

A W E S T G A T E PERSPECTIVE

Vol. 9, No. 1 Fall 2000

FROM "AN OPEN LETTER OF THANKS"

To: The Westgate Family
From: Helene Riesen

As this chapter of my life comes to a close, I am grateful for so many things—for the joy of teaching, and for the energy, the enthusiasm, and the idealism of our students. I shall miss all of that and the challenges that come with it, just as I shall miss the camaraderie and good humour of the staff members, who have shown such dedication to our students and our school over the years, and whom I count as friends.

I am grateful to all the Westgate administrators and the various Board members for the privilege of working here. They have all unfailingly treated me with respect and consideration. In particular I would like to thank my first and my last Westgate principals: John Enns, the man who hired me initially, and Reg Klassen, who persuaded me to try administration and who encouraged my development as a Vice Principal.

Above all I would like to thank Westgate parents and the wider Mennonite constituency for the consistent goodwill and support they have accorded our staff, our school, and me personally as we worked together to nurture our students. It is precisely this splendid spirit of community and co-operation which has been most gratifying, and which defines Westgate Mennonite Collegiate as it works to fulfill its mission. May God continue to bless our school and all the many individuals who work tirelessly on its behalf. ■



TRIBUTE TO HELENE RIESEN

On June 30, 2000, Helene Riesen's retirement from Westgate became official. For twenty-one-and-a-half years Helene Riesen was an integral part of the day-to-day activity at Westgate.

As a grade seven student you began at Westgate with Mrs Riesen's Religion class where the stories in the Old Testament took on a reality that was very applicable to your daily life.

In grades 8 and 9 students saw and felt the love of mathematics that has been Helene's trademark forever. After two years with Mrs Riesen many students believed, like she did, that God is a Mathematician.

Helene will also be remembered for the many cakes she treated her students to. There didn't need to be a significant reason other than it was time to celebrate and what better way than to eat cake.

For many years Helene also served as the staff rep on Junior Student Council. It is here that she imparted so many leadership skills to many a young student. Students learned to make speeches, articulate ideas, plan events for 150 students, and think clearly through decisions so the best interests of the entire group were kept in mind.

Eight years ago Helene's job description at Westgate changed as she assumed the role of Vice Principal. Her gifts in administration were felt immediately as she worked with our attendance policy, staff manual, and the day-to-day running of the school.

Students, staff, and school community have experienced the keen sense of honesty and great integrity in all that Helene does. Even when in trouble it was comforting for students to know that Mrs. Riesen would be incredibly fair.

Now that she is retired, Helene will have more time for the company she and her husband run, Riesen Travel. In addition, Helene has already been asked to work as a Faculty Advisor for the Faculty of Education at University of Manitoba.

Through it all, Helene's love for teaching, students, staff, and Westgate have been a blessing. Her unalterable and undying enthusiasm has been motivation for us all. We are the better place because of the time Helene Riesen spent at our school. ■

Mr. Reg Klassen and Mr. Cal Friesen



The Board of
Westgate Mennonite Collegiate
pays tribute to
HELENE RIESEN
for

- enthusiastic teaching
- exemplary service
- insightful leadership

over the past twenty-one-
and-a-half years

WESTGATE
MENNONITE
COLLEGIATE

AWARDS

LEADERSHIP AWARDS

Leadership – Junior High

Kira Friesen, Thomas Epp

Runner-Up

Jennifer Egan

Leadership – Senior High

Karalyn Bagshaw, Eric Palmer

Runners-Up

Rosemarie Hogue, Aaron Epp

SCHOOL SPIRIT AWARDS

School Spirit – Junior High

Kira Friesen, Jason Pankratz

Runners-Up

Hayley Penner and Chloe Rew
Thomas Epp

School Spirit – Senior High

Karalyn Bagshaw, Aaron Epp

Runners-Up

Kathryn Penny, Eric Palmer

UNITED WAY VOLUNTEER AWARD:

Erika Bock

LLOYD AXWORTHY, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT CANADIAN STUDENT AWARD

