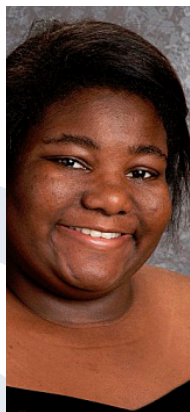
Chestnut Hill College  
 Chestnut Hill College Scholarship

**NATHANAEL LOUIS GUY**



Montgomery County Community College  
 PMCA History Award

**DORIS VICTORIA HAMILTON**



University of Pennsylvania  
 PMCA Drama Award  
 Urquhart Memorial Foundation Scholarship  
 Vice President, PMCA National Honor Society  
 Secretary, PMCA Interact  
 PMCA Representative to Camp Neidig  
 Graduated with High Honors\*

**SEAN J. HAWKINS**



Temple University  
 Temple University Dean's Scholarship  
 Graduated with Honors\*\*

**SYDNEY KYANN HOLTS**



St. John's University  
 St. John's Academic Achievement Award  
 National German Honor Society

**REBECCA HANNA HORMANN**



St. John's University  
 PMCA National Honor Society  
 National German Honor Society  
 Treasurer, Class of 2014  
 Graduated with Honors\*\*

# CONGRATULATIONS

**NATHAN ROBERT HUBER**



Temple University Honors Program  
 PMCA More Than Conquerors Award  
 PMCA Citizenship Award  
 Temple University Founder's Scholarship  
 PMCA National Honor Society  
 President, Class of 2014  
 Graduated with High Honors\*

**KWUN YU (KEVIN) KAN**



Auburn University  
 PMCA Mathematics Award

**THOMAS D. LEAHY**



Drexel University Westphal College  
 A. J. Drexel Scholarship  
 Drexel Dragon Scholarship  
 Dragon Alumni Scholarship  
 PMCA National Honor Society  
 Graduated with High Honors\*

**MICAH JAMES LIEBERMAN**



Pennsylvania State University  
 Pennsylvania State University  
 Provost's Award  
 Graduated with High Honors\*

**LAUREN HOPE MARKOWITZ**



Cabrini College  
 PMCA English Award  
 Cabrini College Provost's Scholarship  
 Council of Independent Colleges -  
 Full Scholarship  
 Treasurer, PMCA National Honor Society  
 Graduated with High Honors\*

**FAITH WEHMEYER MODRICKER**



Boyer College of Music and Dance -  
 Temple University  
 Valedictorian, PMCA Class of 2014  
 PMCA Music Excellence Award  
 PMCA Spanish Award  
 Temple University Founder's Scholarship  
 WPVI Best of the Class  
 PMCA National Honor Society  
 Valedictorian Award, Rotary Club of  
 Springfield Township  
 Graduated with High Honors\*  
 Attended PMCA Grades 1-12

**JENEL LAUREN NOCK**



Temple University  
 PMCA Citizenship Award  
 West Philadelphia Baptist Congress of  
 Christian Education Scholarship  
 PMCA National Honor Society  
 Vice President, Class of 2014  
 Secretary, Class of 2014  
 Graduated with Honors\*\*

**YERUW SHALEM THERLOWE PAULIN**



University of Pittsburgh  
 University of Pittsburgh  
 Academic Scholarship  
 University of Pittsburgh Book  
 Award Endowment

**MILANA JOY WEDEMIRE-RICKETTS**



Ursinus College  
 Ursinus College Scholarship  
 Ursinus College Fund

\*HIGH HONORS DENOTES A GPA OF 3.90 OR ABOVE

\*\*HONORS DENOTES A GPA OF 3.50 - 3.89



# CLASS OF 2014

**KAYIN YECHIEL SCANTERBURY**



Peabody Conservatory  
Johns Hopkins University  
PMCA National Honor Society  
Graduation with Honors\*\*

**ALLEGRA DIANNE SCHNITZEL**



Montgomery County Community College  
PMCA Music Excellence Award  
Attended PMCA Grades 1-12

**SAMMUL YEONIE SHIN**



Pennsylvania State University  
Schreyer Honors College  
Salutatorian, Class of 2014  
PMCA Principal's Award  
Pennsylvania State University  
Provost's Award  
Pennsylvania State University  
Academic Excellence  
Scholarship from Schreyer Honors College  
Pennsylvania State University Honors  
Scholarship from College of Health and  
Human Development  
PMCA National Honor Society  
President, PMCA Student Council  
Treasurer, PMCA Interact  
Graduated with High Honors\*  
Attended PMCA Grades 1-12

