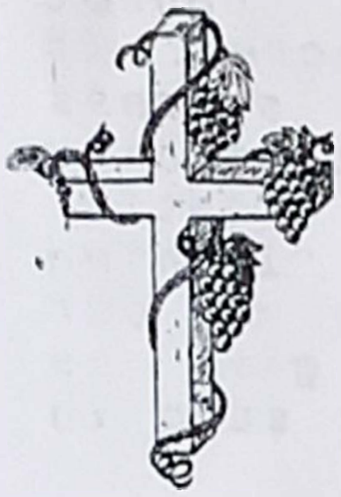


The Grapevine

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF
BRADSHAW CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

FIRST EDITION
VOL. 1

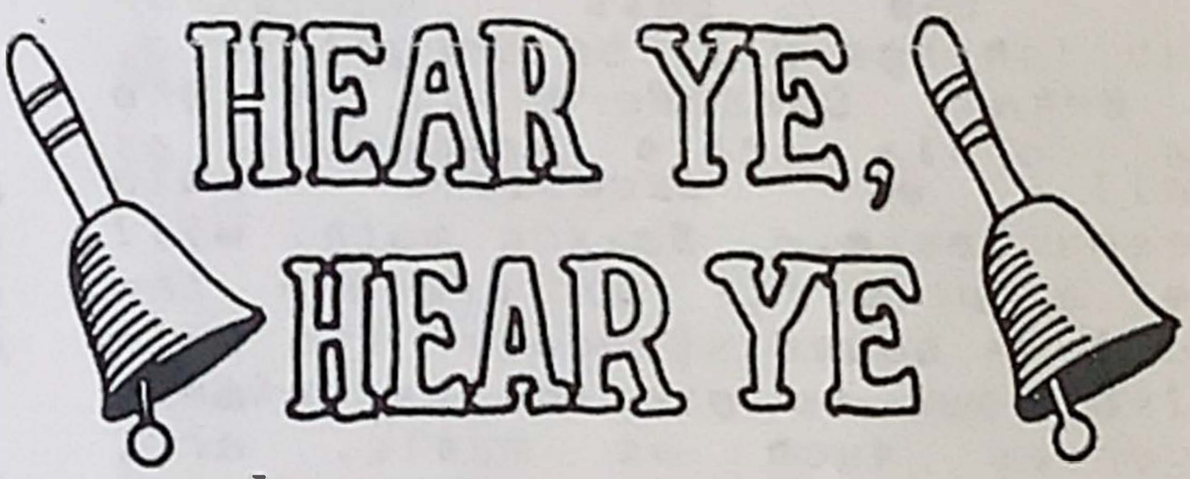
BREAKING NEWS

BCS HOLDS FIRST COMMUNITY MEETING- SUCCESS OR FAILURE?

To semi-quote a rather obscure recent vice-presidential candidate, "Who are we, and what are we doing here?" That is the question the BCS board members attempted to address Monday night, Feb. 22 at Sun Grove Community Church. With the board members outnumbering the community guests by 2 to 1, a casual observer might think it a failure. But was it? Though the numbers were disappointing, after ads placed in the paper and more than a dozen churches contacted, the process before, during and after the meeting, helped to crystalize philosophy and direction as well as bring to light the passion the BCS board members have for Christian education.

Principal and developer, Carl Eastvold, went to great lengths to share the philosophy that underscores the whole foundation and reason for undertaking such a monumental endeavor: "Children are meant to be viewed as rich and complete rather than empty and needy. In looking beneath the surface of a child's life one can find greatness. This greatness is meant to be "educed" or drawn out. It is drawn out by living in obedience to God's course: His curriculum for our lives. Such a viewpoint runs contrary to most educators: children are often likened to empty banks that are meant to be filled by the wisdom of the educational system. This superficial viewpoint obscures the real value of the child, hiding his wealth not only from himself, but others. My passion is to reveal what has been obscured, by challenging each child to discover "what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that "they" may be filled up to all the fulness of God." (Eph. 3:18-19)

Board chairman, Bob Larson, himself a retired public school teacher of 35 years, upheld the advantage of Christian education over public. Not only are the development of Christian mores and character emphasized but



smaller class sizes enhances the learning process.

Debi Corbella, the pre-school director and Maureen Eastvold, pre-school teacher, both had a chance to voice their vision for an energetic learning environment for the 3-5 year olds under their care. The "plan-do-review" approach to learning was shared. More about that in another article. The pre-school will be the initial offering at BCS.

