

C A N A D I A N
Mennonite

September 20, 2004
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Back to school

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Teaching right living

This issue we present a special focus on Mennonite education. Greetings to students, at all levels, as you experience new ways of living, thinking and understanding your world. May *Canadian Mennonite* be one way you can stay connected with your church.

Education of our youth has been a priority of the Canadian church for more than a century, and for Anabaptists much further back than that. *Martyrs Mirror* describes a 1569 interrogation where a Friar Cornelis exclaims in amazement to Jacob de Roore, "You Anabaptists are certainly fine fellows to understand the holy Scriptures; for before you are rebaptized, you can't tell A from B, but as soon as you are baptized, you can read and write. If the devil and his mother have not a hand in this, I do not understand anything about you people."

de Roore retorts, "I can well hear that you do not understand our way of doing; for you ascribe to Satan the grace which God grants our simple converts, when we with all diligence teach them to read."

"With all diligence" is a good description of the mighty efforts Mennonites have made in Canada to teach their children through Mennonite schools.

Writing in *Mennonite Education in a Post-Christian World*, Gerald Gerbrandt, Canadian Mennonite University president, shares Rod Sawatzky's list of what makes Mennonite post-secondary schools distinctive in the world of higher Christian education. First on the list is that Mennonite schools act out the idea of church in the wider world: "Mennonite colleges attempt to be incarnational, even as the church is incarnational.... Mennonite colleges are called to nurture citizens of God's kingdom rather than of the nation."

This idea of school as a place where faith takes on flesh resonates with me. While thinking about this editorial, I

asked a friend to reflect on his university experiences at Conrad Grebel University College. Enrolled in an engineering program with little space for other courses, he was only able to take one of the Grebel classes that students there are asked to take. Even so, he described the experience of living in residence there as one of his life's most formative experiences. He found it "a culture of grace" in the middle of a secular university campus.

There have long been, and will continue to be, debates about the books used or ideas taught in classes at Mennonite schools. The church is right to concern itself with what the current generation is teaching the next generation. The education of Mennonite youth is the way we pass on precious parts of our heritage, the "message we send to another time," as T. D. Regehr wrote.

However, I think the most profound educational experience Mennonite schools can offer is simply the gathering together of people committed to learning right living in a world that makes this difficult. For some, their school years will be one of the most profound incarnations of church they will ever experience. I believe residential programs are particularly important to this purpose; CMU's upcoming residential expansion will have long-lasting benefits for our community.

Second-year student Natai Shelsen wrote in this month's Grebel student paper, "Conrad Grebel is particularly conducive to soul searching, because it allows you to discover yourself on many levels: personally, socially, and spiritually. These three searches are probably the more important of our lives, because at the end of the day, when you strip away the unimportant superficiality that is so ingrained in our culture, all we have left are our friends, our God, and ourselves."

Providing a place where students can encounter God and enter into a community of faith in life-changing ways: This is the highest calling for all our Mennonite schools.

—**Timothy Dyck**

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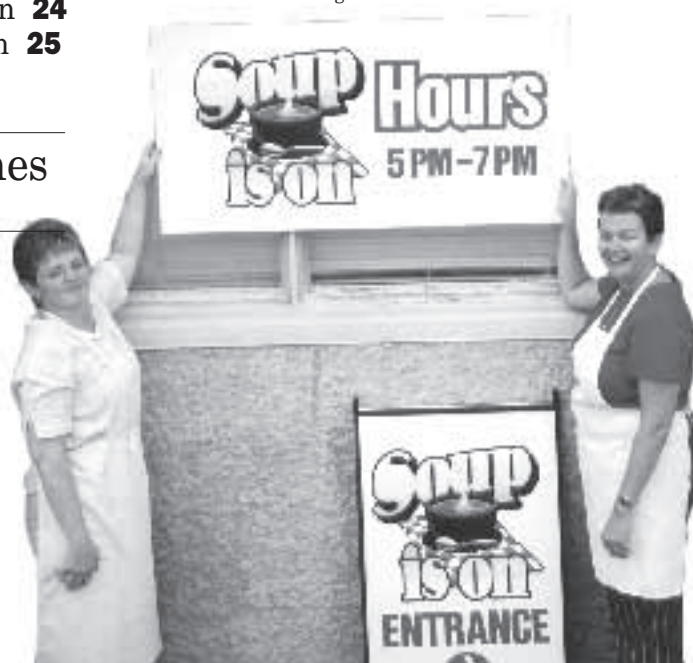
Web site preview

Get a preview of the next *Canadian Mennonite* before it comes in the mail.

Selections are posted on our web site at

www.canadianmennonite.org on the Thursday before the issue date. So you can check out the Oct. 4 issue by Sept. 30.

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Cover: Student leader Luke Keller welcomes Hannah Klassen to Conrad Grebel University College. See page 20.

Toronto, Ont.

German volunteer reflects on Toronto experience

A volunteer to Canada from Germany? Doesn't Canada have its own volunteers?

These are some of the questions that Martina Hettich encountered as she prepared for a year of Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) in Toronto.

She lived near Danforth Mennonite Church, in a house with three other volunteers. She worked in three placements: DayCare Connections, Global Closet thrift shop, and Ten Thousand Villages. As her year ended, she reflected on the following questions.

What was your most memorable experience in MVS?

Living together with people you have never met before. It was kind of exciting to get to know them and figuring out that it actually works. It was also interesting living with Mennonites.

What made you want to participate in MVS?

I wanted an intercultural experience and I wanted to help others.

What did you learn?

I was overwhelmed by the cultural diversity of the city. For example, at Global Closet I had to deal with pictures from many cultures. Also, at the daycare I had to deal with different parents, nannies and children. I learned that different nationalities can live together without problems and this would probably not be possible in Germany. I also found out that I have a lot in common with Anabaptism.

How did you connect with your host congregation, Danforth Mennonite Church?

I felt very welcome and the church was very supportive. They tried to entertain us—inviting us over for dinner, showing us around Toronto. The host families were very neat.... The Danforth Mennonite Church MVS Committee is also very supportive. They care a lot about you....

I arrived a week earlier than all the

other MVSErs. I thought I would have a lot of time to myself. But I got invited every five minutes and had to say no to invitations because I was already invited somewhere else! I was so tired by 9:00 p.m. that I was ready to sleep!

Where do you come from in Germany?

I lived three km outside of a village of 1,400 people. When the plane was landing, I saw the city of Toronto. I thought, "Oh my goodness, I'm never going to make it." I had to adjust to people being around me all the time. People are around all the time but you don't communicate with them. But I made it.... I think Toronto is great.

Martina's placements have spoken highly of her work and they will miss her. The Danforth MVS unit is expecting two more volunteers from Germany in

September and currently has openings for more volunteers. If you are interested in a year of service in Toronto, check www.mvsa.net. Associate membership is also a possibility for those interested in intentional community.

You can partner with Danforth church to support the program: use your Air Miles to book a plane ticket for a MVSEr, rent a room in the MVS unit house instead of staying in a hotel when visiting Toronto, or donate directly to the program. Call us at (416) 422-2406. We've had a great year!—From report by **Evonne Komaromi**



Martina Hettich (right) and Connie Tryba, a former MVSEr visiting from Germany, visit Kensington Market in Toronto.

Reminder to Congregations

When your young people leave home for school or work, remember to sign them up for a Canadian Mennonite subscription.

Contact Canadian Mennonite at **1-800-378-2524, ext. 221** or office@canadianmennonite.org

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Steinbach, Man.

Soup kitchen is a recipe for success

Combine one woman's love of cooking with a "call" to serve people in need, stir in a congregation's hospitality, add a "whack" of volunteers from many churches, spice generously with donations from the community, and you have a recipe for a successful soup kitchen.

"Soup is On," hosted by Grace Mennonite Church here, is a place which attracts guests not only because they're hungry but because it offers fabulous food in relaxed surroundings.

That's the opinion of one mom with two pre-schoolers who has eaten here five times since it opened in July.

"It's nice to come here," said Denise (not her real name) after a hearty meal of farmer sausage, mashed potatoes, cole slaw and chocolate cupcakes specially baked for a regular. "We enjoy the home-cooked, nutritious food. It's our 'dining out' evening."

"At first, I thought I should leave this for people who are needier than I am," she added, "but since I'm originally from another province and have no family here, I lack social supports in town.... It's nice to come here to eat with others. The kids can run and play in the open area and feel free. They look forward to coming here."

Other guests, numbering about 25 that evening, seemed to share her enthusiasm, especially young teens who kept going back for more!

For the hosts—Joy Neufeld, coordina-



Joy Neufeld and Simone Penner hang up signs for the soup kitchen (donated by local painter Ralph Toews) at the basement entrance to their church.

Photos by Leona Dueck Penner

tor; Simone Penner, secretary treasurer; and volunteers Savannah and Debbie—the joy was simply in watching hungry people arrive and eat.

Neufeld first thought about serving dinners to people in need four years ago. She had "a light bulb moment" when she realized that "this was God's idea; there was a need in our community and God was asking me to get it going."

She visited some Winnipeg soup kitchens, checked with service and church agencies in Steinbach, formed a committee and received approval from her congregation for the twice-weekly (Tuesday and Friday) use of the church basement. The slow summer start was a good time to iron out the glitches.

Volunteers come from various church denominations. "We deliberately try to get the community to work together on this and sent letters to all the churches inviting volunteers," said Neufeld. They also informed the Chamber of Commerce and businesses.

"We've had at least 50 calls asking what we needed. People really want to help. They say it should have been done a long time ago."

The response took her breath away. Farmers called to offer meat, and a Blumenort butcher cut, wrapped and froze it. Four freezers and one fridge have been donated. "And we have a whack of volunteers!"

"Steinbach appears to be wealthy; the poverty is hidden," said Neufeld. "People are a little hesitant" to come.

"We try to be open and warm and welcoming. We say you can stay as long as you like. We do not require people to say grace...no strings attached, no pressure."

A couple of families recently sat and talked for an hour, visiting after eating.

They serve "whatever has been donated," said Neufeld. "Produce is at a premium this year due to the weather. But we have a lot of meat: poultry, chicken, pork, beef. Farmers have been very generous. So we serve a lot of meat heavy meals, which is a plus for people who can't afford to buy a lot of meat.... We've only served soup twice!"

To stimulate more donations, they're planning to encourage a "real juice" Thanksgiving drive. Noted Neufeld: "Without the support of my church family, the soup kitchen would not exist."—**Leona Dueck Penner**



People line up for a delicious supper at 'Soup is On.'

It takes a village to teach a child

Education is more than a teacher and a curriculum. Our children are shaped by the whole community context in which they learn. What does that mean for passing on the faith?

In early September, our children went back to school, and they were glad because they were getting bored. (And their parents were glad, too.) In churches, the children began a new Sunday School year.

In both these settings, there is a learning community. The African saying is, “It takes a village to raise a child.” It also takes a village to teach a child.

Our children have two learning “villages” which some days have similar concerns and goals, and some days seem

quite distinct. So distinct, in fact, that some parents choose Christian schools, or home schooling, for their children. What are the differences between public (secular) and Christian education? In both cases, there is concern for quality teaching, sound curriculum, good learning. In both cases, the character of the teacher is significant in how students learn.

Even if we have forgotten much of what we were taught, either in public school or Sunday School, we do remember some of the “characters” who taught us!

Education is more than a teacher and a curriculum and a student. It is a whole community, a “village,” that shapes the character of our children. This is true both in the public setting and in Sunday School.

The chief difference between public education and Christian education is the call to faith and commitment by the latter. A professor of educational philosophy at Althouse College of Education describes the difference this way:

The secular “philosopher” (lover of knowledge) goes “window shopping” for ideas without necessarily being committed to “buying” anything. Public school teachers are committed to this open-ended search for knowledge. The “theologian” (who teaches about God) may also do some “window shopping” for ideas, but will finally stop in and buy. He or she invites commitment.

John the Gospel writer summarizes this well in his purpose for writing: “But these are written, that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing, you may



Photo by Mark Weber

have life in his name” (John 20:31).

Methods of Christian education need to be shaped with regard to this goal. “Book learning” is only a part of it. Christian education, which moves us to faith and greater Christlikeness, is more of an apprenticeship model.