**PETER WITBAARD SORKNESS**



Montgomery County Community College  
PMCA Drama Award  
Secretary, PMCA Student Council  
Attended PMCA Grades 1-12

**EVAN WILLIAM STEIGER**



Tyler School of Art - Temple University  
PMCA Art Award  
Co-Editor of Philotheon  
PMCA National Honor Society  
Graduated with High Honors\*  
Attended PMCA Grades 1-12

**JORDAN ROBERT SUDLOW**



Geneva College Honors Program  
PMCA Lisl Gaffin Tyson Memorial Award  
PMCA Genesis 1:1 Award for Science  
Geneva College Pro Christo Scholarship  
Council of Independent Colleges -  
Full Scholarship  
President, PMCA National Honor Society  
Editor, The 2014 *Vanguard* Literary  
Art Journal  
Graduated with High Honors\*  
Attended PMCA Grades 1-12

**ZIXIN (WINNIE) WANG**



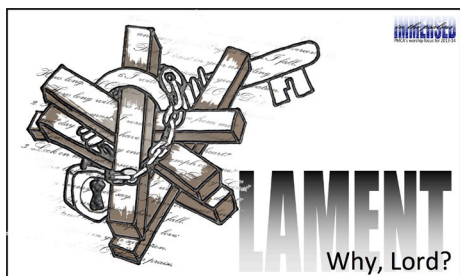
Auburn University

# Immersed in the Psalms Update

Elizabeth Rockey

During the 2013–14 school year, Phil-Mont benefited from a Worship Renewal Grant from the Calvin Institute of Worship, Grand Rapids, Michigan, with funds provided by the Lilly Endowment, Inc. The entire school community explored the breadth and depth of the Psalms. Student chapels used a different monthly *vertical habit* to focus our study.

An increased visual presence in our worship was one of the stated goals of the grant. A core group of high schoolers, led by Matt Stemler, created striking posters and PowerPoint templates for each month's focus. Enter the auditorium and you'll immediately see the fruits of the secondary students' work with our visiting artist—an impressive tri-panel installation calling us to exalt the Lord (see previous *Signet*).



The 'Lament' logo

In June, the elementary students got in on the action as well with an art investigation and project led by Rebecca Suggs and Audrey Sutliff. A group of K–5 students toured the Philadelphia Museum of Art to examine the history of art used in worship. During their visit, they paid special attention to landscapes and sheep in order to inform their collaborative piece on Psalm 23, the psalm featured for the vertical habit of *trust*. Mrs. Suggs presented the design for the project (which echoes the stained glass rose windows they saw at the PMA) and divided students into four groups to create their separate sections. When the pieces came together, a cross appeared—right over the Valley of the Shadow. While creating the sheep of the green pastures, students expressed their individuality. Thus both the creating process and the final art spoke to the unity in diversity we celebrate in



worship. The finished project (see page 1) invites viewers to reflect on the words of Psalm 23 and on the Good Shepherd who laid down his life for his sheep.

Top: Teachers Rebecca Suggs (far left in rear) and Audrey Sutliff with the elementary artists.

Middle: Elementary art students at work on the Psalm 23 project.

Left: A detail from the project shows the cross motif.

The Worship Grant also funded a three-day visit by Jeff Barker, a theater professor and playwright. One of his activities was working with a middle school and a high school group to explore Old Testament stories as plays, fusing tableaux and word-for-word memorization of Scripture. Students presented these dramatic retellings as part of secondary and elementary chapels. Professor Barker also coached the chapel leadership team in a moving presentation of Psalm 46 (check out the video on the website).



Jeff visited each elementary classroom, sometimes coaching them on their Bible memorization, other times telling *them* a Bible story. Finally, Mr. Barker led an inspiring evening seminar for the larger community on presenting Scripture. His talk can be found on Phil-Mont's YouTube channel, SuperPhilMont; it's listed as Spoken Word Workshop.



Above: The middle school team members ham it up with Mr. Barker.



Left: Fifth graders listen as Jeff Barker demonstrates emotion.