Many of the questions posed by the guests had to do with what "curriculum" BCS will offer. Without having the books in hand it was stated that some of the best Christian publishings will be sought (e.g. A Beka). Consideration of the California state framework as well as excellent math resources(e.g. Saxxon math) will be a priority to prepare the college bound students. BCS will also seek to provide enrichment courses such as music, art, foreign languages and computer science.

Another curriculum question had to do with physical education and sports. In answering that question, a look at the history of Principal Eastvold's prior school endeavors in this area were in order. A high value was placed on physical education with hiring of excellent staff and involvement in many extra curricular sports programs. BCS also has plans to develop a portion of their 12 acres to accommodate a gymnasium and field.

Final questions had to do with what grades will be offered in the fall. That brings up the age old dilemma of what came first, the chicken or the egg. Do we offer grades up throughout before we know of we can fill them and thereby pay for the construction of classrooms-or do we go out and see how much interest and actual commitment there is before we identify the grades we will offer.

In any case, we cannot remain the best kept secret. 'f there was any success accomplished by the community meeting it was that of creatin a sense of urgency and "leaning forward" in the hearts of our own BCS board. Lord give us wisdom to know the next step in this walk of faith!

UPDATE

PROGRESS REPORT ON CREATION OF BRADSHAW CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Where are we in the process of creating our new school? What have we accomplished thus far and what have we left to do before the doors can open?

We have accomplished:

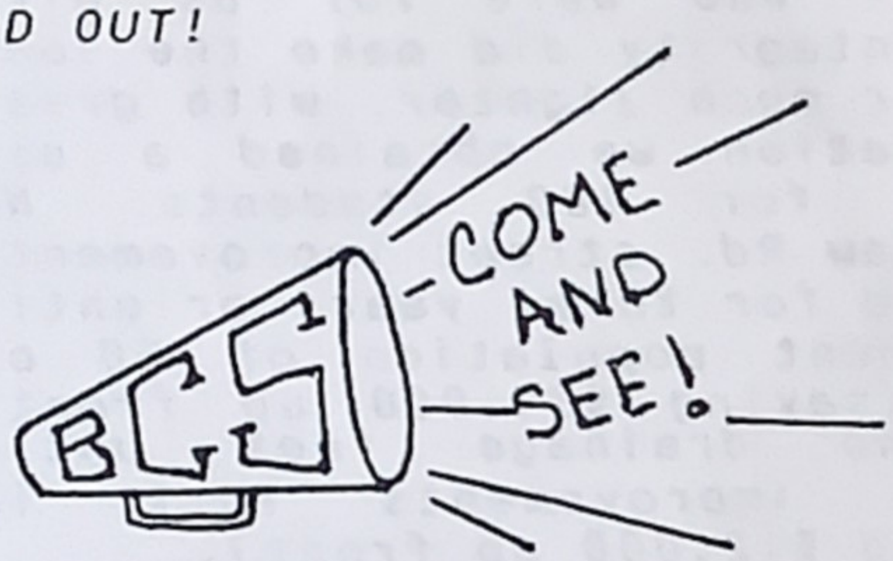
* Our first community meeting
* Securing 12 acres fo development
* Non profit status
* Use permit for 100 students
* Building a house for the Eastvold's that secured financing for the ten acres
* Beginning work on the small house to make classrooms and offices
* Built 40,000 gal. pool for fire protection needs
* MOMENTUM

What we have left:

* Continue water line from pool to front and create a fire hydrant
* Move trees by driveway
* Widen driveway and create turnaround
* Construct bathrooms in pre-school
* Build out garage for classroom
* Obtain and instali playground equipment
* Obtain more manipulative and classroom equipment

*. Identify and hire other staff

Of all the things we have l ft to do, the one of major i portance is that we GET THE WORD OUT!



BRADSHAW CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
A HISTORY LESSON

Though most of our readers for this first edition are friends, family or close in fellowship, and thereby know our "roots" already, we thought a mini-history of our development would enlighten those who are new to our circle. It could also s rve us as a reminder of God's ace and faithfulness as He has fit us for this work of service.

Up until three years ago, all of the present BCS board members were serving in differing capacities at Gloria Dei Lutheran School in South Sacramento. Carl Eastvold, principal, had begun his administrative career there in 1979. The staff grew from 5 to 53, the student body from 55 to 405, and the budget from $60,000 to $750,000 during those 11 years. A fine reputation of academic excellence and Christian values was developed and exists to this day. In 1985, Carl Eastvold was nationally recognized by then Secretary of Education, William Bennett, in Washington D.C., as one of three private school administrators "Principal of the Year."

