



fulfilling a vision

westside christian high school

fall 2009

on purpose

WRITE US

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Westside Christian High School

WESTSIDE ALUMNI WATCH

After a few years of ministry in “the hottest place on Earth”, Bakersfield, California, **Susan (Osborn) Carlson** (1987) has returned to Westside as the new Administrative Assistant for Development and Marketing. She and husband, Nathan, have been married for 11 years and have two children: Clayton, 5, and Lucy, 3.

Josh Pierce (1989) earned a Bachelor’s degree in Writing from George Fox and a Master’s in International Business from Portland State University. Conversant in both Korean and Chinese, he is assigned to the office of the U.S. Trade Representative in the Executive Office of the President. He works to solve bilateral trade issues and disputes with the Republic of Korea and negotiates on behalf of U.S. industry in quarterly trade talks with the Korean government.

Wheaton graduate **Kristi (Barram) Blackburn** (1992) is the home-schooling mom of three boys, ages 12, 8, and 5. She earned her B.A. in Secondary Education and Social Studies and is married to Michael Blackburn, Vice President for CNL Securities. They live in McMinnville.

Janna (Barram) Harding (1996) earned her B.A. in Communication and Independent Studies at Wheaton. She and her husband, Andrew, are raising five girls, ages 7 through 1. Andrew founded and manages SENAI (senaiglobal.org), a ministry that drills wells and works in a variety of other ways to attack poverty in Africa.

Josh Adams (2001) joined the Army Reserves shortly after high school and was deployed to Iraq, coming home in February of 2004. He and his wife, Ruth, have been married for four years and are raising a schnauzer named “Cheeseburger”. They live in Spokane, where Josh is finishing a B.S. degree in Nursing at the Washington State College of Nursing.

Westside’s new Basic Art and Study Skills teacher is **Chelsea Johnson** (2004). She earned her Art Education degree from the University of Northern Arizona and student taught at Lake Oswego High School last year. She plans to pursue her Master’s degree in Education at Lewis and Clark this year, focusing on Special Education.

Katie Westerberg (2004) will also begin her first teaching job in familiar territory, West Hills Christian School, where she will take charge of a second grade class. Katie received her B.S. degree in Elementary Education (Summa Cum Laude) from Corban College in 2008.

Oregon State student **Emily Rose** (2005) will be working for NBC as a Hospitality Guide for the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver, B.C. She is majoring in Speech Communication with the goal of a career in event planning.

Recent graduate **Donn Sederstrom** (2007) is an Engineering student at the University of Denver. He is currently working as an intern on a thermodynamics project running simulations designed to help make the lasers in military planes lighter. In his spare time Donn hikes in the mountains of Colorado.

Please send us your alumni updates at onpurpose@wchsonline.org.

on purpose

on purpose is more than a name – it’s a significant part of Westside’s vision: to intentionally prepare our students for a greater purpose in life.

on purpose is published three times yearly for the broader Westside community to give you a glimpse of what makes us unique.

His Timing Is Everything

BY ANDY SEARS, PRINCIPAL

It has been a privilege to be a part of the Westside Community as a student, alumnus, teacher, and administrator for over twenty years. During that time I've observed some things that I believe are the reason why Westside has played such an influential role in our students' lives.

Central to our identity has always been a strong sense of community and the importance of people over things in the education and development of our students.

Foundational to our school is and always will be a deep commitment to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, the core tenets of the faith that we all share, and the integration of our faith in all that we learn and do.

Although facilities have never been a central part of who we are, we have had a dream and a vision for a permanent place to call home as long as I can remember. I am very excited to announce that the dream is finally becoming real – this summer we made a commitment to purchase a piece of land.

To truly appreciate our excitement and see God's hand in the fulfillment of this dream, you really must hear the whole story...

Our search for a permanent home began over five years ago, but the path toward that home was humbly presented to us four years ago when a colleague and I were driving in Tigard

after running some errands. We noticed a spacious plot of land at 15435 SW Hall Boulevard with a single ranch-style home placed in the middle. The site was unusually flat and nearly square. The large plot of land was completely surrounded by housing developments, so it stood out like a sore thumb. As we drove by we thought this would be a great location for a school our size, and we noticed an elderly man sitting on the front porch in a lawn chair.

We turned the car around and courageously pulled into the driveway. We did not realize how courageous we were at the time. As we got out of the car, the man said in an irritated voice, "So you want to talk to me about my land, don't you?" At that point I felt like getting back in the car and driving away. God had other plans for that day. We introduced ourselves to Henry and told him that we were from Westside Christian High School and that his land was intriguing to us.



We said that we would be interested in learning more about it because we were looking to relocate our school in a few years. Then we anxiously waited for a response.

I must admit that I feared he was going to reach for a shotgun and chase us off the land, but that was not the case. We later learned that Henry had been receiving calls and solicitations from developers for years and was holding out so he could live out the rest of his life on the land on which he had lived most of his life. The property had been in his family for nearly one hundred years. After our introduction Henry said, "When I pass away and this land belongs to my son and daughter-in-law, I would love for it to become home to a church or a Christian school." As you can imagine, I was shocked!

