Bethany Christian Schools BULLETIN

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CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

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Cover photo:

Fourth grade teacher Adam Friesen holds his class in an outdoor space on campus.

This semester, BCS teachers have seamlessly integrated their existing creative classroom setups with Covid-19 health and safety precautions, allowing students to continue receiving a full and robust Bethany educational experience.

Inquiries about joining the Bethany community can be directed to admissions@bethanycs.net.

Making a difference in the lives of our students

by Tim Lehman, *Head of School*

Our core mission at Bethany Christian Schools is to prepare students to participate in God's work in the world. Underlying this mission is the commitment to making a difference in the lives of our students, helping them live into their gifts and discover how they can be utilized to make a difference in the world.

This issue of The Bulletin highlights the career of Dan Bodiker, who has made a difference in the lives of countless students during his tenure at Bethany as a teacher, coach and athletic director. "Bod" as most students affectionately call him, understands how to show others that they are known and loved—necessary foundations for learning.

This issue also contains a story about 1976 graduate Donna Minter, a PhD neuropsychologist who is making a difference in the world through her work with the Minnesota Peacebuilding Leadership Institute, helping communities understand trauma and build resilience through restorative justice programs. Dr. Minter's work with resilience in the face of trauma is deeply rooted in her faith and foundational experiences at Bethany.

Resiliency is a common topic for educators this year: how to be successful during the time of COVID, how to be engaged politically and how to maintain community despite social distancing. Educational institutions can no longer focus solely on curriculum. We must also teach skills such as resiliency by helping students develop core intrapersonal competencies like intellectual openness and curiosity, self-directedness and emotional stability.

At Bethany we achieve this by maintaining high expectations for academic achievement and personal behavior rooted in Christian community. It is deeply gratifying to walk alongside students in this critical stage of their lives, as Bod did for many years, and then see the beautiful work they do while participating in God's work in the world—like that of Donna Minter.



Deaths

Leroy E. Yoder ('63), Dowagiac, Mich., July 7, 2019.
Alan Messersmith ('74), Stuarts Draft, Va., Apr. 10, 2020.
Carol Rhea ('55), Bremen, Ind., May 9, 2020.
Dale Schlabach ('57), Middlebury, Ind., Aug. 3, 2020.
Joan Frey ('55) Bouterse, Harned, Ky., Oct. 13, 2020.
Terry Brandeberry ('82), El Paso, Tex., Oct. 19, 2020.
Larry W. Miller ('59), Topeka, Ind., Nov. 27, 2020.
Lois Kaufman ('58), Mobile, Ala., Dec. 3, 2020.
Russell Liechty (Board 1984-85) Goshen, Ind., Jan. 31, 2021.
Golda Wofford ('70), Colorado Springs, Colo., April 18, 2020.
Dana Yoder ('74), Middlebury, Ind., Jan. 12, 2021.
Carolyn (Yontz '58) Yoder, Goshen, Ind., Feb. 7, 2021.

Births

Austin Scharf ('02) and Kevin Maloney celebrated the birth of Cameron John Scharf Maloney on February 16, 2020 in Atlanta, Ga.

Chelsea Noble ('09) and **Jeremy Thomas ('09)** celebrated the birth of Lily Jean Thomas on December 29, 2020 in Chicago, Il.

Kyle ('06) and Alli (Hawkins '06) Stiffney celebrated the birth of Kailyn Ruth on February 3, 2021 in Goshen Ind.

Marriages

Jordan Shetler ('08) and Rachel Lanctot ('07) were married July 27, 2019, in Bristol, Ind.
Trisha Handrich ('07) and Chase Snyder were married on July 18, 2020 in Goshen, Ind.
Sharisse Yoder ('11) and Stephen Coble were married on November 21, 2020 in Granger, Ind.

Alumni, keep us updated! Fill out the form at bethanycs.net/alumni/ or email alumni@bethanycs.net.

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Bethany grows to serve third grade beginning next school year

Bethany Christian Schools announces the addition of a third grade class, currently enrolling for the 2021-22 school year.