Karalyn Bagshaw

GERMAN AP EXAM (SPRACHDIPLOM II)

Leah Bock

AMERICAN SCHOLASTIC MATHEMATICS ASSOCIATION WINNER – HIGHEST SCORING STUDENT

Anna Dyck

PASCAL CONTEST – SENIOR 1

Medal Winner – Jennifer Kroeker

CAYLEY CONTEST – SENIOR 2

Medal Winner – Natalie Riediger

FERMAT CONTEST – SENIOR 3

Medal Winner – Michael Kliewer

EUCLID CONTEST

Medal Winner – Marika Pauls Laucht

DESCARTES CONTEST

Medal Winner – Marika Pauls Laucht



The AP College Board has identified Marika Pauls Laucht (Grad 2000) as an Advanced Placement Scholar. This award is granted to students who receive a grade of three or higher on three or more Advanced Placement exams. Marika earned a five, the highest possible grade, in both German and Calculus AB, and a four in English Literature and Composition. She is one of only ten students in Manitoba to share this distinction.

ATHLETIC AWARDS

OUTSTANDING PARTICIPANT

Junior Athletics

Erynn Wiebe, Jason Pankratz

Junior Varsity Athletics

Natalie Riediger, Kevin Kornelsen

Varsity Athletics

Alexis Dirks, Michael Kliewer

SCHOLARSHIPS

SARA ALBRECHT MEMORIAL BURSARY FUND

Danny Bae

REV. H. BECKER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Nate Froese

ANNA DYCK MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Andrea Kroeker

MARTHA JANZEN EPP PATIENT CARE BURSARY

Stephanie Peters

GERMAN CANADIAN BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION SCHOLARSHIP

Aaron Epp
Patrick Friesen
Jenneke Luit
Shauna Miller
Bronwyn Penner
Kevin Penner
Lukas Thiessen
Anna Wiebe

KIM GUSTO MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

Leah Bock

HEINRICH HEESE SCHOLARSHIP

Ji-Hae Kim

ABRAM KLASSEN MEMORIAL TRUST FUND SCHOLARSHIP

Rebecca Vanderhooft

ABRAM KLASSEN MEMORIAL TRUST FUND BURSARY

Stephanie Nickel

FRANK KLASSEN MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Rosemarie Hogue

PETER PRIESS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Aaron Epp and Alexis Dirks

NIKKI REDEKOP MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

David Pankratz

DAVID REMPEL MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Eric Palmer

AL KLASSEN SCIENCE SCHOLARSHIP

Yoon Ho Kim

KIRSTEN JOY SIEMENS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Victor Penner

ANNA SUDERMANN SCHOLARSHIP

Magda Cychowska

DR. ROY VOGT MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Brian Kornelsen

CHOWN CENTENNIAL SCHOLARSHIP

nominated by Westgate staff on the basis of highest average and citizenship

Joey Janzen

HIGHEST ACADEMIC STANDING IN JUNIOR HIGH

Rebecca Vanderhooft

HIGHEST ACADEMIC STANDING IN SENIOR HIGH

Marika Pauls Laucht

THE GOVERNOR GENERAL'S CANADIAN HISTORY MEDAL FOR THE MILLENNIUM

Erika Bock

GOVERNOR GENERAL'S AWARD graduate with the highest academic average in Senior High

Marika Pauls Laucht

ACADEMIC AWARDS

7A

Scott Bergen
Danika Bock
Julie Daniels
Justin Dybka
Caroline Fisher
Andrea Kampen
Andrea Karr
Brian Luzny
Jay Mak
Conar O'Neil
Jonathan Toews
Caleb Wiens

8A

Suzanne Braun
Heather Carney
Jami Enns
Tom Ens
Claire Fast
Jeremy Kroeker
Jane MacAngus
Jason Pankratz
Monika Pauls Laucht
Lauren Shelton
John Towns
Erynn Wiebe
Vanessa Wiens
Jamie Woollard

