

A WESTGATE PERSPECTIVE

VOL. 29 NO. 1 | SUMMER 2022



Terry Dirks, Bob Hummelt, Helen Janzen, and Herb Guenther celebrating their retirement with colleagues and friends at Assiniboine Park Café.

by Julia Thiessen

This year we bid farewell to five beloved teaching staff: Paul Dyck, Herb Guenther, Terry Dirks, Helen Janzen, and Bob Hummelt. With well over 100 years of Westgate experience between them, these teachers have made an indelible mark on the school, both through their teaching and support for extracurricular programs, and through their character and contribution to the community. Who will plant flowers and squash at 86 West Gate when Helen and Paul are gone? When Terry retires, who will fill the staff room table (and many a classroom table) with delicious treats from one of Winnipeg's best bakeries? After Herb retires, who can students gently nudge into a 30 minute devo? And how will the school continue without Bob's meandering allegories to help us understand who we are?

Given how much Westgate will miss these staff, we were relieved to hear that they will miss us too. We asked each of these teachers to reflect on what they are going to miss about their work at Westgate, and all of them mentioned the students first. Terry and Helen mentioned just how much they will miss seeing their students engaged in the learning process, and challenging themselves to create and explore. Paul and Herb both mentioned interacting with students through extracurriculars, such as Marsh & Mountain hikes, One Act Plays, and coaching. But it's not just the scheduled courses and events



Westgate Mennonite Collegiate
86 West Gate

Winnipeg Manitoba R3C 2E1

Tel: 204-775-7111

Fax: 204-786-1651

Email:

westgate@westgatemennonite.org

www.westgatemennonite.ca

that they'll leave behind. "Watching kids grow up is a really nice part of Westgate," said Paul. Bob agreed, saying it's the "kibbutzing in hallways" that he'll really miss. "Teenagers are just great!" added Terry.

All five teachers reflected on how much they will miss the staff community. Terry said she experienced excellent camaraderie and a strong sense of belonging in her time at Westgate, pushing her to grow as a professional. Helen called the environment between colleagues "supportive and encouraging". Herb was enticed to work at Westgate by the strong Christian community. He remembers being in high school himself and feeling embarrassment at being a Mennonite, but now he has been part of a high school in which he leads devotions every morning, and where he shares common goals and beliefs with his colleagues. Being in this environment of shared faith allowed Herb to not only grow as a teacher, but as a Christian.

When asked what they're looking forward to about leaving their roles at Westgate, the responses were understandably similar. "I'm looking forward to not having to be somewhere on time," said Bob. "No rushing to the next evening concert or sporting event." Terry agreed, looking forward to "that beautiful freedom to plan your life according to just you and your family and friends," not the demands of "a million other people". Helen spoke of her retired husband and friends who have just been waiting for her to have more time to spend with them. Herb expressed excitement at having the time to take care of himself and feel good, even describing the new schedule he's taking on: a workout every morning, a nap after lunch. Paul expressed the same sentiment a bit more poetically. "Teachers have a time-scarcity mindset," he said. "I look forward to living a more time-abundant lifestyle."

With an emptier calendar comes time for new adventures. Paul, after spending only four years teaching, is excited to return to full-time learning. He has purchased land near Gull Lake in order to practice permaculture, hoping to work alongside natural processes to establish a sustainable agricultural ecosystem. Paul also plans to complete land-based educational training in the near future, and looks forward to future field trips up to Gull Lake. It sounds like Westgate students may have the opportunity to learn a lot more about permaculture alongside Mr. Dyck!

But new adventures aren't just for those in the early stages of their careers. Herb looks forward



Paul Dyck in his element - gardening and giving back to the land.

to renovations, travel, and a new shared life with his partner. Helen is excited to try more sculpting and painting. And Terry is keen to find other ways of contributing to the world, including a possible second career as a writer. "I'm still looking to explore myself as a few other things besides a teacher," she said.

Bob is not as keen to make plans. During his 18 years as principal he guided Westgate through many hiring processes, a massive renovation project, and pandemic restrictions, as well as being a significant voice in nearly every committee's visioning and long-term planning. After all this, Bob's looking forward to seeing what opportunities find him, instead of having to pursue them himself.

