

Board Member Spotlight

This month we meet one of the ex officio members of the ACCS Board, Bob Donaldson. He's a fascinating fellow who has been all over the world, is an avid student of languages and history, could easily have taken a post in academia, and yet makes his living as an independent consultant assessing risk management for new software projects/products.

Having been born in Ann Arbor, MI, accounts for the Wolverine fanaticism, but the larger part of his life has been spent in Texas. He attended junior and senior high school in College Station and then Austin College in Sherman. His father set the bar high, instilling a love of language, literature, and history during the growing up years. Bob was delighted to discover that many of the characters he'd become acquainted with in after dinner readings were real people. He "won the draft lottery" and found himself in Russian language school serving in the Army in Germany. He also finished a bachelor's degree (government major, math and German minors) while still in the Army. Graduate school at UT-Austin followed the military, where he studied Slavic linguistics. This degree included research at Charles University in Prague where he studied the compiled sermons of Jan Hus.

Bob reports growing up Presbyterian, but without being a Christian, so all the religious habits were jettisoned under the pressure of college. It was not until grad school that he confessed belief in Christ. He worked with the Navigators in Prague and then traveled with them in the Soviet Union.

He eventually met his wife, Nancy, and they were married in November 1981.

Once their children Mary and Wesley were born, the weight of parental responsibility began to settle upon them. The legacy of his father's education, his understanding of covenant, and examining the choices of homeschool, Christian schools, and public schools eventually led Bob to discover the early ACCS conferences. He began by reading *For the Children's Sake* and *Recovering the Lost Tools of Learning*. He and Nancy, along with several families in the Austin area, then founded Regents School in 1992. He was involved from the beginning with governance, curriculum development, and building the vision of training 3rd millennium Christians to serve God. He was asked to consider ACCS Board membership once Regents School of Austin was up and running.

To folks considering a start-up school Bob makes several recommendations:

1. Read broadly; challenge your assumptions with reading choices. Books he recommends to begin: *City of God*, *How the Irish Saved Civilization*, *The Lost Tools of Learning*, *Recovering the Lost Tools of Learning*, and *The Seven Laws of Teaching*.

2. Understand antithesis. Be certain to separate the pragmatic (job training) from the principal (education). This is not immediately obvious, particularly in the early grades, but from 7th grade up, it is vital.

3. Use caution: everything, at its root, is theological. Be certain to set rules for handling disagreements over these issues.

Bob Donaldson

ACCS Accredited Schools

Ad Fontes Academy
Fairfax Station, VA
since May 2002

Berean Academy
Tampa, FL
since April 2005

Cary Christian School
Apex, NC
since May 2002

Logos School
Moscow, ID
since January 2000

Providence Classical Christian School
Lynnwood, WA
since June 2004

Regents School of Austin
Austin, TX
since April 2002

Rockbridge Academy
Millersville, MD
since January 2004

Veritas Academy
Leola, PA
since December 2002

Westminster Academy
Memphis, TN
since April 2002