

Bethany Christian Schools BULLETIN



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Inside this Issue

Campus News.....4

- Young Writer Published
- Admissions/School Calendar
- Building Dedication

Fun Fest and Fall Festival.....5

Alumni News and Reunions 5-7

Missing Alumni 7

From the Principal 8

Survey Says...

A report on how Bethany students and parents perceive their school: what it does well and what needs improvement.

see pp. 2-3

Survey Says...

Survey Shows Satisfaction

Results of a fall 2004 survey show a high level of satisfaction with Bethany among parents and students. As the survey's average ratings indicate, parents rated 29 of the 30 positive statements on Bethany's performance between *agree* and *strongly agree*!

Student reactions were favorable as well. Averages were between *agree* and *strongly agree* in 20 of the 30 categories among high school students and 21 of 28 categories among middle school students. All other averages were closer to *agree* than *disagree*.

Strengths

One purpose of the surveys was to find out what parents and students feel Bethany does well so that we can build on our assets and tell those considering Bethany what parents and students value most about the school. Based on average scores, students and parents alike highly affirmed Bethany's close community and teachers' care for students, Christ-centered education, strong academics, and opportunities in athletics, music, and drama.

This survey strongly confirmed the five distinctives that help define the mission of Bethany: Christ-centered, strong academics, opportunities, community, and peace and service. It is gratifying to know that parents and students perceive that Bethany is doing well in fulfilling its stated mission.

Areas to Improve

A second purpose was to find out what parents and students feel Bethany does less well, so that we can seek to improve in those areas. Though areas with the lowest average scores were viewed positively by most respondents—at or just below *agree*—some respondents were less satisfied. Areas ranked lower by all survey groups included computer access, library resources and services, timely feedback on student progress, and discipline fairness.

Addressing Concerns

In March 2005 randomly-selected groups of parents and students provided additional

feedback on these areas with lower averages. The feedback from these focus groups provided more specific information that was helpful in ongoing efforts to strengthen the school's performance.

Technology

One area of concern for both parents and students was computer access. While additional lab space was already being addressed as part of the building renovation, issues such as the number and quality of student computers were addressed by purchasing some new computers and upgrading existing ones. Students now have access to more than 100 school computers—one computer for every three students.

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Computer lab space has increased as a result of renovating the former library into a primary lab, an auxiliary lab, and a multi-purpose room. These three rooms together have a total of 56 computers. The primary computer lab is used for computer technology instruction and when available, along with the other two rooms, can be reserved for use by other classes. The media center has new flatscreen XP computers for student use, and each middle school classroom has three new or upgraded computers.

Another aspect of the building project was the installation of three multimedia centers, in addition to three mobile centers: one in the multipurpose room and one each in the middle school and high school social studies rooms. These installations include a ceiling-mounted LCD projector, sound system, DVD/VCR capability, and inputs for cable TV and computer. Digital video equipment and editing software is also available for use.

Library Resources and Services

Focus group feedback suggested that some concern regarding library resources

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Editor: J. Kevin Miller
Consulting Editors:

Allan Dueck,
Susan Gingerich,
Karen Shenk,
Sarah Yoder

2904 South Main Street
Goshen, IN 46526-5499
574 534-2567

info@bethanycs.net

POSTMASTER: Send form 3579
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c/o Evangel Press
2000 Evangel Way
Nappanee, IN 46550

and services was due to a lack of familiarity with existing resources, especially among newer students. This year all middle school students and new high school students participated in an orientation to the media center. In addition, middle school students meet weekly with the librarian for activities that further familiarize them with available resources.

Volunteers are enhancing access by staffing the media center when the librarian is unavailable. Additionally, Bethany now provides students a powerful research source through Indiana's online research library, www.inspire.net.

Timely Feedback on Student Progress

Prior to the start of this school year, faculty adopted a new policy that helps clarify expectations for students and teachers regarding appropriate time needed for grading various types of student work, from daily homework assignments to major projects. Teachers are committed to following these guidelines, which were shared with students and parents.

Another new technology tool has helped provide more timely feedback on grades. Early this fall technology director Peter Shetler unveiled a secure program on the school's website that allows students and parents to view students' course grades and assignment grades at any time. Teachers update the database weekly and can include notes for a class or individual student. Some teachers use the note area to keep students and parents informed about current or upcoming assignments and projects. In the short time this service has been available, parents have very much appreciated this new home-school communication tool.

