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The character of a Christian school

BY MARLENE BERGSMA, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS AND ADMISSIONS

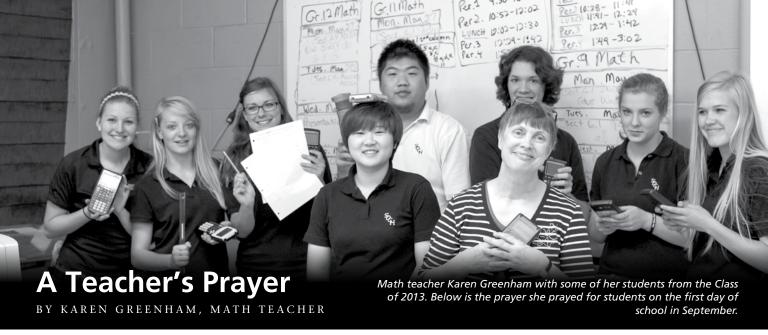
Many of North America's schools were established as Christian schools, but not many of them remain that way. At Smithville Christian High School, we are grateful that being a Christian school continues to be about so much more than simply what's in our name, or what was in the hearts of our founders.

If you visit our school, follow us on Facebook, read our blog or check in with daily

announcements, you can see that life at Smithville Christian High School is made up of things such as daily devotions, weekly chapels, Christ-centred learning, and student leadership in praise teams, student government and small-group discussions during spiritual emphasis week. But in this issue of Echoes you will also get invited into the staff room to hear just one of the many prayers that are prayed by teachers for their students at this school. You will also get a glimpse into what impact all of this is having on the characters of our students, with a visual representation of the qualities of our graduates.

There are also lots of photos, an introduction to the Class of 2017, and more inspiring evidence that God is at work in our school. But don't just take our word for it: come to one of our Wednesday morning chapels, talk to one of our students, or better yet, make an inquiry about enrolling a teenager you love. Smithville Christian High School is a great place to Belong, Believe and Succeed.





LORD, the teachers of Smithville Christian High School come to you at the beginning of a school year as your servants, asking for your blessing as we train our students as Kingdom citizens for today and for tomorrow.

Encourage us to daily show our students that this world belongs to you: an amazing world created by you and redeemed by the death of your Son, Jesus Christ. Help us to work hand-inhand with our families and churches to sow the seed and tend the garden, so that these teenagers will grow and blossom into mature Christ-serving believers, ready to have an impact on our world.

Strengthen us as we build trust and community at this school and celebrate

the gifts of both teachers and students. Make our school a place where all students can succeed and belong and feel valued in an atmosphere of mutual trust and appreciation. Give us wisdom and daily guidance so that we can support and challenge these students as they explore science and

as they explore mathematics, language and drama, music and art, Bible and history, and sport and physical fitness.

We ask that your transforming power will be seen in our lives and in the lives of our students, in the life of our community, and in our larger world. Help us to be Christ-like models, with listening ears, open hearts, and helping hands. Help us both in our teaching and in the example of our lives to encourage these students to passionately follow and serve you.



Leading as a Team: Adjustments to the **Administrative Structure**

BY TED HARRIS, ADMINISTRATOR

This year there have been some adjustments to the administrative structure at Smithville Christian High School. Fred Breukelman, who began his work in administration prior to establishing his plan to teach in Indonesia for two years, has returned to his role as assistant administrator. During his absence, Will Lammers served as our director of program.

Last year, the obvious question confronted us regarding what we would do when Mr. Breukelman returned. After a series of email. and Skype conversations over the course of the last year, it was decided that the best structure to meet the needs of our students and community would be to adjust our administrative structure to include the gifts of all three.

Here is a brief description of the roles and responsibilities of our three administrators.

I remain the head administrator. I am ultimately responsible for all aspects of the operation and well-being of the school. I report to the board of directors, I ensure that the vision and strategic planning of the board are implemented in the school, I ensure that all aspects of board policy are adhered to, I represent the school to the community, I am responsible for the admission of students, I oversee the work and the development of all staff, and I represent the board in ensuring appropriate stewardship of the school's finances in connection with the board and the treasurer.

Fred Breukelman is the Director of Student Life. In addition to his 67% teaching load, he ensures that our school culture reflects the mission of the school, he addresses student behaviour and attendance issues, he oversees the athletic program, he oversees the care and maintenance of the facility, and he is in charge of the building in the absence of the administrator.

Will Lammers continues to serve as the Director of Program. In addition to his 83% teaching load, he ensures that our program meets all the requirements of the Ontario Ministry of Education, he oversees the work of our curriculum council and the development of our program, and he supports teachers in the implementation of innovative instructional techniques (such as project-based learning).