Within a few days Henry set up a meeting with his daughter-in-law, Nancy, and we exchanged information and discussed the possibilities down the road. Months passed and the providential nature of that meeting began to fade in my memory. In November 2006, we learned that Henry had passed away. After a few months I called Nancy and Henry Jr. and left a message that we would be interested in talking to them if they were ready. A few more months passed, and I left even more messages but did not hear back. I could only assume that Nancy and Henry had other plans for the site.

Steve Reiff, Hutch Johnson, Karl Sonnenberg, and Phil Carter, among others, began to work on a more concerted search process. Many possible sites came and went from our attention over the months until the fall of 2006, when we learned about an Armory building in Multnomah that would be conveyed by the Department of Defense as a result of the base closings. This seemed like a long shot, but we submitted an application and ultimately became one of six viable candidates for the site.

The site was small but near West Hills Christian School, where many of our students have historically attended. It seemed worth our effort to pursue

the site because if we were awarded it, we would receive it at nearly no cost. We began to reach out to the neighborhood and city officials to introduce them to our school. This process took over a year as we worked with neighborhood associations, the city council, the Department of Defense, and the Department of Education. It came down to a decision by the city council between us and two other organizations. We felt we had about a fifty percent chance of receiving the site. The city council met in June of 2008 for public comment. Then they took a few weeks to deliberate and sent out an email to all parties involved to announce their decision.

I was in Thailand with a group of students from the school when the email was sent out. Steve Reiff, a board member and project manager for our site search, forwarded the message that said the site had been awarded to another organization. I had anticipated this response, but still felt discouraged for our team and school that so much time (approximately 18 months) and effort had been put into this project.

Then God stepped in to reassure me that He was still very much a part of this process. Within literally seconds of reading the email, I noticed a voicemail on my BlackBerry. As I walked through the Bangkok airport, I listened and was shocked by God's timing. The message was from Nancy Schmidt. She said they had been going through old messages, remembered us, and would be interested in having a conversation about their property.

We met with Nancy and Henry in July and felt excited about the possibility. Nancy and Henry, in turn, felt really good about seeing the property used in a way that could provide a legacy to their father and family. They had been pursuing other options for the past few years, but things changed, and they realized that Westside would be a good fit for the site. Although we liked the site, we felt compelled to survey the market over the summer and evaluate all possibilities to make sure this was the best option for the school.

After evaluating over twenty sites, we narrowed our search to four, one of the options still being the Schmidt site on Hall Boulevard. After research, conversations, and prayer, we decided to pursue two of the four sites. Although we preferred Nancy and Henry's land, we were not able to come to terms in our first conversation. We politely waited on one another and began to pursue our second option. The second site required the purchase of a

number of adjacent parcels and was a more complicated deal. It had promise, but after six months of effort, it seemed too forced, and we walked away. Within days we received a call from Nancy and Henry again. They wanted to talk one more time.

In the spring of 2009, Hutch Johnson, Steve Reiff, Nancy, Henry, their attorney, and I met to discuss the terms of an agreement. That meeting was a catalyst to a purchase agreement that was signed almost a year to the day we heard the "no" from Portland City Council on the Armory site. We are now in the process of gathering data, researching, and considering a reasonable timeline for the project.

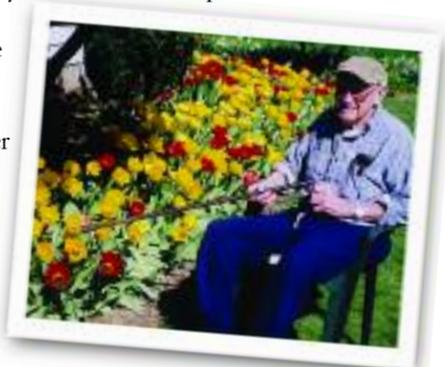
Our purpose has not changed and will not change from being a school that is dedicated to developing a deeply committed staff that teaches about Jesus Christ from His Word and provides opportunities for students to live out what they are learning in all areas of their school life: academics, athletics, arts, and community activities.

When I was a Westside student, we leased space from Portland Public School's Collins View Elementary School off Boones Ferry Road near Lewis and Clark College. The walls were a putrid green color, and the school always felt cold in the winter and never cool enough in the spring. Our science lab was on a cart, and our gym was about half the size of other schools in our league. And that was okay. It was clear during that era, and even today in our current setting, that Westside's identity is not about having a great facility.

Our purpose has not changed and will not change from being a school that is dedicated to developing a deeply committed staff that teaches about Jesus Christ from His Word and provides opportunities for students to live out what they are learning in all areas of their school life: academics, athletics, arts, and community activities. The hope is that our students

will know Jesus intimately, become leaders for the cause of his Kingdom no matter what their vocation, and worship Jesus Christ with their lives.

I anticipate that God will provide us with a place that will allow us to fulfill His vision for Westside. When that place is complete, it will be an exciting day. But what will be even more exciting are the generations of young people who will know Christ intimately, be educated and prepared to serve Him completely, and change the world humbly in His name.



Henry Schmidt

Equipped for Impact

BY BEN HERR

A year ago our family moved to Portland after serving with Young Life for 25 years, most recently as Property Manager of Wildhorse Canyon, a camp in Central Oregon. After making a thorough search of high school options, we enrolled our daughter, Ally, at Westside. We did not know what to expect, as we had never been involved with a Christian school. I must admit that I was a bit concerned that Westside might be an overly sheltered environment that would not properly prepare our daughter to live in and engage the secular world.