Discipline and Fairness

As the person who carries primary responsibility in disciplinary matters, new assistant principal Hank Willems says, "It is important for students to learn to know me in various capacities, not only in my disciplinary role." Indeed many students have enjoyed relating to Hank informally in



Librarian Beth Berry meets every two weeks with each sixth grade class to answer questions, discuss current educational displays in the media center, and to help familiarize students with media center resources.

the hallways and at extracurricular events and more formally as a coach and faculty sponsor for the student government. With the school's hallway renovations completed, Hank has given leadership in communicating and enforcing new expectations concerning hallway behavior to help keep facilities clean and attractive.

One issue identified by some parents and students was the perception that some teachers treat students differently, especially in relation to differing political perspectives. A survey of some faculty and students found a range of views among both faculty and students that showed a comparable spectrum of opinions among faculty as among students. Faculty agreed that sharing their perspectives and dialogue about politics is appropriate, but they acknowledged the importance of taking greater care not to suggest a particular perspective is the only or right one.

Campus News

Young Writer Published

Seventh-grader Ben Mast wrote a story, "Penny's Journey," that is published in the November-December issue of *Stone Soup*, a magazine for young writers. Ben is the son of John ('81, F'97-) and Lois (Stoltzfus '80) Mast.



Several years ago Ben had set the goal of getting published and has been working at improving his creative writing. An avid reader, he prefers writing, especially fantasy, because "in writing I feel I can do anything I want." He likes to create characters who encounter perplexing situations.

In "Penny's Journey," he creates a young girl named Penny who encounters a dragon that had killed many of her family. She discovers the dragon is really a magician in disguise and uses her quick wit to escape.

He first wrote this story for a sixth-grade language arts assignment. With encouragement from his teacher, Beth Grieser, Ben worked at several rewrites and title changes before submitting the story for publication in February 2005. In July he learned it would be published at the end of the year.

His teacher notes that Ben kept the class informed on how things were going and that the experience was beneficial for all. She says, "It was good for the kids to see that it doesn't just happen automatically."

Salem, 1692.
neighbor turns on neighbor.
accusations of witchcraft.
betrayal.
and yet... goodness.

the crucible

by Arthur Miller

Three performances

7:30 p.m. Thursday-Friday, Feb. 23-24
3 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 26

Ticket reservations begin Feb. 6

\$7 for adults • \$5 for students
Call 574 534-2567

Calendar

January

30 MS Spiritual Life Week begins

February

23-26 HS Drama: *The Crucible*

March

6-10 HS Spiritual Life Week

17 Fun Fest (see p. 5)

21 Spring Arts performance, 7 p.m.

24-26 Orchestra Festival, Kalona, Iowa

April

3-7 Spring Break (offices closed)

7-10 Choir Festival, Lancaster, Pa.

21 Fish Fry, 4:30-8:00 p.m.

24-28 Interterm/Senior Trip

Admissions Calendar

Discovery Day: Feb. 20

A 6-8 p.m. open house for prospective students and their families includes a short informational program at 7 p.m.

Visitor Days: Feb. 6, Feb. 20, Mar. 6

Prospective students shadow current Bethany students for a day; to register call Sarah Yoder at 574 534-2567.

Early Application Due Date: March 15



Technology director Peter Shetler (right) talks with Capital Campaign donors Esther and Galen Yoder following the Nov. 6 dedication of the building and renovation project.

Benefit Day

Hacienda Restaurant

Feb. 7: Bethany receives 20% of sales from patrons presenting coupon, which are available at the school and in local congregations several weeks prior to the event.

Fun Fest and Fall Festival

This year the traditional Fun Fest has been split into two events: Fall Festival, held on Oct. 29, and Fun Fest, coming up on Friday, March 17. Both events raise funds for tuition assistance. More than \$275,000 in tuition assistance has been granted to Bethany families this year.



March 17, 2006

Fun Fest activities will include live and silent auctions, a chicken barbeque, a carnival for youth and children, and a bake sale. Auction

items will be published in an auction catalogue, which will be printed prior to Fun Fest—a pdf version will be available online at www.bethanycs.net by late February.

Everyone is welcome to participate in this fundraising event as a donor or buyer. Contact the office to donate baked goods, auction items, money to cover expenses, and to volunteer your help.



The Saturday morning Fall Festival, which included a pancake-and-sausage breakfast, 3-on-3 basketball

tournament, 5K run/walk, straw maze, and climbing wall, grossed more than \$10,000—approximately \$1,000 more than the Fun Fest breakfast last year.

