

# One Day Monthly

May 2011

Volume 3, Issue 8

*Yo, Mr. S...*

## A Higher Calling

*Following is the third installment of "Yo, Mr. S." Many of you will recognize that phrase either from David Swarbrick's license plate or by having heard it from the lips of one of Mr. Swarbrick's students. This month Mr. Swarbrick explains the mission of the One Day Academy math department.*  
-Editor

I would like to close out the year with a few thoughts about math. We have never been too concerned about what everybody else is doing—we have always tried to learn from successful systems. Why would we want to be like everyone else around us when Texas is one of the weakest states

in one of the weakest countries in the world (28th out of 40 in mathematics the last time I checked)? Instead we have chosen to focus on understanding and imitating what is happening in mathematically successful countries such as Korea and Finland—and we are trying to go back to days gone by, when we actually won the race to the moon.

One Day Academy runs the only accelerated math program in town. Like the rest of the world, we spend one year on transition math, not three years as is common practice in the U.S. Ninety-five percent of students do not need to spend more than one year on transition topics when

they are explained clearly and precisely. And, also like the rest of the world, we integrate geometry into our overall three-year high school sequence. Separating out geometry as a distinct course is statistically linked to low performance all around the world, a practice we are eager to avoid.

ODA has never been too concerned about what is happening at the high school/community college level. Why would we want to imitate what is happening in community colleges when they are designed to focus on meeting the needs of students who could not get accepted into major universities? Instead we have focused on

*(Continued on page 3)*

### Special points of interest:

- David Swarbrick column
- ODA Students at NASA
- Royals Basketball
- ODA Student at State VASE
- 2011 Christian Home-school Formal

### Inside this issue:

- Royals Basketball 2
- State VASE 3
- Announcements 4
- Homeschool Formal 4

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## ODA Students Intern at Johnson Space Center

It has to be the dream vacation: designing rockets and working with a team on space projects at NASA. Thanks to the NASA High School Aerospace Scholars program, for many students, it isn't a dream; it is their summer vacation.

Three One Day Academy students participated in the NASA HAS program this year. Two students will be heading to NASA this summer to work on projects with other students from across the state.

"High School Aerospace Scholars, or HAS, is an interactive online learning experience highlighted by a weeklong internship," according to the NASA HAS website.

"Selected students are encouraged to study mathematics, science, engineering, and computer science by interacting with engineers at NASA's Johnson Space Center."

ODA Natural Science Department Head Patti Ashley will also go to Houston for the summer program, as she will serve once

again as a mentor to a group of students during one of the weeklong internships.

Alek Denslow, who also joined the online NASA group INSPIRE, was selected to participate in a paid, eight-week internship at the Johnson Space Center in Houston, where he will work alongside NASA engineers and scientists, as well as fellow interns.

INSPIRE, or "The Interdisciplinary National Science Project Incorporating Research and Education Experience," according to the NASA website, "is a multitier year-round program designed for students in ninth to 12th grade who are interested in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, education and careers."

Alek is looking forward to this opportunity. "When I'm not working (and even when I am) I will be conducting research for my research project and oral presentation that is due at the end of the eight weeks."

Alek applied for INSPIRE last June and completed projects for

that program in addition to his HAS projects. Students in the INSPIRE program also participated in online chats with NASA personnel.

After the INSPIRE internship, Alek will participate in the HAS internship. About half of the students who participate in HAS during the school year are selected for the summer weeklong internship program.

The HAS program is rigorous: "the work was challenging, but very do-able, and I really enjoyed it," said Alek. "I would really encourage any students considering this program to do it. It is a fun learning experience, and at about an hour each day, the work is roughly about as much as any regular class would require, except it is never boring."

Fellow ODA student Alexandria Shaw said at first the work was so difficult, she "didn't enjoy it at all! But when I got to module four, I really got into it. I got to design and draw a shuttle. It was fantas-

*(Continued on page 2)*

# Royals Basketball: Giving God the Glory

## Girls' and Boys' Varsity Finish Well at Nationals

*"What stood out to me this season was that no matter how tough things got for us, we continued to persevere."*

*-Royals Coach*

*Jodie McGarity*

"The most memorable moment [of the season] was finishing third at nationals...we finished with a [season] record of 39-5," said Pam Lee, Austin Royals Christian Athletics Girls Varsity Basketball coach. The varsity boys won the Division II 2A bracket in March at the National Christian Homeschool Basketball Championships in Springfield, Missouri, winning the 2A championship.