Staff remained stable. ograms for their enrichment were offered on a regular basis. Test scores of students were continually rising. A program for building extra classrooms and a gymnasium was in the works.....So why leave such a "successful" scenario ? "We were doing the thing right- but were we doing the right thing?" ponders Mr. Eastvold.

Believing there was more to Christian education than even what was being experienced and finding it difficult to redirect the established program to the higher ground he envisioned, Mr. Eastvold decided to start afresh.

LORD, NOW WHAT?

The search was on for a suitable site for our school. It led us to various warehouses, abandoned schools and esisting schools, churches and vacant land- light industrial as well as residential/agricultural. One of the initial sites aggressively sought was the First Baptist Church in Elk Grove. They were hopeful as were we in making it work out. Though it was "land locked" in the middle of Elk Grove proper with little room to grow, it did have an existing gym, classrooms, offices and asphalted grounds. We could start school within just a few months of occupancy! As the lengthy escrow went on, nearly a year, we finally came into the county's clenches- a process of establishing requirements (usually involving money) of site improvements necessary before opening for business. The final blow came at a community/county hearing where neighbors voiced their concerns. Due to the possible adverse environmental effects (noise, loitering etc.) it was determined that an 8 ft. masonry wall needed to be put up around the perimeter adjoining neighboring yards. With a cost of nearly $80,000 we could not afford to go any further with the First Baptist parish- much to our disappointment and theirs.

LORD, NOW WHAT?

Though we were "hung-up" for a year, we had never stopped looking- just in case. One property was always a favorite as we looked around- the Laidet Ranch at 8324 Bradshaw Rd. Such an ideal location- surrounded by growing neighborhoods, flat yet still non-flood plane land, no powerlines or rail-road tracks (that seemed to come up in many other locations), two acres with a house and adjacent ten acres of pasture (so you can start small on the 2 and then expand to the 10), on a busy thoroughfare (convenient access), not many neighbors to bother, a willow, a barn, a tree lined entrance, chickens- a real country flavor.
BUT -the price tag of 1.2 millon dollars!
The "ideal"... out of reach.

LORD, NOW WHAT?

On other properties we made offers, looked, made offers, looked, made offers- with one eye always on the Laidet Ranch. Mike Laidet kept the fires fanned with constant contact and price lowering...$975 K, $850 K, $700 K, we were getting close.

In all of our financial dealings, we had the generosity and expertise of Carl's father, Don Eastvold Sr., himself a "seasoned" negotiator and developer of a large time share organization based in Palm Springs. Senior Eastvold negotiated a deal with an incredible reduction in sales price to $600,000 and terms we could live with, as well as assisting in short term financing. The school ministry is something he envisions as a worthwhile investment in the youth of today. We signed the deal and moved in on August 7,1992.

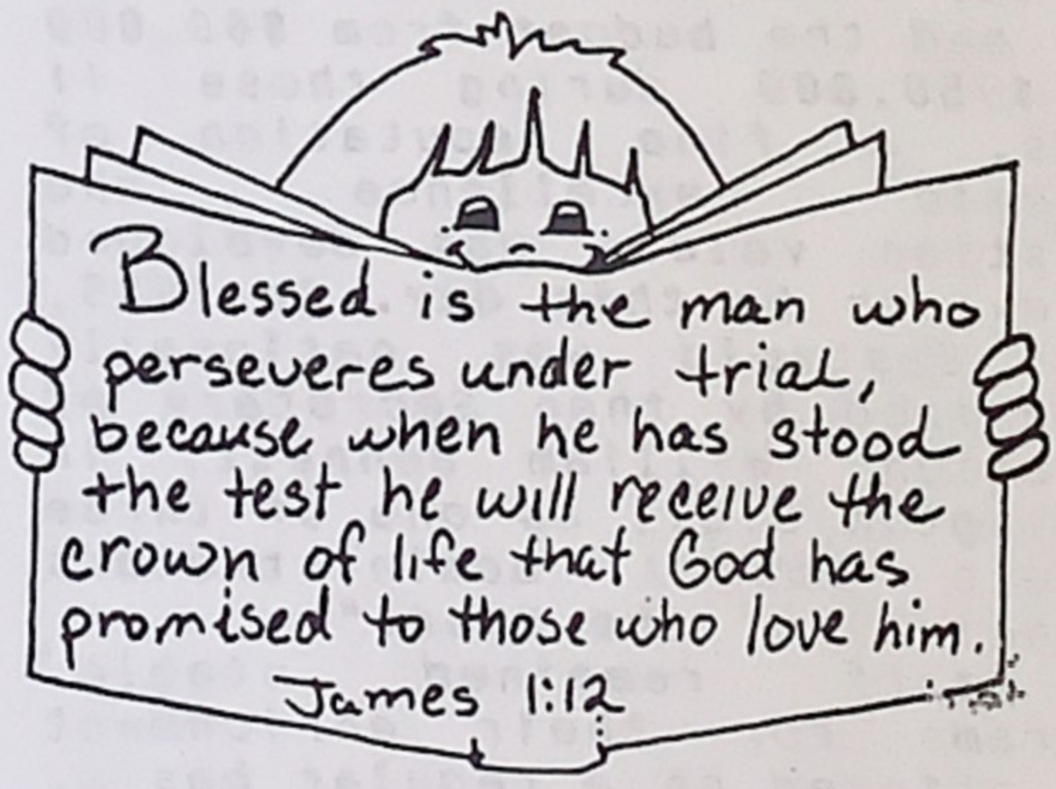
LORD, NOW WHAT?