Westgate begins its 2022-2023 school year on September 7th. That day will be full of excitement, as we welcome new teachers and make plans for the year. However, we will also be feeling the absence of all five of these amazing Westgate staff, and wanted to know what they will be doing on that momentous day. "I'm going to be at my cabin, enjoying a coffee on the deck, looking over Brereton Lake," said Terry, though she noted she's just as likely to have a troupe of grandchildren to look after. "I will be sitting on my deck surrounded by my flowers with an intriguing book in one hand, a whipping cream topped mocha in the other," said Helen. Herb hopes to be enjoying his newly renovated kitchen and bathroom space - renovations which he, of course, plans to do himself this summer. Paul imagines he'll be up on the land at Gull Lake, preparing a meal out of local ingredients, and sleeping in a tree house. Bob will be "sitting on my dock at Long Pine Lake, knowing that I'd otherwise be in the car heading home." We wish Paul, Herb, Terry, Helen and Bob all the best, as they create new communities and schedules in which they can be at home.

“The One Where All The Events Returned”

The students of Westgate have become extremely good at changing direction, adapting to change, and making the best of “not ideal” situations. The last two years have challenged students and staff to learn and be creative in new ways. Although resilience was built during these challenging times, it is exciting to be able to return to the many school events that make Westgate so special.



I LOVE TO READ MONTH



Karina Fast gave “nostalgia” a whole new meaning when she brought in Westgate’s First Scholastics Fair for I Love to Read Month in February. Remember these from your childhood? Students were lined up in the hallway with excitement as they shopped for new books, pencils, and posters.



Continuing the celebration of the arts, students gathered on a cold February evening to share poetry readings, warm drinks, and treats. Another “first” at Westgate, a Poetry Reading Event. The event was well attended with students and teachers eager to share their favourite works.

The Great Outdoors

In a city where it feels like winter 8 months of the year, you have no choice but to get outdoors and make the best of it. Students embraced many outdoor activities including a Winter Triathlon challenge, ice fishing adventure, and overnight Winter Hike and Quinzee Camping.

QUINZEE CAMPING



Students braved the cold for a fun day of building and sleeping outside in a quinzee.



A 20km hike across 5 frozen lakes to a cabin on an island. A tough journey but worth it.



WINTER HIKE

ICE FISHING



Students headed up the Red River to try their luck at ice fishing. They caught fish and had a feast right there including hot french fries and fish. Well known Manitoba fishing celebrity, Jay Siemens, joined Westgate for the day!



WINTER TRIATHALON



52 teachers & students ran, skated and snowshoed on a brilliant day at the Forks for our 2nd annual Winter Triathlon.



Westgate Travels



The view of the Rhine River from Burg Stahleck Youth Hostel.

Students and staff packed their bags and headed out on various adventures this Spring. Frau Kroeker and a group of students went to Germany on a hybrid exchange + EST trip. Mr. Friesen, Ms. Loewen, and Ms. Cornelsen went to the Middle East with a group of students. We are thankful for the opportunities to learn through travel once again, embracing new cultures and allowing strangers to become friends.



Westgaters pose for the iconic shot in front of Brandenburg Tor in Berlin.

GERMAN EST + EXCHANGE



The group toured the Hamburg Rathaus (City Hall) with their German hosts.



Huddled together under the Oberbaumbrücke in Berlin.



Back in Canada, German guests meet up with their Westgate hosts.

MIDDLE EAST



> **LISTEN HERE** to students singing as they kayak on the Sea of Galilee



Westgate students in Jerusalem by the Dome of the Rock and on the Mount of Olives.



Meeting with Galilee Dreamers - An organization made up of Israeli Jewish and Palestinian young people who are tearing down walls that are separating their communities.



▲ Westgaters at The Treasury in Petra.

Being hosted by Bedouin in the Wadi Rum.



The Return of the Arts

As students stood at the wings waiting for their turn to enter stage right, it was evident just how missed the arts were. There is nothing like performing for a live audience! This spring we enjoyed the return of Junior One Act Plays at the CCFM as well as the lovely Spring Concerts at Bethel Mennonite Church.

JUNIOR ONE ACT PLAYS



Mixing with other grades, fun, confidence, leadership, independence, and teamwork skills are just some of the results of One Act Plays.