Paul in I Corinthians 4:16 tells people: “Imitate me, as I imitate Christ.” That is an awesome responsibility for the teacher. That is why we need people of “Christian character” to teach our children in Sunday School.

Hans Denck assumed the discipleship model of learning when he said: “He who would know Christ truly, must follow him daily in life.” I would add that Christians who teach in the public sector may not promote Christianity, but I trust that they model themselves after Christ in all they do and say.

So Christian education is a discipling model which has an apprenticeship component to it.

Definition of education

Let me offer a definition of education. Education is a conversation between the generations. This applies especially well to Christian education. Psalm 78 speaks of “things that we have heard and know, that our ancestors have told us... we will not hide them from their children; we will tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord....”

We are the guardians of a tradition or a history, a story which we pass on “from generation to generation” as Luke 1:50 declares. It is not just any story, it is “salvation history” or “holy history” (*Heilsgeschichte*). It is the story of God’s creative and redemptive activity in this world.

And it has a kind of “once upon a time” quality to it: “Once upon a time, God created” (Genesis 1:1-2). “Once upon a time, God redeemed” (Matthew 1:18-21). This “once upon a time” quality transports us into a world that is past but still exists, so we say, “Tell me more! How does the story end?”

But the story has not ended yet, because God still creates and God still redeems. And so we ask: “What does this



Photo by D.M. Hostetler

story mean, for me, today?” If we believe that God, in Christ, created the community of the redeemed, the Church, then we realize that we are part of the story.

The goal of Christian education is to help people put themselves into the story as they make it their own.

Context is an especially important part of the apprenticeship/discipling model. This is perhaps best illustrated by the Old Testament Wisdom model of passing on the tradition (borrowing from teacher Waldemar Janzen).

Imagine a village setting. The sun is starting to set, and the men of the village are coming back from their day’s work, in field or shop. They meet under a big tree, or down at the well, or at the village gate. They come to exchange the news of the day, to hear stories by someone back from a journey, to sing familiar songs.

One of the older men might raise his voice and say: “A glad heart makes a cheerful countenance.” And another voice picks up the challenge: “But by sorrow of heart the spirit is broken” (Proverbs 15:13).

Then another voice: “A wise son makes a glad father.” And the reply out of the twilight: “But a foolish son is a sorrow to his mother” (Proverbs 10:1).

And another challenge: “Three things are too wonderful for me; four I do not understand.” After some silence in the face of this riddle, a voice might venture an answer: “The way of an eagle in the sky.” A second says, “The way of a snake on a rock.” A third voice says: “The way of a ship on the high seas.” Then, the clincher: “And the way of a man with a maiden” (Proverbs 30:18-19).

This went on, the old men taking the lead, but from time to time a younger voice from the outer edges of the circle daring to make itself heard.

I think Mennonites prefer this village circle style of Christian education. We create contexts where we can share the stories and learn from each other in a dialogue between the generations.

Continued on page 8.

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Village *From page 7*

At the beginning of the new school year, we stand in a place between memory and hope. It is a time of transition, from one grade to another, from high school to university.

In Deuteronomy 6, we see the people of Israel experiencing a major transition. They are at the threshold of a new chapter in their history. They have come out of the wilderness, and are under new leadership. They looked wistfully across the river to the promised land. But many see more peril than promise there. They wonder if they can even survive as a people.

Sometimes we might wonder how long the Christian church can survive in this wilderness of many “spiritualities” which lay claim to our loyalty. Sometimes school itself appears like a wilderness, as our young people sort out their options from

the many conflicting values promoted all around them.

Like the children of Israel, they need to be led. We might well ask them each day, “What did you learn in school today?” Then engage them in “values clarification” conversations around the family table.

We need to help them examine the conventional wisdom of the day and weigh that against the values of our Christian faith. Not only do we ask “What did you learn today?” We as parents also ask, “Will our children have faith?”

The church has responded in various ways to that question. The Sunday School movement which originated in England over 200 years ago was designed to get the kids off the streets on Sunday, teach them Christian values and hopefully lead them to faith.

We as Mennonites have bought wholeheartedly into the Sunday School movement. We create our own curriculum; we pride ourselves on having Sunday School for all ages.

However, in 1889, some among the Swiss Mennonites in Ontario—now called the Old Order—felt that Christian nurture belongs in the home. My Old Order relatives are reminders of another way of seeing things. Have we left Christian nurture too much to the Sunday School and abdicated our role as parents?

At the least, we need to maintain a clear partnership between church, Sunday School and the home. Again, “it takes a village to teach a child.” And it takes families of faith to raise children of faith, as Paul well knew when he affirmed the role of Timothy’s grandmother and mother in his faith formation.

We who are in this partnership are concerned with some of the same concerns that the people of Israel had when they entered the Land of Promise in that time of transition. Will our children have faith?

The answer was simple. God told them to keep telling the Good Story. How do you pass on the faith to your children? “When they shall ask...tell them!” (Deuteronomy 6:20). Make it a part of daily life. Talk about it when you lie down, and when you get up, and when you walk together.

This daily “habit of the heart” will promote Christian faith. Write it on the walls! I remember well as a child seeing those mottos hanging in our living room: “Christ, the unseen guest at every meal,” and “God bless our home.”

Sometimes we take for granted that the church will always be there. We may even take for granted that our children will have faith. But we live in a time of “fragmented gods,” as sociologist Reginald Bibby described religion in Canada. We want to pick and choose the most satisfying spirituality from the society around us.

As the people of Israel entered the promised land, they were faced with many gods. They had to take stock of who they were and what they would continue to affirm in their spiritual heritage.

We as Mennonites are also in transition. We desire to fit in with our culture and the broader church. As we do this, we need to take inventory of our Anabaptist-Mennonite heritage of Christian faith.

It’s like taking inventory when we pack to move. We examine each item: Will we keep it? Use it daily? Will we store it (and hope it is still there when we need it)? Will we share it or give it away? At what price?

These are questions we can discuss in our “village circle” as we commune with God and each other. These are educational questions in the conversation between generations.—**Maurice Martin**

This is from a sermon preached at Shantz Mennonite Church in Ontario on September 5.

Sometimes we might wonder how long the Christian church can survive in this wilderness of many ‘spiritualities’ which lay claim to our loyalty. Sometime school itself appears like a wilderness, as our young people sort out their options....

Christian education is ‘sub-versive’ activity

The following is from a meditation given by Terry Schellenberg, principal of Rockway Mennonite Collegiate in Kitchener, Ontario, to his staff the day before school started this fall

Times, people and worldviews have changed since Rockway Mennonite High School opened its doors in 1945. The 430 plus students who will walk into this building tomorrow morning will bring with them a very wide range of views on God and the life of faith.

When I was interviewing potential new students, one boy asked, “Surely teachers don’t let religion get in the way of their teaching, do they?” One girl was baffled by chapels, asking, “Why would you have two school assemblies each week?”

They were fair questions, but they also indicated that we can’t assume where it is these kids are coming from. Today, unlike 400 years ago in our culture or 60 years ago in our school, not believing in God is a credible option for serious people.

In our time, to articulate a life with God has perhaps become an odd or risky intellectual outpost, perhaps as difficult or embarrassing as was atheism in the seventeenth century. It can now be hard, courageous work to imagine the world with God as a central defining presence.

I offer two simplistic observations about what’s changed. We’ve all been impacted by scientific thinking and high-gear technology. Our culture’s technological control and precision has created for our students a wired, cabled, digitized, internet-laden universe. We can easily be seduced into thinking that if we know the codes, we can pin down the meaning, understand the mysteries and have our way, without surprise, deception, amazement or miracle.

In addition, we live within the embrace of the Nike swoosh—a dominant cultural symbol of the reality in which our students grow up. It’s a symbol that says life is not about playing well—it’s about winning. It’s about living well and being “successful.” It’s about what our society calls

“opportunity,” opportunity to amass material goods and guard them—because there isn’t enough for all.

If we can no longer assume a broad consensus of faith within the student community, why do we have this Christian school? I believe that our mission is a subversive one. By subversive I mean that our mission—as Christians, as Mennonites—has never been the dominant version.

Ours is always a sub-version, a rendering of reality that lives under the technological miracles and the Nike swoosh. In a culture that has learned how to make sense of the world without reference to the God of the Bible, we are invited to empower our students to re-imagine the world with God as a key and decisive player.

This means a couple of things. It means we believe our humanness depends not on a consumer technoculture, but on the deep strangeness and surprising newness of the biblical story. It means that we identify the cultural assumptions we all breathe so naturally as thin on memory and ethics and hope.

It means that we pay attention to the biblical story and its “thickness,” a thickness that requires many readings, hearings, interpretations and acts of faithful imagination. It means that we celebrate the powerful alternatives of courage and freedom and energy that emerge from that story of faith, in contrast to the often thin imagination of the dominant worldview.

Our “sub-version” of reality claims that another way of life in the world is not only possible but true. It tells boys and girls that we are different—peculiar, at risk—because we have been with Jesus. That peculiar claim is a challenge as we open our circle and welcome diversity.

Our calling is to share this sub-version together. We can’t do this with pointed fingers and judgement. If we are to creatively sub-vert the dominant version we need to practice our lives according to a different imagination.

We need to model for kids a sense of covenant and community; a structure that invites honesty, belonging and participation. Our peculiar specialty has to be the cup of cold water and shared bread; hospitality, compassion, peace—in our classrooms, offices, cafeterias and hallways.

We are called once again this year to be a sub-people—sub-verted, subtle—filled with a different hope and truth for our humanity. That is our calling for the coming year.

**Gracious God,
On this day before another school year
we gather ourselves
as people of hope.
We thank you for this school
and for the opportunities
that lie before us
in our teaching and our work at every level.
Dear God, may we be true to our calling
to re-imagine and live
with one another and with the students
and families
we will come to know.
May we do so with creativity and love
and with a hand extended towards your
grace and your way in our world.
Walk with us today and in the days to come.
Amen**

Trustworthy guide to Revelation

John R. Yeatts, *Revelation*. Believers Church Bible Commentary. Herald Press, 2003.

Interpreting *Revelation* is a high-stakes affair because the book has long agitated deep human fears and longings. With careful scholarship, confessional clarity and sensible application, John R. Yeatts is more than equal to the challenge of interpreting *Revelation* for the church today.

This commentary is a pleasure to read and is packed with useful insight. Yeatts is both teacher and preacher, ably bridging the gulf that sometimes distances academy from pulpit.

With a wary eye on dispensationalists, he gives thumbnail sketches of how premillennialists, futurists and others understand the vision from Patmos. Then he presses ahead with what he cares deeply about: an interpretation of *Revelation* that takes seriously the first-century milieu of the work, and a symbolic reading of the text that illuminates issues of power, idolatry and allegiance to Jesus Christ today.

This book is more than a survey of exegetical perspectives; Yeatts helpfully takes a stand on many issues.

What makes this commentary Anabaptist? The most revealing aspect is how Yeatts deals with violence. While *Revelation* sometimes seems awash in blood, Yeatts insists that the book is not a call to violence.

"The message of Revelation is developed around the primary symbol of Christ the Lamb," he writes, "who overcame persecution, not by military force and political violence, but by suffering love and exemplary martyrdom." The operative word for Christians is "patient endurance."

Yeatts is so thoroughgoing in his pacifist hermeneutic that he cringes when saints cry out for God to avenge their blood (Rev. 6:10). Perhaps he should read the angry cry of the martyrs alongside the lament Psalms,

in which the supplicant brings rage to the attention of God.

This commentary also puts a thoroughly Anabaptist emphasis on discipleship. "The verb *believe* does not occur in Revelation," he observes, and "the noun *faith* always means faithfulness." Repentance is "central to the message of Revelation, which is an appropriate corrective to the modern de-emphasis on good works."

Yeatts sometimes makes sweeping statements. "In chapters 12-22," he ventures, "new ideas are not encountered; instead, new symbols are introduced for teaching the same truths that were communicated in chapters 1-11." What about the beast, the fall of Babylon, the marriage supper of the Lamb, or the New

Immigrant story well told

Henry Klippenstein, *Thicker than Water: A Story of Faith and Courage*, self-published, \$20.00.