I have looked admiringly at schools where a three-person administrative team is in place. Now that we have implemented this team approach at Smithville Christian High School, I am very grateful for the synergy of this group of three. We all need others to sharpen us, and this group does a lot of sharpening as we interact throughout each week. We are grateful to have a great deal of passion and expertise in our two assistant administrators. Please encourage them in their new roles.



Fred Breukelman



Will Lammers



Looking a Little Less Institutional: A Fresh Coat of Paint

BY TED HARRIS, ADMINISTRATOR







When students returned to school this fall, the school looked a little different as a result of a donation made to our school this spring.

Normally we allot unrestricted donations to our bursary fund to help other families access our school. This is a good practice, but this time we used these unexpected funds to spruce up the look of the school. A small ad hoc committee was assembled to spend some time with a colour specialist. Though working out paint colours is not really my gift, I was part of this group.

I must admit when I walked around with this small group (evidently that's what paint-colour committees do), I was a little queasy at some of the discussion. I got the sense that the colour experts around me wanted to do things in our school that they never get to do in people's houses. I quickly moved from an initial "Oh my goodness, what will people say?!" response to a "Wow, this

is so different and cool!" stance. In fact, I am very glad that we have chosen some colours which I wouldn't want in my living room. The "northern fire" colour selected for the front hallway, the "surf blue" colour chosen for the west wing. and the more muted "pale avocado" selected for the girls locker room grew on me very quickly. We decided that these colours would say something about the character of our school, and we set out to paint every door and door frame in the school, two large hallways, some significant bathroom and locker room space, and a rather large red stripe in some other spaces.

What do the colours say about the school? They say that we are not really all that interested in being an ordinary institution of learning. We are a place where students love to be, a place where they are allowed to be unique and creative. The education we offer has changed in a host of ways. Why should the walls suggest that everything is the same?

So what are the kids saying? We hear mostly positive comments on the new colours in these parts of the school. There are some dissenting opinions; a few students even suggested that one colour might be bad for the health of some students. If this ends up being true, we will have to address the matter; but in the mean time we're having fun being a little out of the ordinary.

I can't guarantee what every Echoes reader would say, but I do invite you to come and have a look for yourself. When you visit, just remember that our hallways are not meant to be living rooms; they are places where students get excited about learning and connecting. We are aware that there are some theories about the impact of colour on student behaviour. If our students end up getting a little too excitable with these colours around, we will do our best to steer this excitement toward some exciting, engaging learning. After all, directing the God-given passions of young people is the business we're in.

Students transforming their world

BY ALEXANDRA KAMPHUIS, STUDENTS' COUNCIL VICE-PRESIDENT

Our Student Council theme for this year is 'Transformers,' and the verses we are focusing on are Romans 12:1-3

"Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you."



We chose this theme because we think it's important for us, as Christians, not to give in to the temptations and pressures of our world. We need to be transformed into what God wants us to be. We want to be an image of Jesus in the world.

In order to be transformed, we need to understand who we are in Christ and who He wants us to be in Him. Verse three helps us with that; it stresses the importance of having a good perspective on ourselves. We know that this is a hard thing for many people of our age to have. It can be very easy to always be down on ourselves, and it can also be easy to think you're the best and not really in need of any transformation.

We, as a Students' Council, believe that this theme includes some very important teachings for us and the rest of the student body. We look forward to being transformed ourselves and we look forward to going out to transform our families, our communities and our world.













CLASS OF 2017



Ayden Beck



Daniel B.



Makenna Bezemer



Lucas Blyleven



Caleb Boerefyn



Celina Boorsma



Larissa Bos



Miranda Bos



Jonathan Buist



Anna Crinson



Sean DeBoer



Kayla DeKlerk



Brandon Dieleman



Curtis Dykstra



Mariah Ellis



Robyn Folkerts



Morgan Glasbergen



Samuel Goodfellow



Alexandrea Haas



Devon Haas



Sam Hong



Byron Horinga



Sean Houwer



Jared Jackson

GRADE NINE



lan Kang



Nathan Mans



Brendan Masselink



Jay Min



Haley Mulder



Chris Noh



Sarah Prins



Adam Riddell



Benjamin Schat



Dylan Schilstra



Damian teBrake



Kyle Thiessen



Zaria Thompson



Alanna van der Beek



Harrison Van Grieken



Kiersten Van Hoffen



Sara VanderKuip



Reuben Vermeer



Tyson Wagter



Katie Wiens



Wesley Zwier



Planning for the Future

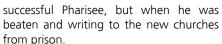
BY LINDA BOOY-KORVEMAKER

The start of a new school year can be busy and often this busy-ness can cause stress. For grade 12 students this is accentuated by the many times they are asked the question: "So what are your plans for next year?"

