

# THE *Eagle Eye*



November 16, 2017

Eagle Ridge Academy

Volume 14 | Issue 5



## Cultivating Gratitude

**JASON ULBRICH**

*Executive Director*

In 2012, shortly after beginning my journey at Eagle Ridge Academy, I read a book by Brene Brown, *The Gifts of Imperfection*. One of the ten guideposts that Brown discusses is titled "Cultivating Gratitude and Joy." The premise of the guidepost is that one cannot fully cultivate joy without gratitude.

Gratitude is an action that must become a habit in order to achieve true joy. An action becomes habit only after it becomes part of our daily routine and is almost automatic.

Because of America's Thanksgiving tradition this month, this is a great time to start the habit of gratitude. A good way to begin this journey is to be grateful for the most foundational aspects of your life. For me the most foundational elements are faith, family, health, and my career.

- I am grateful that I am free to practice my faith in America and for the sacrifice that was made for me.
- I am grateful for my wife and that we make the perfect team. We were uniquely designed for each other.
- I am grateful for my health and that I am able to stay active.
- Finally, I am grateful for Eagle Ridge Academy. I believe that this is the perfect fit for my talents, and I have been grateful to work with families, teachers, and board members that love education as much as I do.



## Liberal Arts in the School of Grammar

**JANELLE MELLGREN**

*Principal, School of Grammar*

I have been thinking quite a lot lately about liberal arts education. Merriam Webster states that the roots of "liberal arts" comes from the Latin word *liber*. *Liber* means "free, unrestricted" and involves a training of the mind. The value this type of education holds for our students is immense. Rather than simply receiving training in specific vocations, our students have the privilege of learning about Literature, English, Latin, Art, Music, Science, Social Studies (History), Physical Education, Mathematics, and more.

The Classical Education your child receives as part of the Eagle Ridge Academy School of Grammar begins this liberal arts education in Kindergarten. What a gift for our students to receive training of the mind from such an early age. Thank you for all you do to support our school and the education we strive to provide each day.

### *Schools of Logic & Rhetoric*

## November Pillar Award Winners

*Teachers nominate students for Pillar Awards each month to recognize outstanding embodiment of the school's values.*

#### *6th Grade (Team Eagle)*

Citizenship: Anthony F.  
Integrity: Aliyah K.  
Perseverance: Shucayb H.  
Honor: Navya N.  
Excellence: Nitya A.  
Respect: Laysa M.

#### *6th Grade (Team Lion)*

Citizenship: Livia B.  
Integrity: Najma H.  
Perseverance: Munira M.  
Honor: Aditya K.  
Excellence: Andrew W.  
Respect: Devh T.

#### *7th Grade*

Citizenship: Elyse R.  
Integrity: Navroz V.  
Perseverance: Moriah B.  
Honor: Samira I.  
Excellence: Karis T.  
Respect: Dhruvi M.

#### *8th Grade*

Citizenship: Andrew M.  
Integrity: Kaya W.  
Perseverance: Ashley G.  
Honor: Natasha D.  
Excellence: Arie C.  
Respect: Amoligha T.

#### *9th Grade: Dexter M.*

*10th Grade: Josie Carson*

#### *11th Grade: Abdawahab H.*

*12th Grade: Carol F.*





## Classical Liberal Arts Education or STEM? ...*Can it be both?*

**ERICA POWELL**

*Principal, Schools of Logic & Rhetoric*

*Schools of  
Logic & Rhetoric*

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**It's technology married with liberal arts, married with the humanities, that yields us the results that make our hearts sing. *Steve Jobs***

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A common question I get from parents as their students look at high schools is "Will my child be prepared for a STEM field if they stay at ERA for high school?" My answer is always yes, because we teach their children how to think, how to learn, and how to solve problems, yet many parents are swayed by the appeal of STEM and STEAM curriculum and the fear of their child not being prepared.

As this topic has become ever increasingly relevant over the past few years, I wanted to take a moment and dispel the myth that students who receive a Classical liberal arts education will not be prepared to enter college in a STEM field. Not only do I want to dispel this myth, I want to argue that our students are better prepared to enter college and even the workplace.

