

# A W E S T G A T E PERSPECTIVE

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## TO EVERY THING THERE IS A TIME AND A SEASON...

This summer, Lorie Bergen is starting a new chapter of her life. It is hard to imagine Frau Bergen not gracing the halls with her friendly smile and hop in her step in one way or another in the years to come.

As of June 2007, Lorie will be officially retiring from her permanent teaching career at Westgate. But fear not, she is not done with us yet; there are rumours she wants to be a regular sub around here next year. Plus, there are all those grandchildren waiting in the wings. Perhaps her future holds being the #1 Westgate Oma.

Lorie Bergen has been moving through the halls and various roles at Westgate since 1964. Her connections and commitment runs deep. I am sure Lorie cannot recall not being connected to Westgate. Growing up in Springfield Heights Mennonite Church, she was a teacher's daughter, a Westgate student, a Westgate parent three times over, the board chairperson and eventually a staff member.

In 1995, when she joined the Westgate staff, she chose to follow in her father's (Karl Fast) graceful footsteps teaching and instilling a love for God and learning. Lorie's teaching often went beyond the classroom. She encouraged students to stretch their horizons through experiences that took them into new territories, be it Winnipeg's North End or Niedersachsen. She offered her students support and friendship as they carved out their paths in life. The opportunity to watch students grow has brought her much joy and satisfaction.

Throughout her career, her support for making language learning come alive,

and for students in general, has been evident in her many hours of volunteering. She has planned German poetry and language contests, music and variety nights as well as matching students with suitable partners for the German exchange program. Hundreds of students both here and abroad have benefited from her careful, thoughtful work of predicting potential positive relationships from paper applications.

Mrs. Bergen's teaching career began in 1972, teaching grade two at Princess Margaret School. In the late '70s, she took time for a different form of teaching and nurturing as she raised three of her own children. In 1982, she returned to formal teaching at Princess Margaret as one of the pioneers of the bilingual program. She taught grade one and three for seven years. She believes the idea of trying new things and stretching yourself is not just for students. Lorie took the German bilingual program to new heights in various ways as she opened up the program to Senior High, teaching grades 10-12 at River East Collegiate from 1989 until 1995. These years were a highlight for Lorie as she put her creative edge to work developing programs and philosophies of bilingual education. She remembers fondly the German Club and drama nights where skits were performed in three languages. These opportunities allowed her to take learning out of the classroom and helped her to build friendships with her students. This is a special gift of hers.

In 1995, after 16 years in the public school system, Lorie took a position at Westgate. In her 12 years here, she has taught at all grade levels and in many subject areas, including German,



*The Bergen family.*

Christian Studies and English. At Westgate she has developed the German program to include Sprach Diplom and AP German. The German program stands on a firm foundation with many success stories of students coming in with no German and graduating fully bilingual. Her creative lessons and Kaffee Klatsches have allowed students to develop their confidence and skills.

Mrs. Bergen has also shared her passion for doing justice, loving mercy and walking humbly with God. Whether it is in a lunch time rehearsal for the one-act plays or Friday afternoon at Misericordia Personal Care Home or in June on an Urban Plunge, Lorie's passion for justice and dignity for all shines through. Again the benefits have been carried well beyond our little community.

Lorie, you are a teacher for life. You have demonstrated your true colours as a teacher as you adapted to the many circumstances and challenges that came your way with joy and pizzazz. May God grant you much time and good health for the many new ways these "colours" will be reflected. May God's unending love and desire to be in covenant with all of us bring you much joy and peace. You are a real Mensch. Thank you for sharing these great years of your life with the Westgate family. ■

## ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS

As an enrichment to the Social Studies program, Westgate students went on a field trip to the Manitoba Museum. The museum offers an "Ancient Civilizations" program that focuses on early people and the ten "markers" of a civilization, advances that anthropologists consider to be indications of a civilization. Once the classroom work was out of the way, it was off to the museum for a picture scavenger hunt that allowed students to identify those markers with aboriginal and fur trade artifacts found in the museum. The students got to see the museum, learn and of course



Students try their hand at creating pinch pots. Ancient people had skills that are not always easy to duplicate.



Solving the Mummy Murder Mystery.

chromatography were some of the forensic techniques used to help students solve the crime.