Bethany thanks the faculty, parents, and students who volunteered in planning for and working at the festival. Many people affirmed the separation of Fall Festival events from Fun Fest. Parent committees will again plan Fall Festival and Fun Fest as separate events in 2006-07.



Sixth graders Emma Caskey and Malaina Weldy try the climbing wall during the first annual Fall Festival. Money raised from Fall Festival and Fun Fest are used for tuition assistance.

Births

Greg ('80) and Sue Leatherman **Sommers**, Columbia, S.C., adopted a daughter, Tessa Ruth, Nov. 20, born Nov. 17. Grandmother is **Verna (Yoder '59) Trautman**. Grandfather **Elson Sommers ('58)** is deceased.

Karl ('83) and Carola **Steiner**, Munich, Germany, a son, Jonathan Eric, Sept. 29.

Denise (Clemens '86) and Michael **Murphy**, Mishawaka, Ind., a son, Jacob Wendell, Nov. 19.

Doug ('87) and Becky **Horst**, Birmingham, Ala., a son, Landon Peter, Aug. 17.

Robert ('87) and Candy **Newcomer**, Nappanee, Ind., twins, daughter Stephanie Renee and son Austin Alan, Oct. 5. Grandfather is **Rollin Newcomer ('61)**.

Rebekah Stutzman ('87) and Rob Ripperger, Washington, D.C., a son, Jacob Roman, Sept. 20. Grandmother is **Phyllis (Dintaman '60) Stutzman**. Grandfather **Ron Stutzman ('60)** is deceased.

Justine (Yoder '87) and Jerry **Nettrour**, Bronson, Fla., a daughter, Aubrey Joy, Nov. 21.

Hank ('89, F'05-) and Cori **Willems**, Goshen, Zoe Maria, Oct. 7. Grandfather is **Ken Willems ('64)**.

Alumni News

"Attics" published

"Attics," a play written by Judy Clemens Smucker ('87) for Bethany's 50th-anniversary celebration in June 2004, has been accepted for publication by Drama Source. In the play, three siblings reflect on their past in the attic of their mother's home prior to its being sold after fifty years in the family.

Doug ('90) and Amber Yoder, Goshen, a son, Carter Richard, on Oct. 20.

Michele (Bontrager '91) and Brian Showalter, Olathe, Kan., a daughter, Lexi Grace, Sept. 11.

Sherri (Delagrang '97) and Larry Gyrion, Silver Lake, Ind., a daughter, Ashlynn Rebecca, Nov. 11. Grandmother is **Judy (Miller '75) Norris**.

April (Nofziger '98) and Matthew Eash, Goshen, a daughter, Abigail Lynn, on Oct. 6.

Brad ('02ng) and Sarah Jane Yutzy, Goshen, twin sons, Joseph Braden and Benjamin Lee, Sept. 22. Benjamin died Nov. 10. Grandparents are **Mike ('77) and Brenda (Hochstedler '79) Yutzy**. Great-grandmother is **Judy (Slabaugh '58) Hochstedler**.

Ryan (F'00-02) and Nisha Springer, Elkhart, Ind., a son, Levi Roshan, on Sept. 4.

Marriages

Jennifer Shell ('91) and Paul Stauffer ('91), Boston, Mass., in Grand Rapids, Mich., Oct. 28. She works as an attorney in Boston. He manages research computing for the computer science department at Boston College.

Aaron Berkey ('96) and Amanda Volarvich, Chicago, Ill., Nov. 5.

Jason Golden ('96) and Andrea Buller, Goshen, Nov. 26. Jason is an agri-loan officer for Farm Bureau Credit Union.

Sarah Wenger ('97) and Jeffrey Short, Atlanta, Ga., August 27.

Heidi Birky ('98) and Andrew Goldman, Middlebury, Ind., Oct. 8.

Alison Dick ('99) and Tim McCormick, Goshen, Oct. 15.

Tim Nafziger ('99) and Charletta Erb plan to marry in Sept. 2006. The fall issue erroneously reported Sept. 2005.

Notes

Melodie (Miller '70ng) Davis, Harrisonburg, Va., received a Distinguished Service Award from Eastern Mennonite University for her work in reflecting the school's vision, mission, and values. As writer/producer for Mennonite Media, she works with radio spots, writes a syndicated column, "Another Way," and does editing for the organization's Third Way Cafe web site. She also works on documentaries on difficult life issues such as "Shadow Voices," a documentary on mental illness that was released in December to ABC-TV stations. She has written

eight non-fiction books and is editor of inspirational tabloids *Together* and *Living*.