The debate over liberal arts education vs. STEM is not a new one. There have been many newspaper stories, blogs, and surveys done to determine which is better. My argument is that we need both.

Students need to be well versed in both math and science, and at the same time, they need to understand how to lead and how to think critically. They need to have diverse skills to be successful. I believe that what Eagle Ridge Academy offers allows students to have both. We require all of our students to take four years of math and science to ensure that they are well-versed in the subjects while teaching them to understand humanity through reading rich literature. Finally, they learn how to see the beauty of the arts by being introduced to both the fine arts and art history.

In his article "[Classical Education- The Best Preparation for STEM](#)," Christopher Perrin points out that studying the liberal arts allows individuals employed in STEM fields to not only be skilled in their craft, but also know how to "...ask the large questions, integrate knowledge, work across disciplines, and write and speak beautifully and persuasively; they are the engineers who start companies or rise up as division managers and CEOs." Many technology companies today are

hiring those with a liberal arts education due to the changing atmosphere of technology. All industries need those who can think creatively and problem solve. Many of the most recognized leaders in the technology industry either have liberal arts backgrounds or promote it. Steve Jobs stated, "The reason that Apple is able to create products like the iPad is because we've always tried to be at the intersection of technology and the liberal arts." [Perrin notes](#), "Mark Zuckerberg studied Greek and Greek philosophy." And according to a [LinkedIn analysis](#), "...liberal arts graduates joined the ranks of tech companies at a faster clip in the past years than their engineering and computer science counterparts."

Eagle Ridge Academy does both. We offer students a strong background in math and science and students receive a deep understanding of humanity. **Students who are immersed in great literature and the beauty that a liberal arts education combined with skill of math and science are poised to enter their post-high school endeavors fully prepared for whatever they may choose.**



*Members of the Class of 2017. | PHOTO BY MARY CORNELIUS*

# Community Updates



## Developing Connections

**KELLY SCHIFFMAN**

*Director of Development*

### Give to the Max on Nov. 16!

Every year, [GiveMN.org](http://GiveMN.org) organizes a state-wide day of generosity for Minnesota nonprofits called Give to the Max Day. This year, Eagle Ridge Academy is participating, and **we invite you to join with us today, Thursday, Nov. 16, to take part in this community-building event that will fund student and teacher scholarships for the Academy.** Simply by giving \$5 or \$10 today through [GiveMN.org](http://GiveMN.org), you could help our school receive \$1,000 or more! How? Every online donation on GiveMN.org during Give to the Max Day will be entered into an hourly drawing for a \$1,000 GiveMN Golden Ticket – which could go to Eagle Ridge Academy. Here's the really exciting part: One donation made on [GiveMN.org](http://GiveMN.org) during the Give to the Max Day campaign will be randomly selected to receive a \$10,000 Super-Sized GiveMN Golden Ticket!



Help us increase our odds of winning and make the most of your gift by making a donation today on [GiveMN.org](http://GiveMN.org). Search for [Friends of Eagle Ridge Academy](#) and then make your donation. Together, we hope to raise more than \$5,000 on Give to the Max Day to help support student and teacher scholarships...and you can help us reach our goal!

### Gala for the Gryphons

The 2017 Gala for the Gryphons, held this past Friday, was a memorable and fun evening for the 140 guests who attended. Watch for a full recap of the event, along with photographs from our photographer and ERA parent, Sridhar Thayur.



Thank you to everyone who supported this event with the gift of time, treasure, or talent. We couldn't have done it without you!



## Kaite Pfiffner '08

### ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Since graduating from ERA in 2008, I spent time studying in Moorhead, MN at Concordia College and Athens, Greece at Arcadia University. I graduated in 2012 with a degree in Latin Education.

I currently teach Latin to middle school students at Providence Academy in Plymouth, MN. I enjoy spending time with my husband Michael, who is also an ERA grad, and our daughter Lucy.

