

LANCASTER MENNONITE SCHOOL

www.lancastermennonite.org

FALL 2009

Bridges



**Building bridges with
global neighbors,
page 2**

Homecoming, page 8

- 6 Spanish program expands
- 7 New course, Global Christianity
- 8 Fall Festival and Homecoming
- 10 School update
- 12 Alumni news
- 15 Phil Bontrager, Alumni feature



Bridges is the quarterly magazine of Lancaster Mennonite School, sent to alumni, parents and friends. LMS exists to transform students so they can change our world through Christlike love, peacemaking and service. The school welcomes students without regard to sex, race, nationality or ethnic origin.

Lancaster Mennonite School has four campuses:

Kraybill, grades PreK–8

598 Kraybill Church Road
Mount Joy, PA 17552
(717) 653-5236

Lancaster, grades 6–12

2176 Lincoln Highway East
Lancaster, PA 17602
(717) 299-0436

Locust Grove, PreK–8

2257 Old Philadelphia Pike
Lancaster, PA 17602
(717) 394-7107

New Danville, grades PreK–6

393 Long Lane
Lancaster, PA 17603
(717) 872-2506

Address alumni and school news to
sprungerdl@lancastermennonite.org
or call (717) 299-0436, ext. 701.

Editor: Fern Clemmer
clemmerfe@lancastermennonite.org

Volume 37, No. 2

Cover photo: In July, LMS Youth Minister Jon Heinly and Franklin Mennonite Conference Youth Minister Cedric Roth accompanied 22 youth and young adults to Mennonite World Conference in Asuncion, Paraguay. After the conference, the group participated in a Habitat for Humanity service project and did some sightseeing. Also see caption on page 3. PHOTO: PETER BRUBAKER

Building bridges with global neighbors

Heidi Long's journey to the 15th Mennonite World Conference (MWC), held this past July in Asuncion, Paraguay, began five years ago when she was only 12. She and her mother were at a junior high youth convention in North Carolina when someone urged her to consider attending the 2009 event.

"For about a month my 12-year-old mind could barely contain its excitement over this worldwide event," she said, "but soon it faded in with all my other life plans. ... It was a dream that I never expected would come to life."

Then last winter, during Long's junior year at LMS, she heard a chapel speaker promote the conference and explain that LMS Youth Minister Jon Heinly was hoping to take a group of young people to the event. Excited, Long approached Heinly, only to learn that she was too young to meet the age criteria for the group. But Heinly encouraged her to fill out an application anyway, just in case not enough people signed up.

But even if she did get to go along, there was another problem—finances.

"I got to a point where I had to lay this dream before God," she said. "My thought was that if not enough people signed up, I would take that as a sign to plan on going ... and that somehow God would provide a way."

Several weeks before the trip, Long learned that she was in.

"After much prayer and cleaning and scrubbing and painting and sanding and weeding—even some letter writing—I finally made enough money (two weeks

before we were to leave) to pay for the trip. I've never seen God's timing in such a real way before."

On July 13, Long and 21 other young people, led by Heinly and Franklin Mennonite Conference Youth Minister Cedric Roth, began their journey to Paraguay. Representing six Mennonite conferences, the group came from Pennsylvania, Ohio and Kansas. Eleven of the 24 are current LMS students or alumni. For names of participants, see the photo caption on page 3.

The idea for the trip began when LMS Superintendent Richard Thomas learned about a similar group forming in Ontario. Excited about this unique opportunity to encourage young people to attend MWC, Thomas invited Heinly to share the idea with Mennonite conference youth ministers in the Atlantic Northeast. Out of that, Heinly and Roth agreed to lead a group.

The 16-day trip included six days at the conference, a three-day service project with Habitat for Humanity Paraguay, and four days of touring Paraguay and Peru.

"Mennonite World Conference was an amazing experience," Heinly said. "It was very moving to be together with Anabaptist Christians from around the world. Repeatedly, we talked about how meaningful the worship times were as we all sang together in a whole array of languages, yet shared the common bond of worshipping God together. Four-part harmony is an awesome thing to hear, but it pales in comparison to six, seven, or even more languages

Continued on page 4





In July a group of 24 North American youth, young adults, and youth leaders representing six Mennonite conferences journeyed to Asuncion, Paraguay, for the 15th Mennonite World Conference. Pictured above at the Machu Picchu ruins in Peru, where they toured after the conference, they are identified here by the Mennonite conference they represent and their grad year if from LMH. Front, left to right: Renee Shenk, Lancaster (LC); Alyse Halderman, Franklin (FC); and Cedric Roth, FC youth minister. Second row: Jason Harnish, LC, 2000; Peter Brubaker, Franconia, 2001; Solomon Rudy, LC, 2009; Darin Harnish, Atlantic Coast (ACC), 2009; Heidi Long, ACC, 2010; and Ben Klinger, LC, 2011. Standing, middle: Dean Royal, LC, 2010, Kaela Landis, ACC, 2009; Ruth Wiens, Allegheny; Ashley Moyer, Franconia; Megan Leaman, LC, 2004; Amy Kreider, FC; Julie Heinly, LC, 2009; Leah Risser, FC; Liz Dutcher, Ohio; Katrina Schmid, Ohio; Janelle Bodenber, FC; and Laura North, ACC. Standing, back: Dale Weaver, ACC; Carl Opel, Allegheny; and Jon Heinly, LC, 2003. PHOTOS: PETER BRUBAKER

At left, MWC participants begin to gather at Centro Familiar de Adoración, the church where the conference was held. The far left photo shows the outside of the facility (PHOTO: JOYCE THOMAS). It is the largest church in Paraguay.