Although we didn't need a grant for this, chapel leadership aimed for increased participation in secondary chapel. And we met that goal admirably. One highlight was a May chapel planned and implemented by the entire eighth grade class and Miss Trego. At the close of our final chapel (at left, below), all students and teachers who spoke, sang or played an instrument, read or recited Scripture, danced, acted, assisted with technology, and contributed to the visual art component were asked to stand. We looked around—WOW!—and praised the Lord who gives great gifts to his people. See the accompanying photo.



Our grant year is now over. We thank the many people who participated in book groups, and for the Ennises, Hamiltons, and Olingers who led Psalm discussion groups. An amazing number of people brought time and energy to the vision and its fulfillment. We learned that getting a grant was just a catalyst for Phil-Mont. The special projects funded by the grant helped us discover resources with which the Phil-Mont community was already gifted! And while working to create chapels focusing on *vertical* habits, we increased our *horizontal* collaboration with each other. Soli Deo Gloria!

Take a look around—there are more people standing than sitting.



# Training the Whole Body—Focusing on the Heart

*Will Liegel*

Ah, technology. It allows the world to expand its horizons in so many ways. That's why two years ago The Signet began its faculty interview series. Yes, readers could enjoy excerpts from an interview with a department or individual, but then anyone with a computer or smartphone could also turn to the Phil-Mont website to actually enjoy the interview in its entirety. Our alumni could once again hear directly from their teachers, our parents could get an idea of what their children daily experience, and those new to our Phil-Mont family could sample our wares and see how richly God has blessed the Academy.

Each interview has been unscripted, wide-ranging, and authentic in its portrayal of what God is doing here at Phil-Mont: refreshing and helpful and real. This month brings our Physical Education program to the fore at the end of what can only be described as a banner year full of success and surprises.

Athletic Director Mr. Charles "Chip" Struck, PE instructor Mr. Bill DeHeer, and History teacher/coach Mr. Joel Alberts gathered with English teacher/interviewer Mr. Will Liegel to talk about all things physical.

Enjoy the clips from our candid conversation below. Then tune in on the Phil-Mont website or SuperPhilMont YouTube channel to get the whole story directly from some of the "movers and shakers" who make our students both move and shake.

**Liegel:** We of course need to let our guests introduce themselves. We'll begin with the newest addition to our physical education team, Joel Alberts.

**Alberts:** I'm in my eighth year at Phil-Mont and I'm primarily a History teacher here, although I've also taught some Spanish and Bible. My responsibilities include being assistant Cross Country Coach and one of the Track Head Coaches. I did my undergraduate work at Calvin College in four and a half years

where I was involved in Cross Country, but in my fifth year, I used up my eligibility so I began to run marathons. I've run the Boston Marathon as well as the Chicago and Philadelphia.

**Struck:** I should also mention that Joel is part of a program sponsored by Brooks Running which is called "Inspire Daily" which is what he does with our teams here.

**Liegel:** That takes us to our next person, Chip Struck, who is "head guy" in our Phys Ed program. What brought you here to Phil-Mont?

**Struck:** Well, it was a long time ago... 36 years. I did my undergraduate work at Covenant College with a double major in Physical Education and Biblical Studies. After graduation I worked for a few years in the YMCA system where I did everything from men's fitness, to gymnastics, to swimming to summer camps programs.

**Liegel:** Somehow I don't connect the Struck name to gymnastics.

**Struck:** Oh, I have always had trouble with flexibility. When Bill and I put the kids through the physical fitness battery, I can run fast and jump high, but I can't touch my toes! My role here at the Academy is as Athletic Director for the Middle School and Senior High. I teach Phys Ed classes and currently I'm coaching Cross Country and Track and Field. I've also had twenty plus years teaching Basketball and Baseball.

**Liegel:** This guy here, Mr. DeHeer, is one of your former students, right?

**Struck:** How cool is that? One of the joys of teaching here for so long is that you watch kids grow up and get married and have kids of their own - and now his kids are my students. This year alone there were sixteen volunteer or paid alumni coaches and assistant coaches. What a gift for our students!

**DeHeer:** This is my twenty-seventh year teaching at Phil-Mont, and I teach kindergarten through eighth grade Phys Ed and Health and this year a little Bible as well. What do I coach? What don't I coach! At the beginning of the year I coach Middle School Soccer, then it's Varsity Girls Basketball and Middle School Baseball. However, I have been known to coach some Track and Field, some Varsity Girls Softball.