It sounds cheesy, but ERA definitely had an impact on who I am today, especially in regards to my leadership abilities and love of the classics. •

Join us for a special screening of

# SCREEN AGERS

GROWING UP IN THE DIGITAL AGE

BY: Eagle Ridge Academy  
WHEN: 12/05/17 8:00PM  
WHERE: 1111 Bren Road W., Minnetonka, MN  
TICKETS: \$5

[screenagersmovie.com](http://screenagersmovie.com)



## *Essay Prompt: Freedom is not Free*

**Abigail H.** | *4th Grade, Ms. Ralston*

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When I was 4 my dad, a US Marine, gave me a flag and taught me the pledge of allegiance. I fell asleep with my hand on my heart that night. I learned that saying the pledge of allegiance meant you respected our freedoms and the flag of the United States of America. I recently read about a Marine from my dad's old Battalion named Juan Dominguez. While he was fighting in Afghanistan, he stepped on a bomb and lost both legs and one arm. He almost gave everything.

A few years later he was able to walk down the aisle to marry his bride. This veteran proved that the will to keep fighting is what makes Veterans in America so great. I personally think that story was a miracle. Freedom is not free. It is an earned privilege. Protecting our freedom takes strength, brains and brave veterans like my many relatives, father and Mr. Dominguez to protect our country. I'm thankful for them and their many sacrifices.

**Muthuvignesh M.** | *8th Grade, Ms. Leiha Johnson*

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Our nation was forged with the ideals of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," meaning that every individual has the right to freely think and do without hindrance or restraint. But these ideals are only being achieved at a great cost, American blood is being spilled every time we fight to procure, preserve, and provide these ideals.

200 years ago, America's veterans willingly came forward in order to serve in the battle from which our nation was formed. If they had lost, every soldier would have been guaranteed to be tried for treason by the British, but they still fought. Today, American veterans continue to serve our nation valiantly, in order to protect and provide our American ideals around the globe.

But America is still deeply divided over issues such as equal treatment, so what are we supposed to do? Every single person reading this can make a difference. No matter where it is, if you see someone who is being deprived of their right to of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; speak out, voice your opinion. Stop the hate. Let's make sure that the America that our veterans are fighting for stays the America that we need it to be.



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY THE HOEFT FAMILY

**Lida D.** | *8th Grade, Ms. Leiha Johnson*

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Freedom is not free because of the sacrifices my uncle made. On March 2001, my uncle joined the army. He came home after basic training for a 15-day leave. Four days later, September 11th happened. He spent five hard army years away from family and loved ones and "missed all the good things...out in the civilian world."

Jumping out of a Blackhawk helicopter 90 feet in the air a little scared, he said, "I jumped and started rappelling down ropes. I would do anything to have that feeling again." Everything went great until he landed. He released a 45-pound bag before hitting the ground, but not in time. He landed hard fracturing his right leg and smashing his kneecap; the pain returns sometimes. Standing and carrying heavy loads are hard.

In Iraq, he battled extreme heat and sand: sand everywhere, in their guns, hair, shoes, and clothes. Their tent had a small refrigerator. To cool off, he went into it with the door open when it was 120 degrees. He lost a close friend in the battle of Ramadi. His friend left behind a wife and baby. Being in the army caused many problems for my uncle. For years, he has struggled with medical problems and PTSD. Just recently he finished an 18-month VA counseling class.

My uncle said, "Personally, freedom comes at a cost...a price that cannot be paid. Our troops left their blood soul on the battlefields around the world so their children and ours can grow up and enjoy the freedom here at home and protect the American way of life....Respect the flag because fallen soldiers came home with that flag. Support our troops and veterans."

Freedom is not free with all the tragic events in soldiers' lives that will forever affect them and their families.

# Poster Prompt: American Veterans, We Salute You!

**Bhuvan G.** | 5th Grade, Ms. Carlson

People in America know that freedom is not free. Thousands of veterans stayed away from their families and thousands lost their lives while fighting for the freedom of America. Some of the wars that veterans fought in are the Revolutionary War against Britain, World War I and World War II against Japan, Germany, and Italy, The Korean War and the Vietnam War.