SPRING CONCERT

During these past 2 years of no live performances, Westgate uniforms have not been required. Fall 2023 will see the return of navy, grey and white uniting to sing and play! This year students were asked to simply wear black while graduating students were invited to wear "bright" formal wear for one of the few performances of their Westgate Careers.

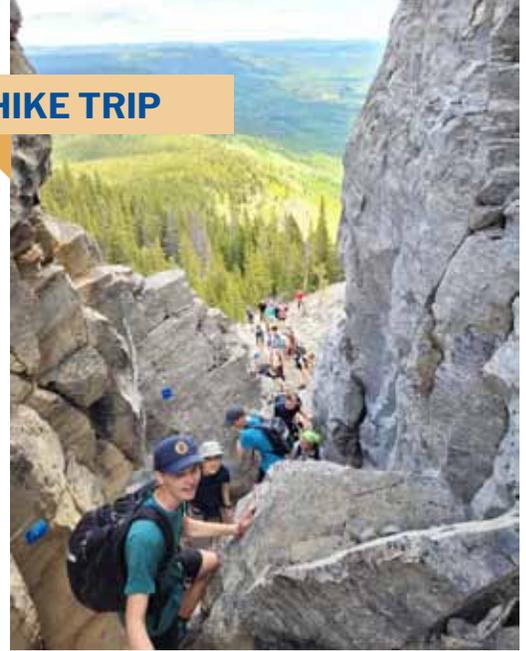


> WATCH
Bob Hummelt Retirement Tribute Song performed at the Senior Spring Concert. Special thanks to: Dan Wiebe, Jamie Taronno, Brian James, Sandy Taronno, Derek Allard.

Alternative Education is often a sweet time of year, but this year it seemed even a bit sweeter as so many students at various grade levels were trying things for the first time. Learning curves were steep but so many skills and experiences were added to the year's growth and learning. Fun was had!



HIKE TRIP



▲ Caleb Friesen Epp and Andrew Rohatensky lead the way up the Heart Mountain single track.

◀ 39 students from Grades 10 through 12 spent 5 days summiting various mountains in Kananaskis country, Alberta. Mountain top experiences indeed!

GRADE 8



▲ The Grade 8 Class learned camping basics at Birds Hill Park.

Students had the chance to delight in good friends, the shade and picturesque forest at Birds Hill Park (among many other things). ▶



GRADE 9



Playing in the water.



Tenting on the grounds of Camp Koinonia allowed for adventures in and around Max Lake for the Grade 9 Class.

GRADE 7



GRADE 6



Enjoying the Horses and a “Walk in the Park” were great ways to begin the camping careers of Grade 7 students.



The Grade 6 students learned teamwork and independence at their Camp Assiniboia retreat. It was an extra treat to have some of our alumni join in to lead activities. Special thanks to Ava Campbell-Enns, Scott Warkentin, Miriam Huebner and Kai Penner.



CANOE TRIP



Paddling and exploring the area in the Experimental Lakes was just one of the challenging and exhilarating options for Senior High students.



MONTREAL TRIP



Traveling in Canada to Montreal and Quebec City was the perfect urban recreation experience for 22 students. Learning to navigate transportation, fun and food in French was a welcome challenge.



URBAN REC



Sticking closer to home, students enjoyed daily excursions with friends as tourists in Winnipeg. What could be better than cruising the Red River, picnicking with friends and sleeping in the comforts of your own bed?

BIKE TRIP



The bike trip gathers just outside Jasper at the beginning of their 300 km journey.



6 days later, arriving in Banff on a cool, cloudy morning.

The return of spring sports included basketball, badminton, track and field, cross country, soccer, and ultimate. Congratulations to all the teams!

In an abbreviated cross-country season, where provincials were delayed 7 months, our Varsity Teams ended by capturing silver medals for the girls and bronze medals for the boys.



Our Varsity Girls Soccer Team, Consolation finalists, guided to their best season ever by their grizzled guru, Coach James Friesen and spritely veteran Natalie Johnson.



Harrison Ens & Jake Bergman helped the Varsity Boys to a Consolation Championship.



The Senior Ultimate "B Team" in action!