Adding this grade allows Bethany to begin its strategic movement towards serving the community as an independent school for students in kindergarten through grade 12. Bethany is a dynamic learning community in which students are known, loved, and prepared for their journey beyond school. Up until now, Bethany has served grades 4-12.

"This is a great opportunity for more students to be part of a community where teachers creatively develop students' strengths and faith is explored in a safe environment," said Rex Hochstedler, chair of the Bethany board and current Bethany parent.

The third grade will join fourth and fifth grade as part of the lower school, which emphasizes hands-on experiential learning with a focus on fine arts, outdoor education, field trips and a lively learning environment that make the Bethany experience unique.



Current lower school students enjoy class outside.

Small class sizes allow students and teachers to connect on a deeper level. Because of this, students can grow and be challenged in a safe environment at Bethany—all the way through their senior year.

A parent of a current fourth grader emphasizes the importance of these connections saying, "You just feel like you're cared for from the faith perspective, but also that people are really invested in your child's development."

New faculty and staff members join BCS community, KP shifts roles







Will Leichty began as Chief Financial Officer for BCS in November. He has previous experience working as a CPA and other finance roles in several different industries both in California and Indiana. Will is excited about joining the nonprofit world and being able to integrate his professional skill set in corporate finance with his personal passion for the Bethany mission. Will graduated from Iowa Mennonite School in 2002 and Goshen College in 2006. He lives in Goshen with his wife, Kate, and their three daughters: Jo, six; Ada, four; and Mae, 8 months. They are involved at Eighth Street Mennonite Church and enjoy spending time with friends and family in the area, as well as traveling and taking family vacations.

Bradley Kauffman began as Choir teacher in January 2021. His most recent work experience includes working as the Project Director and General Editor of Voices Together (MennoMedia). He is excited about joining the team at Bethany and he looks forward to helping the BCS community explore the new Mennonite hymnal and devising safe ways of singing together. Bradley graduated from Goshen College in 1996. His wife Renee is a chaplain in Goshen, and they have two children who have also joined the BCS community: Lucca, 10th grade, and Rowan, 4th grade. Outside of work he enjoys composing, woodworking and cycling.

Krysten Parson is already well known in the Bethany community as a teacher, coach and mentor. This fall, after Jim Buller's retirement as guidance counselor, she stepped into the counselor role and is already beginning to transform it. As the Bethany school counselor, KP will work in collaboration with teachers, administrators, parents and other groups to focus on the academic, career and social/emotional development of students. She is excited about the opportunity to continue supporting students and faculty at Bethany.

Donna Minter ('76) works for truth, mercy, justice and peace in Minneapolis

For Donna Minter, Bethany values such as service, peace and Christ-centered living have been central to her life and work for many years.

Minter is the founder and Executive Director of the Minnesota Peacebuilding Leadership Institute (Peacebuilding), a nonprofit organization in Minneapolis that provides training and support for communities to understand trauma and build resilience with restorative justice.

This organization was born out of Minter's desire to share what she learned at her first STAR (Strategies for Trauma Awareness and & Resilience) training. She attended STAR for professional development at the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding (CJP) at Eastern Mennonite University, in Harrisonburg, Va., in 2008.



Donna Minter, right, with Co-Executive Director Crixell Shell. Donna and Crixell lead STAR trainings together.

To say that attending that training changed the course of her life both personally and professionally would be an understatement.

STAR trainings integrate elements of restorative justice and nonviolent conflict transformation, as well as human security and spirituality, to help people become informed about trauma experiences and build resiliency. STAR began at the CJP after the tragic events of September 11, 2001. Church World Service gave the CJP a grant to develop a way to equip communities to understand the dynamics of trauma and healing and how they intersect with conflict, justice and peace.

As a PhD neuropsychologist who had been practicing for over 15 years, Minter realized that STAR directly applied to the work she was already doing.

"I was seeing things and working with people in the clinic and the courts and realizing there's a bigger picture here," she said. That bigger picture included things like historical, structural and cultural trauma, particularly for people of color, and Minter felt that the mental health diagnostic system wasn't equipped to talk about these things.