Bottom photo: During the group's Habitat for Humanity service project near Mennonite World Conference, some of the workers formed a "bucket brigade" to supply the other workers with construction materials they needed for the foundation of the home they helped to build. PHOTO: PETER BRUBAKER

I believe that these experiences help to encourage passion for missions, service, and a lifestyle that is actively engaged in the global church community.

- Jon Heinly



Above, 24 North American youth, young adults and youth leaders pose inside the walls of the home they helped start during their Habitat for Humanity service project in Paraguay. With them are Paraguayan family members who will live in the home plus other local workers who helped with the project. PHOTO: HEIDI LONG

At right, Kaela Landis, a 2009 LMH alumna, works with a friend of the new home owner. PHOTO: PETER BRUBAKER



Continued from page 3
praising God together.

“We also had the opportunity to live in dormitory style housing with people from all over the world. This created a lot of neat cultural experiences.”

For the service project, the group traveled to Benjamin Aceval, a small town outside Asuncion. There they helped construct a house, working alongside the family for whom the house was being built. Beginning with the foundation, they spent much of the time digging and carrying materials for the Paraguayan masons who constructed the house.

“This part of the trip was really incredible,” Heinly said, “because it provided an opportunity for our group to bond around a common goal. Many persons in the group expressed feelings of accomplishment as they completed tasks that were physically difficult and tiring.

“Youth experiencing something like this at this time of life is an amazing opportunity because of all the decisions they will be making in the next few years. Having their world view broadened as

they look ahead to college or career brings these decisions into a new light.

“I believe that these experiences help to encourage passion for missions, service, and a lifestyle that is actively engaged in the global church community.” ■

Pizza helped pair think outside the box

By Jeff Hawkes, LMS parent and staff writer for *Intelligencer Journal/Lancaster New Era*

The following story appeared in the Intelligencer Journal/Lancaster New Era on September 1, 2009. It is reprinted here with permission from Lancaster Newspapers.

A steady drizzle heightened Jonathan Spicher's dread as he and a friend bicycled through a lonely stretch of Mexico's northern desert.

They were crossing a 40-mile "lawless zone," where drug cartels had free rein, and with each passing vehicle Spicher remembered what a migrant at a border town had said: "I hope you two make it to Monterrey alive."

Having biked 1,500 miles from Virginia on their way to a Mennonite conference in Paraguay, Spicher, 21, of Mountville, and Lars Akerson, 23, of Harrisonburg, Va., weighed the danger but decided to press on.

About an hour into the ride through a dreary landscape on the morning of February 16, Spicher saw a pickup approaching from behind and his heart thumped when the vehicle slowed to his speed. From the passenger window Spicher heard a shout in Spanish, "You want a pizza?"

Spicher thought he had misunderstood, but then the passenger stuck a box of Peter Piper pizza out of the window. Spicher took it, and the truck sped away.

Inside the box the bicyclists found seven warm slices topped with sausage, bacon and onion. They enjoyed the pizza and saw it as a sign that they should not fear.

In the following weeks, Spicher and Akerson rode 6,000 miles through 10 countries. Each day gave them reason to grow more trusting.

On a typical day they covered about 70 miles. Late in the afternoon they would ride into a town, stop at a Catholic church and ask for a place to spread their sleeping bags and keep their bikes. More often than not, they were welcomed and offered a bed, food and sometimes a room in a hotel.

Over a journey that took six months, the pair used their tent only twice, both on nights when they were far from a town.



Jon Spicher (right), a 2006 LMH graduate and a Mountville, Pa., native, is a senior at Eastern Mennonite University (EMU). Akerson, who lives in Harrisonburg, Virginia, is a 2008 graduate of EMU. Besides being an opportunity to meet ordinary people from many different faiths and cultures, and then share those stories at Mennonite World Conference, the trek was a chance to raise money for the AMIGOS fund which helped youth from around the world travel to MWC's Global Youth Summit. The bikers added about \$2,000 to the fund themselves when their travel expenses came under their budget. The total raised for AMIGOS was not available at press time.

One thing Spicher heard again and again is that people in the town to the south would not be as friendly, but the bicyclists never found that to be the case.

Spicher, who is a pre-med major at Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, said being vulnerable as bicyclists and trusting in people might have accounted for the hospitality they received. They learned to expect that strangers would be gracious and receive them.

"That held true," Spicher said, "until we got to Asuncion," their destination in Paraguay, which they reached July 9.

In Peru, the pair was repeatedly warned not to stop in the port of Chimbote. Again and again for over a week they heard things such as "They're not going to take you in" and "People will rob you."

"People told us to not even get off our bikes," Spicher said, but they arrived in Chimbote at the end of an 88-mile day with darkness coming on, and they felt they had no choice. They were directed to the Virgin de la Puerta, where nuns took one look at the bicyclists and said, "Let's get you inside."

The sisters brought a tray with hot water and instant coffee. Spicher was surprised to also see a jar of jelly. He had been carrying a bag of bread, and the women had noticed.

The epic tour offered Spicher many rich experiences, perhaps none more meaningful than the way people, who often had little, greeted them and extended hospitality. They are lessons Spicher said he hopes to put into practice, whether it's opening his door to a tired stranger or sharing pizza on the road. ■

Being vulnerable allows one to see God's provision and grace in a very real way, and being able to see that throughout our trip was an incredible blessing for me.

- Jonathan Spicher

Spanish program expands

Recognizing that (1) children learn languages more easily than older persons and (2) our population is becoming more diverse, LMS is offering Spanish at all three elementary campuses.