In the meantime, non-profit status was sought and obtained retroactive to 1991. This was a little unusual in that we had no church affiliation.

In the many dealings with county we became known for our determination and established friendships within th bureaucracy. "Friends in hig places" who were for us with high integrity did make the load to bear much lighter. With great cooperation we obtained a use permit for 100 students. No Bradshaw Rd. street improvements imposed for three years or until a student population of 50 or more (saving $35,000 up front) and no drainage fees until street improvements kick in (saving $12,000 up front).

Experiencing the guiding hand of the Lord has been a real faith builder. That's not to say we don't hit the "bumps in the road" with a little trepidation as we move forward into the blackness of the unknown, not knowing for sure where we'll land. A favorite author, Oswald Chambers, says it quite well, "Faith never knows where it is being led, but it loves and knows the One Who is leading. It is a life of faith, not o. intellect and reason, but a life of knowing Who makes us "go". The life of faith is not a life of mounting up with wings, but a life of walking and not fainting. It is a faith that has been tried and proved and has stood the test."

LORD, MAY WE STAND THE TEST!



From the Principal's Pen

Dear Friends,

Little Rusty slumped into the folding chair in my office, sent down for the third time in one week for unruly behavior in his kindergarten classroom. The note he had in his hand was addressed to the principal. As I read this note from his teacher, Mrs. Peterson, it was obvious that the two previous disciplinary actions had no affect. Little Rusty, with his long red hair that draped over his forehead and freckles covering both cheeks, nervously ifted up on his suspenders, and ent into one of his stuttering explanations as to what happened. I took control and ordered him to be quiet. Tears rolled down his cheek while he attempted once again to take control of this frightening situation. "Mr. East..vold, I am sorry Mr. East..vold," he sputtered, " I will never do it again.....you aren't going to spank me, are you Mr. East..vold.", he questioned? Pitiful. Yes. But I learned through this little guy that I was the one that really was to be pitied. It appeared he wasn't listening to me. In fact, it took me months to understand that I wasn't listening to him. In my many dealings with Rusty, I took the posture that he needed to be fixed. He had a problem, it shouldn't be there, and he needed me to make it go away. In short, I was playing God, not wanting to involve myself any deeper than what was comfortable for me. In reality, despite his many problems, and despite the fact he needed to be disciplined, God in His great love for him in Jesus Christ, had graced him with His rich plan and full love. My approach to him, if not based on that motivation and understanding, was nothing but deceitful and self serving.

I have shared this story with you to exemplify by my mistakes the significance of loving children according to the grace of God in Jesus Christ. To become involved in the lives of children brings with it the great responsibility of knowing we are participating in drawing out and establishing God's plan for each child. This suggests a point of view, despite the many NEEDS of the children, that a child's bank is not empty, but filled with the riches of Christ - to be discovered and spent in the world.

We can contrast this view with public education, where the focus in educational research, seminars, and leadership is not on the child's' riches, but on their needs.

