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International Students

This year Smithville Christian High is delighted to be hosting six international students who are studying with us for one year through the EF Foundation for Foreign Study. Because they come from all over the globe, they have given us a glimpse of the beautiful mosaic among those who bear God's image. Our students are enjoying getting to know them. This connection is aided by the fact that they stay with families that are part of our school community. We celebrate the opportunity to offer them a Christ-centred program of studies, and we celebrate the impact they have on the educational experience of our other students.

It is of great importance for our young people to understand that serving Christ today frequently means having to reach across cultural and national borders. Our young people need to learn how to be gracious to the stranger. Experience is a great teacher in this regard.

But this is just the beginning. Smithville Christian High is also drafting policies that relate to the admissions of international students. This discussion will include questions regarding admissions criteria, how many to admit, what special programs will need to be put in place, and the possible impact on school culture and the achievement of our school's mission. As we seek out answers for these important questions, there is no doubt that the experiences of this school year will be helpful.

Having these students in our midst has brought a new spark and perspective to many classroom discussions, and it has stretched our students socially. It is our prayer that God will bless us as we interact with many others with whom we have something to share and from whom we have much to learn.

To meet our six EF students and find out what they're learning in Canada, turn to page 6.

Thank You Nellie!

Nellie DeHaan has served Smithville Christian High for 28 years, initially as a volunteer, then as the administrative assistant. She was a blessing to our school, keeping us organized and showing hospitality to all office visitors or callers. She was a confidante and friend to staff members, parents and students. The board and staff have both taken opportunity to celebrate her contributions and to wish her a blessed retirement.



BOARD SECRETARY L'IZ WHITEVIEEN PRESENTS NELLIE DEHAAN WHITH A GIPT.

WAYNE SCHILSTRA, BOARD CHAIR

Board Report

On Monday, November 17, a large group of parents gathered for our annual fall membership meeting. It was a good evening at which we celebrated a lot of great things happening at Smithville Christian High School:

- We honoured Nellie DeHaan for 28 years of service at SDCH thank you Nellie for your dedication.
- We were led in praise by a group of students and Dave Giesbrecht thank you for taking the time to lead us.
- We welcomed new students and families to SDCH. We thank God for their presence at SDCH.
- We heard that SDCH ended the 2007/2008 school year in the black thank you for everyone's financial support.
- We welcomed Marlene Bergsma to the SDCH staff as Communications and Admissions Director thank you Marlene for your desire and passion to see SDCH flourish and grow.
- We heard from Ted Harris and Al Korvemaker how SDCH is always striving to be the best place of learning possible thank you Ted and Al for your diligence.
- We heard from Theresa VanOenen about the many areas of strategic planning that the Board is working on thank you Theresa for keeping the Board on track.
- We heard from Henry Koornneef how the Foundation for Niagara and Hamilton Area Christian Schools is growing and becoming stronger thank you to Henry and the Board members of this foundation for your visionary work in helping to sustain Christian education financially for today and tomorrow. Thank you to the Foundation for a cheque of almost \$11,000.
- We had the privilege of selecting two new Board members from four excellent candidates. Thank you to Cynthia Buist and Carol Pot for your willingness to serve SDCH and congratulations to Pauline Smit and John Klompmaker for being elected to the Board.
- We thanked Christine Smit and Bernice Robson, out-going Board members, for their service to SDCH. Thank you Bernice and Christine for the dedication you have shown to the Board.
- We heard about the many ways the Board strives to do the best job it can. Thank you to the hard work and commitment of each Board member.

On behalf of the SDCH Board, it is a pleasure to serve our living God by serving SDCH.

Strategic Planning day!

The Board of Smithville Christian needs your help! On Saturday, February 28, 2009, we will be doing some long range planning and dreaming about what is in store for SDCH for at least the next 5 years. Our current strategic plan was developed at a similar "Town Hall" style meeting and has been a guiding force for our school for the past five years. It's time for the people of this community to come together and dream big about the vision and mission of SDCH. This Board needs your input and involvement in this important process. We would love for you to come out on February 28, 2009. To sign up, contact Wayne Schilstra on his cell phone, 905-515-8066 or email waynes@remax-gc.com.