Special thanks to Lorraine Rempel and Steve Plenert who joined us as parent chaperones on our day at the Museum. The pictures are courtesy of the Manitoba Museum and their photographer, Rob Barrow. ■

make the required side trip to the Nonsuch Gallery.

The second program was called "CSI: Curse of the Pharaoh." Students got a hands-on lesson in logic as they tried to solve a "Mummy Murder Mystery" set in the Egyptology department of the museum. Microscopic investigation of hair fibres, fingerprinting, blood typing and

## JUNIOR HIGH ONE-ACT PLAYS

This annual extravaganza, held on January 25th and 26th, was again impressive and entertaining. Along with the over 120 students involved, we hunted the jungle for the mysterious jungle man, commiserated with Prince Charming as he nobly endeavoured to solve all the woes of his many princesses while foiling the dastardly plans of the wicked stepmothers (?) and were left with aching jaws as we followed the grueling tongue-twisting competition. The dedicated staff and students involved in this event were once again well prepared, rehearsed and determined to give us an evening of fine entertainment. We were not disappointed! ■



## <<<< INSINGIZI >>>>

On Wednesday, November 29th the students, teachers, and parents of Westgate were treated to a special 40-minute concert by the African group, Insingizi. This a capella group from Zimbabwe specializes in the Mbube style of music, made famous by Ladysmith Black Mambazo. The three-member group filled the school gymnasium with their infectious musical energy, even managing to invite (coerce?) several teachers to get up and show off their African dance moves. Their beautiful voices, drumming, and polished dance steps will long be remembered by all in attendance. We would like to thank Pam Poulter-Friesen for making the arrangements to bring this exciting group to Westgate.

## A big THANK YOU

to all the volunteer staff, students and parents who helped Westgate host a very successful AAA Provincial Basketball Championship this past spring. Many positive comments were received about how helpful and welcoming the "Blue Crew" decked out in the Westgate Basketball t-shirts were. Congratulations to both the Varsity Girls and Boys who finished their seasons on a winning note by each capturing the Consolation Championships.



Nick Miller driving to the basket.



## "HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL" AN OVERWHELMING SUCCESS

**O**n April 19, 20, and 21, Westgate senior high students put on an amazing production of Disney's "High School Musical." It was a show that involved over 70 students in the cast and many more behind the scenes. The students rehearsed for two hours a day, four times a week, for 13 weeks. Many staff helped with choreography, costuming, set construction, sound, lighting, make-up, programs, house managing and stage managing.

I had some reservations about doing this production because the movie "High School Musical" is a little on the schmaltzy side, but the musical was much

stronger when it came to character development. The songs in the musical that were not in the film also contributed to a stronger version of the show. It was also a huge bonus to have a great band helping with the music.

Being able to direct a show like this is always such a privilege because of the level of commitment shown by all parties involved. As the students sang at the end of the show:

We're all in this together  
And it shows when we stand  
Hand in hand, our dreams come true. ■

*Vic Pankratz*



## SEVEC EXCHANGE

**T**his February, 19 lucky grade 9 French class students spent a week immersed in the language and surrounded by the culture, visiting their "twins" in Quebec. They received a warm



*Taking time to relax at Valcartier.*

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Quebecois welcome and were properly fêted. Highlights were visits to Montreal and the old city of Quebec, tubing at Valcartier, visiting the Biodome and taking part in a live taping of MusicPlus. Our students also enjoyed a taste of French Canadian education at their twins' school —apparently almost as savoury as the classic maple syrup they tested at the sugar shack!

Two months later, the twins were excited to see each other again in Winnipeg, as our students played the roles of host and guide. Local activities included wall climbing at Vertical Adventures, touring The Forks, the Legislative Building and St. Boniface, and the chance to participate in classes at Westgate, of course. Our guests were offered a glimpse into the values espoused by our school as they joined us in chapel and packed health kits as part



of their visit to MCC. Venturing further afield, the group worked up an appetite baling hay and had the chance to assess the relative merits of poutine versus borscht at the Heritage Museum in Steinbach. Clearly, any visit here would be incomplete without the essential Manitoban experience of a hike in the desert, and the day at Sprit Sands fit the bill. All too soon, though, we were bidding friends an emotional "Au revoir!" ■

# MIDDLE-EAST TOUR

**I**t is the call to prayer which reminds me that I am not in Canada anymore. Somewhere between four and five in the morning, I am jolted out of my slumber by the muezzin's cry through a speaker which seems not ready to handle such a loud output. It is then that I realize I am in the Middle East and I smile. I smile because I am in a magical place, full of religious intensity, historical complexity, and political tension. I smile because I know that in a few hours, I will wander through crowded markets, drink Arabic coffee at the local coffee shop, and sit contemplating the presence of God in churches and in mosques.

