

The Vision



Temperance:

It is by the goodness of God that in our country we have those three unspeakably precious things: freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, and the prudence never to practice either.

Mark Twain (1835 - 1910)



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The Other Silent Night . . .

If you are anything like me, you love this time of year. From Thanksgiving to New Years' and Christmas in-between, there are pictures, songs, decorations, lights and shows that remind us of the good ol' days.

All the television claymation specials, the air filled with Christmas carols like *Winter Wonderland* and *Silent Night*, and newer traditions like the red cups at Starbucks remind us of bright packages waiting under the tree and joyous times with friends and family. But, along with all the joy we experience we are also reminded that this is the season of "*peace on earth*" and "*goodwill toward men*" — the greatest virtues of all.

As we reflect upon these virtues it is good to reach back into history almost a century to find a true story which often goes untold but embodies the true meaning of Christmas — it is the story of the other Silent Night.

In the autumn of 1914 Pope Benedict XV called for an official truce of the brutal war that would soon become to be known as the "war to end all wars". Unfortunately, the pope's call was ignored and by the end of the war millions had suffered and died. But, ironically, in the midst of World War I, there was a brief glimpse of the peace we all hope to enjoy some day.

On Christmas Eve, December 24, 1914, German troops in Belgium began decorating their trenches for Christmas. They sang Christmas carols including *Silent Night*. This caused the British troops in opposing trenches to do the same. The troops then began to shout Christmas greetings to each other and finally there was a call for safe passage into the "No Man's Land" between the trenches. Both sides entered the dangerous area and began to exchange gifts of whisky, cigars, chocolate, and jam. Not only did the soldiers exchange gifts, some exchanged addresses, and drank together.

Soldiers also took this time to properly bury fallen comrades back behind their lines and mourned the dead together. It is reported that at a funeral in "No Man's Land" soldiers from both sides gathered and read a passage from the 23rd Psalm.

This time of peace and goodwill became known as the "Christmas Truce" and spread down through the trenches. There are many stories of soccer matches and later on even letters being exchanged between soldiers. In many sectors, the truce lasted through Christmas night, but in some areas, it continued until New Years' Day.

It was because of this truce that the artillery in that region of Belgium fell



silent that night — the other "silent night".

As a result of the "Christmas Truce" artillery bombardments were ordered on Christmas Eve in all of the following years of the war to ensure that there were no further lulls in the combat. Troops were also rotated from sector to sector in the front lines to prevent them from becoming overly familiar with enemy troops. Despite these measures history tells us that there were a few subsequent friendly encounters between enemy soldiers, but never on the scale of the "Christmas Truce".

So, this year, as we enjoy our candies, music, hams, trees, lights, the "Heat-miser", presents, family and friends, let us look back to the brief moment in history that is proof that when we choose to be virtuous with one another wonderful things can and will happen!

HAVE A MERRY CHRISTMAS !

A Christmas Timeline . . .

- The custom of singing Christmas carols is very old - the earliest English collection was published in 1521.
- The first Christmas card was created in England on December 9, 1842.
- Electric Christmas tree lights were first used in 1895. The idea for using electric Christmas lights came from an American, Ralph E. Morris. The new lights proved safer than the traditional candles.
- Poinsettia plants are named after Joel R. Poinsett, an American minister to Mexico, who brought the red-and-green plant from Mexico to America in 1828.
- The first Christmas card was created in England on December 9, 1842.
- Electric Christmas tree lights were first used in 1895. The idea for using electric Christmas lights came from an American, Ralph E. Morris. The new lights proved safer than the traditional candles.
- In an effort to solicit cash to pay for a charity Christmas dinner in 1891, a large crabpot was set down on a San Francisco street, becoming the first Salvation Army collection kettle.
- Construction workers started the Rockefeller Center Christmas tree tradition in 1931.
- Rudolph, "the most famous reindeer of all," was the product of Robert L. May's imagination in 1939. The copywriter wrote a poem about the reindeer to help lure customers into the Montgomery Ward department store.