The author tells the story of his family's struggle through the terror and starvation of the Russian Revolution and their journey to a new country. In their new land, the rich soil of the Ukraine has been replaced by the dust bowl of Saskatchewan, and the familiar *Plautdietsch* by harsh-sounding English.

Henry's parents, desperately poor, maintain integrity and dignity as they scrape out a living for their family.

Thicker than Water begins with a summary of Mennonite history from its 16th century origins to the late 18th century settlement in the Ukraine. The Klippensteins belong to the second wave of immigrants to North America in the 1920s.

The story is told by Hendrijk (Low German for Henry), the middle child of seven. His story becomes the story of all Russian Mennonite immigrants, and indeed the story of all immigrants who leaves the old and familiar to

Jerusalem? These seem to be major new ideas.

Yeatts includes a collection of crisp essays at the back that cover topics

This commentary is a pleasure to read and is packed with useful insight.

such as "Worship in Revelation" and "Persecution during Domitian's reign."

For all the preachers who struggle to preach from *Revelation*, and for Christians who profess bewilderment over it, this accessible commentary is a trustworthy guide.—From review by **Nelson Kraybill**

The reviewer is a New Testament scholar and president of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary.

venture into the unknown. One could even say that Henry's story is a metaphor for the pain and disappointment, yet courage and faith, for anyone who embraces life fully.

The concluding chapters contain embellished episodes and vignettes, with touches of wry humour, that serve well for oral readings. Hendrijk not only laughs at circumstance, but also at himself as his inquisitiveness gets him into countless troubles.

The book ends with Henry travelling by bus from Vancouver back to Saskatchewan for his 50th high school reunion. He is apprehensive, but it is a good experience. He grieves for the "hardness" of his parents' life, but finds himself theologically "back on the Mennonite bus."

The book is available from Henry Klippenstein, 814 Frederick Rd., North Vancouver, BC V7K 2Y3, phone (604) 987-1506.—From review by **Linda Falk Suter**

The reviewer teaches English at Bluffton College in Ohio.

CMU course explores role of movies

Gordon Matties believes that going to a movie can be a lot like going to church.

“A church gathers to hear the stories that both reflect and shape its life,” he says. The same is true of movies.

To explore how films can shed light on spiritual issues, he has partnered with Cinematheque, an independent movie theatre, to offer “Seeing is believing: Conversations between film and faith,” a Continuing Education course through Canadian Mennonite University.

The format will be a series of Sunday matinee screenings, followed by conversation over light dinner about the role of film in visualizing the spiritual and social challenges of our time.

The course also invites participants to imagine how movies allow them to

experience or to recognize the “transcendent” through the stories they show. The movies for this series meet the criteria of the Ecumenical Juries (sponsored by InterFilm, the International Interchurch Film Organization) which serves approximately 20 film festivals in Europe and Canada.

Such films have artistic merit, express a perspective that stimulates creative conversation with Scripture; and encourage sensitivity to spiritual and social values and questions.

“It’s a good thing to learn to see the world afresh through excellent movies—to allow our imaginations to be challenged by a vision that embraces both the darkness and the light that cinema offers us,” says Matties.

The screenings are October 10, November 14 and December 12. The first two movies are *The Return* (2003) by Andrey Zvyagintsev (Russian with English subtitles), and *The Man Without a Past* (2002) by Aki Kaurismaki (Finnish with English subtitles).

For more information, visit www.cmu.ca/pdfs/0405film.pdf or call Continuing Education at (204) 487-3300.—From CMU release

Canadian Mennonite University’s worship band plays in the opening chapel under the banner with this year’s chapel theme: “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth” (John 16:13).



CMU photo

Mennonite Savings and Credit Union (Ontario) Ltd.



Michelle Horst



Max Bentz

The Board and Management of **Mennonite Savings and Credit Union** are pleased to announce the following appointments.

Michelle Horst has been appointed to the position of Branch Manager in the MSCU branch in New Hamburg, effective August 23, 2004. Ms. Horst began her career with MSCU in 1997 and has excelled in various roles, both in branch and head office settings. Most recently she served as Commercial and Agricultural Lender in the MSCU branch in Elmira.

Max Bentz has been appointed to the position of Manager, Personal Lending, based in the MSCU head office in Kitchener. Prior to this appointment, Mr. Bentz served as Manager of the MSCU branch in New Hamburg since 1995 where he was appreciated by Credit Union members and staff. His new duties began July 19, 2004.

Mennonite Savings and Credit Union was founded in 1964 to bring together the principles of financial stewardship and mutual aid within a financial cooperative. Today, MSCU operates as a closed-bond credit union that serves more than 15,000 individual members from the Mennonite, Amish, and Brethren in Christ church community in Ontario. MSCU operates six branches, five partial service outlets, and various Extended Area Services delivery channels, including Internet banking. Total assets under administration exceed \$500 million.

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The 'couple phenomenon' at Mennonite schools

My mom always told me, "Mennonite schools are like shoe stores—you go in to get your souls mended, and you come out in pairs."

I always laughed at this, partly because it was incredibly corny, but mostly because it was incredibly true. My parents hooked up at Bethel College. And now, as a student at Conrad Grebel University College, I'm reminded of this every day.

This "couple phenomenon" starts at the dawn of student life: Frosh Week. We all know that for frosh leaders, activity of this sort is deemed illegal, but this is where the seeds of attraction are planted. Soon, everyone seems to be hooking up. Rather than trying to count all the couples, the question becomes, "Who hasn't dated who?" That, in turn, leads to who will most likely get together in the coming weeks.

What is it about Mennonite schools

that make us feel like we're living in a dating service? More important, what draws us together?

Well, first of all, we're out of high school, which means our dating lives are beginning to get more serious. Our hormones are racing, and our heads are spinning from meeting so many new people. For those of you who came from Mennonite or Christian high schools, you are finally meeting more than the 20 girls or guys that went to your school. (I mean, come on, what is the population of UMEI?)

For those of us who come from more secular communities, we are finally in a place where people have similar

values, morals and beliefs. And we are at a place in our lives when these things become most important to us. A relationship that is grounded in a spiritual connection will be the best one. Besides, Grebelites are cute!

Of course, these Mennonite school relationships come and go. After a break-up it can get awkward in the cafeteria when you are behind each other in line, or in the library when you are trying to concentrate on your mid-term, and your ex is in the next cubicle.

But, by and large, dating at a Mennonite school is a good way to get to know new people, expand your horizons, and have fun. Fall term is now in session: let the games begin!

—**Chani Harder**

The writer, from Windsor, Ontario, is a Math and Business major living at Conrad Grebel University College, University of Waterloo.



Harder

Letters

Ethnomusicology a separate discipline

I appreciated the opportunity to write about the Sound in the Land conference (June 28, back cover). As an "ethnomusicologist," however, I was disappointed that the word was edited out of my list of participants in the article.

Ethnomusicology is not the same as musicology. It is an emerging and important discipline in which many young Mennonites are involved; in fact, nearly every academic under 30 at this conference was an ethnomusicologist.

Ethnomusicology is often defined as the "anthropology of music" (including popular and world music), and tries to interpret music as a social practice, while musicology could be glossed as the "history of western art music and the historiography of this history."

Ethnomusicologists made an important contribution at this confer-

ence. (One could include Mary Oyer's "world-music" discussion regarding the Mennonite hymnal as an ethnomusicological feature!) The discipline is growing and many young scholars are choosing this route.

—**Jonathan Dueck, Edmonton, Alta.**

Amish show may change viewers

I found "Amish in the city" (Aug. 23, page 12) as amusing as the show. Some great thinker may see the show as "absurd and ridiculous" and a "cultural slap in the face of the Amish." But as another great thinker once wrote, "...if you have an area of pain, think of the area without pain! If you have one sorrow, look at your joys."

America may be laughing at the "blunders" of these awe-struck and naïve young people, but I see them as

This section is a forum for discussion and discernment. Letters express the opinion of the writer, not necessarily that of *Canadian Mennonite* or the church. We publish most letters, unless they attack individuals or become unnecessarily repetitious. See page 2 for address information.

being "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world" (Matthew 5:13-14). The idea of the show may seem like a big pain, but if we look closely we see things that may actually benefit laughing America.

We saw Mose saying grace; we saw the girls holding each others' hands and saying a simple prayer for a safe helicopter ride. We see them trying to bring order amid the disorder and figure out ways of getting along with their worldly roommates.

As the great thinker I quoted wisely said, "God can write straight even on a crooked line."

As the show continues we may see more little incidents that may have a profound effect on America. Let's not

be too hasty in labelling the show as “absurd and ridiculous.”—**Wes Epp, Calgary, Alta.**

Draw line, then reach over to help

Burton Patkau found no boundaries that Jesus placed on homosexuality (Aug. 23 letter). I think he overlooked Mark 7:22 where Jesus taught that “licentiousness” defiles a person.

Nelson’s Bible Dictionary defines this big word as “undisciplined and unrestrained behaviour, especially a flagrant disregard of sexual restraints. The Greek word means ‘outrageous conduct,’ showing that licentious behaviour goes beyond sin to include a disregard for what is right.”

Charles Colson, in *A Dance with Deception*, tells the story of a sister who discovered that her brother had AIDS. She first visited him, then went home to pray, gather courage and consult her family. Next, she invited her brother to come to her home for his dying year.

Her children played games in his bedroom and he told them stories from his life. He did not die unloved and alone.

May we treasure the guidance Jesus offers and then reach over into the land of the suffering and act like Jesus did.—**Paul Landis, Carstairs, Alta.**

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MEI launches new middle school

Mennonite Educational Institute (MEI) welcomed its first middle school students to its campus this fall. An estimated 375 students from grades 6-8 began their school year at the state-of-the-art 59,000-square-foot facility.

Along with a 30-station computer lab and a double gymnasium, the school also has a multi-purpose auditorium with seating for 400 and movable walls to make it into four learning centres. Many rooms are equipped with projection units and portable “smart” boards have been installed in both the middle and high school.

The middle school is the third building at MEI, which also has an elementary and high school. It is the result of a decade of prayer and planning. For MEI’s superintendent, Peter Froese, this school is “a dream come true.”

“We have a fabulous team of administrators in each of our schools and my work is significantly reduced as a result,” he said. “Each school has its own administrative team and each principal has full authority to manage their school according to MEI policy.”

He added that it has been a blessing to have 10 portable classrooms removed so that all their students could be housed in a permanent building.

“God has blessed this work and I count it a privilege to assist our school principals in providing the best possible faith-based instruction available,” said Froese.

Heather Smith, principal of MEI middle school, agrees. “We are thrilled and awed at God’s provision in our new facilities,” she said.

Smith started working at MEI 12 years ago as a high school language teacher. She served as vice-principal for three years. She is excited about the middle school role of meeting the needs of pre-adolescents.

Each student belongs to a “homeform” classroom. The school is



The new middle school at MEI received students this fall.

organized into grade-level teams in which two to three teachers share the care of 60 to 90 students.

“This increases the likelihood that students will find a meaningful connection with an adult in our school community,” said Smith. “In addition, each school day starts with an ‘advisory,’ during which life skills are addressed in addition to a devotional and prayer time.”

Along with fine arts and athletics, children also have a chance to explore areas such as sewing, cooking, wood-working, info-tech and leadership. The technology program offers students an opportunity to make jewelry, bottle rockets, CO2 cars, and learn electronics and robotics.

Students will also have an opportunity to give back to their communities.

“Every Grade 7 student in our school will be involved in a service program that will see MEI partnering with a variety of community agencies,” Smith said.

Grade 6 student Ashley Redekop was enthusiastic about her first day at MEI. Although she really liked the new facility, it was not the first thing she commented on.

“I loved the teachers and the principal,” she said. “And the best part was chapel [where] we sang and the principal prayed.”

The staff is looking forward to the task of building a new community.

“Our prayer is that we can fulfill our staff covenant of being rooted in love, serving in love and speaking the truth in love,” Smith said. Their theme verse is Colossians 1:10: “We pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might.”—**Angelika Dawson**

Elkhart, Ind.

Alumni lead increase in donations to seminary

Giving to Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) by alumni increased by nearly two-thirds during 2003–2004, while the number of alumni who gave increased by half.

This increase, combined with a strong response to AMBS's Next Generation campaign, resulted in a 45 percent jump in total giving to AMBS.