With one year under our belt, we could not be happier. We are incredibly thankful for the new friends our daughter has made and the community that has embraced not only her, but our entire family. But it is more than just "fitting in" that speaks volumes to the soundness of our decision. It is also the unique way in which Westside is equipping our daughter—or for that matter, all of our kids—to make an impact on the world.

You see, I've had the pleasure of working with teenagers my whole life. Over the years I have observed a few common characteristics of kids who go on to actively live out their faith after their high school years—those who make a difference in the world. First, these young adults understand their own sin and weaknesses and appreciate the great gift of the cross. Second, they have learned to put their faith into action by regularly serving others in some capacity. And finally, they understand their need to be mentored and to invest in and love others as well—the lost art of discipleship. In my observation these three traits seem to be the real difference between young adults who just know the Word intellectually and those who are living it out in their daily lives.

So you can imagine how excited and thankful I was to learn last spring that the leadership of Westside was praying for guidance as they were actively planning how they might restructure the Bible programs and curriculum to better equip students to not only have a solid Biblical foundation, but to also learn to put their faith to work.

As a parent I want more for my daughters than that they merely survive their teen years. It goes without saying that I want them to have a strong comprehension of God's Word. Westside has always provided that and has no plan to steer away from giving students a solid foundation. Beyond that, I want them to start to discover and appreciate the special gifts with which God has blessed them. I want to see them grapple with ways they might use these gifts to make an impact in the world. And I want to know that there are other mature Christians speaking into their lives as they transition beyond high school. These latter elements are all being integrated into the curriculum. As I mentioned previously, I have seen firsthand that it will take much more than head knowledge and a safe high school environment for young Christians to complete college with their faith intact, ready to serve as change agents for Christ. Having worked with non-Christian kids and families through Young Life, I am convinced our world desperately needs adults and leaders who have learned to live out their faith in real and practical ways.

I am so grateful for the work that has been done at Westside to not only

love on our kids (which my daughter has experienced) but to prepare and train them to minister to the world when they leave. It excites me that my youngest daughter, who is a freshman at Westside this year, will also benefit from the revamped structure and curriculum.

In my view, one of the most powerful components of the revamped curriculum will be the mentoring program. To see other families and individuals committing to following/mentoring each Westside graduate through the next four years of their life will be powerful. My wife and I would consider it a privilege to pray for, encourage, and stay in contact with one or two kids we have built friendships with through our daughter. To have someone likewise do this for my girls is the greatest gift they could give me as a parent.

Westside has an amazing opportunity to prepare kids to be grounded, Christian leaders who will serve inside and outside the walls of the church. I am confident that if the school continues to develop this vision, it will have a powerful story to tell that will reverberate throughout the city of Portland. We are excited to be a part of this vision on behalf of our children and the world that—more than ever—needs Christians who have learned how to lovingly serve the people around them.

Ben Herr
Executive Director
The Master's Plan Foundation

Visit our website for an updated summary of the new WCHS Bible curriculum.

Champions On The Road Less Traveled

BY DEB GIVENS

The next time I have greatness thrust upon me,
I will try to remember what I am made of
-- the essence of Christ who "lives in me"
(*Galatians 2.20*) and through whom
"I can do all things" (*Philippians 4.13*).

On the surface, it was a solid victory. When Floyd Landis captured the yellow jersey in the 2006 *Tour de France*, enthusiasts raved about the new champion of the most grueling race there is. He won a prize so precious that cyclists will do anything to win it. And they have. And, according to authorities, Floyd did, too.

Unfortunately, other sports are not immune to such scandals. Between Mark McGwire's andro usage and Ken Caminiti's revelation in Sports Illustrated about steroids in baseball, the sport is having an image crisis. And on the basketball court, veteran NBA referee Tim Donaghy was accused of cheating, having bet on the outcome of a number of games, including ones in which he officiated.

Over the past decade the sporting world has seen a rash of positive tests for banned substances and cheating. Even the music industry has suffered its own version of the same tarnished image. Why? In most cases it is the earthly lure of fame, money, and championship titles.

In an age in which many sports heroes and rock stars have fallen into disgrace, we watch our teens join an athletic team or music group with some apprehension. What will their motivation be? What road will they choose? Will they be held captive by the super highway that promises fame and earthly prizes? Or will they choose the less-traveled road, the one with an assortment of bumps and potholes and one all-important intersection – the intersection with their faith?

This past spring Westside had the opportunity to witness first hand the path our students chose. Let's travel down that road with a few of our teams and choir...

Choir Focuses on Goals First

As the concert choir diligently warmed up backstage at this year's state competition, it would have been very easy to be distracted by thoughts of previous trophies and accolades. After all, over the past decade they had consistently ranked among the top three choirs in the state and had achieved first in state a total of four times.

Despite these achievements, the group focused instead on pursuing the following three goals: excellence in our calling (singing in this case), showing the love of Christ, and bringing glory to God. Regardless of the competitive outcome, the group would only be satisfied if they first achieved these goals.

The result? With their focus in the right place, the earthly result didn't really matter. They sang as if God was their only audience. And He was pleased. So were the judges. In fact, as they accepted their state championship trophy for the third year running, it was easy to picture God smiling on each one of them.