**Liegel:** How does physical education fit into the fabric of a Christian school?

**DeHeer:** It may seem like an obvious answer, but my challenge as an Elementary / Middle School teacher is to get them to latch onto the idea that their bodies have been given to them by the Lord and they are to be good stewards of them. I'm a big fitness guy and so is Coach Struck and I remember from my days in PE here that it was a rigorous program and I've followed through with that. In addition, teaching them to compete with Godly sportsmanship is paramount to what we do.

**Struck:** Bill has a real gift in inspiring the elementary kids. He's developed a year-long jump rope challenge and also runs the Presidential Fitness Challenge with rewards, tokens, and patches all along the way.

**Alberts:** This is the only school I've taught at, so I can't say if it's unique, but it is a special aspect to our program. A lot of the kids do succeed in the classroom and on the field or court, but that speaks to our community here, in training the whole child up, in the commitment of many of our parents and all of our faculty.

**Struck:** It's also exciting the amount of support the faculty gives to the sports program, both in terms of releasing the kids for away games and working with them during free periods to make up the work they may have missed. Some of our best sports fans are the teachers. After school is over, folks aren't hopping in their cars and rolling home, they're going out to the fields here, or we're having basketball games, they'll come back and cheer the kids on.

**Liegel:** What are some of the challenges for a small school in the marketplace that is high school sports?



Coaches Chip Struck, Bill DeHeer and Joel Alberts in the weight room.



The Girls Varsity Basketball team celebrates its District Championship.

**DeHeer:** The challenge is to get enough kids out to make a team. In a basketball program you want to have enough for a JV program and a Varsity program. We have that in some sports and yet not in others because of the amount of people who are available. This year [in Basketball] I only had nine girls to work with.

**Liegel:** Oh, and what a shame those nine girls did so poorly this year! Tell us about the season and how well you did.

**DeHeer:** We did pretty well. We managed to make it to the state playoffs for the first time in the school's history. We managed to win three state playoff games which put us one game shy of the state championship game. Which means we were fourth in the state.

**Alberts:** You won some district titles then? (hint, hint...)

**DeHeer:** We won a district title, we won a BAL (Bicentennial Athletic League) title, and a Constitution Division title. We won twenty-six games which is eight more than we'd ever won before. But again, the challenge is being able to put together a program with a small amount of kids and the reason it works is the kids and their attitude and maturity.

**Liegel:** And you're not going to say it, but what I hear from the kids is what makes them want to be a part of the program is the humility and patience of the coaches mixed with driving them to the next level. It's niceness with an undercurrent of "push."

**DeHeer:** Faith Schutte, a PMCA alumna, English teacher, and assistant Girl's Basketball coach, has been enormous help. She loves the girls, she loves the sport, she works with them in the off-season. You won't find too many coaches who are willing and able to put the sneakers on and play—you notice we had nine people and she made ten. Many times she mimicked the opposing team's best player, so you had to try to stop Mrs. Schutte—and that was no easy thing.

**Struck:** This year we also had a very talented bunch of kids on the Boy's Basketball team. They've been with us for a number of years and we were expecting them to do well and they didn't disappoint. They were the Constitution Division champions.



**Struck:** And they qualified for the PIAA State Playoffs as well and the boys advanced to play games that were out in Harrisburg and lost a game there by a whisker.

**Alberts:** When looking at the challenges of sports in a small school, we can't offer the same program as a large public school, but we can offer sports that our kids can excel at. In Cross Country you can win as a team but the cool thing is that you can also send individuals. When we first joined the PIAA, we won the Division title and moved on to tie for fourth and the next year we were second in the District. This year we were able to send two individual to the State Finals, sophomores Katie Guerra and Isaac Stemler, who both did well, and we're expecting great things from them this summer.

Well, what you've just read is about a third of a 40-minute interview that covers far more ground than we can take on here. Giving you the crux of the discussion is great, but hopefully you are encouraged to get on-line and sit down with these three mentors. Other topics included in the live interview are:

*How do you deal with the physical unfitness of the youth of our day, with their inactivity with video games and "screens?"*

*How do you identify kids' gifts and encourage them to "buy into" after school activities, to foster a broader life?*

*What keeps you coming back to teach Phys Ed at Phil-Mont year after year, decade after decade?*

*How do sports function differently in a Christian community?*

Finally, the latter part of the interview deals with a rather wrenching finish to our sports year—a "Chariots of Fire Moment" when our Biblical stance clashed directly with district scheduling demands. The Department and Administration were forced to make a difficult

and emotional decision to stand for Word of God. Rather than spin it out here with all its twists and turns, instead tune in and hear the situation and its outcome from our team themselves. It would be impossible to convey in print the genuine emotion of the conversation. You will be moved.