To honor the military veterans, Veterans Day is celebrated in U.S on November 11 which is the day the World War I prisoners were released. Various branches of US military are the Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force and Coast Guard. According to DoSomething.org, a few interesting facts about veterans are there are currently 2 million female veterans. Nearly 10 million veterans are of age 65 or older. Florida, Texas, and California all combined are home to more than 3 million veterans. Abraham Lincoln, George Washington and Ulysses S. Grant were U.S presidents who were also war veterans.

Today we are living in a free country due to the sacrifices of all these veterans. So, American veterans, we thank you for serving our country! Happy Veteran's Day!

**Hari R.** | 5th Grade, Mr. Ward

To keep a country free, takes a lot of sacrifices and hard work from its citizens. Some people need to be separated from their families to keep their country's freedom, they are known as Veterans. All Veterans try very hard to keep their beloved country safe and free. A Veteran's family must be very courageous and patriotic to let them do their job. Veterans might get injured fighting for their country, to make sure people can go to school and their jobs without fear. Back in the 1700s, many men joined the continental army to protect their land from the Great Britain. Also, back in India, Mahatma Gandhi and many others fought non-violently to free their land from the Great Britain. It took many years to regain their rights and be free.

We enjoy this freedom because of our forefathers' and the Veterans' hard and selfless work. To conclude, to maintain freedom is not going to be free and easy.

This year's essay contest was judged by Mr. Jason Ulbrich, Executive Director, and Mrs. Christine Kelash, 6th Grade Teacher. This year's poster contest was judged by Mrs. Jami Kruschke, K-2nd Grade Art Teacher, and Mrs. Mary Cornelius, Communications Specialist.



**1ST PLACE**

**Kevin B.**  
2nd Grade  
Ms. Hudak



**2ND PLACE**

**Sana V.**  
2nd Grade  
Ms. Hudak



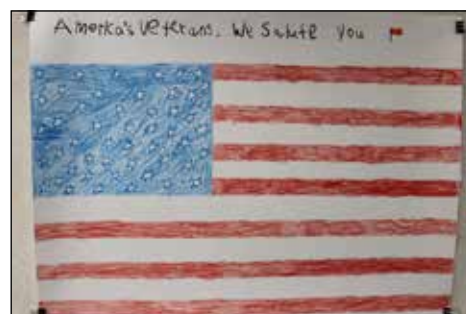
**3RD PLACE**

**Nikhil P.**  
2nd Grade  
Mr. Vacinek



**HONORABLE MENTION: 1ST GRADE**

**Harini M.**  
1st Grade  
Ms. Herdrich



**HONORABLE MENTION: KINDERGARTEN**

**Sugan S.**  
Kindergarten  
Ms. Gillitzer

Eagle Ridge Academy  
Presents

*The* **Odyssey** *Created By the Ensemble*

Dec. 1 at 7 p.m.  
Dec. 2 at 7 p.m.  
Dec. 3 at 3 p.m.

**Tickets are \$5.**  
*Reserve them online!*

## Club Spotlight: *Ballroom Dance* | [JESSAMINE KUEHN, Senior](#)

On Oct. 28, Eagle Ridge Academy was represented at the U Dance Blast hosted by the University of Minnesota. ERA students competed in ballroom dances throughout the day and wore costumes at the Halloween social dance in the evening. Members of the high school ERA Ballroom Dance Club will be going to a similar competition in Spring, U Dance Fest on March 3 and 4, 2018. We will have about six ballroom dance lessons leading up to the event. Dancers who are able to commit to weekly dance lessons may perform as an ERA

formation, a synchronized dancing group event. Students who are too busy to attend all lessons may come as they are able. Last year, students competed at the newcomer level after only one lesson per dance. Dance partners are not needed to join the club! Lessons are after school and taught by Cindy Nehrbass, a professional ballroom dance instructor. Any high school students who are interested may [contact Jessa](#). The picture shows students Jessa Kuehn and Jack Orr at the competition.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY JESSA K.