After her first STAR training, she also realized that there might be more people in Minneapolis who would be interested in learning along with her.

When Minter returned to Minneapolis after that first week, she began thinking about how to bring STAR to people who might not have the resources to spend a week in Virginia for the 5-day training. She returned in 2009 to begin a conversation with STAR trainers at the CJP about bringing STAR to Minneapolis in the summer of 2010.

In January of that year, Minter created an introductory powerpoint and began speaking to any group of people in the Minneapolis area that would have her and might be interested in this work, "whether it was two people in a living room or 100 people in a conference room," she said.

Minter was committed to making this accessible to anyone who wanted to come, regardless of finances, and she also wanted a

diverse group of people to reflect the diversity of the Twin Cities, where the training would take place. After her months of campaigning, Minter had raised over $8000 to provide scholarships for attendees, and had a cohort of over 25 people signed up, representing five racial and ethnic groups and several faith traditions.

The first training in Minneapolis was such a success that Minter realized there could be a desire for more of this in the community. Crixell Shell, who had attended the first training, approached Minter with interest and eventually joined her as a co-trainer. Together they started offering the 5-day STAR training two or three times a year in the Minneapolis area.

As a result, Minter began the Minneapolis Peacebuilding Leadership Institute in 2013. A nonprofit organization would allow Minter and Shell to provide additional trainings in different formats to even more people. By March 2020, over 3700 people had been trained through Peacebuilding.

Since March 2020, that number has almost doubled. At the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic, Minter and her staff decided to put their trainings online—including Minter's original powerpoint, which is now the introduction to STAR training and is available worldwide.

Putting the trainings online at a pay-what-you-can rate was definitely a risk for the organization. However, this increased accessibility has not only allowed even more people to become informed and take the trainings, but it has also increased the visibility of the organization to people with financial resources who are interested in supporting the work of Peacebuilding.

"With Covid-19 and the murder of George Floyd, there's even more need for this work," said Minter, referring to the highly publicized murder of a Minneapolis Black man killed by police in May of this year and the collective trauma and national unrest that followed. "We'd already been doing the work. It's not like we had to create something new. And we're going to keep doing this."

Part of doing this work includes empowering communities that may benefit from these skills in trauma healing and resiliency. "I love it when city leaders pay attention to us and want to talk to us, but I don't wait around for the leaders. We all get to be leaders within our own spheres of influence," said Minter.

"That's really what peacebuilding and leadership is about. How can each of us do what we can where we are with what we have. And for those of us who are people of faith, what does that look like for each of us."

For Minter, part of her foundation as a person of faith began years ago at Bethany.

"I have such strong memories of teachers who were solid and grounded in their faith, and that's how they were teaching," she said. "Bethany was willing to do things differently, and be creative with what it meant to be in education. It was a really important foundational time for me."



Donna graduated from BCS in 1976.

In 2019, Minter was honored with the Melanie Greenberg U.S. Peacebuilding Award of Excellence from the DC-based international Alliance for Peacebuilding. Peacebuilding continues to offer trainings online in a variety of formats, and there are now six people on staff including Minter and her now co-executive director Shell.

"This work has allowed me to take what I know from my psychology foundation and build on that in a new way. It's been an exciting journey, and it's a journey that anyone can take," said Minter. "This work gives me an incredible amount of hope."

Celebrating 55 Years of Service to BCS

Dan "Bod" Bodiker is a Bethany legend. His over-five decade career began in the 1960s and recently ended as he retired from teaching drivers ed. Bod helped develop the athletic program and coached, taught and mentored students for years, as shown in the timeline below. These photos and stories serve as highlights of the lasting legacy that Bod leaves at BCS.



Bod was hired as a world history, physical education and health teacher. He was also hired to start an interscholastic athletic program; at the time BCHS only participated in church leagues. He coached soccer, basketball and baseball.

1964

Bod coached the baseball team to a Sectional championship.



