

Castle Valley Academy JOURNAL

Issue 2 January 2024

Castle Valley Academy Christmas Concert 2023



Check out CVA Choir Performance at
Granite Bay SDA Church here on
[YouTube!](#)

1:07:59 / 1:40:00

Scroll for details

The **Students of CVA**
Choir Tour 2023

+GIVING
Opportunities

Q & A
with Mrs. Norma

The Students of CVA

Check us out on [YouTube!](#)



Jada

My name is Jada and I am currently a senior at Castle Valley Academy. This is my second year at Castle Valley. I am so happy to have come to an actual school with peers and teachers. Before CVA I did homeschool and I didn't really like it.

The classes at CVA that I like are Music, Health, and Agriculture. At CVA, playing my instruments and singing with friends is one of my many favorite things to do here. When I am at home I enjoy going to the Colorado River with family and friends.



Micah

I am Micah, Son of Luke, a member of the graduating class of Twenty Twenty-Four, and a fourth-year Cadet of the United States Airforce Auxiliary.

I am an entrepreneur, photographer, videographer, search and rescue/tactical enthusiast, and a guy who just likes helping people.

I like working with both my hands and head, solving problems, and restoring items that need fixing.

I love having intellectual conversations about life, Christ, business ideas, and problems that we face today.

Thank You for investing your most valuable resource of time into taking a moment to read this auto-cogitation.



Leticia

Hello friends! My name is Leticia and I'm a student attending Castle Valley Academy. Here at CVA, our mentors teach us practical skills like farming, cooking, survival, horseback riding, CPR, etc.

It is my duty to make sure that the students and staff have food on their plates. I am not alone in this task. My friends Ms. Rosalie, Dayanara, and Melody help me ensure everything looks good and tastes delicious in the cafeteria. We work hard and laugh with each other.

Currently, I am a junior. Next year, I will be a Senior. It is honestly kind of scary. But the Lord promises me this "For I know the plans that I have for YOU "declares the Lord," plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."(Jeremiah 29:11) This verse has been very uplifting, especially the part where it says," plans to prosper you and not to harm you." We live in this world of sin so... of course we are going to have our struggles along the way, but the Lord will always be on our side. MOTTO: Walk by Faith and not by Sight.



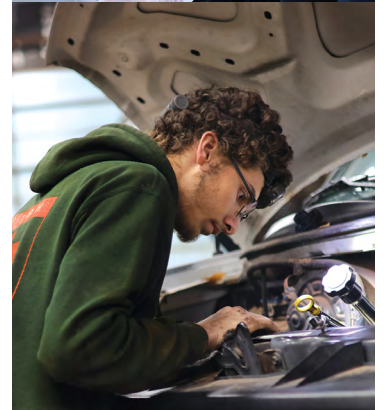
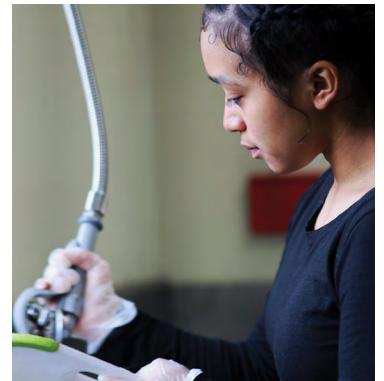
Sean

Howdy! My name is Sean and I am a 16-year-old sophomore at Castle Valley Academy. I'm originally from the state of Kansas, but I like being in Utah. I really enjoy traveling to most places in the USA, especially Texas.

Sean continued...

Some of my favorite things to do include spending time in God's Word and in nature: bird-watching, wildlife photography, hiking, reading, working with and riding horses, playing music, and hanging out with my friends. As you might be able to tell, I'm a very outdoor-oriented person and I love everything about nature.

To be honest, being here at school can be super hectic at times, but it's always a huge blessing and a lot of fun no matter what. I'm very glad God has led me to come here, and I hope that this school year is going to be the best one yet.



On the Cover

Castle Valley Academy is nestled in a beautiful valley surrounded by public land and majestic mountain buttes near Moab, Utah.

Editors:

Jada, Ben, Nathanael, Melody & Micah

Assistants:

Sean, Ethan & Zethyn

Staff: Brenda Ellis, Luis Alonso & Principal Norma Howard

Donation of Handbells

By Kyler & Mercedes

Handbells have added an exciting new avenue for Castle Valley Academy students' musical performances. Lewis Walton, a long time friend of our Principal, Ms. Norma has recently donated four more octaves of bells to us and we are so excited! It is an amazing blessing, and we are going to need more students to play them!