At the Kraybill Campus, Spanish became part of the curriculum in 2002, adding one grade at a time so that this year it is offered K–8. Kindergarten Spanish meets two times a week while grades 1–8 meet three times.

Locust Grove has been offering Spanish at the middle school level and in the past also offered it at the elementary level. With the K–5 program reinstated last year, Locust Grove now offers Spanish to grades K–8. Grades K–5 meet once a week, grades 6 and 7 twice, and grade 8 every day.

New Danville, an elementary facility, began offering Spanish K–5 this past year. They meet once a week.

Learning Spanish in the early elementary grades is so much more than grammar and vocabulary. At all three campuses, the primary grades enjoy a hands-on kinesthetic approach (visual and auditory) in a room enhanced with Spanish artifacts/displays.

By the time students reach grade 5 they have a good foundation for hearing sounds of the language through basic conversation and song. They are now ready to build upon this foundation as



At the Kraybill Campus, teacher Betty Mumma creates a fun atmosphere for learning the Spanish language and its culture. Betty, who was born in Guatemala, believes that the Spanish program can help students understand that God's family embraces people of all races, nationalities and cultures. She shares her classroom with husband Paul, former head of the language department at Manheim Central School District.

PHOTO: JONATHAN CHARLES

they use a textbook, learn proper grammar, and expand their vocabulary. ■

Honduran students visit Kraybill Campus

In late September, 18 students from White Dove School in Honduras visited the Kraybill Campus to experience middle school in an English-speaking setting. The visit was a chance for the Honduran students to brush up on their English while Kraybill students got a chance to try out some Spanish. It also exposed Kraybill middle school students to another culture and helped break down some of the stereotypes that can exist between different cultures. The visitors presented chapels at Kraybill, Locust Grove and New Danville.

During the week, the White Dove students prepared some Honduran food for the Kraybill students to sample, taught a Spanish song, and shared prepared reports about life back home.

The White Dove students were accompanied by their principal, a teacher and a pastor. According to Daniel Martin, middle school principal, this is the third year eighth grade students from Honduras spent a week at the Kraybill Campus. ■



During a recent weeklong visit, Honduran middle school students enjoy getting to know their hosts at the Kraybill Campus of Lancaster Mennonite School. The students are, left to right going clockwise: Morgan Brubaker (Kraybill), Astrid Lilibeth Mejia (White Dove), Cindy Italina Cordoba (White Dove), Lucy Alejandra Marroquin (White Dove), Rebecca Keener (Kraybill), and Aria Hess (Kraybill).

PHOTO: DANIEL MARTIN

Course reflects global vision

At Lancaster Mennonite High School, the 11th grade Bible course, Heritage of the Christian Church, has been changed to Global Christianity to better connect with the growing global Christian community.

According to Bible/social studies instructional area leader Sheri Wenger, students were involved in naming the course and making recommendations for changes. The process was guided by the school's mission to be Christ-centered as it transforms students so they can impact the world.

Wenger says the new course reflects four changes: (1) a wider variety of faith stories, including those from the Orthodox and Anglican churches; (2) content that is more global—now including more than Swiss German Mennonites, (3) a new unit that discusses current trends and attempts to answer the question: “What is it that helps Anabaptists celebrate their identity and values while also respecting and working with non-Anabaptists within the larger Christian movement?” and (4) increased use of technology that will allow students to see and talk online with Anabaptist leaders from places such as Indonesia, Paraguay and Congo.

The new course is one of numerous ways the school strives to help students think globally. In their senior year, students are required to write an essay around the topic, “What does it mean to be

a Christian in a global community?”

Social studies courses are becoming more global as well. Starting with the 2010-11 school year, the senior class, U.S. Government, will become Comparative Government. Students will still receive the foundation of U.S. government principles but within the context of other political systems. Sophomores will also take more of a global approach to social studies by switching from Western Civilization and Advanced Placement European History to Recent World History and Advanced Placement World History.

“As a department we feel these changes are essential to truly meet the school's mission statement of preparing students to change the world,” Wenger said. “Our goal as educators is to help our students become more aware of the global community so they can fulfill the challenge of Micah 6:8: ‘And what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?’

“As Bible and social studies teachers we want to focus on citizenship—citizenship in the global community and the global Christian movement.” ■



Above, social studies teacher Galen Sauder and middle school students plant and dedicate a Peace Pole at the Lancaster Campus. The LMS Peace Pole bears the message, “May Peace Prevail on Earth,” in four languages—Spanish, Korean, Amharic (Ethiopian) and English. According to The Peace Pole Project, which is part of The World Peace Prayer Society, there are thousands of this nationally-recognized symbol in nearly every country in the world.



GIFT OF A LIFETIME: Charitable Gift Annuity

Would you like to support the Christ-centered education of our youth while securing an attractive fixed income for life? If you are 62 years of age or older, a charitable Gift Annuity (CGA) to Lancaster Mennonite School will permit you to do just that. If you are younger than 62, a deferred payment CGA may be right for you.

Benefits of establishing a Charitable Gift Annuity with LMS:

- An immediate income tax deduction for a portion of your gift
- Annuity payments that are guaranteed for life and backed by the assets of LMS
- The satisfaction of making a significant gift that benefits both you and the students at LMS

The gift minimum for establishing a CGA is \$5,000. To receive an illustration of gift benefits for either the immediate or deferred payment CGA, please contact Director of Advancement Heidi Stoltzfus at (717) 299-0436, ext. 308, or stoltzfushe@lancastermennonite.org. ■





November 19–21, 2009—for all LMS
Don't miss the fun, food

Lancaster Mennonite School invites all families to its Annual Fall Festival and Homecoming Thursday, November 19, through Saturday, November 21, at the Lancaster Campus. This special weekend is a great way to connect with friends and alumni. And, of course, your participation will help more students take advantage of the terrific opportunities at LMS. Come on out! For more information go to www.lancastermennonite.org.