7B

Curtis Carrick
Riley Epp
Andrew Froese
Ian Giesbrecht
Jon Kasdorf
Andrea Kazubek
Christina Klassen
Zachary Kroeker
Monica McGinnis
Kendra Regehr
Lauren Schewe
Sydney Woodman

8B

Hilary Bergen
Phillip Bshouty
Lauren Donnelly
Elizabeth Esselmont
Jocelyn Gordon
Alexandra Herzog
Luke Klassen
Daniel Kroeker
Jane Na
Rebecca Peters
Christina Redekopp
Heidi Wiebe

SR. 1A

Kristi Carrick
Chris Carther-Krone
Julie Cornie
Haley Derksen

SR. 1B

Rachel Bock
Anna Dyck
Jennifer Egan
Susanne Guenther



Victor Penner, awarded the Kirsten Joy Siemens Memorial Scholarship, stands in front of a Colorado Blue Spruce that was planted in the school's front yard in Kirsten's memory. Kirsten was in Grade Ten at Westgate when she passed away suddenly on December 30, 1986.

Ashley Dyck
Kira Friesen
Heather Kasdorf
Chelsea Klassen
Peter Klippenstein
Jason Neufeld
Steven Solomon
Dmitri Tredin

SR. 2A

Mikael Chan
Mark Epp-Tiessen
Melanie Foster
Jenneke Luit
Monika Neumann
Natalie Riediger
Jonathan Van Kuik
Fast
Justin Wiebe

SR. 2C

Jane Eagleton
Leslie Fast
Dani Goyer
Shauna Miller
Bronwyn Penner
Colin Shelton
Anna Wiebe

Amy Kasdorf
Jennifer Kroeker
Charlotte Lieferink
Brenden Loewen
Robyn Loewen
Krista McPherson
Ben Schellenberg

SR. 2B

Nicola Dirks
Shannon Enns
Patrick Friesen
David Froese
Bryan Neufeld
Jaclyn Regehr
Ryan Stoesz
Amy Vanderhooft

Aaron Epp
Kate Gesbrecht
Christine Kampen
Cheryl Partridge
Kevin Penner
Lukas Thiessen
Erin Wiebe

SR. 3A

Danny Bae
Andrea Daniels
Sunayna Gupta
Camille Kennedy
Michael Kiewer
Andrea Kroeker
Andrew Redekopp
Daniel Wiebe

SR. 4A

Dan Bender
Leah Bock
Alexis Dirks
Robin Ducas
Andrea Enns
Skylar Friesen
Joey Janzen
Hyunsoo Kim
Ji-Hae Kim
Brian Kornelsen
Sasha Osipova
David Pankratz
Stephanie Peters
Anthony Petrenko
Jodi Schmidt
Sandy Taronno

SR. 3B

Erika Bock
Magda Cychowska
Nate Froese
Jodon Karlik
Yoon-Ho Kim
Ashley Krahn
Stephanie Nickel

SR. 4B

Karalyn Bagshaw
Jeremy Cheung
Justin Dobis
Rosemarie Hogue
Paul Klippenstein
Carolyn Kolm
Gordon McLeod
Russell Milne
Sharla Nance
Jenna Newman
Marika Pauls Laucht
Victor Penner
Christine Plett
Bruce Reimer

GRAD 2000**SR. 1 GRAD 2000**

FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK

FEET TOO BIG?

The year is off to a wonderful beginning. There is particular pleasure in walking through the halls at school to be greeted by big smiles and "Hi Mr. K" or a friendly "Good Morning." Of course my assessment of the year to date is not just based on the happy greetings that are exchanged between the students and the principal. There is more, a lot more. I believe the discussions by Board and Staff about Nurturing Faith (last year and now this year) and what that means in our school is already at work. The concrete plans are yet to be made, but the discussion has made us all more aware of what it means to nurture faith in ourselves and our students. God is at work, of that I am sure.

What else, you ask? Last year our fledgling Advanced Placement program had its first AP Scholar, one of ten in Manitoba. In addition to this, 35% of our graduates received scholarships from a variety of post secondary institutions.