Strategic Planning Coordinator Needed!

The Board of Smithville Christian is looking for an organized individual to be the Board's strategic coordinator. Currently, we are served by Theresa VanOenen, whose term is to be completed in May of 2009. If you would like to see a job description or have questions about this important position, call Wayne Schilstra on his cell phone, 905-515-8066 or email waynes@remax-gc.com.





Front Row from left: Strategic Planning Coordinator Teresa VanOenen, Secretary Liz Witteveen, Pauline Smit, Chair Wayne Schilstra. Back Row from left: Brian Wagter, Vice-All George Lindeboom, Treasurer Doug Stuive, Arch Vermeer, John Klompmaker, Tim VanHoffen.



Alumni Update

"The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. (Ps 19:1-2)"

Being involved in the sciences, I'm struck by the number of my colleagues who readily acknowledge the beauty, order, and intricacies observed within our discipline, yet choose not to see a Creator behind it all. Having been trained in the sciences at both Smithville Christian High School and at Redeemer, I've always been encouraged to see the Creator amidst the scientific details and facts; to see the creation as one of the ways that God reveals his character to the world. The Psalmist David declares that the heavens and earth constantly proclaim the attributes of Creator God, describing him as awesome, consistent, faithful, and wise. I suppose that's one of the reasons I love working in this field; every day offers a new opportunity to glimpse the character and majesty of God in the tiniest detail.

A graduate of Redeemer University College, Julie Kikkert ('03) is currently pursuing a master's degree at the University of Guelph, researching the movements of rare elements in plants and soils within the environment. She has recently been awarded the Alexander Graham Bell Canada Graduate Scholarship by the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada. For more on the academic accomplishments of Smithville Christian High School students, see page 9.

SDCH Community Choir in Smithville's Santa Claus Parade





BY KATIE MONSTER, GRADE 12

A Dog Goes to School



"Mom, can we please have a dog?" was the persistently asked question that led to the Monster family's adventure with Pablo, the dog guide in training.

We met Steve, a foster parent to dog guide puppies for the Lions Foundation of Canada. He was taking loving care of a puppy for a short time while it grew up enough to start training to lead blind, deaf or epileptic people. A puppy for a year. A puppy we could take everywhere with us. It was perfect. We were getting a dog!

After carefully filling out an application, receiving the OK from an adventurous group of high school teachers, and a terse wait, we were on our way to pick up our puppy.

The first day at school was a stressful one. A puppy needs a lot of baggage. I found myself hauling around a bag overflowing with puppy supplies and a tired Pablo. As the first few days passed, the admiring crowds settled down and Pablo and I settled into a kind of flexible routine, of water, food, sleep (on his part) and bathroom breaks with a couple of minutes of class squeezed in.

OH-NO! I guess he couldn't wait. The first puppy-puddle had occurred. Pablo had peed right in the middle of the grade 11 hallway. Pablo grew more interactive. Students took him for short walks and played fetch with him in the hallways. Pablo was even interactive in class. During a particularly difficult math explanation, Pablo let loose a perfectly timed moan.

Pablo grew smarter. He knew exactly what the bells meant. As soon as the bell rang Pablo would be ready to go, much too impatient to wait for prayer, or for slow students in his way. Pablo was still confused by some things like lockdown drills though. When he was left in a dark room tied to my chair, he simply pulled it along till he had pushed through my classmates and found me in the corner.

Pablo grew stronger too. Once when he had lost interest in his chew toy he decided to try tug of war with his leash, the only problem was it was attached to my chair. I had quite the scare as my desk and I were jerked across the floor. Pablo would chew on anything; soon destroying all of his toys and chewing through his own leash (Twice, during class!) The puppy exuberance was bursting out. Pablo was often frustrating but I couldn't stay mad at him for long.

Pablo had been with us for 5 months when the time came for him to move on. He was moving to another family in Kitchener. It was a sad goodbye.

Looking back on our time with Pablo I have to say it was a good experience. It taught me a lot about responsibility. It was really good to see a Christian community come together to support a worthy cause like a dog for the needy. There were difficult, stressful times and times of great excitement and happiness. Pablo was a vibrant member of our family, church, and school. He is missed.