More than 700 AMBS alumni, including 131 Canadians, contributed, compared to 475 the previous year, in part because of a phonathon conducted in the fall and spring. Gifts from Canadian alumni added up to \$33,256. Total alumni giving was \$267,517 (US), a 64 percent increase over the previous year.

Total giving to AMBS for the year came to \$3,353,007 (US), a 45 percent increase over last year. Canadian contributions totalled \$316,283. The increase came in contributions to

designated projects in the Next Generation Fund for Church Leadership.

As of June 30, the Next Generation Fund had reached three-fourths of the goal of \$20 million.

Gifts to the AMBS annual fund were down slightly as donors designated more of their giving to special projects. AMBS endowed funds grew by \$1.94 million during the year with a combination of gifts and market increases.

"We are grateful to God and to the church for this strong support," said Ron Ringenberg, vice president for advancement and administration. "As a seminary offering only graduate-level degrees, AMBS relies more on contributions than on tuition for the majority of our support. The contributions we receive are essential for us to continue the vital mission of preparing the next generation of leaders for the church."—AMBS release

Nelson Kraybill, president of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, addresses the AMBS community during the opening convocation in September. He used Isaiah's prophecy that God will do a new thing (Isaiah 43:15-21). The banner behind him was created from cut-out paper leaves on which AMBS members had written their names.

—AMBS release

New director at AMBS

Regina Shands Stoltzfus has been named director of admissions and financial aid for Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, beginning this fall.

Stoltzfus was associate campus pastor at Goshen College in Indiana, and minister of urban ministries for Mennonite Mission Network. Previous to this she was associate pastor of Lee Heights Community Church in Cleveland, Ohio, and coordinator of the Damascus Road Anti-Racism Program.

She holds a master of arts degree in biblical studies from Ashland Theological Seminary in Ohio. She has written adult Bible study curriculum and numerous articles in Mennonite publications.

"Regina comes with substantial experience in church work," said Loren Johns, AMBS dean. "Regina's experience and her relational people skills will serve her and the seminary well in this position."

Stoltzfus said, "I am passionate about nurturing leaders for the church, whether they are lay leaders, pastoral staff, teachers or serving in church institutions. I look forward to being part of an organization that helps so many women and men answer a call from God."

Stoltzfus succeeds Randall C. Miller, who joined the AMBS administration in 1998.—AMBS release



Shands Stoltzfus



Pontius' Puddle



Burkina Faso

Learning a language of love

Let me see the elephant/house paper," Sali said, pressing her nose against the screen door of Lillian Haas' office. Lillian shut down her computer and took out the pages illustrating the Siamou alphabet.

All of the 28 letters in the Siamou language were represented with a key word and a picture drawn by a local artist. Lillian and Sali sat down together and the nine-year-old started identifying each picture.

How does one teach reading in a society that doesn't have books or signs or paper; where people have to work hard even to identify someone they know in a photo? This is the challenge Lillian Haas faces in her literacy and Bible translation work in Burkina Faso. Haas is a member of Bluesky Mennonite Church in Alberta.

Creating a language primer is a painstaking job. Mamina, who works with Lillian, made a list of all the verbs and nouns in each text, charted the frequency of each syllable or the combination of letters, and recorded all the consonants and vowels in descending order of frequency. All this just to prepare for writing the primer!

Lillian's patience and long-term commitment to this work is a testimony to the people of her village of the love she, and her God, has for them.

—From MC Canada Witness

Peacemaking in Africa

Siaka Traore, a Mennonite Central Committee peace coordinator, is on a commission that oversees Burkina Faso's National Day of Forgiveness (March 30). The commission is investigating political violence and negotiating restitution for victims. Traore says it also has to work for accountability in government "because politicians are very good at talking but very bad [at] doing good acts." The Day of Forgiveness was established in 2001 when President Blaise Compaoré asked forgiveness for his government's human rights abuses. Too many African countries are destroyed by revenge, says Traore.

Elfrieda Klassen Dyck
March 10, 1917—August 20, 2004



"If I can give a one-word promotional. Read."
—Urbane Peachey at Elfrieda Klassen Dyck's memorial service referring to *Up from the Rubble*, Elfrieda and Peter Dyck's story of rescuing thousands of war-ravaged refugees.

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FOCUS

Education

Spirituality: A space between the logs

What kind of spirituality defines a Christian school? In this article, the principal of Rockway Mennonite Collegiate offers his reflections.

*What makes a fire burn
is space between the logs.
A breathing space.
Too much of a good thing,
too many logs
packed in too tight
can douse the flames
almost as surely
as a pail of water could.
So building fires
requires attention
to the spaces in between,
as much as to the wood.*

These opening lines to *Fire*, by Judy Brown, are an apt introduction to thoughts on “spirituality.” Recently, I’ve had various discussions about spirituality as it relates to Rockway Mennonite Collegiate. These conversations concern the identity and foundation of our school—what kind of a spirituality is alive at our school?

First, Rockway is a school and not a church. The “logs we burn” in our school fire have to do with academics and learning, with the study of Science, Calculus, History, English. Our goal is to open meaningful opportunities for students for study, work and service for life.

The student, parent and community expectations related to this end can be packed tightly together. Add in a few logs related to other school opportunities—music, drama, clubs, athletics, food drives—and the potential of a blazing fire is there. Rockway has many important logs in the school fire.

Rockway is a diverse community quite different from a congregation gathering for worship. We assemble young people at many different stages of maturing who reflect an array of values, convictions and life priorities.

Our students come from a range of Christian contexts, and some of them have made a personal choice to follow the way of Jesus.

Continued on page 18



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However, we also welcome students from Muslim, Sikh, Ba'hai and other faiths or secular traditions.

Regardless of their background, students are searching. They share fundamental questions about who they are in relation to themselves, others, their world and the faith of their parents or communities. That is as it should be. Adolescents should be asking significant questions, and part of our school mission is to create the space in which this can meaningfully occur.

Any consideration of our school's spirituality

must be open to the diversity we welcome and engage on a daily basis.

But important as they are, these logs of curriculum, program, and student mix are not the whole picture. Indeed, "too many logs packed in too tight, can douse the flames" as the poem states.

I believe the "spaces" between the logs have to do with a school spirituality that must be alive and present, integrated, and rooted incarnationally in hospitable relationships. These spaces are foundational to our school's mission—to the fire we are building.

Rockway's "space between the logs" involves a spirituality alive in who we are. It is grounded firmly within the Christian tradition and more specifically within the Anabaptist Mennonite family of faith. It roots our identity in a God who created and loves all people and One who calls us to wholeness in knowing ourselves as God's own.

Our spirituality affirms that Jesus is the divine embodiment and human model of our Christian calling to know and be known of God. The flames of this spirituality are fanned in chapel worship, music, silence, prayer, Bible study and in relationships and activities of our life together.

This "space between the logs" involves a faith commitment shared by our teachers and staff, board and support constituency. It fans the spaces of our individual and collective lives in opening students to the meaning of this spirituality for themselves.

It is because these spaces are rooted in Christian convictions that they are always invitational, never coercive, and consistently show regard for every student, regardless of their faith. God's creative imprint is seen

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What students are saying about Grebel

Elizabeth

2nd Year Systems Design Engineering

Favourite Grebel activities: talent show, snack nights

Favourite Grebel food: perogies, chicken burgers

Extra-curricular activities: yearbook, larger leadership team, banquet committee, chapel

The best thing about Grebel is: skybunks, snickerdoodles, community supper bread, and open doors

Darren

2nd Year Arts - Religious Studies

Favourite Grebel Activities: hanging out, spontaneous evening activities, conversation

Favourite Grebel food: ice cream cookie crumb cake

Extra-curricular activities: former Frosh Rep and current Student Council President, Campus Rec. teams-basketball and soccer

The best thing about Grebel is: the people! diversity of experiences and personalities, friendship, personal growth, laughs and good times

Meagan

3rd Year Health Studies

Favourite Grebel Activities: random outings with a big group of people for slurpee's, pizza, or movies

Favourite Grebel food: brownies and Community Supper bread

Extra-curricular activities: intramural volleyball and ultimate frisbee, various positions on Student Council, Don

The best thing about Grebel is: the people! there is always someone around to have fun with or to study with (or both)

Conrad Grebel University College is a residence and academic institution on the University of Waterloo campus. It is grounded in the beliefs and practices of the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition but welcomes students of all backgrounds. Students register and graduate through UW in any of UW's six faculties, but can live at Grebel and take liberal arts courses with Grebel's faculty.



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The faith convictions which ground our school are meaningful only as they become real in our shared experience. Just as we seek to relate to all students in a holistic manner (mind, body, spirit, community), so Rockway's "space between the logs" must be seen holistically.

This flame is not reserved for fanning in chapel and religious studies classes alone. Rather, such a spirituality intimately connects a personal faith journey with commitments to justice, service and peace in our relationships with others and our world.

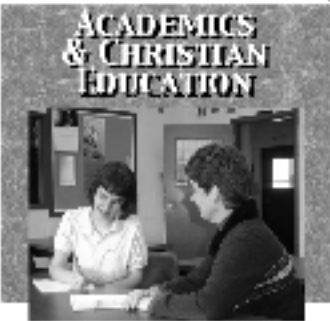
This space between the logs involves an active modelling. It lives in the words shared by a coach in a timeout huddle; in the passion, openness and care of teachers engaging tough questions in class; in the way we discipline. Spirituality thus defined shapes our school ethos and how we live together.

We can never embody such spirituality perfectly. There are times when we err in judgement and action. We need to learn to "open spaces in the same way we have learned to pile on the logs." We must learn to know who we are and why we are here, as we seek to open the world of learning, faith and life for students.

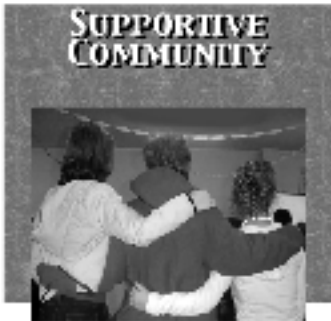
Through and beyond that, the fanning will come from God's creative and gentle spirit.—Terry Schellenberg

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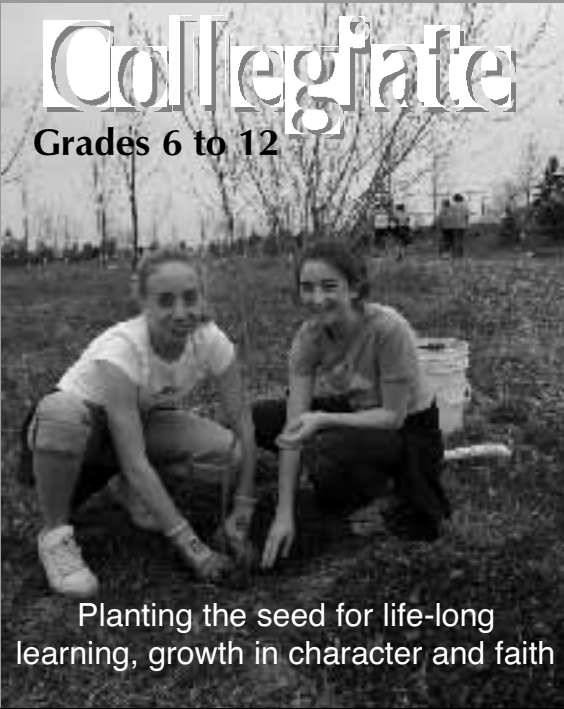



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New year looks promising at Grebel

While many students spent Labour Day savouring their last day of summer freedom, 174 students converged at Conrad Grebel University College for "Move-in day."

The 57 frosh (first year students) were greeted by more than 50 student and orientation leaders pouring out of the building exuding excitement. Fears were

soon calmed as everyone found their rooms, met their roommates, and had family members lug all their belongings into their new home.

Parents, siblings and students were treated to a Grebel lunch, and then met for a gathering ceremony. Mary Brubaker-Zehr, dean of students, assured students that

"they were in good, loving hands" and that Orientation Week begins the process of creating a community with faculty, staff, and students.

In addition to the 174 students living in the Grebel residence and apartments, there are 20 "off-campus residents" who eat all their meals at Grebel and participate in Grebel activities. Grebel also has 42 "off-campus associates," mostly senior students who still participate in Grebel activities such as Community Supper, chapel, and sports. Over 240 students are connected with Grebel Student Services.