Note
Auction time
change!

Schedule of Events

Thursday, November 19



Charley's Aunt

Calvin & Janet High Fine Arts Center, 7:30 p.m.
 Don't miss this hilariously funny farce.
 See details at www.lancastermennonite.org.
 Adults \$8.00 • Students \$5.00
 Tickets sold at the door or call (717) 299-0436, ext. 340.

Friday, November 20

All-you-can-eat Hess's Barbecue (Pig Roast and Chicken)

Alumni Dining Hall
 Take-outs: 2:30-8 p.m. • Dine in: 4:30-8 p.m.
 Adults \$9.50 • Children 3–12 \$5.00

Class Reunions

1969: Classroom Building, room 115, 5:00
 (1979: mailing being sent with details)

Charley's Aunt

Calvin & Janet High Fine Arts Center, 7:30 p.m.



Saturday, November 21

3 v 3 Basketball Tournament
 Gym B, 8:30 a.m.

Country Breakfast

Alumni Dining Hall, 8:30-10 a.m.

Iron Bridge 5K Benefit Run

Outside Gym A, 9:30 a.m.
 Registration 8:15–9:15

Alumni Art Exhibit

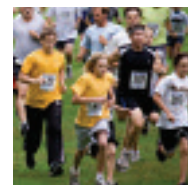
Gathering Area, 10:30 a.m.–5 p.m.

Benefit Dinner & Specialty Auction

Alumni Dining Hall, 5 p.m.
 (See order form on page 9.)

Charley's Aunt

Calvin & Janet High Fine Arts Center, 7:30 p.m.



5K run to help complete funding for track and field facility

To finish the high school's new track and field facility debt-free requires an additional \$150,000, but the Iron Bridge Run set for November 21 will aim to put a major dent in that. To register for the run, go to www.ironbridgerun.org.

Other donors may contact Director of Advancement Heidi Stoltzfus at (717) 299-0436, ext. 308, or stoltzfushe@lancastermennonite.org. The new facility will encourage students to develop lifelong health habits as it enhances the physical education curriculum and the track and field program. ■



The new track and field facility, to be completed by the end of October, features a rubberized surface.

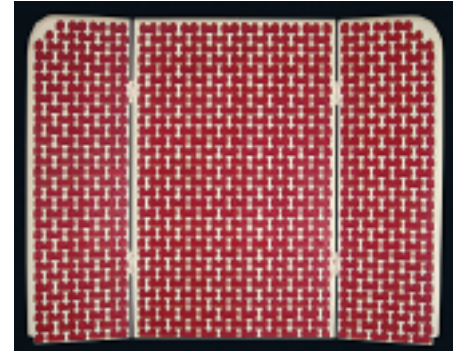
Friends and alumni
and fellowship!

**Alumni art
exhibit
Benefit Dinner &
Specialty Auction**

This year's Fall Festival and Homecoming has two new items on the schedule for Saturday—an alumni art exhibit that will begin at 10:30 a.m. and a Benefit Dinner & Specialty Auction at 5:00 that will feature a delicious dinner of prime rib or stuffed salmon, followed by the auction—both in Alumni Dining Hall.

The specialty auction will include items such as donated alumni art (see samples at right), Garrison Keillor show tickets (New York City), Sam Martin wooden model, vacation packages, and dining experiences.

To save your spot at the dinner, please complete and return the form below. ■



Saturday evening's Benefit Dinner & Specialty Auction will include the sale of numerous originals from the alumni art exhibit, such as the four pictured here. Above: "Walking Mt. Gretna" pastel by Liz Hess, 1983 (from her signature Red Umbrella Collection). Top right: "Dingle Sheep" mixed media by Velma Yoder Magill, 1962. Center right: "Blood/Seed" oil on panel by Tim Gierschick, 1995. Bottom right: "Anchor" oil on canvas by Dorothy Frey, 1992. Go to www.lancastermennonite.org for more information.



Registration Form

Benefit Dinner & Specialty Auction
Saturday, November 21, 2009

Name(s) _____

Address _____ Phone _____

Entree choice (indicate # of persons per entree): ___ Prime rib ___ Salmon stuffed with crab meat

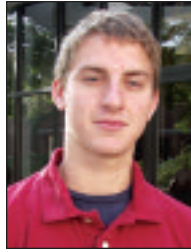
Number attending _____ Amount enclosed (\$50 per person, proceeds to benefit LMS) \$ _____

This event, which will be held in Alumni Dining Hall, features a delicious dinner followed by a specialty auction that includes alumni art, Garrison Keillor show tickets (New York City), Sam Martin wooden model, vacation packages, dining experiences, and more. Consider hosting a table of eight or more for this unique opportunity to support LMS students. Please list all persons at your table (if more than two) on a separate piece of paper. Thank you.

Instructions: Please return this form with payment to LMS Benefit Dinner & Auction, 2176 Lincoln Highway East, Lancaster, PA 17602. Please register by November 13. For more information, contact Deborah Sprunger at sprungerdl@lancastermennonite.org or (717) 299-0436, ext. 701.



Seth Moffett



Aaron Gish

■ Seth Moffett, has been named a semifinalist in the 2010 National Merit Scholarship Program, and Aaron Gish and Taylor Wenger have been named Commended Students. The students qualified for the honors by participating in the PSAT/NMSQT test taken in 2008. About 90 percent of the semifinalists become finalists who are eligible for merit scholarships, presented in the spring.