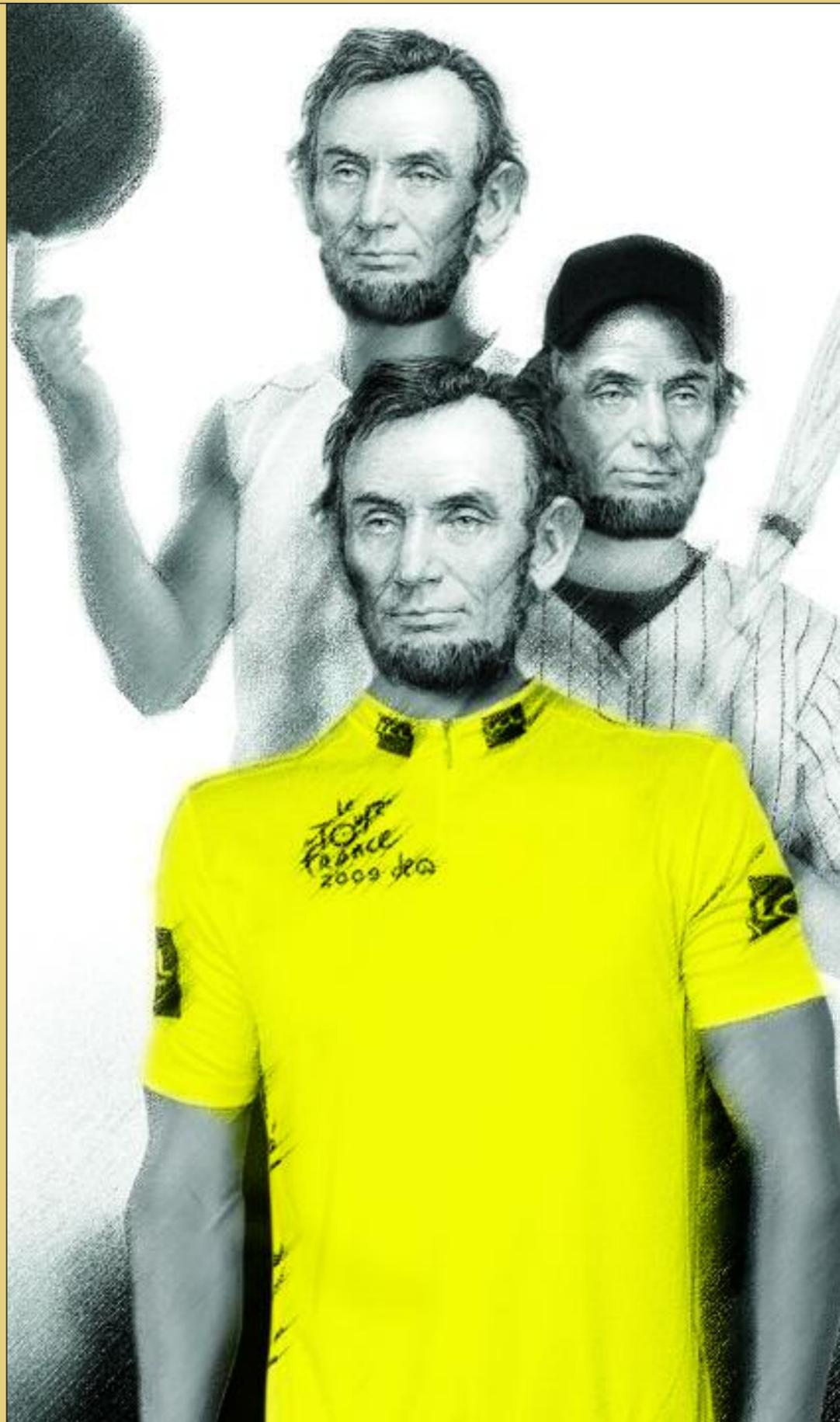
Track Teams Aim for Personal Bests

Early in the season the track team aimed to take their individual and team performances a notch higher. Each practice they came ready to perfect their stride, the handoff, the lift over the hurdle... each and every move that would inch them above their previous personal best time or height or result.

As the district meet approached, the boys team suffered an unexpected curve ball. Returning 400m district champion and key 4 X 400m relay member, Scott Harris, was diagnosed with mononucleosis, taking him out of the competition. Some teams would have suffered defeat right then and there. The Westside boys knew they would just need to adjust their plans and work harder.

Despite the excitement of the State Track Meet, the team remained focused on their primary goal, to reach their personal best. As a result, junior Andrew Curtis led the Eagles with first-place finishes in the 200m dash and the 300m hurdles. Additionally, he was fourth overall in the 110m hurdles and was a member of the winning 4 X 100m relay team, along with senior teammates Cameron Colby, Nick Meusch, and Trevor Hansen.

Colby finished second in a solid performance in the 100m dash and earned fifth place in the 200m dash. Joining him was junior Stephen Nelson, who finished seventh in both events. Westside also earned sixth place points



from senior Luke Smith in the high jump and a seventh place from senior Austen Paul in the 3000m run.