To close this article, a few encouraging comments from our Athletic Director have been chosen. While sixteen alumni and faculty coaches and assistants participated in this year's program, Chip Struck is at the helm of this ship and is the guide to both coaches and students, daily pointing them towards excellence and the reason to strive towards it. His words are encouraging and what every parent might hope to hear from their child's coach.

**Struck:** I think the kids are "getting it"—the spiritual dimension of our program. In all areas of life, they're seeking to glorify God. They're able to have fellowship with the Holy Spirit and fellowship with one another. The expression in the movie *Chariots of Fire* is, "When I run I feel His pleasure"—you could say it on stage, you could say it in the classroom, and you are certainly saying it within our sports program. Even on the Varsity level, there may be beginners, but you see them progress and improve and get it physically but also get it spiritually; that what they're doing is an act of worship.



Isaac Stemler and Katie Guerra running Cross Country at States.

# Places and Spaces to Grow

Matt Stemler

When I started teaching at Phil-Mont 19 years ago, the curriculum handed to me left plenty of space to grow and develop. In fact, what was handed to me were three pieces of paper, handwritten with rough outlines that described a general direction for teaching drawing, painting, sculpture and art history. A handful of assignments could be found in the file.

For seven years I researched and worked to build that outline into structured classes with philosophy statements, goals for skill development and specific outcomes for students. Furthermore, I brought in a background of graphic design and a specific Christian view of contemporary art-making. Then I took a break from teaching. Fast forward through four years and a few large exhibits of my own art, and I started to feel God's strings pulling me back to the classroom and then I was specifically called back to Phil-Mont.

In the fall of 2007, with a new sense of intention, the High School Art Department joined the English and Math departments in offering Advanced Placement (AP) courses at Phil-Mont. Since then, the Fine Arts Department has experienced tremendous growth throughout its program. Furthermore, through my participation in the leadership of the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) fine arts team, I have gained a broader knowledge of the high school arts programs in other schools. Many schools are shrinking and even closing their art departments, but we are comforted in the knowledge that Phil-Mont is

dedicated to growing the arts in ways that will beneficially impact students.

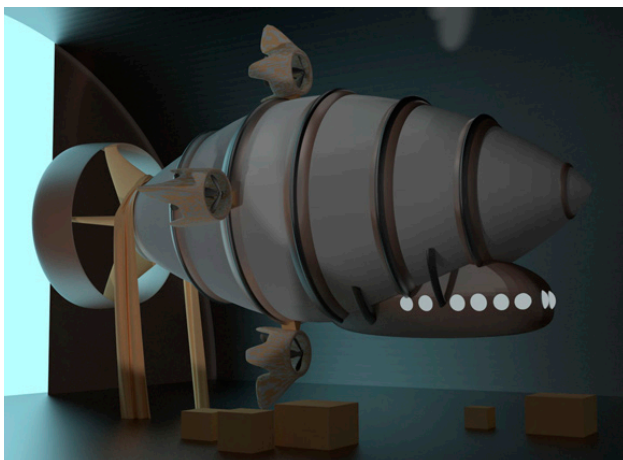
This spring, in the interest of seeking improvement in the experience and opportunity found in the visual arts department, I have put forth a proposal that sheds the old outline and creates a new structure for the art classes being offered. The current content won't necessarily disappear, but will be reshuffled in a practical way into a program that has a slightly different focus.

Some of the issues driving this change have to do with developing artists who are ready to meet the challenges of AP Studio Art and even beyond into college. Other issues simply identify curricular deficiencies and are aimed at expanding the potential artist in each student. For example, we can now offer a third AP class, 3D design, which makes a lot of sense since sculpture is a focus in my own work. It is hoped that this proposal provides more alternatives for scheduling and placement for students not intending to pursue an AP level course but wanting to continue their personal investigation in the arts.