While the majority of residents are from Ontario, there are also students from Alberta, B.C., Nova Scotia, Saskatchewan, the United States, Africa, and Hong Kong. Grebel residents represent the range of faculties at the University of Waterloo, with 42 percent in the technical faculties (Math, Science, Engineering), 40 percent in Arts, and others in Applied Health Studies, Environmental Studies, or at Wilfrid Laurier University down the road.

Just over half of Grebel students are Mennonite.

Academic enrolment in Grebel courses continues to grow, with over 1,700 students in 32 classes this fall, a 6 percent rise from last year. Almost all of Grebel's courses are full! Grebel professors teach courses in Arts, History, Music, Peace and Conflict Studies (PACS), Philosophy, Religious Studies, and Sociology. Music and PACS are the most popular courses with University of Waterloo students.

Grebel also offers its own Master of Theological Studies (MTS) program, currently with 36 students, 7 of them full time. This is one of Grebel's fastest growing programs. Approximately 70 percent of MTS students are Mennonite.—From Grebel release by Jennifer Konkle



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A taste of China in the Saskatchewan Valley

Most of us get our “taste of China” at the local Chinese restaurant. On August 15, about 125 of us in Rosthern got a much broader taste that included Chinese culture, history and faith.

Rod and Kathi Suderman, with their children Christopher, Stefanie and Jesse, were assisted by Pastor Magdalena Widjaja and 12 members of the Grace Mennonite Chinese congregation in Regina to bring us a fun-filled, family day of discovering China.

The weather was perfect, so all the activities were outdoors except the eating, which was in the Rosthern Junior College dining hall.

The afternoon began with activity centres on the RJC lawn: writing Chinese characters; practising chopstick techniques; trying Chinese shuttlecocks (hacky-sack with feath-

ers); learning Chinese jump-rope (think of doing a giant cats-cradle with your knees); kite flying (the Saskatchewan wind wasn't even strong enough for Chinese dragons); and Chinese geography using a giant wooden puzzle.

Then we gathered on our lawn chairs as Rod and Kathi used interview role-plays, skits and stories to transport us to China. We learned what it feels like to be a foreigner and a teacher in China. We learned much about Chinese culture and values, the Chinese church and the work being done by Witness workers in the China Educational Exchange program.

Then it was time for the food. Volunteers barbecued donated lamb and chicken skewers, spicing them with cumin and crushed pepper in the Xinjiang style of Chinese “street-meat.”

Potluck dishes included many with an Asian aspect, and one table of Chinese food was brought by our friends from Grace. There wasn't much left!

After supper we heard Ed and Holly Olfert talk about their trip to China last January. We were invited to work at new ways to be “sent with” the Suderman family, the Hansons and Cari Friesen, all members of MC Saskatchewan churches. An offering raised \$700 for MC Canada Witness work in China.

As a closing activity, the Suderman family “tested” our new-found knowledge of China and gave out prizes of Chinese souvenirs. Ken Bechtel sent the Sudermans off (they were returning to China the next day) with a prayer of blessing for them and for our Chinese brothers and sisters.—**Eric Olfert**

Hawkesville, Ont.

Young adults foster community the fun way

Young adults at Hawkesville Mennonite Church here welcomed about 30 young people from 9 other Mennonite churches on July 31 for an evening of games, food and entertainment entitled “Mennoz Before Midnight.”

The event evolved from a discussion in Hawkesville's young adult Sunday School class about church, community, and the need to look across congregational boundaries, said Perry Bartel, pastor at Hawkesville. Kaitlyn Nafziger, Kristen Nighswander, and Emily Jantzi were instrumental in organizing the evening.

Participants were divided into teams and took part in a number of games, including log sawing, caber toss, and log rolling in the murky waters of the Conestogo River. A slip-and-slide run like no other was one of the popular events.

Space for the various events was provided by Hawkesville members who live in the village. Several amused residents gathered on the bridge over the river to watch the log rolling event.

After the games, everyone returned to

the church to enjoy homemade pizza and coffeehouse-style entertainment. Local businesses and congregation members provided a wide variety of door prizes for the evening, including an airplane flight over the local countryside.

The relaxed atmosphere of Mennoz Before Midnight allowed for lots of conversation and laughter. The games and socializing, which used almost every corner of the village, allowed the young adults at Hawkesville Mennonite to promote a sense of community among young people in nearby congregations.—**James Morgan**



Log rolling on the Conestogo River was one activity at the young adult night in Hawkesville.

Mennonite Church Saskatchewan



Visioning with three 'i's

Recently, I received an e-mail commenting on a typo: "Very appropriate how you spell *visioning* with two eyes!" Fortunately, Christian visioning actually has three!

This past year, Mennonite Church Saskatchewan has been working toward a vision, a new openness to God's intentions among us. The Envisioning Team works closely with me in facilitating conversations about who God wants us to be, what God wants us to do. Three places where that conversation is happening are in congregations, in regional think tanks, and at the leadership level.

Last February the conference accepted a recommendation that congregations spend time in 2004 studying C. Arnold Snyder's book, *From Anabaptist Seed*. The Envisioning Team has invited congregational reflection on the implications of our shared historic faith for church life today in Saskatchewan. We look forward to receiving this feedback by mid-October.

In October and November, Envisioning Team members look forward to meeting with regional Focus Groups. Congregations in seven regions have been asked to suggest names of persons who can help us think further about our context, our opportunities, and about what God is doing. We look forward to stimulating conversations as groups of about a dozen brainstorm together.

The MC Saskatchewan

General Council has also been engaging in conversations about new directions, new ways of working together as a conference. In June and August, we pondered the feedback from earlier Envisioning Team questionnaires, as well as from a delegate discussion on Vibrant Rural Churches.

On August 28, 1963, Martin Luther King Jr. addressed 250,000 people at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington DC. He was about to sit down when gospel singer Mahalia Jackson called out, "Tell them about your dream, Martin! Tell them about the dream!" Encouraged by shouts from the audience, King shared his dream of all people, of all races, colours and backgrounds, sharing in a country marked by freedom and democracy.

Four decades later, we too hear those who call out "Tell us about your dream!" We open our two eyes and begin to see. Then we open ourselves to one another, and to our all-seeing God. It is then we begin to see with the third eye. That's visioning with three eyes!—**Ken Bechtel**

The writer is conference minister for Mennonite Church Saskatchewan.

New pastor at Eyebrow church

Writing a paper on nonresistance at Briercrest Bible College "was a life-changing experience," said Sharon Schultz, new pastor of the Eyebrow Mennonite Church. "It blew me away."

She heard about Briercrest at a "missionfest" in Ontario in the late 1990s. Later, on a cross-country trip, she and her husband Duane stopped at Caronport, Saskatchewan, for a meal and found more information on Briercrest.

Back home in Ontario, Duane encouraged her to explore this opportunity. Their three children—Graeme, Melanie and Scott—

thought it would be "cool" until they were ready to move in the summer of 2000. Being at Briercrest was, in Sharon's words, "a leading from God; it made me examine my Mennonite roots" and make them her own.

The idea of pastoral ministry came slowly. The daughter of a Mennonite pastor (her parents are George and

Ruth Steinmann Elsasser), she was not unfamiliar with the pastor's life. Anna Rehan of MC Saskatchewan suggested Eyebrow as a church for her intern year.

A visit to the church one Sunday morning made the family feel as if they "had come home." Sharon graduated with a BA in Pastoral Theology and was licensed for ministry at Eyebrow on June 30.

—**Jake Nickel**



Schultz



Pauline Steinmann, originally from Ontario, is ordained with song and rejoicing at Wildwood Mennonite Church in Saskatoon on June 6.

Photo by Jake Nickel

A counsellor's reflections

"Meet friends, experience God and have fun." This is the Rosthern Youth Farm Bible Camp's slogan, and I have experienced all three.

For the past two summers, I have been a counsellor at this camp and although times were sometimes stressful, I have never regretted my time spent there. The energy that the children bring each week is amazing.

I like to see the interaction as the returning campers eagerly explain events and rules to new campers. It is humbling to watch how the children look up to you. I remember one meal of chicken noodle soup where I had put ketchup in my bowl. Before I knew it, nearly all of my campers had added ketchup to their soup.

Not all days at camp are sunshine and roses, although as a camper I sure thought so. There is a lot of "behind the scenes" work for the staff, from last-minute rainy day plans to staying up till the wee hours talking to a homesick or ill camper.

You realize what an impact the week has had when Friday afternoon hits and the children run to their parents to tell them their stories and show them the camp.

Rosthern Youth Farm also offers four weeks of adult special needs

campers, which have challenged my understanding and patience. These campers teach me more than I can teach them. These weeks are my favourite—to see the joy in their face and their love for God. While children tend to hold grudges and can be exclusive at times, these campers tend to be extremely inviting and non-judgmental. As song leader this year, my favourite song was "I've got the joy down in my heart." As the special needs campers belted out this song, it was clear that they had a passion for Christ.

Overall, camp has been an incredible time for me to grow in my faith and to share it with others. I encourage others to give it a shot because it really can be a life-changing experience.—**Alison Tiessen**

The writer, from Nutana Park Mennonite Church in Saskatoon, is a second-year student at Canadian Mennonite University.



Alison Tiessen with campers at Rosthern Youth Farm Bible Camp.

Transitions:

Mel Letkeman resigned as Associate Pastor at First Mennonite Church in Saskatoon at the end of July to begin pastoral work at Grace Mennonite in Steinbach, Manitoba, this fall.

Fred Heese retired as pastor at Emmaus Mennonite Church in Wymark this summer.

Menno Epp completed several years as interim pastor at Osler Mennonite Church in June.

Gordon Allaby began as pastor at Osler Mennonite on August 1, with installation on September 19.

Youth Farm Complex celebrates 60 years

Despite the cold wind, a sunny sky brought 200 people to the Log Cabin on the Rosthern Mennonite Youth Farm Complex on June 9 to celebrate 60 years of service. A delicious barbecue supper was followed by a program emceed by Jake Wiebe.

Stella Dyck, chair of the Mennonite Youth Farm board, gave a history of the organization. The vision of J.C. Schmidt and Henry W. Friesen was one of service and that vision has not changed. The former experimental farm was bought from the federal government in 1943. In May 1944, the first residents were admitted. Ten years later, the youth farm received its first government grants.

The complex included a nursing home, a crippled children's home, an orphanage, and homes for mentally

challenged men and women. Country Gardens (two four-plexes) and Pineview Manor (assisted living units) were added.

Past history included big gardens, and a dairy and pasteurizing plant which supplied the town of Rosthern with milk. The Mennonite Youth Farm Bible Camp continues to serve children and mentally challenged campers during the summer months

The anniversary celebration was also an appreciation evening for the many volunteers who help at the Mennonite Nursing Home. Mary Jane Block listed all the activities of the auxiliary, including serving at the Christmas banquet, Telemiracle Pie Social, painting Easter Eggs and serving at an Easter Brunch. She also thanked all the workers that serve in

the "Canteen."

Volunteers lead Sunday worship services, monthly birthday parties, and Bible studies. Senior choirs and school choirs come to entertain the residents and visit with them.

Mark Wurtz, director of the camp, showed videos of the history of the nursing home and the camp. Tom Ferguson, director of the complex, invited the board members to help cut and serve the anniversary cake.

Musical entertainment was provided by the Blumenheim Singers and the Penner Family Singers.

—**Tina Siemens**

This two-page supplement was prepared by Mennonite Church Saskatchewan. Coordinator was Jake Nickel.

Waterloo, Ont.

Oak tree at centre of memorial garden

Most people of Russian Mennonite heritage have heard stories of the massive old oak tree in the Khortitsa Colony in Russia. The tree was an unofficial gathering place for the community.

Coined the *Hundert-jaehrig Eiche* (hundred-year-old oak) by early settlers, the tree is estimated to be 700-800 years old.

Historian N.J. Kroeker wrote, "No one who had ever walked near the gnarled trunk beneath those mighty branches which had the power to draw your eyes upward could help being overcome with a feeling of reverence and peace." One tradition held that walking around the tree three times would bring good fortune to newly-weds.