Taylor Wenger

■ LMS welcomed seven new teachers to its four campuses this year. Go to www.lancastermennonite.org for details.

Visit our campuses

Prospective students and families may call anytime to arrange a personal tour at our four campuses. In addition, here are several visitation opportunities planned for the next several months:

Prospective Student Day—Friday, January 22

Prospective students are cordially invited to attend classes at our Lancaster Campus on Friday, January 22. For times, please call (717) 299-0436, ext. 312.

Kindergarten and PreK Open Houses—January 27 & 28

The kindergarten open house is set for Wednesday, January 27, and the pre-kindergarten open house is Thursday, January 28. Both will be held at the Kraybill, Locust Grove and New Danville campuses, 9–11 a.m.

Open House—Tuesday, February 2

LMS will hold an open house at each of its four campuses on Tuesday, February 2, from 6–8:30 p.m. Along with guided tours and the opportunity to meet teachers, there will be a 7 p.m. information assembly at the Lancaster Campus and a 7 p.m. PreK/kindergarten presentation at Kraybill. At the high school there also will be an opportunity for students entering grades 9–12 to register for courses for the 2010-11 year.

For more information or to schedule a visit

Kraybill Campus, PreK–8: Principal John Weber (717) 653-5236
 Lancaster Campus, grades 6–12: Christy Horst (717) 299-0436, ext. 312
 Locust Grove Campus, PreK–8: Principal Judi Mollenkof (717) 394-7107
 New Danville Campus, PreK–6: Principal Judi Mollenkof (717) 872-2506

Twins generate unique learning opportunity



PHOTO: EDIE HESS

It was mid-morning on Friday, September 18, when the New Danville students excitedly spotted the top of the first generator as it crested the hill. The generator, one of two that were on their way to Three Mile Island, was cruising along at about 3 mph.

Just the day before, representatives from AREVA, the company that manufactured the twin generators, presented a special school assembly to explain their trek. The students learned that each generator weighed

as much as 200 elephants and was carried by a self-propelled transporter that had 26 axles and 208 wheels. They also learned about nuclear energy and how the generators, manufactured in France, were needed so the power plant could continue providing clean energy throughout the region. In classes, teachers talked about the importance of taking care of God's earth by using clean energy.

The generators, which began their land journey at Fort Deposit, Maryland, on September 12, reached their destination on September 30. They are expected to add 30 years to the life of the plant. ■

■ Rutt Academic Center recently received the first GC Sustainable Design Green Award presented by the Associated Builders and Contractors Keystone Chapter. The school is pleased that the community supported the vision of a green building that helps control annual operating costs and provides a quality environment for Mennonite Christian education.

■ The Mennonite Children’s Choir of Lancaster now has its own Web site. Go to www.mennonitechildrenschoir.org. ■

December 3	Mennonite Children’s Choir of Lancaster (MCCL) Christmas Concert at Witmer Heights Mennonite Church, 7 p.m.
December 5	MCCL Christmas Concert at St. Edwards Episcopal, 4 p.m.
December 6	MCCL Christmas Concert at Mount Joy Mennonite, 6 p.m.
December 17	Middle School Christmas Concert, 7 p.m., Lancaster
December 20	High School Christmas Concert, 3 p.m.
January 28–30	High School Drama— <i>The Winter’s Tale</i> , 7 p.m.
February 2	Open House, all campuses, 6–8:30 p.m.

Pastors visit Lancaster Campus

On September 24, the Lancaster Campus was delighted to have 45 pastors and youth leaders visit during the annual Pastors Day. The visit began with chapel, followed by class visitation and lunch with students. The guests represented 24 Mennonite congregations and numerous other faiths, including Episcopal, Brethren-in-Christ, Lutheran, and non-denominational.

Such visits strengthen the partnership between church and school as together they invite students to personal faith, Christlike witness, peacemaking and service. ■



At left, Jane Peifer, pastor at Blossom Hill Mennonite Church, attends class with freshman Liban Dinka during Pastors Day. Above are Monroe Yoder, far left, and Alfred Taylor, center, who visited the school in early September. Both are pastors at Infinity Mennonite Church in New York City, formerly Seventh Avenue Mennonite where LMS teacher Dottie Weber (right of Taylor) attended during an early 1970s voluntary service assignment. Second from left is LMS Admissions Counselor Curtis Edwards, and on the far right is Superintendent Richard Thomas.

Kraybill ready to finalize building plans

With a goal to break ground by the end of the school year, the Kraybill Campus is ready to develop its final plans for the renovations the campus is calling “Gateway to Kraybill.” The changes will:

- renovate the school’s main entrance
- enlarge the lobby
- add a classroom for PreK and kindergarten
- relocate the offices for greater student security
- alleviate student congestion between classes by increasing access to the middle school student locker area and enlarging middle school hallway space, and

- connect the rear of the elementary building to the gymnasium which will reduce student traffic in the main lobby area and decrease walking time for students going to the gym.

Kraybill parent and staff member Jim Baer says he’s excited about the campus improvements and is “especially eager for a main entrance that will fall within the guidelines for handicapped accessibility.”

Preliminary projections for the project were \$1.5 million, including endowment, but a firmer projection will be available after final plans are developed. To find out how you can help, contact



This artist rendering shows the proposed front entrance planned for the Kraybill Campus.