This year students are again working at their studies diligently. In addition many of them have chosen to participate in the co-curricular activities. Our Varsity Girls volleyball team moved from AAA to AAAA

this year and is presently ranked number one in the province. We are blessed this year with a record thirteen German Exchange students who will be with us for the first three months of school.

There are many more activities I would share with you but space does not allow. In an attempt to summarize what all these activities mean I quote Brother Eagan Hunter. In his article entitled "The Myth of Adolescence," as found in the *Principal Leadership* September 2000 issue, he states that our task as adults is to give youth "a sense of self-worth and a true evaluation of their knowledge, skills, and abilities, while providing opportunities for them to grow, develop, and reach their full potential."

I would presume none of us would argue with this statement. But as we near the completion of year 2000 I wonder how we will fulfill this educational commission in the year 2005 or 2010? Will we accomplish it the same way we do today? What will future student needs require? At Westgate where we often find facilities crowded and little or no space to consider new or revamped programs I cannot help but wonder how we will be meeting the ever-changing needs of



students in ten years. Will we be able to continue to "inspire and empower students to live as people of God?"

The Board has already begun to do some research in an attempt to answer these questions. Let me use the words from the Opening Program of our Board Chair that so aptly describe our situation, "Our feet have grown too big for our shoes and our neighbors tell us that our feet stink." This is a situation which has made it ever more difficult to serve our students. It is important to state that our staff does an incredible job given the limited space available. My fear, if the truth be known, is that we will find ourselves at a place in the future only to realize that we have missed the turn and are not meeting the needs of our students.

The time then has come for careful inspection of future possibilities for Westgate Mennonite Collegiate. In order to choose the right course we will need to pray for: God's guidance, patience to listen to each other, and the ability to discern the needs of our students. May God grant us wisdom as we peer into the future. ■

VISION WORKSHOP

Staff, board members, church staff and interested members of the Westgate community met at Bethel Mennonite Church in late June to share ideas aimed at helping the school to continue nurturing faith. It was acknowledged at the gathering that the school is active in

the faith development of the staff, students and the school's constituency, but it is also important to explore other opportunities. David Church facilitated the discussion by encouraging participants to brainstorm issues of faith to help identify and answer many "Focus Questions." Small groups

offered input to concepts such as "Providing for an Atmosphere Resonating God's Voice," and "Graceland: Christ's Community of Grace, Acceptance and Dialogue." The session concluded by identifying potential strategies needed to nurture faith. The staff will now draw upon these visions to plan and implement programs that will continue to inspire and build faith in the school. ■



THE NEW HELP

ANDREA BELL

Ms. Bell conducts our string ensemble. She holds a Master of Music from the University of British Columbia and a Bachelor of Music and B.Ed. from the University of Manitoba. Andrea manages and plays the cello for the Rembrandt String Quartet, and also serves as a cello teacher, conductor and adjudicator. Ms. Bell is Co-Director of the University of Manitoba Summer Chamber Music Camp and is Artistic Director and Conductor of the Winnipeg Youth Concert Orchestra.

IRENE DERKSEN

Mrs. Derksen serves as the school's accounting clerk. She has taught elementary school, raised a family and taken professional accounting courses. Irene enjoys travel and the family has lived in Ghana and Pakistan. Quilting and reading are Irene's favorite pastimes.

JILL FRIESEN

Ms. Friesen has joined the Student Services department as an Educational Assistant. She holds a Teaching English as

a Second Language Certificate from Providence College, and has used her training to gain experience by teaching English in Libya. Jill just married this past summer, and enjoys biking and reading.

GEORGE LOEWEN

A Westgate grad, Mr. Loewen is helping the custodial staff. Mr. Loewen also coaches and serves as parent volunteer in his local community club at Valley Gardens. George is an expert on salt and fresh water fish, and currently maintains a 250-gallon fish tank.

SHANE NESTRUCK

Mr. Nestruck is conducting all the junior and senior bands. He received his education at McGill University, and has taught in St. James, Seine River and Hanover School Divisions. Mr. Nestruck plays saxophone and clarinet, and has received a residency, which includes conducting, at Gustavus Adolphus, a college in Minneapolis.