For two-and-a-half weeks this spring, I was blessed with the opportunity to travel with 10 Westgate students to the Middle East. Our journey began in the friendly city of Damascus. We explored the streets of the old city, streets which wind and snake past shops and homes. Even so-called Straight Street chooses to bend its way through the old city. Our first stop was the Chapel of Ananias, built on the site of Ananias's home, now far beneath street level, as the layers of time have covered the site. As we descended the steps downward, it was as if we were moving back in history. Next stop was the Ummayyad Mosque at the heart of Damascus. In the huge open-area mosque, our students spent hours soaking up the wonderful communal environment, trying out Arabic phrases and making friends.

And there was so much more to remember about Syria: the refreshing rub-downs in one of the oldest Turkish baths in the world, the wonder of hearing the Lord's Prayer recited in Aramaic in the last Christian village which still uses the language Jesus spoke, the adventure of exploring the Krak des Chevaliers, one of the best preserved crusader castles in the Middle East . . .

From Syria, we headed into the Bekaa valley. Our bus had to wind around craters in the road and past empty shells of buildings, bleak reminders of last summer's violence. Our destination was the Schneller Schule, an orphanage in a small town where my wife LeAnn and I

had worked almost four years ago. Our students plunged into the school, once again making many friends as they made the campus their home.

On the last night in Lebanon, our whole group dropped in on our former neighbours. We were shown amazing hospitality as an impromptu party began, featuring the traditional Lebanese dance, the dabke. Being a guest here once again made me realize how much we need to learn from this culture.

After Lebanon, we zipped through Syria and made our way to southern Jordan where, in the shadow of Indiana Jones, we trekked and explored the unbelievable ruins of Petra. After seeing these marvels of human construction, we spent two days breathing in the beauty of nature in the Wadi Rum, a desert area with incredible rock formations rising out of the flat desert floor. Hiking over rock bridges and along mountain passes was outdone only by our night in a Bedouin camp, sleeping in a three-sided tent in the middle of what felt like nowhere.

We next went across the border to the holy city: Jerusalem. From our vantage point on the rooftop of the convent where we stayed, Jerusalem lay before us in all its splendour: the golden Dome of the Rock seemed so close we could touch it, the bells of the church of the Holy Sepulchre rang and echoed through the streets, and the Mount of Olives rose majestically as a backdrop.



*We did it! Conquering our fears in the Wadi Rum desert.*



*Our Good Friday service in Jerusalem.*

On the day before Good Friday, after seeing so much beauty in the Middle East, we paused to take a glimpse at the ugly political reality in Israel/Palestine. We headed to Bethlehem, where our first view of this ugliness was the concrete barrier separating the Israelis and the Palestinians, snaking through the countryside, gobbling up land and restricting movement. As we met with Palestinian groups in Bethlehem, we heard stories and laments of the wall and of the occupation. At Bethlehem Bible College, Bishara Awad scoffed at those who called the wall a "security fence." This "fence" is, in his words, a monstrosity that has nothing to do with being "neighbourly." Furthermore, he applauded Jimmy Carter on naming the reality of what is going on in Israel/Palestine as "apartheid." Whatever we name it, as the hill-top settlements gleamed in the distance, as the Palestinians lined up in queues at checkpoints simply because of the accident of their birth, our hearts were troubled and we prayed and still pray for peace and for reconciliation.

Our journey ended where it began, in Damascus. We sat for hours in our favourite coffee shop, wandered down our favourite streets, soaked in our favourite Middle Eastern atmosphere, and ate all of our favourite Damascus delicacies: shawarma sandwiches, fresh fruit smoothies, chocolate croissants, and, of course, khubez (pita) with jam.