Principal John Weber at weberjs@lancastermennonite.org or (717) 653-5236. Or, contact Director of Advancement Heidi Stoltzfus at (717) 299-0436, ext. 308, or stoltzfushe@lancastermennonite.org. ■

CLASS NOTES

Former LMH science teacher **Charles Longenecker, 1950**, and former LMH English teacher **Janet Gehman, 1952**, are instructors in the Landis Homes' Pathways to Lifelong Learning program which is open to Lancaster County residents 60 and older. This fall the program is offering courses on 30 subjects. Both Longenecker and Gehman live at Landis Homes.

Ken Yoder Reed, 1962, Milpitas, Calif., recently authored the novel, *He Flew Too High* (Winepress, 2009). Classmate **Emmett Murphy, 1962**, Troy, N.Y., who read the manuscript, claims he recognizes lots of the characters as being from his LMS days. Ken's book tour included book-signing stops in Lancaster and the Mennonite Church USA convention in Columbus this summer. His Web site is www.kyreed.com.

Kate Kooker, 1967, Christiana, rode 60 miles with 60 friends to raise \$60,000 this summer to end homelessness for single mothers and their children. The ride was sponsored by Bridge of Hope Lancaster & Chester Counties. She helped start the event 21 years ago after

being inspired by her widowed mother who raised five children alone.

Nelson Longenecker, 1975, Elizabethtown, is vice president of business innovation at Four Seasons Produce, Inc. The company was recently recognized as a "Green Power Consumer" for their commitment to reduce energy use, conserve resources and improve the environment. In August, Four Seasons Produce, Inc.'s distribution center earned the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) prestigious ENERGY STAR for the second year in a row. Longenecker serves on the board of directors for LMS.

Kim Stauffer, 1993, Brooklyn, N.Y., has founded the new Mennonite Artist Project, an online social network and monthly in-person meeting in New York City. In June the project launched its Web site, www.MennoniteArtistProject.com. More than 300 artists have posted bios, events, classified ads and examples of their work. Kim is a professional actor in the city.

Douglas Charles, D.O., 1993, Williamsport, graduated from the Williamsport Hospital Medical Center Family Medicine Residency Program

on June 26. He works for the Family Practice Center in Lykens and Valley View.

Amy Hess, 1997, Wilmington, Del., graduated from Towson University, Towson, Md., in January with a master's degree in early childhood education. Prior to that she earned a bachelor's degree from Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP), Indiana, Pa., with a certification in Family and Consumer Sciences Education.

J. Daniel Hess, 1998, Wilmington, Del., graduated from University of Maryland School of Medicine, Baltimore, Md., in May. In June, Dan began a residency in Emergency Medicine/Internal Medicine with Christiana Care Health System, Christiana, Delaware.

Eric Kennel, 1999, Lancaster, is the site director for seven other persons at Lancaster's Lutheran Refugee Service. He provides help to over 100 families. The agency helps anxious folks experience freedom by helping them acquire language skills, housing, schooling for their children, and employment. He is working primarily with Burmese and Iraqi refugees.

CLASS REUNIONS

1944

The LMS class of 1944 held their 65th reunion at Landis Homes on May 27. See photo at right.

1949

The class of 1949 met August 1 for their 60th reunion. They enjoyed a tour of the Rutt Academic Center led by Richard Thomas, a "delicious brunch" in the Alumni Dining Hall, and a time of visiting and reminiscing. In attendance were 33 classmates and 26 spouses (12 of 59 class members have died).

1984

During their 25th reunion on August 1, the class of 1984 went back in time as they enjoyed a display of old pictures, Campus Chorale dresses and gym uniforms; viewed a DVD that included pictures and consumer facts from 1984



1944 class reunion—front row, L-R: Mildred Shirk Fisher, Arlene Landis Hege, Dale Landis, James Hess, Miriam Weaver Stoltzfus, Rhoda Krady Lehman, Vera Stauffer Kauffman, Ann Stoltzfus Witmer. Middle row: Blanche Kreider Gingerich, Ruth Newcomer Gehman, Rachel Kraybill Brubaker, Anna Elizabeth Lefever Hershey, Miriam Ebersole Charles, Ruth Zeiset Rohrer. Back row: Betty Ruppert Bucher, Clyde Glick, Ernest Weinhold, Elvin Martin, Elvin Denlinger.

(did you know that in 1984 a cell phone cost \$3,500?); participated in a Name That Tune game with music from the

1980s; and tried to identify old campus photos. The reunion, held at the LMS campus, also included a campus tour,

Hans Smucker, 2002, and **Lane Crouse, 2004,** New York, N.Y., were employed as manager of technical operations and audio post-production assistant, respectively, for Guiding Light until the TV show aired its final show recently. Crouse plans to relocate to Atlanta, while Smucker will stay in New York. Both worked in the LMH theatre before attending Syracuse University.

MARRIAGES:

Dawn Weaver, 1983, and Arnold Baer, July 5, 2009. They live in Poolesville, Md., where Dawn is employed by Sovereign Grace Ministries as an IT assistant and database administrator.

Janae Yoder, 2001, and Rodney Hostetter, June 13, 2009. They live in Lancaster City. Janae is a case manager for adults with mental illness.

Tim Keener, 2001, and **Melissa Horst, 2005,** May 23, 2009. They live in Mount Joy.

Matthew Horst, 2003, and Betsy Ewearitt, July 18, 2009. They live in Stewardstown.

Continued on page 14

Lessons learned on cross country trek

This past summer **Seth Charles, 2008,** Strasburg; **Bobby Longenecker, 2007,** Lititz; and **Dietrich Linde, 2007,** York, biked 3,850 miles from Imperial Beach, California (the southwest corner of the U.S.), to Lubec, Maine (the northeast corner). It took them 55 days.