The ancient tree is dying, and only a few branches bear leaves anymore. It is dying because a hydro-electric dam has raised the level of the water table

and the ground has been raised around the tree, both disturbing the tree's roots.

In 1999, Toronto high school teacher



Peter Rempel participated in a tour to celebrate the founding of the Khortitsa settlement. Rempel pocketed eight acorns from the old oak tree and planted them in his backyard. He later donated the tree from that seed to

Conrad Grebel University College.

Thanks to the efforts of Harvey Dyck, John E. Toews, and Victor Heinrichs, the college has established a Russian Mennonite Memorial Garden around the oak tree to memorialize the suffering of Mennonites under Stalin in the Soviet Union, and as a place for contemplation.

Marlene Epp, history professor at Conrad Grebel, sees the tree as signifying "both a celebration of the positive times Mennonites recall about Russia and also as a memorial to the tragedies that befell them."

A dedication service will be held on October 17 at 3:00 p.m. in the garden at Conrad Grebel. People are invited to come and hear the story of the oak and to remember the Mennonite experience it represents. Music will be provided by the Conrad Grebel Chapel Choir. Contact (519) 885-0220 for more information.—Conrad Grebel release

Calgary, Alta.

Installation service at Foothills

On August 29, Foothills Mennonite Church here concluded its summer worship series, "On the way of Jesus: Discipleship in the Gospel of Luke." The installation of Shami and Deanna Willms as associate pastors on that Sunday was a fitting response.

The couple, who will share a full-time position, talked about their call to ministry. They have a special passion for working with youth and have been pastoral assistants at Foothills for the past year.

Shami, from Pincher Creek, Alberta, attended Columbia Bible College and is trained as a computer programmer. Deanna grew up in the Coaldale Mennonite Church. She also teaches part-time at Menno Simons Christian School.

The couple met at the Mennonite Church Canada assembly in Abbotsford in 2001 where they were both youth sponsors.

Darrel Heidebrecht, board chair, and Jim Shantz, Conference Minister, expressed encouragement and their desire to

engage in covenant relationship with the couple. The service concluded with an intergenerational prayer circle and communion led by Shantz and Doug Klassen, Foothills pastor.—From reports



Deanna and Shami Willms

CANADIAN Mennonite

MANAGING EDITOR

Canadian Mennonite is seeking a Managing Editor. This full-time position begins Jan. 1, 2005 and is based in Waterloo, Ontario. A resumé and two news-writing samples should be submitted by Oct. 22, 2004.

The person filling this position will have the responsibility of editing and producing each issue. Duties include working with the Editor on story ideas and soliciting contributions, overseeing layouts, and proof reading. The Managing Editor also will do some reporting and writing.

Applicants should have: a passion for the church and for Canadian Mennonite's mission; excellent communication and listening skills; the ability to manage multiple tasks and details, and flexibility and creativity under pressure.

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www.canadianmennonite.org

Edmonton, Alta.

Storm turns Edmonton into disaster site

On the afternoon of July 11, I was enjoying time with a friend and new church member, Elizabeth Wall. Squeals and laughter from the living room indicated contented children, so we relaxed as coffee steamed in our cups and rain began to streak the kitchen window.

Within minutes, however, the rain dramatically intensified and hailstones began to bounce off our neighbour's new shingles. The happy voices in the other room trailed off. My six-year-old son's incredulous voice piped over the sound of the pelting deluge: "Mommy, fountains!"

We ran to the living room window. Our street was a lake with every manhole shooting filth three feet into the air. The brown water was surging onto the lawn.

"The sewer is backed up; nobody flush!" I announced. "I'm moving the car!" Moments later I was back in the house. I ran downstairs to find a replica of the street fountains in the middle of the laundry room floor. Liz and I quickly moved a cedar chest, photo albums, the computer, and assorted toys to higher ground before the sludge soaked the carpet.

I called our Mennonite Mutual Insurance agent for advice while Liz settled the kids.

"I've only been a Mennonite for a few weeks," Liz quipped, "and already I'm doing MDS!"

The *Edmonton Journal* reported July 11, 2004 as a "one in 200-year storm." Snowploughs were needed to clear the high drifts of hail in the west end of the city, while up to five inches of rain fell in other areas. The famous West Edmonton Mall was evacuated when burst pipes, sewage backup and a collapsed ceiling made the facility unsafe.

The south end of the city suffered sewage backup and many basements were flooded. More than a month later, the cleanup was still continuing. Contractors are swamped with calls and many people are waiting to find out when repairs can be scheduled for



Darian and Jacob Wiebe-Neufeld try out their tricycles in the gutted basement of their home.

their homes. Those with no insurance have applied for relief funds the city and province have made available.

Mennonite Mutual Insurance (MMI) and Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) were involved in the cleanup.

'I've only been a Mennonite for a few weeks and already I'm doing MDS!'

Eleven MMI clients reported flooded basements. Of these, six were covered. Insurance covers sewer backup, but not general seepage or water that comes in through windows. Policyholders not covered by the insurance were sent letters to aid them in making application to the city for aid.

Lendrum Mennonite Brethren Church, also covered by MMI, was hard hit by the storm. Over a foot of water and sewage filled the basement, destroying historic choir music and some Sunday school curriculum. Basement drywall had to be removed up to four feet. The cleanup, combined with ongoing renovations in the building, made for a rather large

inconvenience.

MDS got involved in the cleanup when the Salvation Army, overwhelmed with requests, contacted the organization. Ernie Wiens of First Mennonite Church co-coordinated 40-45 volunteers to clean 20 homes. Volunteers answered phone calls, moved household items, bagged and threw out damaged goods, ripped up carpets, and removed soaked drywall.

Wiens commented that "several homes were in really bad shape—in one, the smell was out of this world. It hadn't been cleaned up quickly enough." Other homes were just wet, but the owners had no access to insurance and needed help to get the cleanup done.

"The Salvation Army did a good job of screening the requests for help," Wiens remarked. Altogether, the project took approximately four weeks of almost full-time volunteer work for Wiens. One week was spent organizing, and the other three involved the physical work.

When asked why he helped out, he replied simply: "Well, you see the need and feel the urge to want to help out where help is needed."—**Donita Wiebe-Neufeld**

Transitions

Births/adoptions

Dyck—to Rose and Norm, Graysville Mennonite, Man., a son, Jonah Norman Abraham, Aug. 8.

Friesen—to Andrea (Wishart) and James, Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., a son, Keegan Anthony, June 15.

Gingerich—to Heather and Brent, Wilmot Mennonite, New Hamburg, Ont., a daughter, Chloe Isabella, Mar. 13.

Guenther—to Charlene and Jon, Vineland United Mennonite, Ont., a daughter, Eryn Raina, July 13.

Guenther—to Andrea and Kelly of Salmon Arm, B.C., Fort Garry Mennonite, Winnipeg, a son, Arik Barg, Aug. 11.

Hamilton—to Cindy and Jason, Grace Mennonite, Winkler, Man., a daughter, Keira Vaughn, July 23.

Hamm—to Melody and Ken, Grace Mennonite, Winkler, Man., a son, Nolan Scott, Aug. 5.

Higgins—to Bonnie and Rick, Wilmot Mennonite, New Hamburg, Ont., a daughter, Claire Elisabeth, Apr. 6.

Leis—to Kristin and Shawn, Steinmann Mennonite, Baden, Ont., a son, Riley Wayne, Aug. 17.

Millin—to Jennifer and Ken, Bethany Mennonite, Virgil, Ont., a daughter, Kennedy Taylor, Aug. 25.

Neufeld—to Patty and Maurice, Grace Mennonite, Winkler, Man., a son, Liam Jude, June 25.

Ruediger—to Lori Ham and Ed of Brantford, Ont., Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Ont., a daughter, Amelia Aliza, Aug. 11.

Schlörff—to Roxanne and Fred, Arnaud Mennonite, Man., a son, Logan Patrick, Aug. 16.

Suderman—to Kathy and Ian, Grace Mennonite, Winkler, Man., a son, Julius Dale, July 20.

Warkentin—to Heather and Jeff, Glenlea Mennonite, Man., a son, Pearce Thomas Scott, July 3.

Wiebe—to Becky and Rod of Fresno, Calif., Sherbrooke Mennonite, Vancouver, a daughter, Veronica Elaine, Aug. 19.

Wiens—to Jen and John, Glenlea Mennonite, Man., a son, Nicholas Peter, July 23.

Wiens—to Jessica and Brent, Bethany Mennonite, Virgil, Ont., a daughter, Olivia Anna, Aug. 15.

Willms—to Rachel and Paul, Orangeville, Ont., Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Ont., a son, Jonah Paul, July 10.

Marriages

Alleyn-Martens—Anton and Kim, Steinbach Mennonite, Man., in Winnipeg, Sept. 4.

Bartel-Martens—Ben and Lisa, Steinbach Mennonite, Man., at Camp Moose Lake, Sept. 5.

Bergmann-Dyck—Andrew and Aimee, Grace Mennonite, Winkler, Man., Aug. 28.

Collins-Penner—Keith and Tannis, Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., July 9.

Driedger-Froese—Chris and Sonya, Grace Mennonite, Winkler, Man., July 30.

Dyck-Barkman—Korey (Sargent Avenue Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.) and Wendy, in Pinawa, Man., Aug. 29.

Enns-Rempel—Karl (Winkler Bergthaler, Man.) and Kim (Altona Bergthaler, Man.) in Altona, Aug. 21.

Epp-Kroeker—Aron and Linda, Vineland United Mennonite, Ont. in Jordan, Ont., July 3.

Ehling-Schartner—Jonathan and Diane (Point Grey Inter-Mennonite, Vancouver), in Gibsons, B.C., Aug. 7.

Friesen-Friesen—Bryon and Courtney, Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., June 26.

Froese-Nabigon—Bentley (Trinity Mennonite, Calgary) and Alana (Catholic), in Peterborough, Ont., July 17.

Giesbrecht-Esau—Stacey and Heather, Steinbach Mennonite, Man., in Winnipeg, Aug. 29.

Harder-Voth—Steve and Joanne, Schoenfelder Mennonite, St. Francois

Xavier, Man., Aug. 21.

Harms-Desmarias—Cameron and Melanie, Warman Mennonite, Sask., Aug. 7.

Harms-Munkholm—Bradley and Laura, Warman Mennonite, Sask., Sept. 4.

Hiebert-Hildebrand—Michael and Jocelyn, Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., at Evangelical Mennonite Mission Church, July 10.

Janzen-Paetkau—Ben (Rockway Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont.) and Stephanie (Waterloo North Mennonite, Ont.), at Victoria Park, Kitchener, Sept. 3.

Klassen-Braun—Ryan and Monica, Peace Mennonite, Richmond, B.C., May 1.

Krahn-Cortez—Brent and Marcia, Grace Mennonite, Winkler, Man., July 31.

Krahn-Dyck—Farrell (Bethel Bergthaler, Winkler, Man.) and Janelle (Winkler Bergthaler) at Winkler Bergthaler, Aug. 14.

Kuepfer-Schyff—Ervin and Becky, Riverdale Mennonite, Millbank, Ont., Aug. 21.

Loeffler-Friesen—Ron and Jill (Trinity Mennonite, Calgary) in Calgary, Aug. 6.

Neumann-MacKenzie—Ryan and Lynn, Bethany Mennonite, Virgil, Ont., Sept. 4.

Nickel-Sportack—Jesse and Liana, Peace Mennonite, Richmond, B.C., June 19.

Peters-Fransen-Ward—Joel and Leigh, Home Street Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man., Aug. 14.

Poulin-Janzen—Eric and Sarah, Bethany Mennonite, Virgil, Ont., Aug. 7.

Roy-Dick—Steven and Sherri, Bethany Mennonite, Virgil, Ont., Aug. 27.

Steingart-Burkhardt—Christopher and Jillian, Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Ont., July 10.

Unger-Koski—Ryan (Glenlea Mennonite, Man.) and Kristen, at Trinity Lutheran, Minneapolis, Minn., Aug. 21.

Wagler-Ruby—Ryan and Katie, East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont., Sept. 4.

Deaths

Bender—Alice, 92, Steinmann Mennonite, Baden, Ont., Sept. 2.

Dueck—Jacob F., 72, Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., June 20.

Franz—Mary, 78, Niagara United Mennonite, Aug. 26.