CELIEN SOPHIE BOSMA

Grade 11, Hamburg, Germany

MY HOME: I live in Maschen, but in Germany is everything so close that I consider myself from Hamburg.

MY FAMILY: My father, who is Dutch, was born in Canada but came back to Holland when he was three years old. When he was 20, he met my Mom in Germany. I have three citizenships and three passports: German, Dutch and Canadian!

IN CANADA: THE TAXES!!! In Europe the taxes are always included in the price.

AT SDCH: It is a very small and organized school. In Germany there are different schools for different learning abilities after grade 4, and it is very cool to experience a school system without these groups. I never thought that I am able to do this: being away from home for 10 months. Of course, I miss home and my family and friends but I am experiencing something unique and unforgettable here in Canada and at SDCH.



SELMA HOTTINGER

Grade 10, Obfelden, Switzerland

MY HOME: Swiss chocolate, Swiss cheese, Swiss mountains, Swiss watches. Switzerland is so small it would fit 26 times in Ontario.

MY FAMILY: I live with my two older sisters and my parents on a little farm.

IN CANADA: Switzerland has much bigger population density. Here when I drive to school in the morning there are so many fields between the houses, and less cars on the road. I am actually very proud that I was so brave and came all by myself to Canada.

AT SDCH: I learned already a lot of English. I really like that everyone knows everyone.





RODRIGO SOSA MACHORRO

Grade 9, Puebla, Mexico

MY HOME: Mexico is an awesome country, full of history, and really beautiful places to visit or live. There are lots of parties every day, which makes this country fun for some young people.

MY FAMILY: My family comes from many different parts of the world, like Lebanon and Spain. The family of my mom is really big, she has almost 14 uncles and aunts.

IN CANADA: The most important thing that has happened I think is the SNOW, something that is almost impossible to see in Mexico.

AT SDCH: The people are really nice, they are kind and everybody helps you.

INTRODUCING OUR EF STUDENTS – Spending a high school year abroad



DANIELA ORTEGON

Grade 11, Cali, Valle, Colombia

MY HOME: The Colombian people are really kind people despite all the problems they have. Also they would help you without a doubt. Most of them are really poor and have a hard life and they are still happy.

MY FAMILY: Most of the time we see each other only at night, when we arrive home at 8 o'clock or later. However when we are together we really enjoy that time and we have a special relationship.

IN CANADA: Everything is different about Canada: the customs, the people, the appearance of the cities, the food, the schools, the environment, the music. I will never end with the list. I am here for fun, to learn, to be a better girl, to know a different culture.

AT SDCH: I like almost everything about SDCH: the people, the many choices of classes, also that it is not too big, and the atmosphere inside the school.

THIAGO SOUTO FREITAS

Grade 12, Montes Claros, Minas Gerais, Brazil

MY HOME: Brazil is a very populated country, about 190 million inhabitants. People are very hospitable and friendly towards others. The official language is Portuguese.

MY FAMILY: We like to go out for dinner together, and celebrate special events, such as birthday and holidays.

IN CANADA: Everything is totally different from Brazil, the food, the buildings, the school system. But the biggest difference is the weather, which is much colder. I'm experiencing Canada's way of life, the Christian religion and a little bit of the country life here, because in Brazil I live in the city

AT SDCH: The staff and the students are very friendly, which makes me feel at home. The assemblies are a good way to start Tuesdays and the intramurals are enjoyable and also a good opportunity to have fun and meet new people. The Christian education is good for me.



MAREIKE HENNIGES

Grade 12, Einbeck, Germany

MY HOME: Einbeck is a small town which was built in the Middle Ages, so we have many old buildings and churches and an interesting history, which makes Einbeck attractive for many tourists.

MY FAMILY: I live in the centre of Einbeck in an apartment with my mom.

IN CANADA: there are long distances which make you really dependent on a car. In Einbeck my school is really close to my home with a large sports field and a swimming pool, so we have lots of things to do.

AT SDCH: It is a small school compared to my German school, with a nice atmosphere. The biggest difference is the religion and the belief in God here, because in Germany the church does not play such an important role.