Danile (Stoltzfus '73) Martens and her husband John received a Mennonite Mutual Aid Journey Award in October in recognition of their passionate approach to stewardship of creation. Their commitment to living in a sustainable manner that complements their faith values has resulted in remodeling their home with environmentally-friendly materials, buying hybrid cars, choosing to live close to John's work to reduce their dependence on cars, and eating primarily locally-grown or organic foods. Within their congregation, Kern Road Mennonite Church, they have offered educational activities on caring for the environment, inspiring others to do the same.

Judy Augsburg ('82), New York, N.Y., is an NBC News producer on assignment in Baghdad. In November she produced a report on Christian Peacemaker Teams work in Iraq, available online at: www.msnbc.msn.com/id/10036431/.

Kelly Lerner ('82), Spokane, Wash., was named one of the top ten eco-architects for 2005 by *Natural Home and Garden* magazine. She was awarded the 2005 World Habitat Award in recognition of her work on the Straw-Bale Energy Efficient Housing Project that provides sustainable, energy-efficient, and seismically-resistant housing to rural areas of northeastern China. Kelly also has a private practice, designing sustainable, ecologically-friendly housing throughout



Kelly (right) with workers in front of a brick/straw-bale house.

the Pacific Northwest. She is co-authoring a book, *Natural Remodeling for the Not-So-Green House: Bringing Your Home into Harmony with Nature*, which will be released by Lark Books in June 2006.

Andre Hirschler ('90) was a visiting doctor at Shirati (Tanzania) Hospital in April 2005.

Hannah Dueck ('97ng) is administrative assistant in the Church Leadership Center at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary.

Hannah Livengood ('99) is administrative assistant for the !Explore and Pastoral Studies at a Distance Education programs at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary.

Landon Yoder ('99) is an intern with World Vision International at its United Nations office in New York City. His primary role is researching, networking, writing, and attending meetings at the United Nations regarding the conflict in Nepal.

Carrie Landis ('00), Harrisonburg, Va., teaches English as a second language and a Spanish literacy course for native Spanish speakers at Harrisonburg High School.

Laura Rheinheimer ('01) graduated with a history major from Goshen College in spring 2005. She interned during the summer at the Indiana State Museum and is now on a one-year assignment with Mennonite Central Committee's SALT program in Brazil.

Jaron Caldwell ('04), **Michael Honderich ('04)**, and **Jonny Meyer ('04)** are members of Goshen College's eight-person traveling worship team *Parables*.

Alumni News

Missing Alumni

If you have contact information on the following alumni, please notify Susan Gingerich in the Development Office at sdgingerich@bethanycs.net. Your help is appreciated as we keep alumni informed of news via the *BCS Bulletin* and in touch with classmates for reunion planning.

Class of 1955

Mary Jean Carlin

Class of 1958

Kit (Georgia) Thompson Heard

Class of 1959

Mary K. Miller

Class of 1960

Carol Yoder Schaaf

Class of 1961

Gary Fulmer
Rachel Hernandez Hensley
Lewis (Yoder) Robinson
Linda Stevens Hugey

Class of 1962

Phyllis Birkey Fitchpatrick
Ray Marks
Richard Slabaugh
Mary Ann Miller Suter

Class of 1963

Dolores Hughes
Carol Odell Martin

Class of 1964

Barbara Birkey
Philip Lehman

Class of 1965

Larry Austin
Veronica Beachy Denlinger
Raymond Johnson
G. Anthony Yoder

Class of 1966

Michael Hershberger

Class of 1967

Esther Rocourt Lemler
Julie (Juliana) Parcell
Janet L. Swartzendruber Reid
Jerry O. Yoder

Class of 1968

Edna Yoder

Class of 1969

Donald Metzler
Priscilla Stoltzfus Trinkley
Denver Troyer
Steve Valtierra

Class of 1970

Marilyn Nisley
David Schrock
Golda Yoder Wofford
Alvin Yoder

Class of 1971

Nancy J. Schaffer

Class of 1972

Steve Ball
Jocelyn Yeater Kauffman

Murphy Lucas
Derrise L. White

Class of 1973

Atsuko Endo
James Mishler
Fideles Ongo

Class of 1974

Bonnie Regier Donnelly
Janet Miller Kauffman
Chrisann Longstreet
Patricia Taylor
Lamortto Wofford