Friesen—Diedrich D., 85, Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., July 6.

Friesen—Peter S., 94, Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., Aug. 9.

Gascho—Jean, 64, Tavistock Mennonite, Ont., Aug. 14.

Gingrich—Elvina, 70, Hawkesville Mennonite, Ont., Aug. 15.

Heppner—Tena, 87, Zoar Mennonite, Rosthern, Sask., Aug. 12.

Hiebert—Elizabeth, 81, Winkler Bergthaler, Man., Aug. 28.

Lampman—David, 44, Vineland United Mennonite, Ont., July 12.

Klassen—Elsie, 70, Vineland United Mennonite, Ont., July 20.

Neufeld—Kate, 99, New Milford, Conn., Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Ont., Aug. 17.

Penner—Cornie, 81, Vineland United Mennonite, Ont., Aug. 26.

Schultz—Mary, 88, Grace Mennonite, Prince Albert, Sask., Aug. 14.

Weber—Esther, 70, Hawkesville Mennonite, Ont., Aug. 31.

Weber—Melvin R., 77, Hawkesville Mennonite, Ont., Aug. 31.

Wiebe—John M., 80, Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., June 28.

Wiebe—Margaret, 90, Rosemary Mennonite, Alta., Sept. 4.

Baptisms

Herschel Ebenfeld Mennonite, Herschel, Sask.—Jesse Wiebe, Aug. 1.

Canadian Mennonite welcomes transitions announcements within four months of the event. When sending by e-mail, please identify congregation (name and location).

Mennonite Church Canada

September Equipping sent to churches

The September edition of Equipping Canada is now available in Mennonite Church Canada congregations and electronically at www.mennonitechurch.ca/resources/equipping/current/. Produced 10 times per year, the packets provide congregational news, information and resources.

This issue includes: Prayer requests, news and notes for bulletin covers and bulletin boards, reflections from Dan Nighswander, Justina Heese and Sven Eriksson. It also lists resources for Sunday School, prayer and worship, pastor salary guidelines, and the Multi-cultural Ministry Newsletter.

Of special interest to congregations that have been following the detainment of Mennonite church leaders in Vietnam is the "Cry Aloud" prayer and advocacy resource. The resource provides a summary of events, as well as tools for prayerful support of persecuted Christians in Vietnam. Find it at www.mennonitechurch.ca/files/resources/equipping/49/Equipping_Vietnam_Update.pdf or ask your church office for copies.—MC Canada

Prayer requests for Witness work

Give thanks for the 32 baptisms planned for September 12 in Burkino Faso. Witness worker Anne Garber Kompaore writes that the baptisms are evidence of new life in the Kotoura church and are a testimony of Christ's work of transformation of their lives.

Loren and Donna Entz, also Witness partners in Burkina,



Justina Heese receives a gift from Dan Nighswander at her August 30 farewell coffee break at MC Canada offices. Heese has retired as executive secretary of Christian Formation. Her husband Heinz, and children Carla and Jonathon, were present as staff shared memories and expressed their good wishes.

report that cassettes of the gospels of Luke and John are circulating among the Samogho people, indicating a "hunger for the Word." Pray that Blangama, who has found the stories invigorating and also disturbing (notably, Jesus' trial), may continue to be transformed and show leadership in his community.

An urgent prayer request is that God would provide a suitable new place for the Macau Mennonite Church. The former location has been sold. Witness workers George and Tobia Veith and family are in Olds, Alberta, for the coming year. Tim and Cindy Buhler are in their former home in Macau. Both families express gratitude for recent conversions and baptisms in Macau.

Pray for the Evangelical Mennonite Church in Zaporozhye as it deals with difficult issues related to its building plan and leadership structure.—From Witness

Seek to meet financial commitments

Mennonite Church Canada invites prayers as together we seek to meet the financial commitment to brothers and sisters in communities of faith at home and around the world.

At the end of August, MC Canada was \$113,000 behind our revenue plan. We are grateful for what has been given and prayerful for that which is needed.—MC Canada

Mennonite Church Eastern Canada

Goals for visioning and restructuring

In June, three focus groups continued the visioning and restructuring work presented at the April MCEC assembly. The groups focused on tasks for Congregational resources, Missions, and Leadership.

Congregational resources:

1. Formulate criteria for programs and resources. Criteria could include formation and missional components, developing empowerment rather than dependency, and good utilization of time.
2. Move away from the model of staff as programmers to staff as consultants and enablers.

3. Increased web resources.
4. Integrate the arts into all aspects of staff work.

5. Hold a major celebration that is multi-cultural and multi-generational.

6. Pursue a structure that is invitational, and across cultures, age and gender.

Missions:

1. Empower churches and service ministries toward self-sufficiency.

2. Develop criteria for evaluating service ministries.

3. Explore new ways of supporting ministries.

4. Communicate the MCEC vision and story.

5. Promote a bequest/donation fund that links resources to needs.

6. Promote a model of "churches planting churches." Present workshops on church planting, be leader rather than conference driven.

Leadership:

1. Discern the future of pastoral leadership and the settings for training.

2. Assess the financial implications for supporting and training leaders.

3. Develop a plan for early assessment of pastors.

4. Provide increased pastoral care and policy for counselling for pastors.

5. Nurture collegiality and peer accountability.

6. Provide more resources on-line for pastors.

In Fall, three focus groups will examine 1) Camps and schools, 2) Support services, and 3) Key leaders of ethnic groups. Four ad hoc groups will work at criteria for evaluating and developing programs in the above areas.

Six regional meetings will discuss the revised Vision proposal and hear feedback on the restructuring plan. Three emphases will guide discussions: Empowering, Evaluating, and Equipping leaders.—From report by Marianne Mellinger

Training for lay leadership

The Teaching Circle is offering a Lay Leadership Training event at Steinmann Mennonite Church in Baden on November 6, from 9:00 am. to 3:00 p.m. This is part of the SAFARI (Shaping Adult Faith: Action, Reflection, Integration) program.

The SAFARI event will feature three course options: 1) Home before midnight: Leading effective meetings, 2) Where 4 or 5 are gathered: Small group ministry, and 3) Volunteers wanted: Inviting

people to share their gifts.

The program is designed for committee members, deacons, elders, pastors and future congregational leaders. Group rates are available.

To register, contact: Miriam Frey, SAFARI director, phone (519) 880-9684 or e-mail: miriamfrey@nonline.net. You can also ask her about other courses offered by SAFARI.—From SAFARI release

**Mennonite Church
Manitoba**

**Welcome party
for young adults**

The third annual Welcome Party is being held on September 26. The party is to help rural young adults become aware of ways to connect with congregations in Winnipeg and to get to know each other. This year's event is taking place at First Mennonite Church, beginning at 4:30 p.m.

**Mennonite Church
Saskatchewan**

**Prison visitation
being evaluated**

Person to Person (P2P), supported by MC Saskatchewan, is undergoing a government-funded evaluation of its prison visitation services. The evaluation is being conducted by a clinical psychology student from the University of Saskatchewan.

This evaluation will be useful for both the Prince Albert and Saskatoon offices for several reasons.

"We know that offenders benefit from the services we provide," said Dale Schiele, P2P director, "and content inmates are less likely to riot or cause problems."

Results of the visitation program have never been documented and the evaluation may prove beneficial when working with Correctional Services Canada, said Schiele. To have something on paper

will be evidence that P2P services are making a difference in the lives of inmates and released offenders.

Schiele continues to need volunteers for the program. "Both men and women are needed at the Regional Psychiatric Centre in Saskatoon and the three centres in Prince Albert," he said.

As part of the continuing quest to inform the Mennonite constituency of the P2P ministry, Grace Mennonite in Prince Albert will host a Portable CMU (Canadian Mennonite University) workshop in January. Paul Redekopp will be speaking about the historical roots of restorative justice, and Dale Schiele will discuss the opportunities available for volunteers working with offenders.

**Mennonite Church
Alberta**

**Another good summer
at Camp Valaqua**

On August 27, the last Valaqua campers drove through the winding, spruce-shrouded driveway on their way home. Summer staff cleaned up and said their goodbyes, leaving directors Don and Tanya Dyck Steinmann and their children Katerina and Ruby alone with the moose, squirrels and trees.

From his suddenly quiet office, Don reported that over 530 campers and 100 volunteers (including 22 counsellors-in-training) worked, played and worshipped together united by the theme; "What if love ruled?" Chaplains used the prodigal son and the good Samaritan stories to explain God's love to campers. Through various activities, such as random acts of kindness, campers were challenged not only to talk about love, but to act it out in practical ways.

This summer was the first time that the camp week ended on Friday evening instead of Saturday morning.

That gave staff and volunteers a bit more time to prepare themselves between camps, as well as allow families to have their entire Saturday with each other.

Don remarked, "Overall the feedback was pretty positive. There were definitely some adjustments to be made.... The most significant adjustment was the lack of a Friday night campfire, but in some ways Friday morning chapel worked as a final camper sharing time." The camp board will be reviewing the change at its next meeting.

**Pastors' Council
plans fall meeting**

The pastors' council of Mennonite Church Alberta is planning a fall meeting at Camp Valaqua on October 18-20. The group will be studying Willard Swartley's book, *Homosexuality: Biblical Interpretation and Moral Discernment*.

The council was formed in 2002 to assist pastors to discern the leading of the Holy Spirit, to serve as a unifying body, to work toward spiritual enrichment of pastors, to provide opportunity for fellowship and sharing, to test direction and explore understandings, to help pastors develop skills in dealing with congregational issues, to process issues of conference-wide significance, and serve as an advisory board to the General Council of MC Alberta.

**DVBS Troupe forming
for next summer**

MC Alberta is initiating a trial run of the Travelling Daily Vacation Bible Study troupe concept for congregations next summer. The program is supported by both the Missions and Service and the Congregational Life committees of the conference.

The goal is to help churches with limited financial and volunteer resources to reach out to their communities with

a quality summer program. Participating congregations would provide a local coordinator, room and board for troupe members, daily snacks for the children, and adult helpers. The fee for the troupe is \$500, plus \$5.00 per child.

Application forms are available online from the MC Alberta website. For more information, contact Kelvin Rempel at (403) 282-7418 or e-mail: admin@mennonitechurch.ab.ca.

**Mennonite Church
British Columbia**

**Vancouver food bank
welcomes donations**

Sherbrooke Mennonite Church is home to the MCC Refugee Food Bank. This vibrant ministry serves those who need extra support as their refugee applications are processed.

The Food Bank operates every Thursday morning and pastors from Sherbrooke and First United Spanish Mennonite Church are on hand to visit over a cup of coffee and some baking. Through this ministry, many refugees have found a church home and have come to appreciate the opportunity to worship openly, without fear.

The Refugee Food Bank is run by volunteers and accepts donations of all kinds, including "extras" from your garden. For more information about how you can get involved, contact Sherbrooke church at (604) 327-3913.

Unless otherwise credited, articles in The Churches pages were written by: Leona Dueck Penner (Mennonite Church Canada), Maurice Martin (Eastern Canada), Evelyn Rempel Pethau (Manitoba), Karin Fehderau (Saskatchewan), Donita Wiebe-Neufeld (Alberta), Angelika Dawson (B.C.). See page 2 for contact information.

Employment opportunities



Mennonite Central Committee (MCC)
is accepting applications for the position of

MCC CENTRAL STATES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The director provides vision and oversight for all MCC programs in Central States.

Familiarity with MCC constituency, strong relational administrative skills, and cultural competency required. Experience with budgeting, administration, Spanish language skills preferred. Women and people of color are encouraged to apply. Significant travel time within the United States.

Contact:

Charmayne Brubaker

**Phone: (717) 859-1151; E-mail: cdb@mcc.org
or your nearest MCC office for the full job description.**

Application review begins immediately. Position available January 1, 2005 or sooner, if possible.