The boys' overall standing wasn't decided until the final event of the meet, the 4 X 400m relay. Going into that event Westside was tied for first and had a third team right at their heels. To add to the excitement, all three schools had teams competing in the event. Westside's foursome of freshman David Harris, senior Nick Meusch, sophomore Blake Kingsley, and senior Luke Smith each gave their personal best, and the end result showed it. Finishing in a school-record time, the Eagles not only won the race but also secured the state championship title.

The girls team was led by senior Emily Quatier, who qualified for three events. With a solid performance across the board, she won the 200m dash and placed second in the 400m event and third in the 100m. "I wasn't out here for state titles," said Quatier. "My goal was to beat my personal best times, which I did in all three events. Running is my passion."

Quatier was joined by sophomore Latane Cox, who took sixth and fourth respectively in the 800m and 1500m runs, junior Ally Herr (fifth in the 400m dash), and freshman Ciana Baron with her seventh place in the 100m hurdles, sixth in the 300m hurdles, and a tie for sixth in the high jump. Accumulating just two points less than the runner-up, the girls captured third place overall.

Finding Worth

For the past three years the Westside golf team capped off their season by bringing home the state title. The depth of proven talent on the team was enviable. Then the inevitable happened. All but one varsity player graduated, leaving veteran player and State Champion Alex Harding to lead a younger, less-seasoned crew of golfers in the 2009 season. From an outsider's perspective, the season had the distinct mark of a "rebuilding year".

In addition to receiving daily pointers on the green, the team learned not to focus on the wins or losses. Under the tutelage of three-time 3A Coach of the Year Roger Allcroft, the emphasis

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was instead on the importance of character development. Over the course of the season, he challenged the boys with questions like, "Where do you get your worth from? Your golf score? Championships?" He countered those misperceptions by stressing the importance of showing Christ's love on the golf course. "In the long run," he emphasized, "your worth comes from the positive impact you have on others around you."

While they focused on working on these life skills, some amazing things started to happen. As the season progressed they demonstrated marked improvement and displayed more overall consistency from one game to the next.

By the time the district tournament rolled around, Westside was the top seed. They did not disappoint. Then with a district championship under their belt, they prepared for the state tournament.

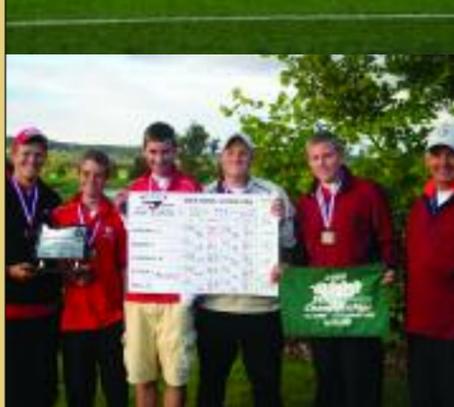
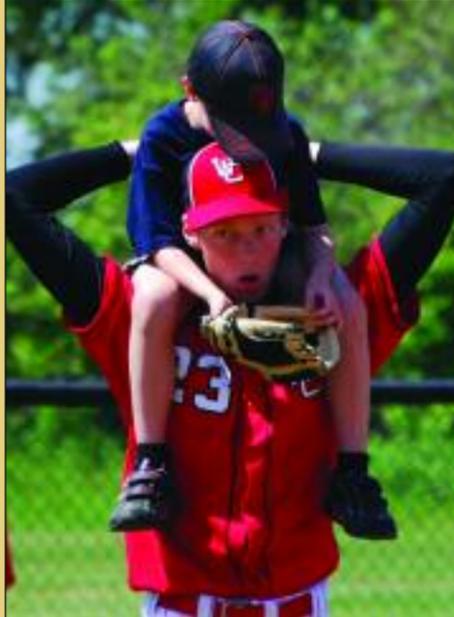
During an incredible opening round in which they held a two-shot lead, the Westside Christian golfers spent more time encouraging their opponents and wishing them well for the subsequent round than they did patting themselves on the back for an unbelievable performance. In the second round of play they were able to hold off all of their competitors but one, earning a well-deserved second place in State. The cornerstone of the team, Alex Harding, won the State Medalist title for the second year in a row.

Years from now they may not remember much about the score or the second-place finish in state, but chances are good they will still be seeking opportunities to demonstrate Christ's love to those they meet on the green.

Where the Real Miracles Happened

After capturing second in state last year, Westside's baseball team seemed destined to claim the championship title this year. During the regular season the team easily sailed through undefeated.

Then the state championship game turned into an endurance race -- one in



which, in an unexpected turn of events, the Willamina Bulldogs outlasted the Eagles for the state title. For the second year in a row Westside earned second in state.

Reflecting on the season's scoreboard and the success they achieved, however, only tells part of the story. The real miracles occurred a couple of weeks prior to the state championship game. While other teams in the league were busy practicing for the playoffs, the Eagles took some time off to create some memories for a special group of kids up in Vancouver, Washington. Teaming up with the Miracle League, our players provided opportunities for disabled children and young adults to experience the joy of baseball, regardless of ability.

"It was an incredible day for us," stated senior Spencer Ross. "We had a blast helping these kids experience the thrill of hitting the ball and scoring. Being with these kids was a real eye-opening experience and made us realize how we take so many things for granted. There were kids there in wheelchairs, with autism, cancer, or some other disabling disease. Some of these kids already know that they have little hope of reaching adulthood. They have responded by living each day to the fullest. We could all learn from their example."