DAVID PANKRATZ

Mr. Pankratz has assumed the duties of Business Manager at Westgate. He holds a Bachelor of Religious Education from

Providence College, a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Winnipeg, and is a Certified General Accountant. Mr. Pankratz has experience as Chief Accountant in the Winnipeg office of the Mennonite Central Committee, and has served on MCC assignment in Zambia. His time in Africa has sparked his interest in reading and writing in North/South relations. David is currently busy renovating his Wolseley area home.

TANIS THIESSEN

Ms. Thiessen, a graduate of the University of Manitoba (B.Ed., B.Sc.), is teaching math, science and physics. She has previously taught at Garden Valley Collegiate in Winkler and Balmoral Hall. Ms. Thiessen has served on the Provincial Curriculum and Assessment Committee, and also conducts workshops on assessment. Twin to staff member Janis, Tanis finds time to play tennis and keyboard. ■



Irene Derksen



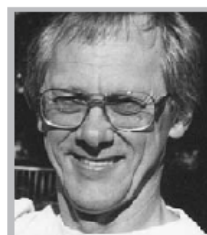
Tanis Thiessen



David Pankratz



Shane Nestruck



George Loewen



Jill Friesen

THE NOT-SO-NEW HELP

Westgate is pleased that long-time staff member Bob Hummelt has accepted the position of Vice Principal beginning in the 2000-2001 school year. Bob brings a wealth of classroom experience to the job, having taught Social Studies and Mennonite History for some two-hundred-odd years, or so, he says, it seems. Westgate students have benefited from Bob's enthusiasm, energy and organizational ability in a number of

ventures and adventures beyond the classroom walls as well. A founder of Westgate's Marsh and Mountain Club, Bob is a wilderness leader *par excellence* or however you say that. He has coached cross-country and track teams at our school since before he was even on staff, led study tours to Europe, the Middle East and Greece, and organized our Interterm Week of activities. We wish him well, and look forward to his bringing a unique understanding of students, staff and administration to his new position. ■

From files compiled in the Westgate staff room, probably at the end of a long day.



JOCK TALK

WESTGATE BOYS WIN CROSSTOWN CONFERENCE

The Westgate Varsity Boys had an extremely successful soccer season in 1999-2000. In league play, the boys went undefeated with the only blemish being a tie against perennial provincial powerhouse, St. John's Ravenscourt. The team cruised through the semi-finals with a great deal of class and dignity in a gritty game with St. Norbert. The boys then went on to defeat Westwood in the final game in front of an enthusiastic crowd at CMBC.

Westgate faced the number one seed and eventual provincial champions, St. Paul's, in the first round and lost a close game. A valiant effort was put forth by all. Congratulations on a great season and thanks to Coaches Loren Brown and Vic Pankratz for their time and effort.

CROSS COUNTRY PROVINCIAL CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS

Varsity Boys:	Ben Plett	20th
	Kevin Penner	32nd
	John Broeska	89th
Jr. Varsity Girls:	Becky Paetkau	33rd
Varsity Girls:	Angie Paetkau	93rd

VOLLEYBALL

VARSITY GIRLS

Winner: St. Pierre Tournament

All Star: Nicola Dirks

Winner: Steinbach Tournament

Winner: University of British Columbia High School Tournament

MVP: Nicola Dirks

All Star: Moni Tessmann

Ranked #1 in AAAA

VARSITY BOYS

Winner: St. James Collegiate Tournament

2nd: Portage Collegiate Tournament

Ranked #3 in AAA

JV BOYS (SR. 1)

3rd: Louis Riel Tournament



Ben Plett

Kevin Penner

Angie Paetkau

PERSONAL BEST

- Sonja Enns set a new shotput record for thirteen-year-old girls in the Knights of Columbus Independent Schools Meet last June. Sonja's winning throw measured 10.0 metres.
- Nicola Dirks was the sole Manitoban on the sixteen-and-under Junior Team Canada volleyball squad this past summer. The girls trained and lived at CMBC for the month of July to prepare for an August tournament played in the Dominican Republic. The team placed fourth out of eight national teams that participated.
- Carolyn Fast and her 4 teammates won gold in Women's Beach Volleyball at the Manitoba Summer Games in August.
- Alexandra Speit, a visiting student from Germany, so impressed a coach while playing a casual game of handball that she has been invited to play on the Manitoba Provincial Junior Handball team this winter.



