

June
2019

FLETCHER Spirit



Growing Into Our Future



FLETCHER Spirit

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You are welcome to contact us
or make a donation to:

Fletcher Academy
PO Box 5440, Fletcher, NC 28732
www.fletcheracademy.com
828-209-6800



It is with great pleasure and gratefulness that I present you with Fletcher Academy's new-to-us coach bus (pictured with students on the next page). This acquisition has been the result of many people giving gifts to the school for this very project. We initially applied for a grant from AdventHealth through the corporate office in Orlando, FL. Thankfully, they promised us a \$100,000 matching grant. Our alumni then came through with many gifts and pledges during homecoming weekend, and lots of others have responded to mailings and to a personal letter from Mr. Bass, our transportation leader.

Thanks to you we met our goal and we were able to secure a bus at auction in Virginia. We now have a 2009 MCI bus with under 200,000 miles to put into service. James Madison University was the previous owner and kept it in immaculate condition. We have been blessed beyond words by the generosity of so many supporters of our school. It was such fun to see the reactions of the students and staff as they walked out of the chapel when it was unveiled as a complete surprise - they were very impressed!

A whole lot is happening in our cafeteria with the remodel, as you can see from the pictures on the cover. A few months back the cafeteria construction got a little lift from some faculty and staff as we gathered together during lunch to help raise the first wall and take some well executed pictures. Mrs. Novak does a lot for Fletcher Academy, but raising walls isn't one of them as you can see. Our first phase will include a new entrance with bathrooms, a large new kitchen, and work areas. This will free up the space where the old kitchen was and allow us to create a special dining area. We must have a working kitchen by August and Jason McDonald, our project manager and FA alumnus, is not wasting any time. His workers are raising the ceiling and running all the necessary duct work and electrical conduit while the cafe isn't being used this summer. The exterior is also coming along with new brick and stucco.



Only 1/3 of the \$1.8 million goal is still needed to complete the project, but we trust God will inspire people to give once they see the progress being made. Thank you to those who have already given and I will be sure and keep you updated as the construction continues. It is our hope that our momentum will not be slowed because funds are not coming in as fast as we can build. Every contribution helps us get a little closer to our dream.

Phil Wilhelm, FA Principal/Chief Academic Officer

MAJOR BUS UPGRADE !!

REACHING THE WORLD FOR JESUS

The 'new' coach bus has arrived!
Thank you Jesus!
Over \$200,000 was given by alumni, family, and friends.
This includes a full \$100,000 matching grant from:
AdventHealth



Because of YOUR help Fletcher Academy will be able to go beyond our campus with the message of Jesus! With the purchase of these three major vehicles we can continue reaching out in our ministry of music, gymnastics, community service, and mission trips. Your gifts will help our students be a transforming influence in our world!

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Deluxe Coach Bus | Paid for ✓ |
| School Bus | Paid for ✓ |
| 12-Passenger Van | Paid for ✓ |

Transportation Makes it Happen!

- Mission Trips
- Music Tours
- Acroknight
- Home Leaves
- Sabbath Hikes
- Community Service
- Bible Conferences
- History Trip
- Biology Trip
- Disaster Relief

THANK YOU!



Tassels and Tombstones

Christian Bunch '13

Editor's Note: This article is adapted from the commencement speech delivered live on May, 26, 2019 at Fletcher Academy graduation. Christian Bunch, 2013 FA class president, currently works at Southern Adventist University as the Student Missions Director.

It is joy and an honor to be back again. I can't think of any time in my life that was more transformative than my time at Fletcher Academy. So many great memories along the way. But these memories pale in comparison to the people. I think about my classmates. I see many of my classmates weekly even to this day. We were tight like you guys and it didn't stop. My teachers, many of whom are right here – some of the most influential people in my entire life. They pointed me to a God that infuses my life with joy. I could not be a prouder alumnus of this school.

I want to tell you a little bit about how my life has changed since the tassel on my graduation cap was turned not so long ago. Since leaving Fletcher I've lived a lot of interesting places. I lived

in a dorm, an apartment, a basement. I've lived even in a rooftop room in India. But the most interesting place I've lived has to be the place I currently call home – right across the street from a cemetery. It's a little bit normal now, but I mean at first it was strange to wake up on a Sunday morning with a funeral service going on while I'm trying to eat toast. I would take a walk and there's a new widow grieving the loss of her husband beside a fresh pile of dirt. Previously, the last thing on my mind was death. We've all heard it: the world is our oyster – we can change the world – you can do anything. Especially on a weekend like this, we don't want to think about death.