Class of 1975

Rex Bontrager
Gene Gamber
Reinhard Wolff

Class of 1976

Valerie Davis Daw
Eliza Salvadore
Peggy Snyder Goggins

Class of 1977

Narda Calbemente
Louis Reyes

Class of 1978

Deb Klopfenstein Daw
Ivonne Ortiz

Class of 1979

Bill Kilburn
Carl Miller
Rufus Miller
Nele Schmidt
Michelle Smith
Rick Weaver
Terry Bowen
Dunja Moeller
Outi Sarsa
Marc Zimmerman

Class of 1981

Angela Fetz
Carlos Gonzales
Nathaniel Regier

Class of 1982

Tony Davila
Carmen Hopkins
Mike Houser
Reuben Reyes
Beulah Perkins Sparkman

Class of 1983

Gordon Stichter
Robert Beachy
Annette Slagel
Tony Torrejon

Class of 1984

Johannes D. Lichti

Class of 1985

Romelia Luna

Class of 1986

Maria Shenk
Jeff Smith

Allan Yoder

Class of 1988

Kerwin D. Miller
Tony Norris

Class of 1989

Cindy Sark Miller
Andy Stoll

Class of 1990

Heather Pipkin
Marisa Smucker

Class of 1991

Tricia Blosser
Carrie Snok Kovac
Brandon Miller
Brian Yoder

Class of 1992

Daniel Chuen
David Swartzentruber

Class of 1993

Nathan Boughner
Andrea Slegel Pressler
Renee Brooks Stuckman

Class of 1994

Willow Cataldo
Jennifer Eiler
Kyro Morales
Kristina Riegsecker

Class of 1996

Juan Camacho
Damaris Diaz
Kathy Fisher
Chuck Love

Class of 1997

Tina Nunemaker
Katherine Turco

Class of 1998

Rachel Wenger-Keller
Laura Sommers

Class of 1999

Miyuki Aoki
Brittan Frey

Class of 2000

Kevin Witmer

Class of 2003

Nolan Chatterjee

Upcoming Reunions

Class of '56: 5 p.m. Sept. 9, 2006 at Das Essenhaus Inn and Conference Center, Middlebury, Ind. Contact Clifford Frey (260 768-4662) or Glen Hochstedler (574 862-4239 or grhoch@bnin.net).

Class of '66: Sept. 16-17, 2006, at Das Essenhaus Inn and Conference Center, Middlebury, Ind. Contact Jeanne Riegsecker (cjrieg@juno.com or 574 642-4459) or Pat Kauffman Yoder (dannypaty1@juno.com or 574 534-2769).

Class of '81 contact Brenda Stoltzfus Toews at btows@maplenet.net

Class of '91 contact Tim Swartzendruber at swartzt@emu.edu.

To arrange a reunion, contact Susan Gingerich at sdgingerich@bethanycs.net.

From
the
Principal
Allan Dueck



In September Bethany teachers and administrators heard Christian Smith, a researcher with the National Study of Youth and Religion, speak at the Mennonite Educators' Conference. In a keynote address and several workshop sessions, Smith discussed the findings of his recent study of the faith lives of American teenagers, presented in his new book *Soul Searching: the Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers*. The findings, while sobering in many ways, underline the important role of parents and adult Christian mentors in helping youth find meaningful faith.

Smith found that most American teens today are neither rebellious in matters of faith nor disgruntled with the church. Rather, they tend to be very conventional and, like many adults in their lives, most know little about who Jesus is or about grace. Smith described most American youth as individuals who believe in a creator God who wants people to be good, to be happy, and to feel good about themselves. They see little need for God except to solve their problems. For us who believe Jesus' assertion that he is "the way, the truth, and the life," this perspective of American teens is sobering indeed.

The good news Smith shared, however, is that young people are eminently teach-

able and open to learning about faith. What matters most to youth today is relationships. For us as adults to impact the faith development of youth, they must know we care about them.

Smith offered some keys for encouraging youth to follow Christ. His research underscores the fact that the two most important human factors in strengthening the Christian faith of teens are serious, committed parents working to intentionally pass faith on to children *and* other mature Christian adults' intentionally developing significant personal relationships with youth. Smith pointed out that teachers in church schools can help young people not to separate life into sacred and secular compartments. They can do so by bringing faith into the classroom, for instance by asking students, "Should we think differently about this topic or story because we're Christians?"

Smith's research findings underscore the potential for Christian parents and Christian mentors in church schools to equip youth for dynamic Christ-centered living. In the face of cultural influences that push youth to individualistic self-absorption, we as Christian parents and teachers have the opportunity to help young people acquire meaningful faith that empowers them for discipleship and service.

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Notice to parents:

Please notify the BCS Bulletin of
the new address of your son or
daughter.