Placing third in the 6A division, the varsity girls had some individual award winners: Ashley Emmons won All-Region and Hannah Devine and Inga Dedow won All-American. All three girls were privileged to participate in the All-Star Game. On the varsity boys' team, Alex Gould received the Christian Character Award.

Boys' varsity coach Jodie McGarity said he was pleased with the season's outcome. "What stood out to me this season was that no matter how

tough things got for us, we continued to persevere.

"We lost a lot of games by five points or less and it became discouraging. However, God allowed those experiences to strengthen us and help us to win some important games towards the end of the season, which [included] senior night and our last three games at nationals."

The boys' success at nationals made this a memorable season for the team, especially its seniors. "I could not be more proud of our team this season," Coach McGarity said.

"This was our highest finish ever," said Coach Lee. "The bar has been set high by this team, but hopefully we can raise the bar even higher next year!"

Both coaches said it was an honor to coach for the Austin Royals and they can't wait for next year. "I am looking forward to God bringing whomever

He wants to be transformed spiritually through this team," said Coach McGarity. "We have some challenges ahead, but God is able to do the impossible as we as we stay focused on Christ. The season needs to start now...I'M READY TO GO!!"

*-Justin Movalli*



Royals girls' varsity player Inga Dedow comes in for a lay-up during a game against Hill Country Christian School of Austin. Photo by Kelsey Johnson

### Johnson Space Center

*(Continued from page 1)*

tic! After that, I was fine with all the work. I am really glad I stuck with it. And being accepted to go to Houston has just made it completely worthwhile!

"I have always been fascinated by science. Our family had taken a trip to Houston a couple summers before, and I...liked looking at all the equipment and shuttles. I never thought I would be doing a program where I got to design some of the same things!

"To sign up, you have to be recommended by your teacher, and write a letter to your state representative, then fill out the NASA HAS application. You have to write a paragraph telling about yourself and why you want to do the program. You also have to include volunteer work, awards, extracurricular activities, and what classes you have taken."

Alek said that it helped to be prepared. The classes Alek has

taken at ODA "have prepared me because of the way I've learned to think creatively and manage my time effectively."

"The modules included a lesson to read and research, a 500-word essay, and a math problem, which were all extremely difficult," said Alexandria. Students also drew a graph every other week. "The thing that helped me the most was English. I take English with Mrs. Pahlow, and before I took her class, I couldn't write a very good paper." Alexandria said her math and science classes helped, too.

The HAS program is a definite boost for Alek's future plans. "I am most likely going to major in either aerospace engineering or robotics engineering. As a career, I would really like to work for NASA designing rockets."

Mrs. Ashley said she is looking forward to this summer. "I like to participate as teacher training. It is a way for me to learn about new technology and keep up to date with the standards that students


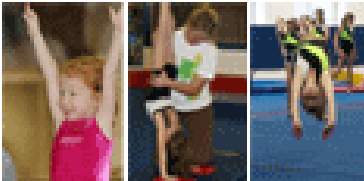
need to meet to be competitive in today's science and exploration arenas."

Last summer "was wonderful!" she said. "The students were fantastic and I was blessed to spend time with them. My most significant moment was the last day when they presented me with roses."

Alexandria encouraged any interested students to take on the challenge of participating in the program. "For those who get the opportunity, don't give up! Believe me, I know it is difficult, but truly, it will open so many other great opportunities for you."