Solomon cautions us with these odd words: "the day you die is better than the day you are born. Better to spend your time at funerals than at parties. After all, everyone dies – so the living should take this to heart. Sorrow is better than laughter, for sadness has a refining influence on us. A wise person thinks a lot about death, while a fool thinks only about having a good time" (Ecclesiastes 7:1-4 NLT). I took his advice and I just started walking through the

c e m e - t e r y reading... Imelda – beloved wife and mother age 106. Marvel and Patricia Bunch – my grandparents, in loving memory, ages 82 and 81. Ella – she lived for others. Darlene – beautiful loving wife age 36. Matthew – son, brother, husband, father, and friend age 22. Jack – we have a playdate in heaven, seven-days-old. One girl died three years ago at age 27 and there's just a temporary card waiting for a tombstone that was never purchased like somehow she'd been forgotten.

You can imagine the emotions and questions that rush over me as I'm walking through the cemetery. I'm angry. Why does the world have to be so painful? I'm grieving for the people that they left behind. I'm hopeful that this is not the end of the story. Mostly it just makes me more serious about life. After all, these people were just like me in one way or another. Some of them attended church where I do. One of them even did my current job. They lived during the days that I lived and most of them graduated from high school. Now one day if Jesus doesn't

come first we will all just be under a tombstone. For the past seven years Pepsi has run this ad campaign called “Live for Now.” I’d like to take Pepsi for a walk through the cemetery.

We grow up believing that we will really be happy when we have family, friends and a good job. And in order to get those things we have to follow certain logical steps like graduating from high school. I wanted those things and I still do but I’ve discovered since graduating that looking for joy in those things is just far too risky. Unfortunately, people will die, friends can leave, you can fail a class, and you can lose a job. I really thought when I was in your shoes that life was just going to go like clockwork. I was going to be a good kid and therefore everything was going to be okay. College would be like high school but with a few bonuses along the way. Freshman year would have more friends. Sophomore year meet a cute girl. After senior year, marry the cute girl and get the dream job – happiness! Has it worked out that way? No, not at all. Sure, there’s good things in life, but this sinful world is predictably filled with unpredictable pain.

For the past couple of weeks I’ve been in India with a medical team from Southern Adventist University. One particular day, they dropped us off at a church in the middle of a slum. We unpack our things, open the clinic, and pretty soon people are gathering in. It is hot with no ventilation in the church. We would actually go outside into the alley as it felt like air conditioning even though it was almost a hundred degrees outside. It was just blazing hot. And somewhere in the middle of that literal hell, I just felt this overwhelming sense of joy. I don’t understand it. But maybe joy is not found just in family, friends or even in a good job. In my own life, I think I find joy the most when I want to serve God and follow him.

Ramen noodles in all their glory will not alone get you through the next chapter of college life. Sad to say, late night Taco Bell runs during finals week, as necessary as they may be, will not buy you peace. Falling in love doesn’t make

life a fairytale. Even graduating from college is great, but it isn’t a ticket to joy. The things of God are the things to pursue. You don’t need anything else.

I hope Fletcher has been a positive spiritual experience for you. Looking back to Sabbath in the mountains, chapels, Friday night afterglows, weeks of prayer – some of the most incredible times in my journey that I don’t forget to this day. But you should be prepared that your spiritual life from this point on will never be as carefully manicured as it has been over these last four years. I think Fletcher does an amazing job of presenting Jesus in a really great way. But the world often sees Him differently. And it’s going to cause you to ask a lot of questions: Do I need to go to church? Is homosexuality wrong? Whom and how should I date? What music should I listen to? Is creation really the right theory? Should I read Ellen White? What is my purpose? If I’m nice do I get to heaven? Until now Fletcher and maybe your parents have answered a lot of these questions for you. After Fletcher I had lots of questions. There are 55 churches within driving distance of Southern. It was just easier to go hiking on Sabbath than to try to figure out where I fit in. Everyone seems to have different answers and they are not all right.