In Student Services, we also ask students that question, and we provide many opportunities for students to explore the answer. We attend university and college fairs – for both Christian and public colleges and universities – and we invite some schools to come to us to talk to our students. We host a number of presentations about post-secondary planning and post-secondary application procedures. These opportunities are intended to make the transition from high school to post-secondary school less stressful by informing students of options and opportunities.

But all high schools help their students plan for the future: is it different at a Christian high school?

I think it is. The first difference is that we challenge students with the concept that calling does not necessarily equal career. We encourage students to realize that their calling is to be a Christ-follower and that a career may be one tool by which they follow that calling, but it may not be the only tool. If we look at the stories of Paul we realize that he was following his calling not when he was the



Secondly, God gifts each of us in various areas – THANKFULLY! Otherwise we would all be competing for the same career. I am so thankful that while I am teaching high school someone else is teaching my son, someone else is fixing my car and cutting my hair, and someone else is caring for my health and managing my investments.

A society needs that variety to function and perhaps that is also what the body of believers means. Whatever career we choose we will contribute to society and if we see our calling more as how we do these careers than how we choose them we can potentially change the world with our impact.

Finally God's plan is bigger than our plan so we cannot really mess it up. We can reassure students that despite our mistakes God will work out his plan for our lives. Sometime we try to measure God's approval by the "lack of bumps" in our lives but God never promised that reward. Our reward is not just here on earth and God's word constantly warns us not to measure our success this way.

We also remind students to be in relationship with our amazing God. If I never talked to my family, I probably would not feel supported when I needed it. But because I am in constant relationship (phone, text, facetime, etc.) my family members know when to come walk with me and hold me up. Similarly, in the context of a relationship with God, the questions, the challenges and hopes and the dreams of students can be surrounded by his peace. Then that question, "What are you doing after high school?" can end up being an exciting leap of faith.





SAVE THE DATE JANUARY 16, 2014

Students, parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins and friends: Come to Smithville Christian High School's annual Presentation of Learning evening. Student work, refreshments, music, Grade 9 registration for September 2014 and much more!

What are people saying about our graduates?

As Smithville Christian graduates walk across the stage to receive their diplomas during the school's annual graduation ceremonies, a pair of teachers takes turns describing each graduate's accomplishments, character or contributions to the life of the school. Here is what they're saying about our graduates.





CONGRATULATIONS to Melinda Bouwers, Class of 2012, who won first prize – and \$2,500 – in a songwriting competition by Innovate Niagara.

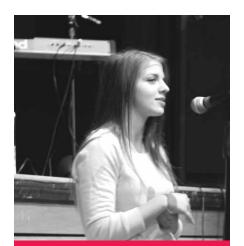
Here's a link to her gold medal entry:

http://youtu.be/lun22cHhaUw



What's so bad about acronyms?

BY MARLENE BERGSMA, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS AND ADMISSIONS



Katie Horvath speaks at chapel.

If you hang around any group of people who share a common history or a common purpose, there's a good chance you'll run into a bunch of acronyms. Let's face it, terms like PBL, POL, AV, SEW or OFSAA are so much easier to say than project-based learning, presentation of learning, audio-visual, spiritual emphasis week or the Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations

But what if you're not part of the group? What if you are new to the job, the school or the sport? Suddenly all those acronyms can be downright confusing or possibly even meaningless.

That's the reason behind the push to get us calling ourselves Smithville Christian High School. It's not that there was something wrong with the word "district" that required it be eradicated from our name. It's just that using four syllables – SDCH – to identify our school only identifies us to insiders. If you are new to the Niagara Region, or to the Christian education scene, those four letters don't tell you very much.

But if you say "Smithville Christian" you've used the same number of syllables and communicated so much more about our identity as a Christian school.

True, it takes more ink to write Smithville Christian than it does SDCH, and you

could make an argument for saving paper or keystrokes. But the next time you are tempted to use an acronym to refer to our school – whether it's SDCH, SCH or SCHS – think about the person who doesn't know about Christian education – yet. As Grade 12 student Katie Horvath said during her brief testimony at a recent chapel: when she introduced herself to co-workers at her new restaurant job, they were struck by the name of her school – Smithville Christian

" I got to share my faith and how God is at work in my life," she said.

Go ahead. Take the plunge. Join the CEA (Campaign to Eradicate Acronyms). Who knows where the conversations will lead?