Our Senior Ultimate "A Team" poses for a picture on a fine summer day.



Leo Thiessen savours a victory at the Westgate Junior Track and Field day.



Action during the mixed relay!



Elizabeth Thiessen helps our JV Girls Basketball Team at the free throw line. The JV Girls were SCAC Finalists.



▲ Olivia Cook & Emily Froese prepare for SCAC Badminton Competition.



◀ Grade 8 Boys in action!

BIPOC Alliance

By Aliya Penner and Lia Campbell-Enns

The BIPOC Alliance has been an idea in our minds for a few years now. The reason we started the Alliance this year is because we felt the effects of racism towards the Asian community during the pandemic, and we wanted to bring awareness to racism that has gone unspoken during our time at Westgate. Our plan was to create a safe space for BIPOC students to share their stories and to connect, and for white students to learn how to be allies and how to create a safer environment for everyone at Westgate.

Throughout our time this year, we learned that although everyone's individual experiences are unique, there is often overlap between stories, which helps us to empathize with each other. We also learned that there are many students at Westgate who are willing to take the initiative to educate themselves and listen.

We have been pleasantly surprised by the support from both students and staff, with around 40 people attending each meeting. We have also noticed teachers at Westgate taking our comments about racism, and making a conscious effort to do better.

The way that BIPOC Alliance reached out to the student body was by holding monthly meetings open to everyone which addressed several different topics regarding racism. Some of these topics included microaggressions and allyship. We also had a smaller planning team with BIPOC students who wanted a leadership role within the Alliance. Throughout the year, we found that these meetings were a good source of support for us and our peers when talking about our experiences



Co-founders of BIPOC Alliance - Aliya Penner and Lia Campbell-Enns.

with racism. Our last, and biggest event, of the year was to hold a Dim-Sum meal (a Chinese meal) to celebrate May being Asian Heritage Month. It was a great way to end the year. We felt that it was meaningful to share a bit of our Chinese culture with the Westgate community, and it was inspiring and gratifying to see everyone having a good time.

Moving forward from our time at Westgate, we hope that the BIPOC Alliance continues to grow and to share important stories from the past and present. We hope that it continues to be a safe space for BIPOC students, as well as being accessible for those willing to learn. It is an important step forward that Westgate has a group dedicated to hearing BIPOC student voices in the school. We are thankful that we have been able to start this Alliance, and are excited to see where the future takes it.




17th ANNUAL ALUMNI & FRIENDS GOLF TOURNAMENT

Tuesday, August 30th
Bridges Golf Course

Adult: \$175 Student: \$150
Golf registration includes: registration package, green fees, golf cart, lunch, dinner, and prizes.

Visit Westgate website or email njohnson@westgatemennonite.org to register or learn more about Sponsorship Opportunities.

All proceeds go towards eliminating our Capital Campaign debt.

WESTXWEST



On Monday, April 27 we were treated to a concert of live music from some very talented alumni. New Wales, Big Heist Brass Band and Luminous String Quartet had us dancing and singing along as they took us on a joyous musical ride. All money raised at the event was put toward our redevelopment project, completed in 2017. **> DONATIONS** are still welcome to help us “kick the debt to the curb!”



BURSARY BANQUET



The CanadInns Hotel buzzed with excitement and laughter as supporters made their way into the Spring Bursary Banquet. It was a joy to gather as the larger Westgate Community once again. We were entertained with music from the talented student bands and choirs; as well as being inspired by anecdotes and stories shared by Bob Hummelt and James Friesen. Natasha Neudorf ('16) was the guest speaker- she reminisced on her years at Westgate and how they have shaped her life and career as a paramedic. Westgate is so grateful for the incredible support we have received. We are thrilled to announce that this year's Spring Bursary Banquet raised over \$46,000 in net profits to help support even more families and students next year. From the bottom of our heart, THANK YOU!



Alumni, past parents, church friends, current parents gathered to celebrate and be reminded of the impact of doing things together.