So how do you answer the questions? “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.” I got this Bible I’m holding from Fletcher and it has been a light to my feet and a lamp to my path. Psalm 119:99 says, “I have more understanding than all my teachers, for your testimonies are my meditation.” You can be smarter than your teachers! Just read the book. I didn’t start seriously reading for myself until after Fletcher unfortunately, but this is the best gift you all ever gave me. It has changed my life. If I told you God wrote you a graduation card full of wisdom with a gift inside worth a trillion times what your Grandma has given you – I know you would open it. So open it. You never know where it might take you, maybe even to a cemetery. My sophomore year at Fletcher during fall picnic, I was selected to run the 440

dash – one full lap around the track. We lined up by class, including a senior, Josh Fries – he probably still holds a few records around here. He was a legend, a cheetah. If you watch the race video, shockingly, I’m like keeping up with Josh. I’m pushing it as fast as I can as we round the final corner. I’m giving it everything. I’ve got 50 yards, 40 yards, 30 yards, 20 yards, 15 yards. And I’m still just a little bit behind him. I think to myself that if I bend down and made myself a little more aerodynamic that maybe I’d run faster. With just a few steps to go, I trip and I fall smack on my face. I’m lying there so embarrassed. I have never wished I went to another academy so much in my entire life. I was a loser and I didn’t want to get back up. I just wanted to stay there.

I then felt a hand reach down and firmly grab my shoulder. The hand of somebody who hated what had happened probably more than I did, it was my dad. He ran out onto the track. He picked me up, set me on my feet. We took a step and a half forward and crossed the finish line.

I wish I had better news for you. But unfortunately your life will probably have a lot of moments like that. I hope all of you have great families, lots of friends and great careers. But whether or not you do, moments of loss are going to come. Sometimes you are not quite good enough. You think you got it all planned out and then you will fall on your face for the world to see. Proverbs 24:16 says the righteous fall seven times then they rise again. Graduates when you fall, rise again, and again, and again. God has gifted you with love, joy and peace regardless of your circumstances. Get back up with your heavenly Father. He will never stop running onto your track to pick you up, set you on your feet, and walk with you until you cross the real finish line. Today you turn the tassel. I ask you to think about what you want written on your tombstone. I think I’d like mine to say: Christian Michael Bunch – Just kept getting back up. ■

The Power of Words

Kellan Myers, 8th Grader at Captain Gilmer

Editor's Note: Each spring, Captain Gilmer Christian School travels around to lead out in Sabbath morning worship at the three constituent Seventh-day Adventist Churches: Fletcher, Hendersonville, and Arden. Students share their love for God through music and song. The upper grade students share their testimony and sermons from the pulpit. This article has been adapted from Kellan Myers' sermon delivered on February 23, 2019 at Arden. Kellan is an 8th grader and new student this year to Captain Gilmer. He plans to attend Fletcher Academy next year.



We can express mercy to others when we speak and we need to make that choice to be merciful.

Proverbs 16:24 reads, "pleasant words are like a honeycomb, sweetness of the soul and health to the body."

Using pleasant or kind words is not something that is very common. We all get frustrated, angry, or annoyed. And whenever we are feeling any of these things we are more likely to be unwise in our speaking. But what we don't realize sometimes is that our words can hurt each other. Our words and the way that we use them are like windows to the heart and soul revealing to anyone on the other side what our true disposition is.

Proverbs 20:15 says, "wise words are rare and more valuable than gold and rubies." To speak with them means to be gentle and considerate. In this wisdom is found an acknowledgement of the power and influence that words can carry, and that is why wise words are both rare and valuable.

I have noticed unpleasant speech in my own life. While I was attending a public middle school, sixth, seventh, and eighth graders all used profanity frequently in their vocabulary. Everyone would get into these arguments were it seems the only goal is to call each other every rude word in existence. And because people were being very unwise in their speech, it often started physical fighting. Nearly every week there was a fight because people were being unwise. We eventually had to have police officers patrolling the halls to prevent these fights.

At Captain Gilmer Christian School things are much different. There is a kindness students have for each oth-

er that I've not found in any public school. This kindness is something I could see on my first day at Captain Gilmer. Nobody knew me but I felt their kindness through the words I received from them. This was very helpful in my experience because I was unsure whether I would fit in or not. So I know first hand that words can really hurt you. But they can also heal and strengthen.