Ethan, a student, is our director and we practice every Friday and Sunday. We all have lots of fun. Sometimes it is hard to get the timing right, but we play together, working as a team, to make beautiful music. We often have concerts and play the bells for our audience. People have said that it was their favorite part of the whole event!

Right now, we are working on perfecting "Now the Green Blade Riseth" and we can't wait to perform it in our next concert. So if you're interested in joining our school and playing bells with us, please go to www.cva.school/student-life/apply and put in an application today!

Q & A

with Principal
Norma Howard



By Dayanara

What are some special events in the past that you think have led you to where you are now?

One event that has led Ms. Norma to where she is now is that in 6th grade she wanted to become a missionary. The events in her life have led her to Adventist school teaching.

How would you describe your personality?

Ms. Norma would describe her personality as quiet, but courageous. She likes to go places and do things. She is not the life of the party but likes to be at the party. She is compassionate, and loves people. She doesn't think she is funny, but I (Dayanara) think she is very entertaining. She likes to tease people and have fun. She says, "If it is not fun, I do not want to do it. Life should be joyful." She likes to help people have a good day.

How would you describe your relationship with God? Also, how did you get that relationship with God?

Ms. Norma would say her relationship with God is that He is her best friend, her confidant, and helper.

Ms. Norma's mom started taking her to church when she was four years old. When she was five, she wanted to get baptized and become a missionary worker. She wasn't always a Christian. Her second Sabbath, she was watching cartoons. Then her six year old brother came in and turned the TV off.

Ms. Norma asked him, "Why'd you do that for?"

Her brother told her, "It's Sabbath. We don't watch TV."

Another story that led her to have this relationship with God was when, in 6th grade, her teacher taught her to pray. She specifically prayed about whether to become a pet veterinarian or not. Someone told her, "Norma, you're going to be a great teacher."

In her head, she was thinking, "No, I'm not. I'm going to be a vet when I'm older."

But then she heard a still, small voice tell her, "Oh yes you are!" She went to Pacific Union College and got her degree in teaching.

Where do you see yourself in the future?

Heaven

Were you always planning on becoming a teacher?

No, she was not. She wanted to be a vet and a missionary.

Have you always wanted to work with

highschool students?

Yes, she has. However, she has mostly worked with K-8 and has also been a professor at La Sierra University.

What brought you to Castle Valley Academy?

God led her here even though she was not planning on it. Things happened for her to know for sure that she would be coming here.

Why did you decide to come to Castle Valley Academy?

God.

Do you like your job? And why?

Yes, she loves her job. She loves to help young people spiritually and academically, to help train us to finish the work and teach us the true Science of Education (God's image reproduced in us).

FUN FACTS ABOUT MS. NORMA

- Ms. Norma was raised on a farm in Lindsay, California
- Ms. Norma LOVES animals (including snakes and "cute" jumping spiders). She especially loves horses, goats, birds, dolphins, lions, bees, dogs and cats.
- Her favorite colors are purple, green and white.
- She has only owned Toyota Tacoma trucks since the late 90's.
- Ms. Norma just celebrated her birthday, but we're not telling you which birthday.
- She loves to do outdoor activities like snow ski, water ski, ride horses and enjoys the great outdoors!
- Ms. Norma eats a banana whenever she gets a headache and it cures it!
- She is an accomplished artist and loves to paint watercolors.
- Ms. Norma is incredibly humble and modest about her achievements. She was once named Teacher of the Year for the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists.



My Evolution into a Horse-Crazy Person

By Sean

When I was younger, I always kind of liked horses. I liked watching and observing their behaviors, admiring their looks and their strength, and reading horse books...lots and lots of horse books. But, considering all that I thought I knew about them, I still only knew very little until I joined Castle Valley Academy's horsemanship program. That was when I really started to learn about horses.

On the first day, we mostly just sat inside and talked about safety, situational awareness, horse behaviors, parts of the horse, tack and whatnot.

We only actually started riding during the second or third class. This was really my very first time actually interacting with horses physically. Learning how to brush them down and get a halter on them was pretty interesting, but then it was time for some actual riding.

We started off bareback so we could learn to find a good sense of balance before we started to use the saddles.

I was up on a big, beautiful gelding named Eclipse. Now, Eclipse is a healthy horse, but not very wide by any means. I actually found it difficult to maintain good balance and was constantly afraid of falling off. The stress made me tense up considerably, which did not help matters much.

My instructor observed this and came over to me, grabbing the reins. She told me to close my eyes while she led Eclipse around as I tried to find my balance. She also told me to relax and loosen up a bit. Things went better, but I still found balancing difficult on such a tall, skinny horse.