Scholarship Winners



Lia Campbell-Enns
Canadian Mennonite University
Leadership Scholarship



Sarah Schellenberg
General Scholarship -
U of M Faculty of Music



Sammy Ludwig
Dr. Dale Iwanoczko Memorial Scholarship

Volleyball Achievements



Julia Martens -
15U Girls Volleyball
Player of the Year
(Jr. Bison Gold)



Rowan Krahn -
18U Boys
Player of the Year
(Jr. Bison)



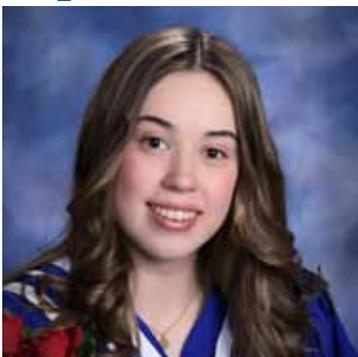
Team of the Year - Jr. Bison 18 U Boys
(Rowan Krahn, Nolan Gawne, Sammy Ludwig, Harrison Ens, Dylan Martens)

Awards



Doug Durksen
received the 2022
Grey Cup Legacy
Male High School
Coach of the Year
from Manitoba High
Schools Athletic
Association.

Baptisms



Fiona Janzen
Baptized at FGMF



Jonah Huebner
Baptized at Charleswood
Mennonite

We celebrate with two of our graduates in their decision to be baptized this year. We are excited that they have taken this step on their journey of faith, becoming members of their churches and naming their commitment to be disciples of Jesus.

Farewells



In addition to saying farewell to our teaching staff, we wish **Emily Enns** and **Peter Grafe** all the best in their next adventures. Thank you for all you gave to Westgate, we really could not have done it without you!

Catching Up with Alumni

KAREN BARG ('89) has been busy creating string quartet arrangements for her LUMINOUS STRING QUARTET and released a CD in March 2020 called "I Did It For Love - A Canadian Classic Rock Compilation", which was well received not just by the public, but by a number of the bands and artists she covered resulting in her performing live with Honeymoon Suite and Chilliwack rock bands. Karen was also recently acknowledged in John Einarson's new book release "Heart of Gold - A History of Winnipeg Music" which was designed by Aniko Szabo ('88) - alumni and Westgate parent. As of late, Karen has been performing with Juno award-winning band Eagle & Hawk as well as Indian City and performed for the fourth time with Juno nominee/Manitoba Country Music Award winning artist Don Amero for his "Amero Little Christmas" show. She is now working on her next string quartet arranging project focusing on Canadian Women: e.g. Shania Twain, Anne Murray, Toronto, The Headpins, etc. Karen and the Luminous String Quartet were also part of our West x West show this year entertaining the crowd with an amazing performance of Bohemian Rhapsody.



Karen Barg '89 performing with Honeymoon Suite on August 28, 2021 at The Burton Cummings Theatre. (left to right: Derry Grehan - lead guitar, Dave Betts - drummer, Gary Lalonde - bass player)



MARIE KLASSEN ('95) has received the Premier's Award for Excellence in Education. Congratulations. Since graduating from the Faculty of Education Marie has taught in Portugal and here in Winnipeg. She has taught Grades 2-5 in the classroom. Most recently she has dedicated her creativity and leadership to Donwood School in the River East Transcona School Division as a school counsellor. She has been affectionately called the Angel of Donwood School by colleagues for her dedication to supporting Kindergarten to Grade 5 students, their families and school staff. She works tirelessly to foster a whole-school approach to creating a more caring and supportive environment. Marie has also established various student groups to help build social capital and leadership. She co-chairs a group for girls to help them learn about and celebrate their Indigenous culture. Always attentive to the needs of her colleagues, she organises relevant professional learning sessions, co-teaches, and provides mentorship to teachers, interns and student teachers. Manitoba Education has declared: Marie Klassen is the epitome of an outstanding school counsellor. In the fall she will begin a new adventure as she shifts to the role of Vice Principal of Princess Margaret School. Pictured here with her husband Chris Chartier and two wonderful children, Sofia and Jack.



Cara Kennedy, Director of Marketing, MSP Starch Products Inc (Solnul™) and Camille Kennedy, Consultant, Camille Kennedy Consulting.

CARA AND CAMILLE KENNEDY - This past year sisters Cara ('01) and Camille ('06) Kennedy were named in the 100 Exceptional Women from Mezzanine's Business to Business (B2B). Congratulations!