And now we are really home. But we have been changed. We have seen a magical world. We have seen oppression; we have seen natural beauty; we have seen hospitality; we have seen a vibrant culture. It was such a pleasure to travel with these students. They took risks and approached all of our days in the Middle East with youthful energy – their eyes were always wide open, and I dare say, they let their hearts be open as well. ■ **James Friesen**





## AAA PROVINCIAL CHAMPIONS!

Back Row l – r: Cory Funk, Jordan Voth, Zach Derksen, Nick Miller, Michael Klassen (assistant coach), Melissa Kennedy, Hannah Hildebrand (managers), Jeff Klassen. Middle Row: Blake Penner, Phil Daniels, Daniel Elias, Riel Banman, Chris Epp-Thiessen, Nick Gamble, Josh Ewert, Karl Langelotz (coach). Front Row: John Klassen, Kyle Wiebe.

## BAND NOTES!

Both the grade 7 and grade 8 bands performed in the Optimist Beginning Band Festival on April 17 and 18. Both groups were very impressive, not only with their fine playing, but in their approach and attitude to a serious music festival. Quotes from the adjudicators include: "...incredible maturity and musicianship! Bravo to you and Mr. Brownlee.", "Focused sound! WOW! You guys RULE!", "Your band is tops in my book." We need say no more....

The senior band and grade 9 band also performed to very impressed adjudicators and parents at the Optimist Band Festival. Both bands received excellent feedback and encouragement from their adjudicators, and were both invited to the

national level Canadian Band Festival.

A brass quintet made up of John Klassen, Nick Miller, Karin Ens, Heather Peters and Reg Carther-Krone received a special invitation to perform an opening show for the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra at the Centennial Concert Hall. The roaring applause was testament to their hard work and excellent sound! The group had performed the previous day at the Winnipeg Music Festival where they earned a stunning mark of 94 in their class!

Not to be outdone by the concert bands, both the junior and senior jazz bands spent a weekend in early March performing for some of Canada's hottest jazz artists at Glenlawn Collegiate. Both groups received excellent comments and adjudications, and senior band was invited to the nationals in next year's Musicfest Canada Jazz Competition. Well done! ■



## HONOUR BANDS

We are proud to announce the following students who auditioned for and were accepted into the Manitoba Provincial Honour Bands:

GRADE 7: Nathalie Daudet – Principal French Horn

Jeremy Wiebe – Clarinet

GRADE 8: Kathryn Kroeker – Flute

Sarah Loewen – Clarinet

Marie Bergen – French Horn

GRADE 9: Kate Schroeder – Flute

Merridy Peters – Flute

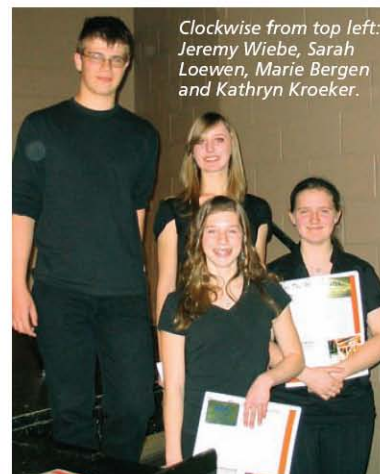
Justin Wiebe – Clarinet

GRADE 10: Kirsten Savignac – Flute

GRADE 12: Kimberley Peters

Congratulations to all of you!

We are also proud to announce that Karin Ens, a grade 12 student, competed against high school and university level players from across the country to earn a spot in the prestigious Canada Youth Band. She met for 10 days in Prince Edward Island for rehearsals, performances and a short Maritime tour.



Clockwise from top left: Jeremy Wiebe, Sarah Loewen, Marie Bergen and Kathryn Kroeker.

"I think this honour band has been the very first band I have been in which I have loved every piece we have played. All of them were full of energy and great fun to play. The slow pieces were beautiful and the fast ones lively and exciting." —

Merridy Peters

## ALUMNI NEWS



Congratulations to **MARIE LOEPPKY ('04)** (formerly Willa Loeppky). Marie is graduating this June with a Bachelor of Social Work degree from the University of Manitoba. Well done!