The thing that makes words most powerful is their ability to create change. There is a flip side to everything. There is good, bad, chaos, order, and there is death and life. When we speak life we build and allow it to thrive and prosper. It is written in Proverbs 15:4 that "gentle words bring life and health, but a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit." That understanding is also important because we do expect kindness from others as they do from us.

I recently read an article about the power of words and affirmation that said that real power lies in our words. It is our words that provide a bold affirmation of our innermost thoughts. They are a confirmation to the world of how we see our lives, each other, and ourselves. It is this powerful affirmation that our words provide which enables our thoughts to manifest into our reality. So why do we choose to misuse our most powerful asset?

What I found to be most important from the article is that words do display our inmost thoughts. What we think is often what we say. What we say creates our reality. What we say around other people can also shape

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“Kindness is something I could see on my first day at Captain Gilmer..”

them. We can shape their personality, their thoughts, and even their actions. If you are kind and gentle to someone it is more likely they will be kind and gentle to others they know and also to you.

Matthew wrote that what goes into someone’s mouth does not defile them, but what comes out of their mouth, that is what defiles them (Matthew 15:11).

Ellen white says, “the voice and tongue are gifts from God, and if rightly used, they are a power for God. Words mean very much. They may express love, devotion, praise, melody to God, or hatred and revenge. Words reveal the sentiments of the heart. They may be a savor of life unto life or of death unto death” (The Voice in Speech and Song, 2).

If our words are such a gift should we not take care of them and make sure that they are used well just as we care for our other possessions? And because words are one of our most powerful possessions we should ensure that they will be used carefully. So would you join me in being more careful and gentle while using your words? ■





A graphic for Homecoming Weekend. It features a blue and yellow wavy banner with the text 'HOMECOMING WEEKEND' in white. Below the banner, the text 'October 5-7,' is written in black. The background of the graphic shows purple hydrangea flowers.





School of Nursing



Class of 1948



Class of 1958



Class of 1968



Class of 1978



Class of 1988



Class of 2008



Class of 1993



2018 Alumna of the Year Award Cathy Rowe Wilkie '58

Cathy graduated from Fletcher Academy in 1958. Following graduation she took a course to become an airline stewardess. Although she has enjoyed traveling throughout her life, working for an airline did not prove to be her life calling. Instead she married a handsome 19 year old man who proved much more interesting than airplanes. The newlyweds called California home for a short period of time but returned to Hendersonville, NC where they remain to this very day.

After returning to Hendersonville, the couple built and ran a residential building and development company. God blessed them with 2 small boys and our recipient managed to raise these energetic youngsters while still helping to keep the new business going.

After the boys grew up and left home our recipient obtained her North Carolina Real Estate License and started her own company. Her outgoing personality and genuine concern for people endeared her to her clients and helped create lasting friendships with many of them. She continued to work in real estate until she retired around 2009.

There are several things that stand out when we consider this individual's life. Her love for the Lord is readily apparent to all who have contact with her. She has a good sense of humor and is seldom seen without a smile. She has remained devoted to her family which now includes not only her two sons but also a daughter-in-law and six grandchildren as well as many extended family members. Her care and concern has not been restricted to her family, however. She has freely opened her heart and home to anyone in need, including students attending Fletcher Academy. She has served her church and community in various roles and continues to serve as a deaconess, often preparing food for those in need. She loves to travel and meet new people and see new places but always returns to the home she loves here in the mountains.

Collin Petty FAI Corporate Secretary

New FAI Corporate Secretary, Collin Petty was voted in at the September 27, 2018 FAI Board of Directors meeting. He replaces Jon Smith who stepped down from full-time responsibilities on October 1, 2018. Jon has served full-time at FAI for 28 years in many areas that include laundry manager, boy's dean, principal, president, work coordinator, and corporate secretary to name a few. He will continue to serve part-time as chaplain at Fletcher Park Inn and as the FAI Property Manager.