The Road Less Taken

By no means was this a comprehensive look at Westside endeavors last spring. It was just a glimpse of how many of our athletes and musicians have learned that success follows when your focus is in the right place -- often down the road less taken. However, that success is not always played out with an earthly prize.

Being in relationship with Christ relieves the pressure of performance. Whether we end the day as a superstar or strike out with the bases loaded, we're still His. Our identity isn't wrapped up in whether or not we take home the state champion trophy. Instead, it is mirrored in our acts of kindness, compassion, and justice as we partner with Christ.

COMMUNITY Seeking To Be That Much Better

A culture of continuous improvement at Westside



In September 2003, the United States was in its sixth month of Operation Iraqi Freedom, and unemployment hovered around six percent.

Fans were listening to Beyonce Knowles on pop radio stations as they drove to movie theaters to watch *Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl*. In the upcoming California gubernatorial race, Arnold Schwarzenegger was favored to win.

And an excited, slightly-nervous Nick Staropoli entered Westside Christian High School as a freshman.

Much has changed in our world since 2003, and, as Nick's brother, incoming freshman Matthew Staropoli, will soon discover, there have been changes at Westside as well.

As Academic Dean Scott Ball says, "While we believe we've always had a strong academic program at Westside, my hope is that we will always have a culture of continuous improvement here. Whether that be academics, athletics, the arts, or even how our office staff does the work which supports everyone else, we strive to improve our program each and every year." A quick examination of recent changes will reveal the "new and improved" academic program which is available to Matthew and his fellow ninth graders.

Curriculum Guides

The foundation of Westside's excellent academic course is its solid college preparatory curriculum, and the standardization and continuous

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updating of the curriculum guides for each class is a bedrock area of improvement. Containing objectives, unit outlines, learning activities and assessments, curriculum guides are the framework from which teachers write their individual lesson plans. Throughout 2007-2009, each faculty member devoted several inservice hours to writing curriculum guides for the courses they teach. Every year since that time, these guides are updated as teachers make approved modifications to their curricula. When a new staff member joins our family, he or she teaches from the guide. This process provides a stable, yet continuously updated and improved, curriculum.

A Variety of Course Offerings

A big change from Nick's freshman year is the recent introduction of a number of Advanced Placement courses teaching college-level material. They are designed to prepare a student to take the official AP test for a particular subject in the spring. A passing grade on the test earns the student college credit. While anyone may attempt an

rigorous class curriculum and have the desire to do so now have the opportunity to take those classes at Westside. Second, as more students across the nation are taking AP courses, our students who take them can demonstrate to colleges that they are capable of college-level work. Third, students who pass these tests save thousands of dollars and hundreds of hours of college class work, while freeing up their college schedules to take other classes, study abroad, or just take a lighter course load at times."

For those courses in which AP certification is unavailable, primarily ninth- and tenth-grade level classes, Westside offers Honors classes. In recognition of the higher difficulty level of the course, an "Honors designation is placed beside the course on a student's transcript.

While Westside is always working to improve our course offerings and provide more challenging work for our abler students, we recognize that not everyone is gifted or has interests in every area, and we want to provide

"...students who pass these tests save thousands of dollars and hundreds of hours of college class work..."

SCOTT BALL

AP test without taking the class, students are always better prepared after the course. This year six AP classes are offered to our students. No AP courses were available to students when Nick enrolled as a freshman, and no Westside students took AP tests in the spring prior to his arrival. In contrast, 33 AP tests were taken by our students last year.

Scott Ball explains that there are at least three benefits of the AP offerings. "First, students who can handle a more

students with choices in order to meet as many needs as possible. For example, teacher Roger Allcroft developed Conceptual Physics in 2006 because, as he explains, in Advanced Placement Physics "we were able to offer an insight into how God created the physical laws which govern His creation to only 15% of our students - those with an interest in math and its application to science. The other 85% of our students, those with a more liberal arts bent, did not have this opportunity. Now they do! Conceptual Physics

"This is the best qualified, most committed faculty I've worked with in over 25 years of teaching in a variety of public and private schools..."

BECKY GASLIN

teaches the students the same concepts that I teach to my AP students, but in a conceptual manner, rather than in a rigorous mathematical manner. Thus we focus on the physical concepts themselves, rather than on the mathematical modeling of those concepts."

Excellent Results

In addition to our broader course offerings, Westside has responded to stiffer public school graduation requirements and higher admission standards for several popular universities by increasing the number of core credits required of our graduates. In 2003, three English credits, two math, and two Science credits were required for graduation. This year four English, three math, and three science credits are required. In the past couple of years, more of our seniors have taken the ACT test, which emphasizes science and math, and they are scoring better, averaging 23.8 in 2003 and 25.7 in 2009.

It is important to note that our graduates have scored higher than state and national averages on the college entrance SAT and ACT tests for decades. Susie Staropoli, Nick's and Matthew's mom, states that Nick's SAT scores compared favorably with those of his friends who went to other high schools. Bigger schools may offer more courses, "but what is the quality of the education?" she asks. Nick was "nurtured through his education and ready for the 'big pond' of the University of Oregon." The education he received

opened the way for Nick to enter any university he wished to attend. His parents are confident that Matthew will also be well prepared to continue his education upon graduation in 2013.