Sonja Enns



Nicola Dirks

OUR KAYAKING QUEST



A group of sixteen students supervised by Mr. Enns, Mrs. Dirks and Mr. Rempel packed up the big yellow bus for a two-day kayaking trip at Caddy Lake in late September. Though many of us were tired from our day's work, we all had obtained a new, exciting, and beautiful experience. —Shannon Enns

Perspective

LIBRARY

In recent years, Westgate's library has seen a huge increase in use, by both individual students and classes with their teachers. While it is sometimes overwhelming to be so busy, this is really a very encouraging sign that the library's programs and holdings are seen as helpful and appropriate in supporting the courses being taught. It also spurs us on to keep up with changes in curriculum, and with approaches taken by different teachers in the same subject areas.

Without the help of the teachers—recommending books, giving us copies of course outlines and assignments, discussing material needed, letting us know when we've missed an item on the shelves that could only be classified as "vintage"—we would have a more difficult time having the right material on hand when it is needed.

Of course, once we know what we need, we have to locate it and pay for it. This is where the incredible support of parents and other donors has been so important. While we have a generous budget, anyone who has bought books recently will realize that the cost adds up very quickly. Our annual book sale at the opening program is an opportunity for our constituents to see the the type of material staff and students are looking for. We have selected most of these items with input from people in many different areas of interest or specialization. We

then search publishers' catalogues, bookstores and other resources to locate what has been requested. Having these books then purchased for the library by those attending the program means we can develop our collection even further. So far we have never been disappointed by the response from those supporters! THANK YOU to all those who have contributed so generously over the years, at these sales and with other donations of both money and volunteer time.

The library has kept up with advances in technology in the last few years. Computer tools such as the Magazine Article Summaries databases, encyclopedias, atlases, and the Internet, have greatly increased the amount of material available to our students. As with most new things there have been some growing pains (students studying rock and roll musicians are cautioned not to enter "The Barenaked Ladies" as an Internet search!) but overall the positive results have far outweighed the frustrations.

This past summer we embarked on what must be one of the most significant changes in the library in many years. Thanks to a generous donation, we have been able to automate the circulation and catalogue in our library, making it possible for students and staff to have access to the catalogue records on the computers. It also enables us to keep



LIBRARY GIFT

For many years, Mrs. Charlotte Barg and her late husband, Peter Barg, have been staunch supporters of Westgate Mennonite Collegiate. This past summer, Mrs. Barg gave a generous donation to the library which helped pay for the software to automate our library. The gift and continued support to Westgate is greatly appreciated.

more current records and makes tracking of items much easier. This project began with a thorough weeding of our collection and then the entry of all book records into the library software program. Karen Barg Camacho, who was hired for the summer, and Andrea Kroeker, a dedicated student volunteer with a keen interest in the project, undertook this job. Through their hard work—almost 6000 records input—we were up and running on August 30.

Now that we no longer have cards to type, we look forward to dedicating more time to helping students and staff with their research projects and assignments, or just finding a good book to read. You are always welcome to drop in and check out the library; we'll try to make room for you too! ■

Wilma Johnson and Lily Barg, librarians



Dorothee Bishof, John Enns and Angela Neustaedter Wiebe ('61) reminisce about the 1979 German Exchange.

day our children will get to know each other in person. I am so grateful for the German student exchange program, and that I have had the opportunity to nurture such great friendship. —Angela Neustaedter Wiebe

This year's German Exchange students and hosts.