The deadline for application is typically in the fall: check the NASA website for updates on the 2011-12 program: [http://www.nasa.gov/offices/education/programs/descriptions/High\\_School\\_Aerospace\\_Scholars.html](http://www.nasa.gov/offices/education/programs/descriptions/High_School_Aerospace_Scholars.html)

*-Susan Peisker*

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## Clueless

(Continued from page 1)

understanding the character and profile of students who attend major universities such as the University of Texas and Texas A&M University. Students do not have to be strong in math to be accepted at those schools. But they do have to be strong students who have the drive and ownership to conquer challenging material. Having taught at both Austin Community College and UT for many years, I can tell you that the difference in student populations is staggering, a difference which we have definitely addressed in our math program.

As a result of these two principles, together with the academically solid nature of our student population, we get students to calculus as quickly as they want to get there—as early as eighth grade in some cases. Most students don't want to get to calculus by eighth grade. But for those who do, ODA teachers can help them make it happen.

So, what exactly makes up One Day's math program? Math programs are hard to design, partly because students' brains change as they move from age five to age 19, and partly because family learning

styles differ so much across the homeschool population. No single curriculum is always the best. As a result, we have mixed the best of several different curricula, using each only in its strongest age group.

We use A Beka for our elementary mathematics. It's not fancy. But it is very effective at helping children get well grounded in fundamental knowledge. ODA math teachers wrote a Transition Math textbook in-house, having helped students for 11 years move successfully from fourth grade math to pre-algebra in one year. We use Saxon in the upper courses: pre-algebra, Algebra 1, Algebra 2, and pre-calculus. The instruction in the Saxon books is poor. We instruct our students to read the book sparingly, if at all, knowing that math teachers provide all the instruction for every lesson. We use Saxon for the comprehensive homework sets and tests, which are excellent. For calculus, we use Stewart because it is the curriculum of choice for 90 percent of math departments at major universities around the country.

None of these curricula are complete in themselves. But sequenced together, they create a highly effective program where both the mathematically gifted and the mathemat-

ically average can both easily rise to their God-given potential.

One Day hires only the best math teachers from the dozens of applications we get every year in order to match a high-quality curriculum and an excellent student body. Our teachers have degrees in engineering and mathematics. Our teachers have worked in youth ministry and are great with kids. Our teachers have taught a variety of math courses in a variety of settings. And our math teachers are passionate about homeschooling and how God uses homeschooling to raise up children who want to walk with Him and serve His Kingdom.

As a result, we have spent 10 years designing and implementing a math program to serve strong students in a way which will prepare them for easy success at major universities. We stay away from fleeting trends and public-school style curriculum and programming, choosing to stick with what is tried and true.

For those pursuing non-mathematical degrees, the results have been consistent. Passing College Algebra or statistics has been an easy way to finish off "the last math class they will ever take." For those pursuing a math-based major, the results have been equally consistent. Ninety-five percent of ODA's calculus graduates make an

A in college calculus, whether they take it at ACC or a major university. Both ACC and St. Edward's University have made arrangements with us to accept our students based on their completion of our calculus program. And since 30-40 percent of our Algebra 2 students make it to calculus, compared to 8-12 percent or less in most settings, we are helping large numbers of students conquer college calculus successfully.

As a whole, we are very happy with our math program. We have seen both the mathematically proficient and the mathematically hesitant pass through our program and move successfully on to a university or community college. Although there will always be a few minor adjustments to make from year to year (we are looking at Stewart's Pre-calculus for the fall of 2012), we are glad to be able to teach a sequence designed around what actually produces success in transitioning to a university-level environment. If you ever have any questions or concerns about our math program, do not hesitate to ask one of the teachers. And thank you for caring enough to choose to homeschool your children.

*-David Swarbrick is the Executive Director of One Day Academy.*

## ODA Student Wins Medal at State VASE

One Day Academy student Samantha Jorden received awards for both pieces she submitted at the state Visual Arts Scholastic Event on April 9.

One of the pieces received an excellent rating, and the other a superior rating and the VASE state medallion.

Samantha said she was "incredibly excited about both of my paintings qualifying for state! I've loved creating art since preschool, but this was my first major art competition. I was so happy to have my hard work recognized."

Nearly 1,200 students qualified for the state VASE, with 75 coming from ODA's region. About 50 other students from the region also received state medallions.

Samantha plans to attend Texas A&M University, where she will study biology. "As I study nature

through Biology, I intend to use my knowledge of God's creation to continue to create art."