Clockwise from top-left: Lars Huijgen, Gr. 11; Hayden James, Gr. 11; John Rhee, Gr. 10; Anne Kang, Gr. 10

SDCH WELCOMES 6 NEW STUDENTS

Left to Right: Pieter Spyker, Gr. 12; Tyler Spyker, Gr. 10





Student Services Report

When Following Simple Instructions Pays Big

As senior students prepare for life after high school, those who apply to colleges and universities always struggle with how to pay for this endeavor and wonder whether it's worth it. In reality this debt is manageable and is probably one of the best investments in life – one that delivers long-term results.

Students can finance their education through loans, work, or scholarships and bursaries. Every student can hold down a job or apply for a loan, but many people think scholarships are only for students with high grades. The reality today is that scholarships and bursaries are not just awarded based on grades, but have a variety of other criteria such as community involvement, volunteering, references, and, the easiest of all: simply following the process outlined in the application.

Following instructions can mean a variety of things, but I remember working on a scholarship application with a student that resulted in \$48,000 over four years of university. At the time this was considered "a full ride." This student met with me at school on a snow day just to "package" her application and to get it postmarked on time. We went over the entire application detail by detail: three copies, in a specific order, no staples, letters of reference, signatures, samples of her work, original transcripts only and the list goes on.

What this experience shows is that often hard work and determination are an important characteristic of achieving scholarships. The student that is granted a scholarship is not always just about the grades, but much more. I know we have those students at SDCH – I meet with them every year.

Making our school visible

Come cheer on the Smithville Christian High School Community Choir as they sing the national anthem at the start of the Niagara IceDogs game on January 15, 2009, at 7:30 p.m. at the Jack Gatecliff Arena in St.Catharines. Tickets are only \$12 (regularly \$17) and can be obtained from any choir member or by calling the school office.



HONOUR ROLL ALLEN KORVEMAKER DIRECTOR OF PROGRAM

Many students at Smithville Christian High School are working at their studies as an act of obedience to God. In Colossians 3:23-24 Paul says "whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving."

We would like to honour those students who have made significant achievements in their academic work. Those with an 80% average or greater have made it to the honour role and those with 75-80% receive an honourable mention.

2007/2008 80% + Average

Kendra Antonides Ian Attema Joel Attema Jacqueline Batenburg Adrienne Bonsma Madeleine Bonsma Rheanna Bruining Kyle Buma Vanessa Buma Sarah Buys Lauren Dam Dorothy DeBoer Gwendolyn DeBoer

Stephanie DeHaan Derrick DeKlerk Emily DeKlerk Robyn DeKlerk Michelle DeRoo John DeVries Julie Elgersma Jasmin Elmers Heather Eyk Mark Eyk Erica Feddema Katelynn Folkerts Anthony Hanemaayer Amanda Harris Kelly Harris Monique Heeg Daniel Heersink

Nicole Heersink Ioanna Hessels Amber Hogeveen Stephen Horvath Dylan Janssen Katelynn Janssen Laura Kelly Hannah Kikkert Joshua Kooiman Alexandra Koornneef Yoon Lee Nicole Lindeboom Levi Moesker Kathleen Monster Stephanie Mulder Kristi Oosterhoff Marita Regnerus Brian Rintjema Michelle Rintjema Justine Schilstra Taylor Schilstra **Colleen Slappendel** Kelly Slappendel Melanie Smit Rebecca Stepita Rebecca Stieva Sara Stuive Amy Teeuwsen Stephanie Tiersma Graham Vandenberg Laura Vandenberg James Vandendool Heather VanderMeer Anne Vandermey Brian Vandermey Jonathan VanderMey Daniel Vandersteen Victoria Vanderstoep Flissa VanderVeen

Frin VanderVeen Jacob VanGeest Bradley VanHoffen Michelle VanHoffen Trevor VanHoffen Llovd VanOenen Brandon VanSoelen Kelly VanSoelen Jessie Veenhof Rvan Veldman **Bethany Veldmeyer** Adam Vermeer Andrew Vermeer Brandon Vermeer **Esther Vermeer** Kendal Vermeer Kenton Vermeer Pauline Vermeer Sarah Vermeer Tori Vermeer Jacqueline Vos Sarah Westerhoff Matthew Zantingh