My instructor finally decided to have me switch horses and put me on a small, stocky horse named Sunshine. I instantly found her much easier to balance on and started riding around the arena. Something

clicked with me once I started riding Sunshine. Riding soon became fun and rewarding and Sunny quickly became my favorite horse on campus. I've been riding her every opportunity I've had since.

Would I ride Eclipse bareback today? Absolutely. But that's not because he's gained weight. It's because I've gained experience.

Being a part of CVA's horsemanship program has taught me so much about horses and the responsibilities that come with taking care of them. I truly do believe it has been an enormous blessing to me and I hope to continue to be part of and contribute to it.

And now, If you'll excuse me, I'm going to go out for a trail ride on Sunny. Happy Riding!

Chemistry Class

By Blake

At Castle Valley Academy, we have been learning the exciting science of Chemistry with our teacher Mr. Thom. Chemistry is the study of scientific properties and behavior of matter. Physical science and Natural sciences study the elements that make up matter and compounds made of atoms, molecules and ions. Chemistry is the study of the structures, properties and the changes as they react with other substances.

In chemistry, we have been learning about the chemistry of soap making. It is fascinating how it needs to cure for 4-6 weeks before using it so that there is no negative reaction to the lye in the soap. We made lavender soap for our farm store on campus. We also learned about the chemistry of ice cream. The salt brings down the melting point so the ice melts at a lower temperature and freezes the ice cream.

Some interesting facts that we have learned in chemistry are how the brain works and what causes some of the more common brain diseases.

Chemistry Class continued...

We watch the Highwire and other videos to explain more in detail about theories we discuss in class. One of the more recent summaries Mr. Thom had us do, was about the hippocampus, how it works, and the effects that drugs have on it. He is also teaching us logical ways to solve our more common problems in the world, how to make choices for yourself and not to go with the crowd.

We are really excited about learning about Adult Hippocampal Neurogenesis, the growth of new neurons when you sleep so you have more space for memories. The hippocampus is where your memories are processed. Watching the news before bed can make you forget the good things that happened in the day and replace those memories with the fear of the things that are happening in the world. When new neurons stop growing in the hippocampus, there is no more storage there, so the brain uses the spaces of old memories and writes over it with what has happened more recently. It becomes possible to get Alzheimers. So, as you have probably figured out, our chemistry class makes learning fun!

The Market Garden

By Leticia

The market garden at Castle Valley Academy is an amazing place to work as a student. We grow a variety of delicious fruits and vegetables year round to feed our staff, students and the community.

Our boss at the market garden, Farmer Sean, assigns what he has for us to do for each day and we complete our tasks (most of the time).

Ellen G. White says, "Gentlemen and ladies that refuse to labor because they are not compelled to, and because it is not fashionable, are not guided and controlled by enlightened reason. Those who shun manual labor, cannot have physical stamina." (Counsels on Agriculture, p.11)

Last fall, our main crop was tomatoes but we also grew other varieties of plants such as greens, peppers, cucumbers, and Swiss chard!

We are currently picking and sorting tomatoes at the farm. We have tomatoes of all sorts of shapes and sizes. There was this one tomato that I picked. The funny thing about this particular one was that it was shaped like a flower! I showed my crew about this neat-looking fruit and they were like, WOW!

I don't normally like cherry tomatoes. The ones at the store are ok... I can live without them. However, when I first took a bite of the cherry tomatoes here, I couldn't stop eating them because they just tasted SO good! Hey, you should stop by at our market sometime when it's tomato season again!



Christmas Concert Tour

By Jada and Michael

Every year, the school's music program hosts a tour in different areas around the country. This year, the tour mostly focused on California, although we started with several concerts in Utah.

We started our tour on Wednesday, December 6, 2023 in West Jordan, about 4 hours away from our school. Then, after several more concerts in the Greater Salt Lake area, we continued on to Northern California. We performed at Granite Bay Seventh-day Adventist church in Granite Bay, California.

At first, we were all very nervous because the church was so large, but the concert went very well and we had a lot of fun there. We also met Doug Batchleour and we took a group photo. The concert was live streamed on YouTube and you can watch it here!

For a student's birthday, we went to the Riverside Pier and had dinner at Olive Garden, which everyone was very happy about.

We had a stop off at the very small Yucca Valley Seventh-day Adventist church, but the crowd was large. They had invited many people from their community to come to our Christmas Concert and they sure did!

In the middle of our tour, we went to Fresno Central SDA Church. By this time, many of the students were sick. We felt like we hadn't sung our best, but the church was so grateful that we had come and invited us to come back next year. Pastor Stephen Bohr was there and we got to see him in person, which was pretty cool.