EXCHANGES THAT JUST KEEP GIVING

Twenty years ago I welcomed a complete stranger into my home. This past summer I welcomed Dorothee back into my home, this time as a longtime friend. We have kept in touch with letters and parcels and we hope that one



ALUMNI NEWS



JASON HIEBERT ('89) graduated with honors from Red River Community College's Motor Vehicle Technicians Certificate program. He has also qualified for the Inter-Provincial Motor Vehicle Technicians License. Jason is currently employed at Bullet Auto in south St. Vital.

MATHEW GOYER ('97) and **JOHN CORMIE ('97)** have become Internet entrepreneurs. They have set up a Web site (Fairtunes.com) that allows music

fans who feel guilty for 'stealing' music on-line by downloading songs for free, to make voluntary contributions to the artist. John and Matt believe there are many music fans who feel these twinges of guilt. Their venture has attracted media attention, most recently by The Globe and Mail, New York Times and CTV's Canada A.M. Matt and John are to be congratulated for their sense of ethics and moral integrity.

Engagements

TREVOR LECLAIR '97 and **Belinda Reimer** are making plans for their wedding on April 29, 2000.

ADAM BERGEN '94 and **Stephanie Miller** have announced their engagement. A date has yet to be set.



RUSSELL MILNE ('00) won the Senior Men Compound class at the Canadian National Archery Championships held in August in Boucherville, Quebec. Russell is currently attending the University of Manitoba.

MANDY VANDERHOOF, '80 (nee **HILDEBRAND**) was awarded the University Silver Medal in Education (Elementary pattern) at the University of Winnipeg 2000 Spring Convocation. Mandy is presently teaching at Salisbury Morse Place School.

WESTGATE'S FRIENDS IN SERVICE

GREETINGS FROM MEXICO!

In September 1999 I started a three-year term with MCC in Mexico. Officially I am a community development worker in a region of the state of Guerrero called "La Montana." Three distinct indigenous groups, all of whom are extremely impoverished economically, dominate the region. My focus is on women's issues and appropriate technology, which means that I help develop and promote things like stoves made of clay and sand that have chimneys so that women burn less wood and inhale less smoke while they are cooking.

I decided to work with MCC because I have always been interested in "seeing the world," not as a tourist, but by working and living alongside God's people. Working in Mexico has given me the opportunity to learn a new language and gain a new perspective on the world as a Christian living among the poor. I have found the people of Mexico to be incredibly patient, friendly and hospitable. I feel extremely blessed to be living among such generous people. —Ms. Sharon Campbell

I SPEAK OF AFRICA AND GOLDEN JOYS

After 3 months here, I'd have to agree with Shakespeare. I'm teaching high school English at Rosslyn Academy, an international mission school on the outskirts of Nairobi. The diversity of my students is amazing, as 10-12 different countries are represented in most classes. Class discussions often bring out interesting contrasts between each student's culture and experience.

In fact, "contrast" is probably the most defining word to describe life in general in Kenya. When it's light, it's very light and when it's dark, it's very dark as power rations force me to do everything from cooking to showering to marking papers by candlelight. (Candlelight has lost some of its charm ...).

The intense dryness of the land in much of Kenya is contrasted with the rich green vegetation in other areas, like the school campus. Trees that I thought existed only in Dr. Seuss books grow defiantly green in the midst of the drought.

The warmth and friendliness of the Kenyan people is contrasted with the fear and caution that comes with the constant threat of attack or invasion ... the wealth of the upper class who drive BMWs and shop at luxurious malls, contrasted with the devastating poverty of millions of street kids and slum residents ...

I'm so thankful for my time at Westgate. Although they don't know it, my students here are benefiting from your influence. ■

—Ms. Kirsten Penner

CONFLICT IN GAZA

Confrontation and violence have erupted in Gaza, the region where James and LeAnn Friesen and children are posted with MCC. They have left the area and are currently living in Jerusalem. Last word is that they are tense, saddened, but safe. It is hoped that the next edition of the Perspective will feature an article by James. In the meantime, he has asked that we pray for the people there who find themselves living amidst conflict. ■

Perspective