Collin Petty has served for 4+ years at FAI as our Human Resources Manager and chairs our Safety Committee. He has made significant improvements in process, consistency, and service in the HR department and will continue to serve in this role in addition to his new responsibilities. Collin is a member of the Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM) and has his MBA and BBA from Southern Adventist University, having also taught in the School of Business and Management and awarded Adjunct Professor of the Year (2014). Collin is also a National Weather Service SkyWarn Network storm spotter, ordained Elder of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Sheriff's Citizen's Academy graduate, ALiCE Training Institute Certified Instructor, and aspiring private pilot. He is married to Tanya (Colburn) Petty, and they have a 1-year-old son named Hudson, who is the joy of their lives. They enjoy all things "outdoors" such as hiking and biking, and love to travel.

The corporate secretary position is one of the corporate officers at FAI, and is responsible for keeping record of all corporate Board and Constituency meetings, secures important documents, records, and papers, and validates contracts, deeds, and other legal transactions as required by law or corporate bylaws. Collin says, "over the past 4 years as Human Resources Manager, I've been privileged to care for the needs of the people of Fletcher Academy, Inc. I'm humbled and honored to add Corporate Secretary to this role, and continue to serve alongside my Fletcher Family, who are so engaged in the mission of Educating for Eternity!" We are blessed to have him as part of the management team here at FAI. Please congratulate Collin on his new responsibilities.

Gary Carlson
President/CEO



Mama Smith Retires



One of the joys of working in a Secondary Boarding School is the opportunity it represents to influence young lives during a critical stage of their spiritual, emotional, academic, and social development. Over the past 28 years Glenda Smith has had many opportunities to interact with and influence the students attending Fletcher Academy.

Glenda was the first housekeeper at Fletcher Park Inn when it first opened up. She worked with several students while serving the needs of the residents who moved into this fledgling business. She fell in love with the residents and came to know them as her friends and extended members of her family.

Glenda also partnered with her husband Jon in taking on the responsibility of being class sponsors for several classes. During that time period she was heavily invested in helping the students in any way they needed it as they progressed from one year to another. It was a special time in her life because this involvement provided the opportunity to get to know more of the students on a personal level.



When her husband became Dean of Boys at Fletcher Academy she took on the role of “Mama Smith” to the young men in the dorm. No boys were ever loved more and all relished their visits to the Dean’s Apartment to enjoy Mama Smith’s fresh baked cookies or other culinary treats. There were always hugs, prayers, a listening ear, and words of encouragement for any young man that needed it. On one occasion she set out to help one young man to get the necessary paperwork and approval to go on his Senior Class Trip. Several time-consuming correspondences with the young man’s parents in Tennessee followed by a trip to a local Senator’s office helped to expedite the process of generating a needed passport. Because of her efforts the passport arrived 3 hours before the students left for their Senior Class Mission Trip and the young man was able to go with his classmates on this trip of a lifetime. Thus it was that Mama Smith did everything

she could to make the time the boys stayed in the dorm a positive experience and one that would draw them to Christ. To this day the men who were in the dorm during the time she was there still call her Mama Smith and send warm and loving greetings whenever they can.

In addition to her caring nature she was dependable. Glenda worked for several years at the Lelia Patterson Fitness Center manning the front desk position during the early morning hours. Her work day started at 4:30 am. She did this faithfully for years and never missed

a scheduled day of work during that time. The customers who utilized the Fitness Center during the time of her employment, just like the young men in the dorm, came to love and appreciate her. Many still express their gratefulness to her for the customer service and personal touch that she provided.

When Glenda left the Ad Building for the final time she was totally surprised to see the hallway lined with students and staff who were clapping for her and wishing her well. It was totally unexpected and a wonderful way for Fletcher Academy to bid goodbye to one of its staff members, whose love for young people and her God, guarantees that her role in educating for eternity will live on long after her retirement.





Taking Jesus to Thailand

Jacob Buckner '21



When it was first announced that Fletcher Academy was taking a mission trip to Thailand this school year over 80 students and parents were interested. Our school is only able to take about half of that number each trip. So it was decided to have two trips to Thailand, one in November and I was excited to be in the group that went in March.

Going to the orphanage in Thailand was my first time going on a mission trip or even going out of the the country. This was an amazing adventure that I would agree to do again in an instant. Spending time with the kids was my favorite part of this trip. It is incredible to me how loving and open these kids were even though they had never seen or met us before. We were able to connect with the kids very fast. I learned that you do not have to speak the same language to share God's love for us. I never thought that I could get so close to people without fully understanding them.