2007/2008 75% – 80% AVERAGE

Samantha Aantjes Katie Batenburg Kyle Bezemer Andrea Bouwers Colin Bouwers Christa Buys Tarin Colyn Jeliesa Cook Shannon Copeland Kyle DeBoer

Nick DeHaan David DeJong Janet deJonge Jessica Dekker Laurie DeRoo Calvin DeVries Josiah Dieleman Wiebrand Dykstra Sarah Feddema Kandace Hessels Greg Hoekstra Nick Hoekstra Jesse Horinga Joshua Ipema Calvin Kamphuis Anthony Keen Adrian Koornneef Rebecca Lindeboom Justin Scholman **Diana Slappendel Robert Smit** Mark Snippe Victoria VanderHeide Amber Vanderhout Andrew Vandersteen Robyn VanderStelt Andre Vanderstoep Janelle VanderWier Valerie VanGeest Mitchell VanGeytenbeek Rvan VanHoffen Kelsey Visser Julie Vos Alannah Westerhoff Clinton Wierenga Steven Zantingh Krysten Zwaagstra Simon Zwaan Philip Zwier

ADAM VERMEER **Students' Council**

Students' Council has already been working hard this year to fulfill our goal and theme to Stand Out Strong. Lots of planning and work has gone into the events we've held so far, including a drive to collect shoeboxes full of toys, toiletries and school supplies for needy children in Central and South America, Africa and Southeast Asia (being distributed bv Operation Christmas Child through Samaritan's Purse). and our new Cash For Change days. The Cash For Change days

have been especially good for Standing Out Strong because they provide everyone with the benefit of a dress-down day for giving and they acknowledge the needs that we have.

Our first Cash for Change recipient was the McNally House hospice in Grimsby. It was our way of saying thanks on behalf of the Vermeer family for the support they received in the recent death of AnnMary Vermeer (the mother of students Andrew and Taryn). We raised \$1,000, which we will soon be presenting to hospice officials. Before our second Cash for Change day we received a request from one of our students. This student showed excellent thought and care when she wrote a letter to us about her grandmother, who had recently died, requesting a possible donation to the Huntington's Society for our November Cash for Change day. We obliged whole-heartedly at this amazing display of thoughtfulness, care and the courage of this student to Stand Out Strong.

As the year progresses, we are planning many more Cash for Change days and fun events for our students. It is our plan to acknowledge everyone's donations with special plaques that will be hung up in the lounge. We hope to cover the lounge with these plaques and in this way we wish to encourage everyone in their giving and Standing Out Strong!





Announcing Smithville Christian Storm Gear

Many people love Smithville Christian High School and the blessing it is in the lives of so many students and their families – now you can show your love! SDCH is pleased to announce its new line of Storm Gear – hats, hoodies, coffee mugs, travel mugs, tote bags and more. To view the items that are currently available, visit the website at www. sdch.on.ca and click on the Storm Gear e-catalogue. Perfect to give or to own.





When a foundation representative attends the Smithville Christian High School membership meeting with a gift in the form of an annual cheque, it is noticed and very well received – especially when the amount grows larger each year. For example, the \$11,000 cheque presented to SDCH this year was ten times the amount of the first cheque presented in 2002, and is being used through the school's Bridge Bursary fund to help make tuition affordable for six families!

The determination of a visionary group of local school supporters who helped establish our foundation just over a decade ago is now realizing tangible benefits for SDCH. Our Lord has blessed their efforts, and, as a broader school community, it's important that we all continue to invest in Christian education through our foundation's endowment and bursary initiatives as well as the planned giving program. We continue to covet your prayerful support. It is indeed making a difference!

SDCH is a founding member of the Foundation for Niagara & Hamilton area Christian Schools.

Henry J. Koornneef, CFP, CSA, Executive Director 905-957-8172 | 1-877-340-9555 office@schoolfoundation.ca | www.schoolfoundation.ca





Henry Koornneef presenting Smithville Christian Board Chair Wayne Schilstra with a cheque for almost \$11,000 at the SDCH Membership meeting on November 17, 2008.