Academic Team

Another new development from which Matthew will benefit is the creation of the Academic Team, led by Academic Dean Scott Ball and Director of Supervision and Instruction Becky Gaslin. They work to ensure that students are offered a high-quality academic program that is suited to their

ning lessons to learning new techniques for more effective teaching."

Staff Development and Mentoring

Currently, our staff development schedule provides a two-day retreat in October and seven monthly two-hour blocks of time on late-start mornings, in addition to inservice time at the beginning of the school year and semester break. Based on a 2007 survey of teachers to determine what types of instructional improvement would garner the most gain in our

as many varied tools in their teaching tool box as possible," says Gaslin.

In addition to providing on-going teacher evaluation and training, the Director of Supervision and Instruction also provides support for our new teachers. Last year's "crop" of seven new staff met together monthly and more often individually with Gaslin. According to Principal Andy Sears, "When I started teaching here in 1997, I was shown my classroom, given a description of my classes, and turned loose. While our faculty members have always helped each other as much as possible informally, they are very busy people, and having a staff person whose job is to work with our new teachers makes sure that everyone is supported in a way that helps them be successful from day one."

A Culture of Continuous Improvement

When Matthew Staropoli greets his friends on the first day of school and makes his way to his first period class, he won't be thinking about the academic changes at Westside, but he will clearly benefit from them. From the courses which make up his schedule to the instruction he receives in his classes, he and future students will continue to see improvements in Westside's excellent academic program.

STUDENT:	Nick Staropoli	Matthew Staropoli
Entered Westside	2003	2009
AP Classes Offered	None	Geography, US History, World History, English, Physics, Calculus
Number Of AP Tests Taken During Previous Spring	None	33
Honors Classes Offered Beyond Ap Classes	None	English, Biology, Chemistry
Minimum Diploma Requirements	3 English, 2 Math, 2 Science, 3 Social Science	4 English, 3 Math, 3 Science, 3 Social Science
Previous 4-year ACT Test Score Average	23.8	25.7

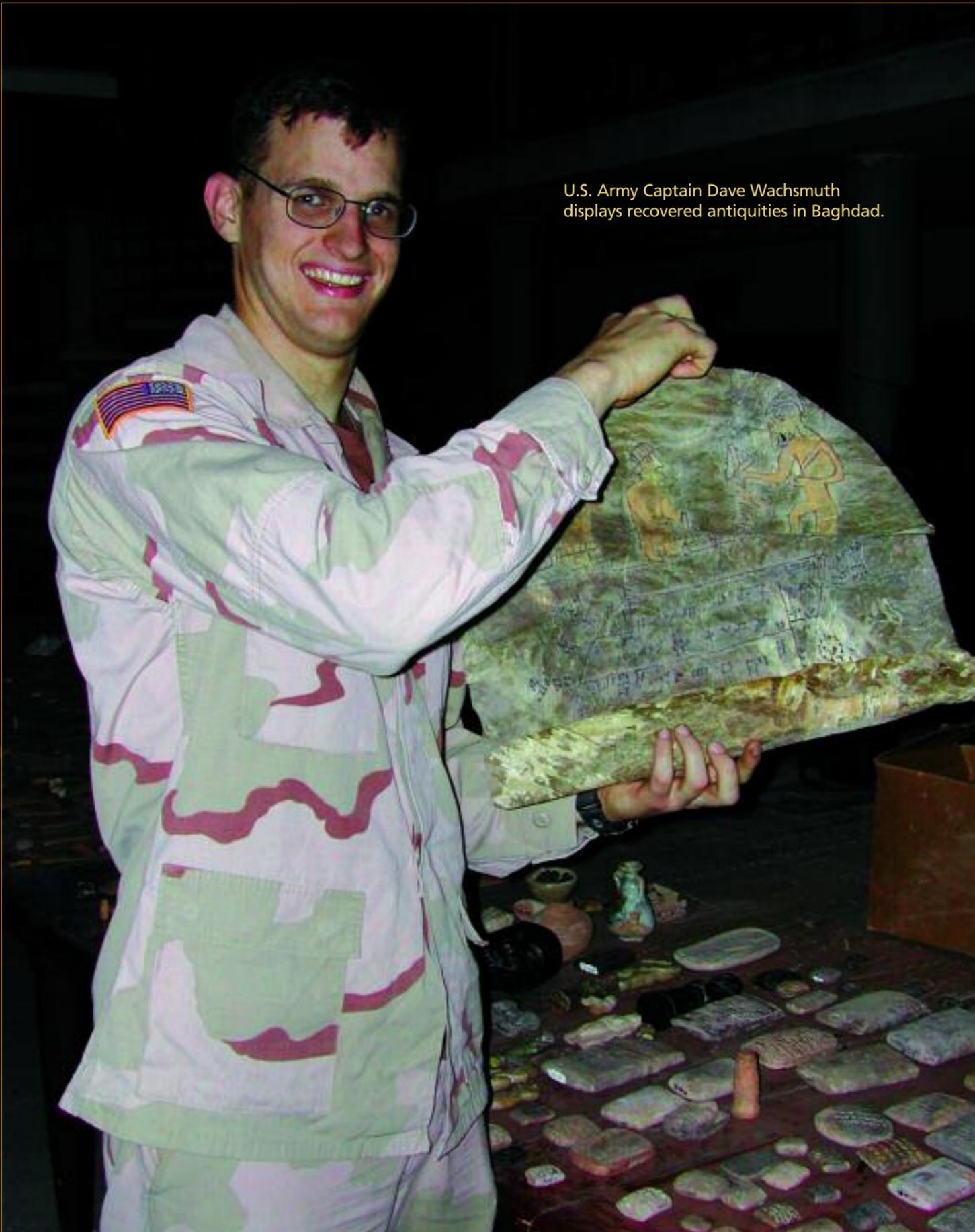
needs and taught by well-qualified teachers who are constantly learning and developing their skills.