The first day we were there I helped hand out glasses at the eye clinic. It was wonderful to watch people who could hardly see be able to see again. The second day we spent playing with the kids. We were still exhausted from over 30 hours of non-stop traveling, but it was so fun to interact with these kids that even in 100+ degree heat no one in our group ever complained. When God sends you to a certain area it might not seem like much at first. But God knows the lives that can be changed and impacted in a big way just by reaching out and communicating with people. I now believe it does not matter how small the task for God, it could make a huge difference in someone's life. We held a VBS almost every day, leading the kids to praise God through songs with motions. We were able to help the kids make crafts that related to the Bible story of the day. This trip will forever change my life and I can not wait for the next place God sends me. ■





Laura Gibbs '19

Orphans clinging to me is never how I would choose to spend a day. Yet here I was facing a courtyard full of energetic children who I knew each had an unfortunate history that landed them in this children's home. I walked in and loitered where some of the older kids were talking. From the conversation I gathered that one girl had a boyfriend of a few days. She claimed to speak six languages

and her repeatedly extreme replies to get-to-know-you questions screamed that she hadn't received the attention and long-term love she needed to thrive fully and as a result now she said whatever it would take to get that attention. Dodging children, chasing my classmates, watching footballs and soccer balls flying over my head I made my way over to Mrs. Doudiken who had my same agenda of watching all the energy being spent instead of joining in the games. When she was called away she passed on the duty of protecting a kid's baby doll to me. Dutifully I cradled the plastic body until it's 'mother' finished playing tag and kickball to her heart's content. On the way back to

the bus Mrs. Doudiken told me that earlier in our time with them the girl had banged the dolls head on the table over and over and explained that that was how you woke it up. She kept emphasizing, "This is how it's done. This is how it's done." This picture wouldn't leave my head as I heard story after story driving back to the church about the kids we had left in the orphanage. The one who bit a hole in KC's borrowed shirt. The one who bit Jeffrey's shoelaces in response to a no to the nth game of tag. The one who full out punched another resident of the children's home in the face. The one 15 year-old girl whose brother is the father of her child. The ones who were removed from their friends and family because they've been hurt and refused the care they inherently deserve as sons and daughters of God. The ones we got to play with a few hours, helping them simply pass a Sunday afternoon. We didn't change the world or come out with an orphan apiece. We didn't baptize them all. But we sure played a boatload of tag, gave out countless piggyback rides and listened to whatever they had to say. And although I mostly sat on the sidelines, looking back there is no other way I would have spent that Sunday. Also people streamed the Superbowl and thoroughly enjoyed themselves as too many people crammed around the too few cell phones with international plans. ■

2019 SENIOR CLASS

BELIZE MI



Jeffrey Meadows '19

One thing that many students experienced our first full night in Belize was the drastic drop in temperature throughout the night. While it probably wasn't that drastic of a change, it was a difference from what we were expecting being down in Belize. Those who felt it the most were those sleeping in the hammocks. At first the cool breeze flowing underneath was refreshing, but when it woke you up over and over in the night it began to be a pain. Even through all of that, most students were able to get a good night's rest to get to work that first day. We all gathered for worship and breakfast around 8:30 AM and enjoyed the wonderful food made for us by some of the ladies in Belize.

When we finished our meal we split into different groups to prepare for VBS that evening. Each group worked on something different. Some preparing songs, practicing the story, setting up games, or building crafts. We then all got together and played games so that we all knew what was going on when we were to lead out later that evening. It was a lot of fun - all of us playing together like we were back in recess in grade school.

The supplies showed up midday and all of us were eager to get to work on the church. They brought us primer, brushes, a drop cloth and rollers. We began working priming the inside and outside of the church. It was great seeing our class come together, and the amount of work we were able to complete in such a short time was amazing. It was a great bonding experience for our class. We got called over for lunch and we were all shocked by how high our plates were piled full of wonderful food. After enjoying our meal we got back to work and worked until around 4 PM when we got cleaned up for VBS.