Overall, there will be level 1 and 2 classes for Drawing and Painting, Graphic Design and 3D Design (sculpture). Also, an AP preparation class will be available. Each level 1 and 2 class will continue to have an emphasis on traditional methods of observing and building artistic skill, an interest in developing personal vision through creativity, a developed art historical context and a specific Christian world view

expressed while instruction occurs. Pre-AP and AP studio courses will additionally emphasize personal artistic processes and responsibility in the arts.

Ideally, students could explore more options vertically by taking two AP courses or horizontally by taking the variety of level 2 courses offered. Our view now is set for the future where we expect our artists to experience more intensity with projects and an opportunity to grow in their artistic skill and understanding.



Artwork created by Class of 2014 AP students. From top, Evan Steiger, Sammie Shin, Jordan Sudlow (left) and Elizabeth Cole.



# Milestones and Transitions

On June 16, a Recognition Luncheon was held to honor Phil-Mont faculty and staff members who have reached significant milestones in years of service. We are grateful to God for the faithfulness of those listed below.

## 5 YEARS

Al Chapman (*Director of Operations*)  
Julie Swope (*MS Math*)

## 10 YEARS

Vicky Maienshein (*Kindergarten Aide*)  
Jana McCann (*Kindergarten*)

## 15 YEARS

Matt Stemler (*HS Art*)

## 20 YEARS

Janet Bacon (*Communications*)

## 25 YEARS

Tim Eimer (*MS Science*)  
Betsy Rockey (*MS Language Arts*)

## 35 YEARS

Marilyn Furcola (*Guidance*)  
Dan Kunkle (*HS Bible*)

## Faculty and Staff Transitions

Our school year is ending with several transitions of faculty and staff. God has faithfully blessed us with individuals of great experience, education, and godly character for which we continue to be both humbled and grateful. However, the blessings we enjoy in the present are not certainties for the future, as God also works in specific lives and callings. Please join us in giving thanks for the faithful and significant contributions to Phil-Mont by those who will be leaving our service with the end of this school year. Please also be praying for these individuals as they pursue the next steps which God has in store for them.

**JIM KRUG** | Jim will not be returning to Phil-Mont after 26 years of faithful service. Jim has given himself to his calling and his role here. We have greatly appreciated him and benefitted much from his sacrificial commitment to Phil-Mont, to faculty, to families and to many students.

He served at Phil-Mont for 16 years as 4th grade teacher before transitioning to 5th grade where he has remained for the last 10 years.

**PEGGY OLIPHINT** | Peggy has served in various administrative roles for the last 11 years. Those roles included assisting in both Admissions and Advancement Offices until she assumed the duties of Admissions Director for 3 years. She then transitioned into the role of Business Office Assistant for the last 3 years. Peggy is ready to retire in order to maximize her availability to travel more with her husband as well as to enjoy her kids and grandkids.

**JANA MCCANN** | Jana has been serving as our Kindergarten teacher for the last 10 years. Her energy for teaching young children, especially in the arts, has been a distinction of our kindergarten program. Jana is ready to make the move back home to Georgia where she can continue to be used in teaching young children and also have more opportunity as a daughter, mom and grandmother.

**AMERICA LARA-ROMERO** | Señora America has been teaching Spanish part-time in our high school for the last two years. She has brought great energy and passion for both the Spanish language and culture to our students. America has been offered a full-time position by her other current part-time employer for next year and sees God graciously providing that position which will be in the best interest of her family.

**FAITH SCHUTTE** | Faith has been serving at Phil-Mont for 8 years. She is a Phil-Mont alumna ('02) and joined our faculty after graduating from St. Joseph's University. She has taught HS English and MS Latin/Greek Roots. She has led girls' Bible studies and has been serving as a Coach in our HS Girls Basketball program. The challenge of the load as well as a desire to consider possible involvement in Bethany Christian Service's foster-to-adopt program has led to a decision not to return to the classroom in the fall. Faith plans to continue to be involved in our HS Girls Basketball program.

**CARLOTTA CARRADICE** | Carlotta is seeking a revised status to part-time teaching as a beginning toward retirement. Carlotta has

been at Phil-Mont for 27 years and her duties have involved teaching German, English, and ESL. She has also been the Coordinator of Phil-Mont's chapters of both the National Honor Society and the National German Honor Society. Her desire however, includes continuing to see the current students in the German Language program through to completion and she has committed to helping us do just that. Her role for next year is not totally definite but will focus on the teaching of German classes.