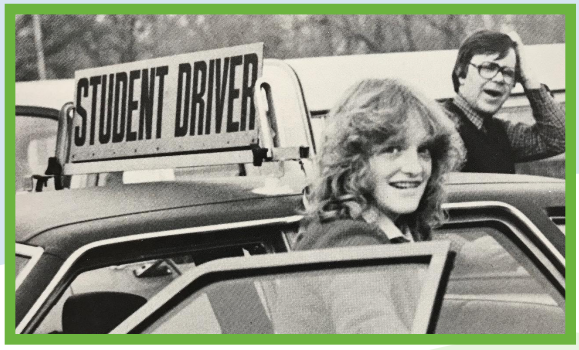
1987

1960

1970

1980

Bod began teaching drivers ed in the 70s and 80s, which would continue until his retirement—often teaching multiple generations of the same family to drive.



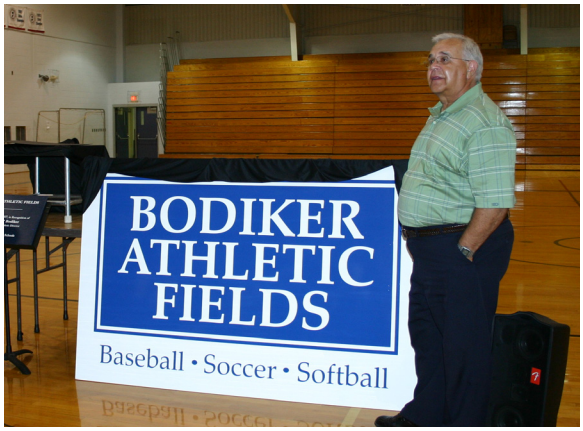
If you missed our social media celebration, be sure to check out bethanycs.net/bodweek/ for the recap! We loved hearing your driving with Bod stories, and if you missed out on a bumper sticker (pictured right), let us know at alumni@bethanycs.net. We'd love to send you one!





Bod officially retired from BCS after 55 years.

2020



Bodiker Athletic Fields were officially named to honor Bod's contribution to the athletic programs at Bethany—most of which wouldn't exist today without him—and his years of coaching and later as Athletic Director.

2006



2007

Bod's last season as boys varsity basketball coach—the same year he turned 50.

1993-94

Bod began as Athletic Director.

1996

2000

2010

1990

Then Bethany AD Bryan Kehr recognized Dan for his induction into the Indiana Soccer Coaches Hall of Fame in 2007. During his time at BCS he was part of developing the unique coach-athlete relationships still found at Bethany today. This is one of the reasons that many former athletes who played for Bod have gone on to be coaches themselves, some at Bethany. Bethany graduate Bryan Kehr ('78) remembers having Bod as a coach and how it helped him grow, saying, "My high school coach (baseball, soccer and basketball) served as a great role model for me and many other young athletes in high school. He was a calm coach who, I believe, helped me develop as a player." Kehr went on to coach girls soccer and serve as athletic director at Bethany and is currently coaching women's soccer at Hesston College.

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Students stay connected, keep each other safe during pandemic

Although social distancing and public health precautions have caused changes in routines, students at Bethany Christian Schools have managed to find many safe ways to maintain relationships, build community and grow in their faith.

Coaches and directors got creative this semester, finding ways for students to continue participating in the activities they love, while keeping themselves and each other safe.



Talashia Keim Yoder, longtime director and producer of plays and musicals at BCS, found herself exploring creative solutions to make the fall production happen. "Thankfully, theater at Bethany has always been about education, about challenging students and teaching them new skills," she said.

Students worked with one or two partners, like pictured at left, to create four comedic scenes, which were recorded and available for livestream on production weekend in November. "Our current situation handed us a new set of challenges and our student actors are learning skills like videography and film acting," said Talashia.

A successful season for fall athletic teams also allowed students to maintain relationships and regain a sense of routine in their lives.

"Cross country allowed me to still connect with my friends and get a chance to be outside," said senior All-Conference cross-country runner Ana Yoder, pictured second from left with her team. Spending time with teammates while paying close attention to social distancing and mask guidelines allowed students to continue activities that they love and continue building connections with their friends and coaches.



And these connections are the most valuable part of a Bethany experience—connections that last across social and physical distancing measures.