Besides evaluating and improving the curriculum, another goal of the academic team is to maintain Westside's tradition of excellence and build up the outstanding teaching staff we currently have. Gaslin states, "This is the best qualified, most committed faculty I've worked with in over 25 years of teaching in a variety of public and private schools. Teaching is a joyful, challenging, frustrating, inspiring job in which we have the opportunity to teach and train young people who will, in turn, impact their world. My job is to support the teachers in every aspect of their jobs, from setting objectives and plan-

students' achievement, staff development focused on cooperative learning techniques in 2007-2008 and experiential learning opportunities in 2008-2009. "Because our faculty has been doing an excellent job of classroom teaching, we aren't seeking wholesale change; rather, we want to provide our teachers with

"...everyone is supported in a way that helps them be successful from day one."

ANDY SEARS



U.S. Army Captain Dave Wachsmuth displays recovered antiquities in Baghdad.

FINDING THE MISSING ART OF SUCCESS

BY DON WESTERBERG

When a high school student is sitting in class at Westside, he or she often has no idea what the future holds. Dave Wachsmuth, a 1995 graduate, could never have imagined, while sitting in World History or Bible class talking about the antiquities of the Middle East, that some day he would be in Iraq living out his own version of National Treasure.

In early 2003, Dave found himself serving in Iraq in an interagency communication unit that coordinated regional efforts among the FBI, CIA, and Army. Concern had arisen in Baghdad that many pieces of Iraqi art and antiquities had gone missing after the breakout of the Iraqi war. Early, exaggerated reports put the number at nearly 170,000 items.

Having worked for a while with some customs agents in an Iraqi port, Captain Dave Wachsmuth was instructed to write a proposal for involvement in the Baghdad investigation and was approved to bring members of his unit to Baghdad to assist. After listening to and deciphering Iraqi testimony, Dave's team discovered that only about 15,000 items were actually missing; some sources estimate that nearly half of those were recovered.

The route that Dave took to his service in Iraq was through the halls of academia. After graduating from Westside Dave entered an ROTC honors program in Industrial Engineering at USC. Upon completion he was stationed in Ft. Lewis in the Army Corps of Engineers in a combat engineering unit and was assigned briefly to the unusual duty of "treasure hunting".

After the fulfillment of his service in the army, Dave attended Duke

University, completing an MBA in 2005. He worked for Intel for two years in their operations finance department and then moved to Planar Systems, which specializes in flat panel displays that stand up to extreme conditions.

He enjoys this new position because it allows him the opportunity to see the whole realm of business from a broader perspective and will be better preparation for using his skills later in a mission context, should the Lord call him in that direction.

Ten years ago he found a real treasure when he married his wife, Rosalie, whom he had met during his sophomore year at USC through their involvement with the InterVarsity ministry on campus. They have recently added to their family, a son, Adam, whom they adopted at 7 months from Taiwan.

As Dave reflects back on his time at Westside, he is thankful for the study skills and academic preparation he received, and he is excited to see the ongoing academic improvements with the addition of AP classes. Primarily he is thankful for the biblical training that reinforced his faith and helped him think through not only what he believed, but why he believed it. At Westside he discovered the tools he needed to feed himself spiritually through the study of God's Word throughout his life. He realizes that the smaller community at Westside allowed him to be involved in several activities, rather than focusing on one or two in which he particularly excelled. This broad-based experience and preparation helped him transition successfully into a large secular university. Dave also knows that his time at Westside

formed a foundation for healthy relationships as he moved on to the next stage of his education. He still plays in a basketball league with his two best friends from Westside, Chris McReynolds and Jeremy Stillwell.

Perhaps the "main course" of the discussion that Dave and I had over our breakfast interview centered on the issue of knowing your true measure of success, the theme of Dave's valedictorian address to his classmates in 1995. It remains a key concern in his mind and a critical need for focus and perspective today. He said...

"I have to continue to ask myself the questions: 'What is really important in life? Is my success gauged by money, prestige, or position? What idols do I have? What are my priorities?' It never gets easy! But what I have learned is that things of this world are passing away, and my success and significance is based on my relationship to God and not stuff."

One of the more recent ways that he has been reminded of this is through the new-found responsibilities and privileges of being a father. The adoption of Adam has brought a new understanding of the fact that God has adopted us into His family and that it is all of His grace.

"I am excited to teach Adam about God and His world. Rosalie and I want to truly shepherd his heart. What I am finding, though, is that God is using my desire to teach Adam as a tool to teach me lessons as well."

Treasure comes in all sizes and shapes, and Dave feels he has found it in the life that sees everything from God's perspective. Mission accomplished!



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Brown Has Gone Green

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