TPS is One of America's Best High Schools!

We are both excited and proud to announce that for the second year in a row *US News and World Report* has ranked Temecula Preparatory School as one of the best high schools in America!



Last year, in 2007, *US News* issued its first "Best High School" awards after examining data from over 18,000 public high schools in the United States in an effort to take a snapshot of each school at a particular moment in time to look at the kinds of students that were enrolled and the caliber of the education that was provided.

TPS was awarded a bronze medal as one of the best high schools in America and was one of only two schools to receive this distinguished award in all of Riverside County.

In its second annual "America's Best High Schools," released on December 5, 2008, *U.S. News* collaborated with School Evaluation Services - a K-12 education data research business run by Standard & Poor's—and analyzed academic and enrollment data from 21,069 public high schools in 48 states to find the very best across the country. The best schools were placed into gold, silver, bronze, or honorable mention categories.

A three-step process determined which were the best high schools. The first two steps ensured that the schools serve all their students well. If a school was able to pass through the first two steps a third step was utilized to assess college readiness. This methodology is based on two key principles. The first is that a great high school must serve all its students well, not just those who are bound for college, and, the second is that the school must be able to produce

measurable academic outcomes to show that the school is successfully educating its student body across a range of performance indicators. When it was all said and done only 1,900 — 9% — of the schools could be considered among "America's Best High Schools" and TPS is one of those.

Our neighboring counties of San Diego and San Bernardino had 18 and 3 schools respectively that made the list, but this year there was only one from Riverside County — yes, Temecula Preparatory. For more information about our award and the rankings in general you can go to: http://www.usnews.com/listings/high-schools/california/temecula_preparatory.

Thank you for supporting and being a part of one of the best high schools in America!

Honor is Due

There is an old phrase we have all heard before that says "Give Honor to whom Honor is Due" — not only is that a nice thing to do for someone, it is a virtuous practice in life overall. If someone has worked hard and been successful, their work should be noted.

It is by no accident that TPS has been recognized as one of the best schools in the nation two years in a row. That takes hard work, determination, long hours, an emotional investment, and the ability to push through difficulties and come out

stronger and better on the other side. For that reason, it is appropriate to honor two specific parts of the TPS family who have worked hard and through that have kept TPS at the top.

First, it is important to note the TPS faculty is amazing. From grades K-12 the faculty is preparing our students day-to-day to shoulder the responsibility of future leadership. By keeping our school among the nation's top schools the faculty is grooming tomorrow's leaders now. Please know how blessed we are to have the faculty we have.

Second, it is important to note all of the support staff. TPS could not operate at the peak that it does without the level of support and service it has from those that handle the phones, facilities, finances, records, child care and campus safety.

So, this season, when you are trying to remember those who are important to you and your family, please remember your teachers and those who support the teachers in serving you and your children. Thank you!

Patriot Ball Tickets



We want to thank all of you who have responded so positively to our invitation to attend the Patriot's Ball coming up in February. Your support is critical to our school in the upcoming years, especially as we begin to prepare for more news from the state regarding the budget crisis and the impact it is going to have on all schools including our beloved TPS.

Please remember to mark your calendars for Saturday evening, February 21, 2009. It is on that day that Temecula Preparatory School will be holding its third annual fundraising event, the *Patriot's Ball*, at Wilson Creek Winery in Temecula.

As we have said over the past few weeks, now, more than ever, the *Patriot's Ball* will help us to raise vital funds for TPS. All proceeds that are raised through the event will be applied directly to the purchase of books and teacher's aids to ensure the school's vision and mission are being met in the upcoming school year and do not suffer under the

weight of the state's fiscal crisis.

So, if you have not done so already, please purchase your tickets before the Christmas Break — December 19th. **After that date the ball ticket prices will increase from \$75.00 to \$95.00.** We truly desire for every family to be with us that night. Not only will it be a time of reflection on the accomplishments of the school, but it will also serve as a time for all of us to enjoy one another's company, friendship, laughter, entertainment and good food. We hope to see you there!