We had about 20 kids show up for VBS that night and all of us students really enjoyed working with the kids and working to spread the word of God with them through stories and songs. We ended VBS by playing games with the children, and this continued quite far into the night, long after VBS was supposed to end. Many of the students discovered that the children here seem to never run out of energy as they were playing tag and horses late into the evening.

After supper with some delicious homemade bread and a quick meeting with a few announcements and a prayer, the girls headed back to their house and the guys split off and headed to their different sleeping quarters, this time already in our hoodies and with our sleeping bags ready.

Thank you so much to everyone who made this trip possible for us, whether it be through donations or through prayer. Thanks to you we were working hard to spread the character of God to the people down in Belize. It was great that while we were serving them, we were at the same time receiving a blessing from them. It's amazing how much we were affected down there. ■



Joshua Kim '19

This morning we awoke to another beautiful sunrise. Actually, most of us choose to sleep in until the sun was high in the sky, until right before breakfast at 8. Breakfast consisted of pancakes served with syrup and honey, as well as peanut butter that we borrowed from Jeffrey Meadow's stash. Following breakfast, we were told that there was some stuff we could accomplish. Some of us used

jackhammers to prepare the bottom of the walls for stucco. The noise was deafening, and dust was flying. Others used sledgehammers to demolish extra concrete slabs. After Tyler States gave the slab several resounding blows, we scrambled in to lift the fragments into wheelbarrows for removal. As we lifted the largest piece, we suddenly became aware that we had lifted the roof off of someone's house. A tarantula the size of a tennis ball emerged. Instead of all running away, everyone came running to see it, and the work came to a temporary standstill. Despite it being rumored to be venomous, Josh Mapes wanted to pick it up. After we relocated it, work resumed. In the afternoon, we took an excursion to a nearby river. The class excitedly boarded

the bus for the 15 minute ride. We had the bus backed up to the edge of the river, and people began jumping off of it. Mr. Wilhelm was one of the first participants, and was met with great enthusiasm. We took at least a hundred slo-mo videos of people flipping and flopping into the river. Across the river was a rope swing. Several people swam over, but ran into a problem. The rope was too far away from the tree to grab. So Kailee took a long stick and swam across the river, enabling us to catch the rope. One of the more memorable moments was when a boat pulled around the bend. We all scrambled to the bank to get out of the way and watch. As we observed, we saw that it was towing a rusty dilapidated barge. We marveled at how strong the boat must be when another barge rounded the bend. Just when we thought it was over we would see another barge attached to the boat. In total, there were a total of five barges being towed by the one boat. Someone asked, "How do you stop?", and honestly no one knew. As soon as we got back, a group of guys and KC headed over to a nearby store, where we purchased cool drinks and snacks. Next door was a barbershop, where they offered some of us free haircuts. Although none of us took them up on the offer, some of the guys liked the idea. Dinner was an enchilada-like dish which many of us gorged on. To my knowledge, the record was eighteen. After dinner, we had a short worship and then headed off for fellowship and then bed. ■

MISSION TRIP





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HOMECOMING WEEKEND

October 4-6, 2019

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 4

- 10:00 am Annual Alumni Golf Classic Tournament
Sign-up at: fletcheracademy.com/alumni/golf
- 5:00 pm Register at the Lelia Patterson Center
- 6:00 pm Delicious Supper Reception
- 7:30 pm Vespers by the 10 Year Class - 2009

SABBATH, OCTOBER 5

- 8:15 am Prayer Breakfast
- 9:30 am Sabbath School by the 25 Year Class - 1994
- 10:45 am Worship Service by the 50 Year Class - 1969
- 12:30 pm Class Photos and Fellowship Potluck Dinner
(Local alumni please bring a favorite dish)
- 2:00 pm Nursing Alumni & Honor Class Reunions
- 3:00 pm Fletcher Academy Music Concert
- 4:30 pm Heritage Hall & Admin. Building Tours
- 6:30 pm Candlelight Vespers by 40 Year Class - 1979
- 8:00 pm Traditional Alumni Games: Football, Basketball

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 6

- 9:00 am Alumni Breakfast and Business Meeting

HONOR CLASSES

1949, 1954, 1959, 1964, 1969, 1974,
1979, 1984, 1989, 1994, 1999, 2004, 2009, 2014

For more information please call 828-209-6800 or visit www.fletcheracademy.com