At Hesperia, CA, we celebrated Jada's birthday and had fruit parfaits for breakfast. Hesperia was also the home of one of our students who was very glad to see his mom.

The last sabbath of our tour, we performed for the church service at Needles Seventh-day Adventist Church in Needles, CA. The Needles concert was homecoming for a number of our students, including one of our seniors, Jada, and the church was packed.

The last concert of the tour was held in nearby Lake Havasu City, AZ. We performed on the open air stage under the London Bridge itself surrounded by Christmas lights and tourists wandering by. A hundred or so people stopped to watch the concert and there were probably another couple hundred that heard from shops close by.

In a little under two weeks, we performed 12 times in three different states.



Christmas Concert at CVA Reaches Local Community

By Joel & Grace

Each year we have an annual Christmas concert for our community on campus. We invite our neighbors to come share a supper prepared by academy staff, followed by the concert.

Before the event we prepare gift bags with homemade bread or treats, literature, and an invitation to the program. We pass them out door-to-door during our outreach period. We also decorate the chapel with lights, trees, and various Christmas decorations. This is our first concert of the season before we go on tour.

This year about 80 community members came and, of course, our academy staff. We had choir, small group songs, and handbells. The cool thing about this event is we get the opportunity to witness to our neighbors that are either another denomination or not christian at all.

Our Principal, Mrs. Norma commented, "I think this year proved to be a great blessing to the people that attended. And I, Mrs. Norma give this article an A +."

DIFFERENCE

2024 Senior Class Fundraising for Europe Class Trip

By Ben, Jada, Melody, Micah, and Nathanael

The Castle Valley Academy Senior Class of 2024 is seeking your support for an invaluable educational and spiritual experience: a class trip to Europe. This is an opportunity for them to experience history, enhance their cultural understanding, and community outreach. We believe that it will also provide a closer walk with the Savior.

At CVA, our educational philosophy extends beyond the traditional classroom setting, aiming to provide us with diverse and enriching experiences that contribute to our holistic development.

The proposed journey to Europe aligns seamlessly with these objectives, offering seniors the opportunity to explore Christian historical landmarks, engage with different cultures, and gain a global perspective that will undoubtedly shape their future endeavors.

The primary objective of the Senior Class Trip are to ignite a profound spiritual transformation that will build our faith. In essence, a journey to Europe is not merely a physical exploration, but a pilgrimage for the soul. It will be profound for these young people to see where the Waldensians were pushed from their homes and into the mountains and persecuted to no end. Whether visiting sites, researching these spiritual trail blazers, or participating in a reformation tour, we can forge a tangible link to the teachings that have shaped our Christianity.

Students will have the chance to visit iconic landmarks, museums, and historical sites, expanding their knowledge beyond textbooks. Europe, with its rich

Senior Class Fundraising continued...

history and diverse cultures, serves as an unparalleled classroom.

The trip includes curated educational experiences, such as a guided reformation tour with insights into European history, art, society, and the Reformation.

In collaboration with the European division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, students plan to engage in outreach programs which includes volunteering in local communities, participating in service projects, and fostering cross-cultural understanding through meaningful interactions.

This transformative experience will only be accessible to the Castle Valley Academy Senior Class of 2024 with financial support from donors like you.

Your contribution will directly impact the success of this initiative, allowing us to cover travel expenses, accommodation, educational activities, and outreach programs. Your donations will directly contribute to covering the costs associated with the trip, making it possible for every student to participate.

You can also help by spreading the word! Please share our cause with your network of friends, family and acquaintances to help students reach their fundraising goal!

We believe in the importance of experiential learning and the positive impact it can have on young minds. We are invested in the education and experiences of our youth, an investment in the future. **Please feel free to contact fred@cva.school to donate or call 435-259-7719**



MAKING A

Have you heard about our student **SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES?**

Please help enable worthy students to stay in school here!

Contact CVA today at 435-259-7719!

Tuition Sponsorship helps eligible students with tuition, room & board.



B E L I Z E mission trip

February 1-12, 2024. [MOVE Missionary Outreach Volunteer Evangelism Center.](#)

Students will conduct evangelistic meetings, Vacation Bible School, music ministry, visitation and feed the needy.

If you would like to support this venture financially, please contact fred@cva.school or Call 435-259-7719

SENIOR CLASS TRIP

E U R O P E

Reformation Sites & Outreach

Our Senior Class and staff chaperones are raising funds to enable them to travel to Europe for their Senior Class Trip in Spring 2024. Our seniors are excited to to grow spiritually as experience broader cultural and historical awareness.

If you would like to support this venture financially, please contact fred@cva.school or Call 435-259-7719