In his signing off note at www.tourdefour.blogspot.com, Seth Charles said the trip taught him three things: the power of a conversation (person to person connections with folks along the way often led to lodging and food); the value of good friends; and the power of perseverance.

On the latter, Seth said he needed to remind himself to concentrate on the present so he wouldn't get too overwhelmed about the immensity of the trip. He compared it to the Christian life.

"In our Christian walks we should be looking at the day in front of us," he said. "What can I do to further



Left to right: Seth Charles, Bobby Longenecker and Dietrich Linde. Dan Lehman, 2007, Leola, rode with the group to Colorado Springs. PHOTO: DALEEN CHARLES

God's kingdom today? How can I help someone today? All of a sudden the task seems more (doable). Then when you look back on your life ... you realize, "Wow, look what God has done through me that I never thought was possible." ■



Visiting at 1949 class reunion are, L-R: Mabel Horst Eshleman, Naomi Burkholder Frank and Nyla Ebersole Witmer.



1984 reunion, L-R: Lauren Reider (fiancee of Phil Kreider), Phil Kreider, Jeff Leaman and wife Lori, Glenda Deiter Blank and husband Bill, Jean Sensenig and husband Daryl Snider.

dinner, and memory sharing by former teachers and several classmates. They ended their fun evening with Clyde Hollinger leading them in "Praise God from Whom" and more visiting with

each other. The event drew 41 class members plus 35 guests. Besides Hollinger, other teachers in attendance included Janet Banks, Myron Dietz, Charlie Longenecker and Dottie Weber.

Continued on page 14

Continued from page 13

Meredith Talbert, 2004, and Andrew Heil, June 7, 2008. They live in Lancaster.

Jessica Esh, 2005, and Jered (J.D.) Ast, July 18, 2009. They live in Oklahoma City, Okla.

Michael Charles, 2005, and Rachael Clemmer, July 18, 2009. They both graduated from Eastern Mennonite University this past spring and are living in Lancaster City.

BIRTHS:

Sherwin and **Carol Hershey, 1988, Wenger**, Lancaster, third son, Austin Karl, July 20, 2009.

Larry and **Kendra Peifer, 1991, Guengerich**, East Petersburg, a son, Hudson James, August 31, 2009.

Joel Leaman, 1996, and Shelley Wissler Leaman, Ronks, third child, first daughter, Abigail Joy, May 8, 2009.

Kerry and **Marlene Weaver, 1997, Martin**, Brownstown, third child, a son, Riley Scott, May 28, 2009.

Benjamin Bixler, 1998, and **Sarah Gehman, 1998, Bixler**, Harrisonburg, Va., second child, first daughter, Susannah Rose, March 20, 2009; died March 26, 2009.

Trent Hess, 2000, and **Emily Par-marter, 2003, Hess**, Lancaster, second child, a daughter, Abigail Frances, April 18, 2009.

DEATHS:

Jeffrey Dale Crist, 1967, York, September 26, 2009.

Carolyn E. Metzler, 1967, Willow Street, August 14, 2009. Carolyn taught at the New Danville Campus for 26 years. She began her career as a much-loved kindergarten teacher at New Danville when it was located at Sprecher Road. She also taught grade 3 and was teaching grade 2 when she became ill. ■



Carolyn Metzler

Thank you for your support! Donor list goes green

To save the earth and put more of your dollars toward helping students, the school is publishing the annual donor list (Year-End Supplement) online at www.lancastermennonite.org rather than sending it with the *Bridges* magazine. Go to "support us" and click on "year-end supplement."

Out of respect for your privacy, a general Web search for a specific name will not produce a search result that points back to the donor list. Again, thank you for your faithfulness in giving this past year. Your commitment to our students and Mennonite education is deeply appreciated. ■

Class Reunion planners for 2010

Please consider planning your 2010 reunion on Homecoming weekend which will be November 19 and 20. Questions? Call Matt Weaver in the alumni office: (717) 299-0436, ext. 706.

Continued from page 13

1994

The class of 1994 held their 15th year reunion at Bird-In-Hand Restaurant on August 22. Thirty classmates attended the event (a total of 52 with spouses). The evening, emceed by Chad Diller, included a group PowerPoint game based on the four words that described each graduate in their yearbook and music by Jessica Smucker who entertained the group with some songs that she wrote. ■



At 1994 class reunion are, L-R: Lori Thomas Heitland, Jen Hoover Lambert, Tricia Bare Stoltzfus and Trish Haverstick.

PHOTO: LISA MARTIN GARCIA

February 2, 2010 Florida Picnic

Join LMS friends and alumni to reconnect, share stories and learn what LMS is doing today.

Bahia Vista Mennonite Church
4041 Bahia Vista Street
Sarasota, Florida

4:30 Gathering

5:00 Dinner

6:00 Speaker, J. Richard Thomas

*The dinner has been
generously provided by a
"Florida Snowbird Alum."*

RSVP by January 19
to Deborah Sprunger at
sprungerdl@lancastermennonite.org
or (717) 299-0436, ext. 701.



Serving God in the corporate world

For Phil Bontrager, the environment at Lancaster Mennonite High School and mission assignments to Honduras and Nicaragua helped prepare the way to becoming a leader in Fortune 1000 corporations, privately-held businesses, and not-for-profit organizations.

“LMH fostered a growing awareness in me that following Jesus is about more than just what happens at church,” the 1972 LMH graduate said. “Jesus calls me to serve others and extend his grace in ways that meet the needs of those around me. That is in my center of joy.”