VOLUNTEER DIRECTORS Mennonite Centre in Ukraine

The Mennonite Centre, located in a restored former girls school in Halbstadt, Molochna, specializes in medical and educational programs and acts as a learning centre. We are forming an ongoing team of several retired or semi-retired volunteer couples, each spending 3 to 4 months a year in Ukraine. We are looking for men and women who can model professional leadership and management roles. Knowledge of German is very helpful, as is some familiarity with Russian. For more information contact:

Walter Unger

Phone: (416) 925-9461; E-mail: walterunger@ica.net

ADULT ESL INSTRUCTOR

Daytime instructor needed for Drayton adult English as a Second Language class 2.5 hrs/wk for 2 terms (mid-Sept. to early Dec. and mid-Feb. to mid-June.) to work as part of an educational team. Training and experience in second-language instruction and sensitivity to multicultural issues required.

Apply by 4:00 p.m. Friday, September 24, 2004:

**Sheila M Nicholas-ESL Coordinator
Wellington Centre for Continuing Education
21 King Street
Guelph, ON N1E 4P5
Fax: (519) 766-9485**

Only those candidates selected for an interview will be contacted.

Housing

Mature couple looking to house-sit in Winnipeg January through April 2005. Phone (250) 782-3589 or e-mail plenert@pris.bc.ca



Stewardship Consultant

Mennonite Foundation of Canada (MFC) is a charitable foundation serving seven Anabaptist church conferences across Canada. MFC is seeking a full-time stewardship consultant to manage its new Calgary office. This person will be responsible to promote MFC's Biblical stewardship message and provide charitable gift and estate planning services to the Alberta constituency.

Candidates for this position should:

- Be able to communicate effectively in group settings and with individuals
- Possess an understanding of charitable gift and estate planning
- Be creative, organized, and self-motivated
- Support MFC's stewardship mission
- Be a contributing part of the staff team

Each candidate must be a member of one of MFC's seven participating conferences.

Submit applications by October 23, 2004 to:

**Robert Veitch, General Manager
12-1325 Markham Rd, Winnipeg, MB R3T 4J6
1-800-772-3257 fax: 204-488-1986
e-mail: rveitch@mennofoundation.ca
www.mennofoundation.ca**

PASTOR

White Rock Christian Mennonite Church is a Mandarin-speaking ministry located in White Rock, BC. We are an intergenerational group of about 50 people committed to worshipping Jesus and sharing Him with others. We are seeking a team-oriented pastor to lead us to fulfill God's vision for us. The successful candidate will be fluent in both Mandarin and English, and be a strong Biblical preacher with a heart for discipleship and evangelism.

For more information or to submit a resume, please contact:

**Chris Lin
14428 - 18A Avenue
Surrey, BC V4A 8S6
E-mail: linist@tiesus.com**

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Justice Ministries meetings in Alberta

Calgary, Alta.—Celebrations of Community Justice Ministries in Alberta will be taking place in six locations from October 15-18. Speaker at the events will be Wayne Northey, director of M2W2 in British Columbia.

The October 15 event is at First Mennonite Church in Edmonton at 7:00 p.m. On October 16, a breakfast meeting will be held at Tofield Mennonite Church at 8:30 a.m. An evening meeting, at 7:00 p.m., will take place at Dalhousie Community Church in Calgary.

The October 17 celebration is at Rosemary Mennonite Church at 7:00 p.m. On October 18, Zion Evangelical Missionary Church in Didsbury will host a Beef on a Bun supper at 6:00 p.m., with a program beginning at 7:00 p.m.—From Justice Ministries report

UN seminar to focus on African issues

Akron, Pa.—The MCC United Nations Office's ninth fall seminar, scheduled for October 21-23 in New York, will explore how MCC and Mennonite World Conference (MWC) advocate for issues in Africa. The event, "A state of beings: Human security and Sub-Saharan Africa," will examine

sustainable development, education, human rights and participation of women.

Pakisa Tshimika, the MWC associate executive secretary for global projects, will give an address on the theological underpinnings for public advocacy work. Frank Magare, director of community development for the Tanzania Mennonite Church, will be another resource. Magare is serving for a year in the MCC UN office.

To register or to learn more about the seminar, call (212) 223-4062 or e-mail: unoffice@mcc.org.—MCC release

Penny Power breaks records

Akron, Pa.—Small change is having big results in Penny Power, an MCC fundraiser. It exceeded its 2003 total in the first seven and a half months of 2004. By mid-August contributions of change, paper money and matching grants had reached a record \$426,253. Penny Power helps fund MCC's health, water and food projects around the world. Most relief sales have activities where kids can learn about these projects. Learn more at www.mcc.org/respond/relief_sales/penny.html.—MCC release

Six things to remember

1. Indecision is the key to flexibility.
2. You can't tell which way the train went by looking at the track.
3. There is no substitute for genuine lack of preparation.
4. By the time you can make ends meet, they move the ends.
5. The other line always moves faster until you get in it.
6. Accept the fact that one-seventh of your life is spent on Monday.—From the web

Calendar

British Columbia

October 4-6: MC British Columbia pastor/spouse retreat.

October 15-17: Women in Mission retreat on "Prayer," with speaker Karen Heidebrecht-Thiessen.

October 16: Mennonite Historical Society of B.C. banquet at Columbia Bible College, 6:00 p.m. Speaker Harry Loewen on "Saints and sinners among Russian Mennonite leaders." Call (604) 853-6177 for tickets.

October 16, 17: Abendmusik Thanksgiving Vespers at Emmanuel Free Reformed Church, Abbotsford (16), Knox United Church, Vancouver (17), 8:00 p.m. Donations to Menno Simons Centre.

October 21: MCC Thrifts Shops evening with "quilt lady" Elda Martens, at Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Abbotsford, 7:00 p.m. Call Norma Neufeld at (604) 850-6639.

October 22-23: MC British Columbia workshop on homosexuality with Willard Swartley, Toni Dolfo Smith and Neil Rempel. For details, call (604) 850-6658 or e-mail: admin@mcbc.ca.

October 22, 23, 29, 30: Mennonite Disaster Service information evenings, at Willow Park MB Church, Kelowna (22), Sardis Community Church (23), King Road MB Church, Abbotsford (29), First United Mennonite, Vancouver (30), 7:00 p.m. Speakers include Gerry Klassen and Karen Midland.

November 6: MCC B.C. annual meeting at Yarrow Mennonite Brethren Church. **December 4, 5:** Abendmusik Advent Vespers at Emmanuel Free Reformed Church, Abbotsford (4), Knox United Church, Vancouver (5), 8:00 p.m.

Alberta

October 15, 16, 17, 18: Community Justice Ministries celebrations with speaker Wayne Northey (from M2W2 in B.C.), at First Mennonite, Edmonton (15), 7:00 p.m.; Tofield Mennonite (16), 8:30 a.m. breakfast; Dalhousie Community Church, Calgary (16), 7:00 p.m.; Rosemary Mennonite (17), 7:00 p.m.; Zion Evangelical Missionary Church, Didsbury (18), 6:00 p.m. supper; 7:00 p.m. program.

October 16: Fall workday at Camp Valaqua. Contact Jeff Schellenberg at (403) 637-2510.

Saskatchewan

September 30: MCC workshop, "Living creatively with stress," at MCC office, Saskatoon, 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

September 30-October 2: Canadian Mennonite Health Assembly at Shekinah Retreat Centre.

October 6: Church planting meeting at Nutana Park Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, 7:30 p.m.

October 13: MC Saskatchewan pastors' gathering at Mount Royal Mennonite, Saskatoon, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

October 15-16: Saskatchewan Women in Mission retreat at Shekinah.

October 15-16: Preaching seminar at Osler Mennonite Church with John Neufeld. To register, call Julie Bergen at (306) 653-4051.

October 20-23: Christian Peacemaker Team meeting at Shekinah.

October 22-23: Rosthern Junior College Alumni Tournament.

October 29-30: Missional church workshop for lay leaders, "Being a church that makes a difference," at Youth Farm Bible Camp, Rosthern.

October 31, Nov. 7, 14, 21: Workshop on Dead Sea Scrolls with Vern Ratzlaff at Nutana Park Mennonite Church, Saskatoon.

November 5-6: MCC Saskatchewan annual meeting. Saturday sessions at Mount Royal Mennonite Church, Saskatoon.

November 5-7: Quilting and scrapbooking retreat at Shekinah.

November 12-13: Music Fest at Zoar Mennonite Church, Waldheim.

November 13-14: Musical, "Pull of the land," at Rosthern Junior College. Fundraiser for Mennonite Heritage Museum.

December 22: Rosthern Junior College Christmas concert, 7:00 p.m.

Manitoba

October 1-2: Conference on "State of the Art of North American Mennonite History," at University of Winnipeg. Speakers John Lapp and Barbara Nkala Oct. 1, 7:00 p.m. Visit web site: uwinnipeg.ca/academic/as/mennstudies.

October 1-3: Young Adult Fellowship North American gathering at Canadian Mennonite University on "Community: Living the tension." Contact Bob Wiebe, phone (204) 896-1616, ext. 254; e-mail: bwiebe@mennochurch.mb.ca.

October 2: MC Manitoba Equipping Conference at Canadian Mennonite University.

October 3: Opening program of Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary School at Portage Ave. Mennonite Brethren Church, 2:30 p.m.

October 6-7: John and Margaret Friesen Lectures at CMU with Barbara Nkala from Zimbabwe.

October 15-16: 24-hour women's retreat at Camp Assiniboia, with speaker Kathy Koop on "Faithful women: then and now."

October 19-20: J.J. Thiessen Lectures at CMU with Peter Erb of Wilfrid Laurier University.

October 23: Manitoba Women for MCC conference at First Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, 10:00 a.m. Bring bag lunch and bar of soap.

October 23: Canadian Mennonite University's fall fundraising banquet at 500 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, 6:30 p.m.

October 23: Mennonite Church Manitoba delegate session at Steinbach Mennonite, 1:00-4:30 p.m.

October 30: Seminar on worship planning and leading with Irma Fast Dueck at Douglas Mennonite Church, Winnipeg.

October 30: Canadian Mennonite University fundraising dessert evening at Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church, 7:30 p.m.

November 1: Annual meeting of Westgate Mennonite Collegiate, Winnipeg, 7:30 p.m.

November 5-7: Quilting retreats at Camp Koinonia (with speaker Tina Hildebrand) and Camp Moose Lake (leader Val Pankratz).

November 12-14: Quilting retreat at Camp Moose Lake with speaker Debbie Hopkins. Call (204) 896-1616.

November 24: Evening with the Arts at Westgate Mennonite Collegiate, Winnipeg, 7:30 p.m.

December 9, 16: Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary School Christmas programs, 7:00 p.m. Aggasiz at Bethel Mennonite Church (9); Bedson at Immanuel Pentecostal (16).

December 13: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate Christmas concert at Westminster United Church, Winnipeg, 7:00 p.m.

Ontario

September 26: Bluegrass fundraising concert for Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre and Mennonite Centre Ukraine at Niagara United Mennonite Church, 3:00 p.m. featuring The Peachpickers, Five-on-the-Floor and Sweetwater.

September 26: Colombia dessert evening at Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church,

Kitchener. Fundraiser for MC Canada Witness, with Rudy and Helen Baergen and Bryan Moyer Suderman, 7:30 p.m.

September 27 or 28: Seniors' retreat at Hidden Acres Camp. (Attend either day.) Speaker Leigh Steckly. Call camp.

October 1-3: Homecoming weekend at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate.

October 5, 12, 19: MCEC regional meetings at Hillcrest Mennonite (5), Elmira Mennonite (12), Vineland First Mennonite (19), 7:00 p.m.

October 16: Classical music night at Toronto United Mennonite Church, 7:30 p.m. Fundraiser for St. Clair O'Connor Community.

October 17: Dedication of Russian Mennonite Memorial

Garden at Conrad Grebel University College, 3:00 p.m.

October 21: MEDA Waterloo breakfast meeting at Stone Crock, St. Jacobs, 7:30 a.m. Report from Egypt.

October 23: Marriage Encounter Auction and Banquet at Kitchener Mennonite Brethren Church. Call (519) 743-5255.

October 30: Christian Officers Peace Seminar II at Conrad Grebel University College.

November 5-7: MCEC Youth Exchange Weekend.

November 6: Lay leadership training by SAFARI at Steinmann Mennonite Church, Baden, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

November 6: Alumni reunion (1964-70) at Conrad Grebel University College, 6:00 p.m.

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1. Individuals who are part of Mennonite Church Canada or one of its five area conferences can ask to be placed on their congregation's group subscription list. The subscription is paid by the conferences.
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