Samantha Jorden received a superior and an excellent rating at state VASE for the two works that qualified. She is pictured here with "Beads of Life." Photo courtesy of Kate Trent

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# Announcements

- **ODA's End of Year party** is scheduled for Saturday, May 7 from 10 am to 2 pm at the Zilker Rock Gardens. Bring a dish to share and be prepared to play catch or visit with friends. For more information: <http://onedayacademy.com/event-calendar/end-of-the-year-party/>.

- One Day Academy will celebrate the **2011 graduating class** at Great Hills Baptist Church on May 21 at 2:00 pm. For more information: <http://onedayacademy.com/event-calendar/graduation/>.

- Sell your used books and find more at the **First Annual One Day Academy Used Curriculum Sale** on June 11 from 9 am to 12 pm at High Pointe Baptist Church. Contact Cinda Lewis at [get2cinda@surfbest.net](mailto:get2cinda@surfbest.net).

- One Day Academy **2011-12 registration** is underway. Families must re-register each year: cost is \$40. Families with students ages 13 and up must also submit a Teen Student Policy Acceptance Form. For forms, schedules, and teacher information, as well as new family information, visit: <http://onedayacademy.com/> and click on Admission and Tuition in the upper right corner of the page.

- **Find us on Facebook!** "Like" our page so you can receive updates on your home page or mobile device. <http://www.facebook.com/pages/One-Day-Academy/153784234679072?sk=wall>

## Not Your Ordinary Spring Dance *Christian Homeschool Formal Still a Popular Event*

Students in modest formal wear glide across the dance floor to the tango—and they seem to know what they are doing. The girls are wearing dance cards—and there are no wallflowers. This can't be a normal prom or formal. That's right: it's the Christian Homeschool Formal.

Held on Thursday, April 21 at the Sheraton Hotel in Austin, this year's event hosted 213 registered attendants. Students come to each formal yearly prepared: they take anywhere from two to five dance lessons the month before the event, and those dance cards are a staple. The goal is to offer a memorable gathering for homeschool teens where they can dance and have fun—and without worry for the parents.

Students and parents are willing to invest time and money in the Formal because it "provides a Christian environment for dancing and for enjoying time with friends and acquaintances," said One Day Academy senior Ethan Lawrence.

The dance cards (girls wear them on their wrists, guys keep them in their pockets) allow for everyone to get a

chance to dance with anyone, without fear of being left to sit out the evening, or of being rejected. There are about 25 partnered dances throughout the evening, with five to nine free dances.

"I think [dance cards] are the best option because it forces people to dance," said Emily Wendlandt. "Without them, I don't think many people would dance. But, I also like free dances because you get to dance with whoever you want."

At the dance classes, which range in difficulty from beginning to advanced, students learn everything from line dances to the waltz and tango. Students interviewed said they enjoy taking the classes with their friends and acquaintances, leading them to feel more comfortable at the Formal.

"I like the dance classes. I always have fun with my friends--goofing around with them--and of course, I really like dancing," said Emily Wendlandt. "People aren't awkwardly standing around. People actually dance."

"I think that dance classes really do help people feel more comfortable at the formal be-

cause without them, some of us wouldn't know what we were doing, and that could be a disaster!" said ODA senior Austin Hensley.

Boys think the Formal is helpful because the etiquette rules and dance classes help them to learn how to treat girls politely. Ethan Lawrence said, "[The Formal] teaches us guys how women should be treated. That is with respect, and without much of the hastiness we see in today's times."

Students generally think that it gives "homeschoolers the opportunity to experience something like a prom," which is important, said Austin Hensley.

"I love the formal because, first, you get to dress up (and that's always a highlight for me!) and also I think it's really cool to learn the dances beforehand to make the evening more fun and less awkward," said Kristin Miller. "This year was memorable because we had a super fun "mosh pit" dance and two of my friends, guys of course, went crowd surfing...I am definitely going next year!!"

-Justin Movalli



Students dance the shuffle near the end of the 2011 Christian Homeschool Formal. Photo by Susan Peisker