"This year's exceptional women are mentors and trailblazers, forging ahead in often male-dominated fields like manufacturing, energy and mining. They bring their smarts and fresh point of view to make their organisations more profitable, sustainable, equitable and successful. They are changing their industries for the better.

Join us in celebrating these changemakers, risk-takers, leaders and all-around exceptional women working in B2B right now."



Michael (left) is pictured here with his partner, Scott, enjoying life in Winnipeg.

MICHAEL MONTESS ('07) finished his PhD in Philosophy at York University in October 2020. Currently is working as a postdoctoral researcher at Western University and the University of Victoria. His research is on public health ethics, including COVID-19, HIV/AIDS, and LGBTQ2S+ health. He recently dropped by the school to say HI and get a tour of the redeveloped campus. He definitely credits James Friesen, and the rest of his education at Westgate, for much of his academic successes because of the mentorship and the essay writing skills he was able to develop in AP English. Currently Michael lives in Winnipeg with his partner, Scott Brisson, and enjoys working remotely from his hometown.

Want some help or support navigating the realty landscape of Manitoba? Consider reaching out to Westgate Alumni who are eager to work with folks in the wider Westgate community.



Paige Derksen ('10) realtor with Royal LePage Prime and the Marcia Bergen Group



Joshua Neustaedter Barg ('13) realtor with Royal LePage Top Producers



Erika Fish ('16) realtor with Amber van den Broek & Associates RE/MAX executives realty



Eric Neumann ('04) Executive Producers

Reunions

Beyond the scope of formal reunions, alumni seem to gather and enjoy time together doing things they enjoy.



Evan Kroecker ('09), Zach Peters ('05), Cory Funk ('08), Erin Braun Janzen ('08) and Anneke ('08) Funk and all raced in a 50km trail race in Brandon called Race the North Face. Lately running has been an activity of connecting with others and it was incredible to be racing amongst familiar faces. Out of almost 60 runners, the Westgate alumni finished in 4th, 5th, 10th, 11th and 13th! We'd say "they've still got it!"



From left to right all from the class 2000: Jennifer Loewen (nee Schartner), Leah Bock, Andrea Regier (nee Enns), Carolyn Regehr (nee Kolm), Skyler Kass (nee Friesen), Sashira Gafic, Rosemarie Mauer (nee Hogue).

"Old" friends or friends of old gather to mark a milestone birthday. Happy Birthday all! May the decade ahead be full of adventure, love and laughter.



Early in June, members of the class and cohort of 2012 met at 86 West Gate to reunite, catch up, share a meal and memories as well as gift the extended Westgate community with a tree to help us all remember the life of Colin Edmond. Thanks to Jacquelyn Klassen and Mikala Epp for taking the lead in planning the reunion. The class also collected money to contribute to the ongoing scholarship in Colin's honour. If others would like to contribute to this scholarship (or any others) please [> CLICK HERE](#)

Baby News - Congratulations!



Amias Bettencourt, born to Adrianna ('14) Friesen and Marcus Bettencourt, May 2022.



Ryder Lewis Douglas, born to Lukas ('06) and Kelly Douglas, May 2021.



Wren Bishop Wiebe, born to Gabrielle ('06) and Stephen Bishop Wiebe, February 2022.



Mya Hailey Douglas, born to Thomas ('08) and Adrienne Douglas, November, 2021. Sister to Nolan and Rory.



Gwendolyn and Mabel Burke Elias born to Laura ('06) and Daniel ('06) Burke Elias March 2022.



Eve Enns, born to Jake ('10) and Brittany Enns.



Luca Miller, born to parents Rebekah ('08) and Jakob ('08) Miller, February 2022.



Lydia Anderson Muns, born to Hannah ('07) and Paul Muns. Her big sisters, Cora and Nettie are loving their newest addition.

Wedding Bells have rung!



Congratulations to Sara ('11) Litz and Kevin Ramlakhan in March 2022.



Congratulations to Karina Rempel ('07) and Christopher Balharry on April 26, 2022 in Costa Rica. Elopement joined by immediate families.

If you'd like to share your news with us, please get in touch!

Contact:
Alumni Relations Coordinator,
Krista Neustaedter Barg:
 >alumni@westgatemennonite.org