Shae Vlaar, Kristen Antonides, Esther Zantingh and Adam VandenDool, members of the Class of 2014, display school pride with their student-designed grad sweaters.

Belonging at Smithville Christian

BY SAMANTHA BOWMAN, GRADE 12

When I was in Grade 8, I thought I had a clear view of my high school career. I was going to graduate grade 8 from Beacon, and then continue to grades 9, 10 11 and 12 at Beacon High. I was able to experience one year at Beacon High in Grade 9 which was such a blessing. Unfortunately, Beacon High shut down. All of the teachers and students had to switch schools. It was scary! I was going from a place where I was comfortable to a new school, with teachers I had never met before, students I had never met before, and a whole new learning environment.

I had a choice. I could either go to Smithville, or I could go to a public school where some of my friends were going. I chose the public school. I will never forget my first day of grade 10. I walked into a school with 900 kids; Beacon had 83.

Luckily I had my friends.

As the year went on, our group made new friends. While it was nice to see new smiling faces, things began to change. I started to hear stories about weekend parties and after school hangouts that included drinking and drugs — things we had said we would not do. I didn't accept invitations to parties that had drinking and drugs. Eventually I didn't get invited to anything anymore. I found myself feeling alone and very unhappy.

I felt myself wanting to change myself just so I could have my old friends back. That's when I knew I needed to switch schools.

In Grade 11, I made the switch to Smithville. The first day was so exciting! Sure I was nervous, but I knew so many people already! People were so welcoming! I began involving myself in praise team and choir and I was even the editor of the school newspaper! I felt like I belonged. I finally saw my marks at the place where they belonged. Most importantly, I felt my faith growing because God was showing me a new side of myself.

When you are thinking about which high school to go to, make the choice based on where you feel you will succeed and where God is calling you.

It's easy to pick a school based on where all of your friends are going. But the new friends I have made at Smithville are friends that have gotten me through some pretty rough times and who have supported me 100%. The teachers are also supportive and excited about having you in their classes. The staff are helpful and the community is very close. Smithville is the place for me.



Samantha Bowman, back row, helps Emma VandenBurg, front row, lead visiting Grade 8 students through some line dance moves in the closing activity of Grade 8 Day 2013.



Smithville Christian High Foundation* Report

*Registered business name of the Foundation for Niagara & Hamilton area Christian Schools (FNHCS)
Charitable Registration # 872708367RR0001

	Opening Balance <u>Aug 31-2012</u>	New Deposits and/or Earned Interest	Total Funds <u>Withdrawn</u>	Closing Balance <u>Aug 31-2013</u>
Smithville Christian High Endowment Fund (exclusive interest account)	121,283.64	108,284.54	4,980.00	224,577.18
Smithville Christian High Computer Tech. Fund (exclusive interest account)	13,697.87	736.14	550.00	13,884.01
Bremmer Memorial Endowment Fund (partial interest account- one half)	62,392.44	3,348.29	2,630.00	63,110.73
Koornneef Family Fund (partial interest account - one third)	150,000.00	1,831.43		151,831.43
Niagara Bursary Fund (proportionate interest account as founding member school)	313,235.49	16,809.82	13,206.59	316,838.72
FNHCS Endowment Fund - Growth (proportionate interest account as member school)	203,119.38	15,213.18	50,000.00	168,332.56
Stewardship Education Endowment Fund (proportionate interest account as member school)	14,268.19	794.91		15,063.10

Foundation executive director Henry Koorneef presents a big cheque worth "nearly \$20,000" to board chair Albert Elmers at the recent Smithville Christian High School membership meeting. The value of the cheque is based on our school's share of the proceeds from column two of last year's foundation earnings, above. A second cheque, based on flow-through gifts, will be coming in the summer of 2014. The cheques are getting bigger every year, and will continue to do so, especially if more supporters accept the invitation and embrace the foundation's long-term vision.



In total more than \$19,750.00 was presented to Smithville Christian High during the previous fiscal school year. This figure includes a number of designated flow-through gifts in addition to funds reported as withdrawals above.

Planned Giving, Tax-Efficient Gift Planning and related information are also available online: www.schoolfoundation.ca/resources2.html

Please take a few moments to also visit our Facebook page: www. facebook.com/FNHCS

Any inquiries may be forwarded directly to our Executive Director, Henry J. Koornneef CFP, CPCA at (905) 957-8172, TF (877) 340-9555 or via email: office@schoolfoundation.ca



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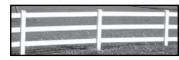
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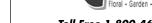
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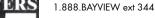
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