Give thanks to God for these living stones He has been using to continue to build a ministry for His own glory! We continue to depend upon Him to bring to us new living stones to continue in the building and lasting impact of Phil-Mont Christian Academy.

## Email Addresses Wanted!

In an effort to keep in touch more effectively with all of our constituents, we are expanding our email database. If you have an email account that you check fairly regularly, please send your current address to Nancy Stemler at [NStemler@phil-mont.com](mailto:NStemler@phil-mont.com).

Please take a moment to let us know about important happenings in your life. Have you moved? Changed jobs? Gotten married? Had children? If you want, we can include this information in the next Signet. Please email it to Nancy Stemler.

Parents: If you are receiving this publication on behalf of a son or daughter who no longer lives in your home, please contact Nancy Stemler with a current mailing address.

# Alumni News: Class Notes

69

**Dr. Lois (Taylor) McElligott** is currently a math and science academic coach for high school Native American students at Fountain Hills High School in Fountain Hills, AZ. She works for the Education Department of Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation.

86

**Paul Dorman** passed away on March 21, 2014. (See *In Memoriam* article on page 15)

89

**Ozias Moore** (M.S. '13/Ph.D '15) has been chosen for the Toni Morrison Award for Outstanding Graduate Mentorship from Cornell's Office of Academic Diversity Initiatives. The honor recognizes a graduate student who has gone beyond his/her role to promote diversity, scholarship and professional development and who has contributed to students and the university community.



Tshepo (holding Dieu'Avie), Charity and De'Amour Mutloatse.



Ozias Moore holds his award.

92

**Jeannette Guilbert** and **Kristin (Lewis) Testerman** recently opened Canvas & Cork, an art studio, in Oxford, PA. Jeannette teaches middle school at Bethany Christian School in Oxford and Kristin is a Technology Specialist at the Warwick School District in Lititz and they run C & C on weeknights and weekends. Canvas and Cork was created initially for the two of them to paint, but others heard about it, thus, C & C was born. Besides teaching in their studio, the ladies will also travel to teach in other locations. Their website is [www.canvasandcorkpa.com](http://www.canvasandcorkpa.com).

Madison Rose was born to **Will Jarman** and his wife, Robyn, on February 20, 2014. Madison joins big sister, Olivia.

96

**Jonathan Burkett** and his wife, Sara, welcomed their daughter Sadie Bernice into the world on June 5, 2014. The family currently lives in Skippack, PA.

Dieu'Avie was born to **Charity (Gross) Mutloatse** and her husband, Tshepo, on March 17, 2014. Dieu'Avie joins older brother De'Amour. Charity and her family live in South Africa.

Moses was born to **April Kalix-Cattell** and her husband, Joseph, on November 3, 2012.

97

**Eileen (Slater) Lee** and her husband, Howard, welcomed Mia Juliet on September 29, 2013. Eileen and her family live in Collegeville, PA.

98

Alethia Elizabeth was born to **Melissa (Smith) Green** and her husband, Nate, on April 28, 2014.

99

**Joel Homan** and his wife, Sharon, welcomed Hannah Elizabeth on April 5, 2014.

00

Anna Dolores was born to **Elizabeth (Sorkness) Hailu** and her husband, Johannes, on April 16, 2014.

02

**Nicholas and Cindy Bacon** welcomed their first child, Arianna Jean, on June 19, 2014.

03

**Sharon (Askey) Thistlethwaite** and her husband, Ray, welcomed Corina Jayne Eliso on May 31, 2014. The Thistlethwaites are living and serving in Eurasia.

**Amanda Howard** married Joshua Edwards on May 24, 2014.

Caleb Riley was born to **Toby and Karen (Bartz) Liegel** on June 4, 2014.

06

**Allison Masser** was married to John Reichert on May 17, 2014. Allison is an Operations/Finance Manager and they live in Drexel Hill, PA.

07

**Jonathan VanVeldhuizen** and his wife, Danielle, welcomed their son Zechariah Bennett into the world on June 4, 2014. The family currently lives in Lock Haven, PA, but will be moving back to Kansas by the end of this summer.