For Bontrager, varsity sports and Student Council provided arenas for learning leadership skills during his junior and senior years at LMH. As captain of the soccer team he learned quickly that teamwork can accomplish a lot more than an individual working alone. And being president of Student Council when the organization helped raise funds for a new athletic field (where new track is now) required “lots of organizing, working with others, and motivating high school students to engage in work beyond themselves.”

During a three-year Eastern Mennonite Missions assignment in Honduras right after high school, Bontrager received affirmation for his leadership skills. In that voluntary service position, and later in Nicaragua where he and wife Lori Hollenberg served as country reps for Mennonite Central Committee, Bontrager started to realize he actually enjoyed the challenges of the leadership role.

Today Bontrager is president and CEO of Sauder Manufacturing Company, a privately-held manufacturer of seating for the education, health-care, and worship markets. Founded in 1945, Sauder Manufacturing has been America’s leading producer of wood church furniture for seven decades. The firm is headquartered in Archbold, Ohio.

Prior to joining Sauder in 2003, Phil served nine months as interim CEO of Mennonite Publishing House, where he led the turnaround and restructuring of the publisher of the Mennonite Church. From 1999–2001, Phil was president of Gardens Alive, Inc. a privately-held manufacturer and direct marketer of proprietary organic lawn and garden products. During his tenure, the company more than tripled in size to over \$50 million through a combination of new product development and acquisitions to become the nation’s largest provider of home gardening products. From 1983 to 1999, Phil held senior executive positions with Hill-Rom Company, a \$1.2 billion manufacturer of hospital beds and associated patient care equipment.

Bontrager graduated from Goshen College and received his MBA at the University of Michigan Graduate School of Business. He and Lori live in Archbold and attend Zion Mennonite Church where Phil serves on the vision team that is part of the pastoral transition. They have four grown children: Andrea, who is in doctoral studies in nutrition; Rachel, a registered nurse; David, who recently completed an internship at the government research lab in Oak Ridge, Tenn.; and Darin, a student at Hesston College. They have one grandchild.



Phil Bontrager, 1972

What I enjoy most in my work at Sauder

I receive great satisfaction from the opportunity to work daily with people that share a common vision, purpose, and values – and seeing us learn and grow. I particularly enjoy spending time with our customers and users in their world and on the shop floor with our front-line people who “make it happen” every day.

My passions

I enjoy learning so spend a great deal of time reading and seeking new and diverse experiences. My experience in Central America in juxtaposition with my leadership roles in the for-profit world lead me to reflect continually how to engage my world in a way that serves others and extends the reign of God.

Best thing about LMH

The opportunity to develop a much more diverse group of friends and relationships beyond my home community in southern Delaware.

Favorite LMH teacher

Myron Dietz was probably the most pivotal in my LMH experience. Dietz had a way of befriending teenage students and nudging us to learn and grow – even when we didn’t want to. His deep, humble faith challenged me to grow spiritually. As advisor of Student Council, he didn’t come with the answers but invited us to think about the big questions—“Why am I here?” and “What do I want to put into life and get out of it?”

LMH soccer

I was a member of the school’s first soccer team, playing defense both years. I wouldn’t say I was a stand-out, but we sure had a lot of fun! We were the first team to play on the “new” soccer field. ■

LMH fostered a growing awareness in me that following Jesus is about more than just what happens at church.



LANCASTER MENNONITE SCHOOL

2176 Lincoln Highway East
Lancaster, PA 17602

Non-Profit
U.S. Postage
PAID
Lancaster, PA
Permit No. 280

Parents: Each LMH alum receives a personal copy of Bridges. If this is addressed to a son or daughter who has established a separate residence, please give us the new address. Call (717) 299-0436, ext. 701, or e-mail sprungerdl@lancaftermennonite.org. Thank you.

Centered in Christ • Transforming Lives • Changing our World

from the superintendent

Education with a global mission

This past July, Joyce and I attended the 15th assembly of Mennonite World Conference in Asuncion, Paraguay. Being in touch with the vitality of the worldwide Brethren-in-Christ and Mennonite churches who are growing at the rate of more than 50,000 members per year was truly an inspirational experience.

Assembly 15 included the first global gathering of Mennonite schools. School leaders from around the world talked about the mission of Mennonite schools in their context. We learned there are over 300 Mennonite schools in Congo that are educating more than 60,000 students. Stories from across the globe highlighted the crucial role of Christian schools in forming disciples to expand the witness of the church.

Being at this gathering of Christians and hearing stories of Anabaptist/Christian education from around the world strengthened my commitment to the value of Christian education in our setting. For me, it also affirmed the changes we are making in our social studies and church history curriculum

that is discussed on page 7 in this issue of *Bridges*.

At Lancaster Mennonite School we want our students to know they are part of a global Christian movement. It is our prayer and goal that through the LMS educational program, our students will be transformed into church and community leaders who will guide our world toward God's intention for all of creation.

Mennonite Christian schools are growing in many ways, and new schools are being formed. Imagine with me what God might do through our

schools by the time the next Mennonite World Conference convenes.—jrt



Above—The first global meeting of Mennonite schools took place in July at Colegio Aleman Concordia, a Mennonite school in Asuncion, Paraguay. With Superintendent J. Richard Thomas (second to left) are, left to right: Angelika Regier, Concordia board member; Alan Dueck, Bethany Christian School principal; Carlos Romero, of Mennonite Education Agency (MEA); and Elaine Moyer, also of MEA. At right—J. Richard and Joyce Thomas.

PHOTOS: JOYCE THOMAS

