

# The Vision



*Fortitude*

◆ What would life be if we had no courage to attempt anything?

*Vincent Van Gogh*

◆ Bravery is the capacity to perform properly even when scared half to death.

*Omar Bradley*

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## Finding Virtue in the New Year

Most of us look to the New Year as a fresh start, it is at this time that we assure ourselves we will stop our bad habits and that we will approach our lives more positively. As a means to secure this more positive life we make "New Year's Resolutions".

A recent survey of over 300,000 people worldwide concluded that our top ten resolutions each year are to: lose weight and get in better physical shape; stick to a budget; pursue debt reduction; enjoy more quality time with family and friends; find a soul mate; quit smoking; find a better job; learn something new; volunteer and help others; and to get organized. But, despite our most noble efforts to live a better life, many of our resolutions are forgotten by February 1<sup>st</sup> each year. So, when did this wonderful practice of self-deception and self-induced frustration begin?

The history of the New Year's resolution goes back over 2000 years ago. According to most historians the mythical Roman King Janus -- which is where we get the name "January" -- was symbolized by two faces looking

in opposite directions. Not because he was a hypocrite, but because he had the ability to look back on the past and look forward to the future. He became known as the guardian of entrances and doors, and entering the New Year. From there Romans began to celebrate this time by seeking forgiveness from their enemies and giving one another gifts.

But looking to the past at our mistakes and seeking to resolve to build a better future was not just a Roman tradition. Other ancient cultures, such as the Chinese, performed elaborate rituals to chase away the ghosts of the past involving cymbals, fireworks, bonfires, processions and masks that symbolized the dead. These rituals were performed to denounce past sins, bad habits and frailties leaving a clean slate and releasing the people from the bonds of ill health and oppression.

It is evident that when we look to the history of New Years celebration we find that the celebration is grounded in a tradition of closing the door on the past year and looking ahead to peace and prosperity in the next.

So, if this is such a positive approach to celebrating the New Year, why do so many of us make resolutions that are promptly broken, abandoned or forgotten?

If we are honest with ourselves the most common reason for ignoring our resolutions is that we lack the fortitude to see them through.



*Fortitude, the virtue for this quarter, is having the courage to face challenges and obstacle and persevering when things get tough.*

So, as you talk about this virtue with your children at home, maybe you can use your recent resolution as an example and then next year at this time as you look back, not only can you be satisfied with where you are going, you can be satisfied with where you have been.

## On January 15th in History . . .

<b>1535</b> Henry VIII declares himself head of English Church	<b>1895</b> Tchaikovsky's ballet "Swan Lake" premieres, St Petersburg	<b>1967</b> Super Bowl I Packers beat Chiefs, 35-10 in LA
<b>1759</b> British Museum opens in Montague House, London	<b>1915</b> Japan claims economic control of China	<b>1975</b> Space Mountain opens (Disneyland)
<b>1785</b> Mozart's string quartet opus 10 premieres	<b>1934</b> Babe Ruth signs a 1934 contract for \$35,000	<b>1981</b> "Hill Street Blues" premieres on NBC-TV
<b>1844</b> University of Notre Dame receives its charter in Indiana	<b>1943</b> 1st transport of Jews from Amsterdam to concentration camp Vught	<b>1991</b> UN's deadline for Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait passes
<b>1870</b> Donkey 1st used as symbol of Democratic Party, in Harper's Weekly	<b>1956</b> KWAB TV channel 4 in Big Spring TX begins broadcasting	<b>1997</b> Space Shuttle Atlantis docks with Mir Space Station

## Missing TPS by Scott Phillips

Murchison Falls National Park is the largest national park in Uganda and one of the most spectacular in Africa. Here the Nile cascades over a breathtaking 14 miles of rapids and on the banks of those rapids you will find elephant, crocodile, hippopotamus, lion, giraffe, buffalo, and countless antelopes and birds. Why do I share this with you? Because, as you read this I am probably hip high in the Ugandan jungle right now and hopefully I am not lost. Either way, I know one thing for certain — I am missing TPS and shaking all those hands in the morning!

This past fall I was invited to travel to Uganda. While I hesitated to do so at first, I knew that one of the primary reasons I was asked to go was to assist in the early planning and developmental stages of a new school with a non-profit organization that seeks to provide humanitarian aid in Uganda. The organization was founded in response to the overwhelming needs of the Ugandan people as a result of the horrific reign of Idi Amin in the 1970's, the devastating results of the AIDS epidemic and subsequent political unrest.