**ADAM BERGEN** graduated from Westgate in 1994, and has spent the time between then and now at various endeavours. He is

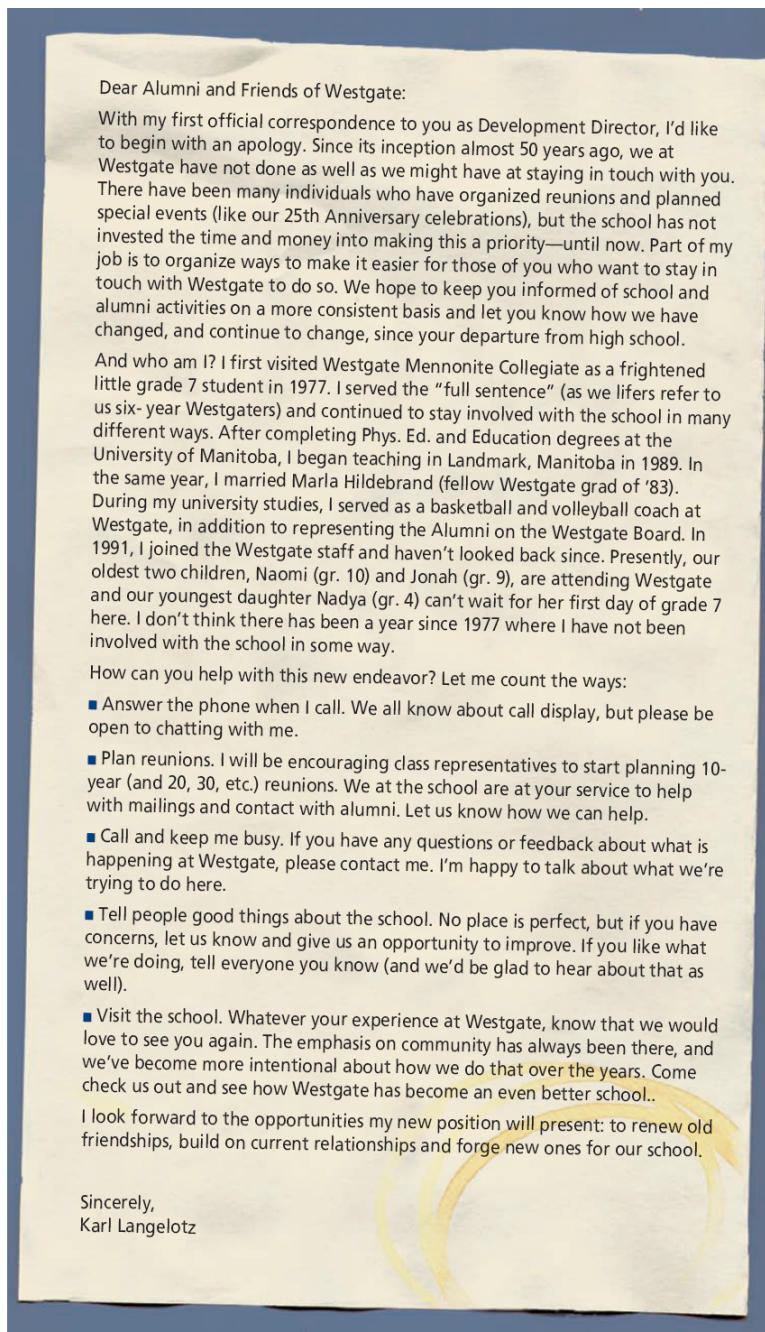
married to Stephanie (Miller) and they have two young sons, Colin and Maxwell. In addition to becoming a specialist in hardwood flooring, Adam graduated from the Faculty of Law at the University of Manitoba in April. He will spend the next year working for the Crown Prosecutor's office. Congratulations, Adam!



The University of Winnipeg and the Canadian Interuniversity Sport announced that Wesmen women's volleyball star **NICOLA DIRKS ('02)** has been named to the CIS

Women's Volleyball Second All-Canadian Team. Nicola was also named a First Team Canada West All-Star. During the 2006-07 season she was the University of Winnipeg Female Athlete of the Week five times.

A three-time Academic All-Canadian, she presently maintains a 4.25 GPA. She has also been invited to tryouts for the Canadian Senior National Volleyball team.



Congratulations to **BEN SCHELLENBERG ('03)**, far left, and his University of Winnipeg men's volleyball team on winning the CIS National Championships back in March. The Wesmen Men's Volleyball Team defeated the Alberta Golden Bears in the Gold Medal match at the CIS Men's Volleyball Championships in Hamilton. The Wesmen won their record 10th National Championship with the thrilling victory.