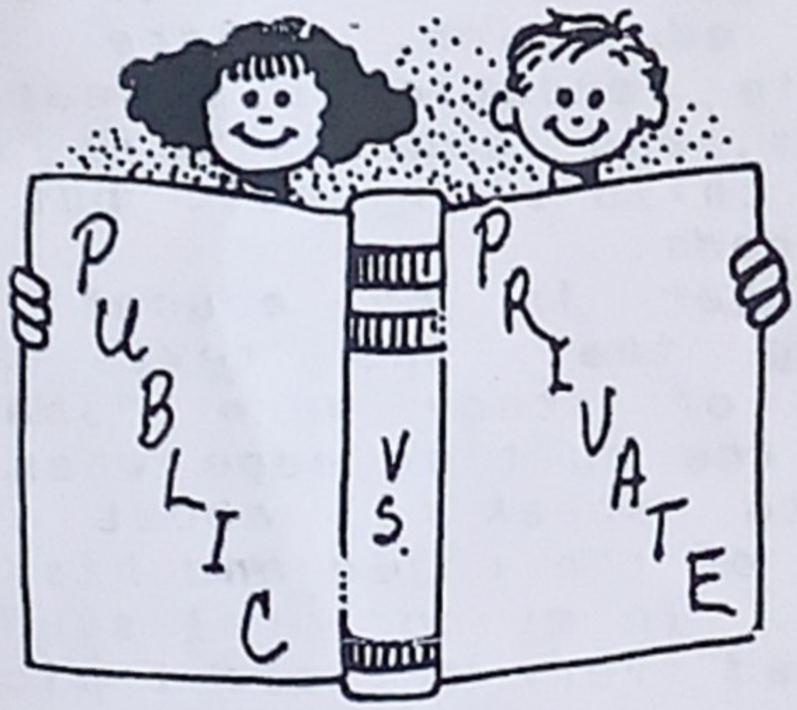
I remember in my educational training that the texts and courses of study were "sharp" and on the cutting edge when it came to speaking about the concept of the child and his/her "needs". In my doctoral studies it seemed every article I picked up addressed new findings in the literature and hopes for even more advancements because education was integrating with sociology and psychology, and could define and understand even more the needs of the child.

Yet, while our experts and technicians discover new heights to their ivory towers, in "filling up" the leaking, cisterns in our needy children, they have failed to see they have "missed" the most important element of all - "our children are not needy and empty - they

are rich and full. They have something to say, something to feel, something to determine. And what is the basis of such a position? Our faith in Jesus Christ. He is, as the scriptures say, "our Man in Glory". He has gone on before us, to run the course (curriculum) for each one of us, then to take a seat at the Right Hand of God, to orchestrate and draw out (educe) the Victory He has won in each of the saints.

This may sound like some nice educational way of packaging our school program to the community. Yet despite appearances, Bradshaw Christian School is here because God has called us to share and live this Good News with the community surrounding us. We invite any of you to call us at 688-0521 and allow more opportunity to share with you what our program is all about.

Carl Eastvold, principal



A PERSPECTIVE . . .

After 35 years as a public school teacher I have come to greatly appreciate the benefits of private school education and particularly that of the Christian private school. When I think of the public schools I think if large class sizes, many problem students, often a great lack in home support, drugs and weapons on campus, humanistic philosophy, restrictions regarding the teaching of Christian values and morals, financial problems, often antagonism between teachers' unions and school boards and/or administrations, and state control. While there are many good teachers in the public schools there are also poor ones which are almost impossible to get rid of because of tenure laws.

We cannot say that as a private school we will not have some of the same problems but we do have a much greater freedom and flexibility in dealing with them. We have some control over who our students will be. We will seek out teachers who agree with our Christian philosophy of education and who have the moral character we desire. We will have much smaller class sizes and therefore able to give more individual attention to the student. We have much greater flexibility in choosing curricular materials. We will actively seek parental involvement and support. We will do everything possible to maintain a pleasant and safe environment in which maximum learning can take place. Most importantly, we desire to provide a Christian atmosphere where our teachers model Christian attitudes, values, and relationships with each other as well as with their students.

Many parents today are looking for an alternative to the public school. We see ourselves as offering not just and alternative but a radically different approach to the student and to education. We see the student as a person created in the image of God. A person imbued with talents and abilities which have to be brought out and developed. A person that can grow in the character of Christ and have a relationship with the living God. A person entrusted to us to help train in the way he should go. The challenge is great but the rewards are even greater.

Board chairman, Bob Larson