## Our Real API

The API is a school performance measurement system which was first developed as part of California's 1999 Public Schools Accountability Act. Early each year, the state calculates the Base API for each school to establish a baseline for the school's academic performance, and it sets an annual target for growth. Each summer, the state announces the Growth API for each school, which reflects growth in the API from year to year. The basis for the API calculations comes from the annual STAR testing.

It is important to note that TPS does not look to the API system as the sole means of evaluation of its program. The result of utilizing high stakes testing such as the API as a sole means for measuring a school's performance has come under serious fire recently as noted in the book *Collateral Damage*. How High-Stakes Testing

After considering all of this, it was very difficult to say "no". So, here I am.

I am spending the majority of my time in the **Luwero** district of central Uganda, the site of a fierce insurgency by the rebel National Resistance Army and a brutal counter-insurgency by the government of Milton Obote, known as the "Bush War", that left many thousands of civilians dead and is currently home to thousands of orphans. In fact, over 50% of the population in Uganda is 15 years old or younger. I will also be staying in a local school where the conditions are poor, but reportably safe. (I am not sure what that means as I type this, but I am sure I will know as you read this.)

I am taking Uganda-style baths (water in a basin) and using Ugandan-style facilities (a hole in the ground) and I am sleeping on the ground covered by mosquito netting. I am hoping that the malaria pills I was given work — as well as the inoculations for yellow fever, typhoid and polio. I am also eating Ugandan food consisting of rice, beans, potatoes, peas, greens and fruit.

Corrupts America's Schools. By Sharon L. Nichols and David C. Berliner.

However, TPS also recognizes that until the state of California recognizes the need for change in this area, TPS will need to participate in the state testing program. Interestingly, despite the fact that TPS does not teach to the test, TPS scores quite well regardless...further evidence that classical education works.

Since we do need to accept that the API exists we at least want to report API numbers that are more accurate than those reported by the state. This past fall the state reported that TPS's API was 849 — only place about the lowest in TVUSD of 831. However, this is inaccurate. TPS is a K-12 school, but the state's API system does not recognize that. So, every year the TPS elementary, middle and high school scores are



Notice the absence of meat, not only is that a huge sacrifice for me, I am pretty sure the only meat on the menu will be me if I happen to get lost wandering over to the facilities.

But, all that is well worth being here — even going vegetarian — as I am here to help develop a school for over two-hundred parentless Ugandan children, using our very own Temecula Preparatory as a model.

So, thank you very much for being part of and taking part in the creation of a great model that can be used as an example for not only schools in our own state, but for schools clear around the world! And, while I am not sure what will come of our efforts over here, I know one thing is for sure. Our students know that we do more than talk about virtue — we live it.

combined into one API and reported along with all the other elementary scores. This requires us to break out the scores ourselves in order to provide a more accurate API based upon the grade levels in TVUSD.

A truer picture of TPS's API for last year is this:

Elementary: 890 (9th in TVUSD)  
Middle School: 870 (1st in TVUSD)  
High School: 797 (2nd in TVUSD)

Again, while this is by no means a complete reflection of the TPS program, it does indeed provide evidence that classical education works. Without teaching to the test the pattern we see is exactly what we should expect and coupled with the *US News* "America's Best High Schools" award, it is apparent that TPS is meeting the standards **you have** for us!

## The Patriot's Ball is Just Around the Corner . . .

By now I am sure your calendars are marked, but just in case — the Patriot's Ball is just around the corner. In just five short weeks it will be Saturday, February 21, 2009 and Temecula Preparatory School will be holding its third annual fundraising event, the *Patriot's Ball*, at Wilson Creek Winery in Temecula.



Many of you have already responded and we are looking forward with anticipation to the time of food, entertainment, dancing and fun we will be having together. But, if you are one of those who has been procrastinating or is still unsure, please know we need you too.

As we have shared the past two months, the *Patriot's Ball* will raise vital funds for TPS books and teacher's aids to ensure the school's vision and mission are being met in the upcoming school year.

Why? Because each and every week over the past eight to ten weeks the news regarding the state budget's affect on schools has been gloomier. But, it does not have to be that way!

With your help we will be able to continue building a great classical school to serve our students — your children.