08

**Cortney Rae Riles** graduated with a Master of Arts degree from University of Southern California's Annenberg School of Journalism on May 16, 2014. While at USC, Cortney was an Executive Producer and Music Journalist at Neon Tommy, USC's Digital News website and co-founded a website, ClefCity, that focuses on 'behind the scenes' interviews with today's up and coming artists. In addition, she interned in Artists Relations at Pledge Music a direct-to-fan music platform that facilitates musicians reaching out to their fan base to pre-sell, market and distribute music projects. She is a 2012 graduate of Wheaton College in Norton, MA.



Caleb Liegel





## In Memoriam: Paul Dorman

The Class of '86 and the Phil-Mont community at large lost a special person on Friday March 21 when Paul Dorman passed away suddenly.

Paul was extremely industrious and wore many hats even in high school: CATERER with his family (then on his own later in life), CAR GUY who at 17 worked at local dealerships and often bought trade-ins to fix up and sell (it was not uncommon for him to have 3–4 cars on the family property at a time), ATHLETE (including hoops and soccer), and BUSINESS-MAN including rental property owner. I had the firsthand opportunity to witness Paul operating in three of those capacities—catering weddings where I was the DJ, selling my best friend his first car (“dude, it’s a cream puff”), and playing defense in front of me (I was the goalkeeper) on Phil-Mont’s 1984–85 and 1985–86 championship soccer teams. Across all those experiences, I saw a man who loved God even as he struggled with following Him at times. Paul was down-to-earth, unpretentious, and kind. He often brought laughter to many of us when trying to “charm” others into getting his way and sheepishly grinning when called on it. His friendship was genuine.

I want to celebrate Paul’s life. Despite the sadness of his passing, there really were a tremendous number of great moments and seasons. He was only 46 but lived the equivalent of at least 76 years considering his diverse and hardworking approach to life. In this sad time, I’ve been

challenged to be more focused on taking time for others—to reconnect and to encourage, even with a simple phone call or email, as well as to take a minute to pray for those who come to mind (and not just think about them).

Here are a few brief snapshots of Paul, as shared by former Class of '86 mates upon learning what had happened:

*My favorite memory of Paul was him teaching me the proper use of the clutch in my little white Subaru. That would be the same car that he and Mike Hanley would drive on to the soccer field DURING school after they stole my keys out of my locker... We'll miss you, Paul.*  
(Elizabeth Thompson Cox)

*I was at Phil-Mont for our Junior year (I lived in Japan) and Paul was so kind and fun-loving to plan a surprise going away pool party for me after taking me out for sushi. What a fun memory along with many more from that year. I am so sorry to hear of his death!*  
(Phyllis Warren)

*Praying for Paul’s family and friends as we all lost a good friend. I have been reflecting on things from many years ago and one story came to mind. Many of you know that Paul always liked to give me a hard time. One day he stole the hubcaps off the Oldsmobile station wagon I was driving. I did not even notice until my dad got upset that I had lost them. So once we figured out it was Paul, my dad showed my sister Ahna how to take hubcaps off of a car and Ahna took Paul’s hubcaps off of his Cadillac. We were all in a final exam so when he tried to blame me that did not work. Anyway, he was very upset that he had to come all the way out to my house to get them back! This is one of many happy memories!*  
(Jane Landin Anderson)

*“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father’s house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.” (John 14:1-3) Looking forward to seeing you again, my brother (I know I’m not the only one).*

*Tim DeMoss  
Class of '86*

## 2014

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

#### SEPTEMBER

- 3**  
First Day of School
- 5 { 6:00 PM }**  
Back to School Barbecue
- 22-26**  
Discipleship Week

#### OCTOBER

- 3**  
No School – Faculty In-Service
- 11**  
Fall Classic
- 17**  
Elementary Grandparents’ Day  
High School Trip Day
- 27-31**  
Church History Week

#### NOVEMBER

- 7 { 7:00 PM }**  
Fall Sports Awards
- 19-22**  
Fall Musical, *Honk!*
- 24, 25**  
No School – Parent-Teacher Conferences



**Philadelphia-Montgomery  
Christian Academy**

35 Hillcrest Avenue  
Erdenheim, PA 19038-8281

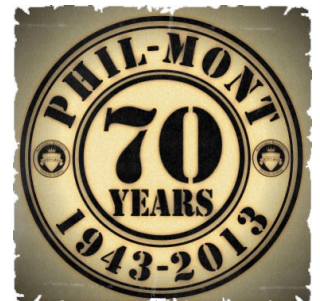
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