### Upcoming School Events:

Nov. 18 - Dec. 3



*For more information and more events, visit the [school calendar](#).*

- Nov. 18 – 9:30-11:30 a.m. – 2018-19 Enrollment Extravaganza
- Nov. 21 – Spirit Wear Day
- Nov. 22-24 – No School. Thanksgiving Break
- Nov. 28 – 6:00 p.m. – School Board Meeting
- Nov. 30 – 6:30 p.m. – Winter Orchestra Concert (Gr. 7-12)
- Dec. 1 – 4:00 p.m. – PTO Ski & Snowboard Club
- Dec. 1 – 7:00 p.m. – ERA Presents "The Odyssey"
- Dec. 2 – 7:00 p.m. – ERA Presents "The Odyssey"
- Dec. 3 – 3:00 p.m. – ERA Presents "The Odyssey"



## PTO Updates

Reminder to all ERA families that PTO Quarterly notes are available on the [PTO webpage](#). We hope that you take some time to review our proposals and results of the events that were held by PTO team so far this year. We want to hear your suggestions, comments, and concerns about events or anything PTO can do for ERA community. We value your support and are in the process of getting ready to start funding some items for our school needs. A rough proposal was presented at our quarterly meeting and all information can be accessed on the PTO webpage. Please email your input to [PTO.EagleRidge@gmail.com](mailto:PTO.EagleRidge@gmail.com).

## Ski & Snowboard Club

Listen up, everybody! There are 16 more days until Dec. 1 to begin our first scheduled Ski and Snowboard Night at Hyland Hills in Bloomington. Invite your friends and families and take advantage of our special rates. Discount lift tickets and rentals will be available for purchase from the ERA PTO inside the Hyland chalet upstairs in front of the windows facing the hill. The PTO receives a portion of the sales. Anyone can come weekly (even if you do not "join" Ski/Snowboard Club). Also, there will be a Potluck and Pizza Party that will be set soon in January and February!

Group lessons will be available weekly for \$10 by check or cash, with prepay due by the Friday before the lesson. If your child is taking a ski or snowboard lesson on Dec. 1, please pay for your lesson no later than Tuesday, Nov. 21 (due to the Thanksgiving holiday), and indicate if your child is taking a ski or snowboard lesson. If Hyland is closed on Dec. 1, and the lessons are cancelled, the lesson reservation is applied to the next lesson on Dec. 8. Please email Kelli TenPas with any conflicts: [kellitenpas@gmail.com](mailto:kellitenpas@gmail.com).

All waivers and payments should be placed in an envelope with PTO written on the front along with the child's name, type of lesson (ski or snowboard) and a parent cell phone number in case there are questions. Adults may also take lessons.

The envelope may be dropped off in the Activities Office with Mrs. Strand at the main entrance. FAQs and other information will be available at the [PTO page on the ERA website](#) for all documents.



## PTO Family Directory

The Family Directory 2017 link is now up and running under the [PTO tab](#). An email was sent out to all families on Wednesday, Nov. 15 which included the password.

If you still haven't filled out the Directory Form, [please go to this link](#). Before you send in the information, please double-check the spelling of names, numbers, grades, and teachers, as entries are placed in the directory as they are received.

## Redemption Program Contest Winners

Once again congratulations to Ms. Strangler's second grade class for winning the lower school redemption for Contest #2! They brought in over 600 redemption items in a very short time! For the upper school, Mrs. Anderson's advisory class submitted the most (51).

### Lower School:

1. Stangler (617)
2. Sorenson (329)
3. Gillitzer (172)
4. Molnar (133)
5. Seely (84)

### Upper School:

1. Anderson (51)
2. Tripps (48)
3. Williams (1)

We are currently in the midst of Contest #3! This contest will be open until February 22nd at 9am, so there is LOTS of time to send in LOTS of redemption items.

We accept Box Tops, Coke Rewards, Tyson Project A+, Loaves for Learning, Milk Moola, and old cell phones/used printer cartridges. Bring all these items to your lower school teacher or the collection cart inside the vestibule of the main entrance. Thank you so much for your diligence and support.

