



Steinbach Christian High School

Alumni Connection

Issue 7 - Spring, 2009

From the Principal's Desk



Mr. Emery Plett,
Principal

This is a special year for me. This fall I will cross a boundary into territory where I have never been before. It is a one way trip, with no return. This year I turn 40! As I look back and reflect I am amazed at how quickly the time has gone. I have now been at SCHS for 14 years! That means a number of you, students that I taught, are into your early 30s! I hope that this newsletter will bring back good memories of school and friends and what it was like to be a kid again!

SCHS again grew in student population. This year, we hit 239 students in grades 7-12. It is amazing to be a part of the excitement and energy that this number of students bring. Our chapel has very few empty seats left. We continue to trust God as we look ahead to next year and the students that he will bring into the SCHS hallways.

On the sports scene, we have been excited by the success our Boys Basketball Team has had. The team was ranked #1 for most of the season, going into provincials in the #2 seed. Unfortunately, an early loss saw the team relegated to the consolation side of the Provincial tournament.

This year SCHS hired four new staff members. Michael Plett was hired to teaching Junior High ELA. In the music department we welcome James Fast who has taken over from Johanna Hildebrand. Unfortunately, Johanna's health did not allow her to continue at SCHS. Scott Schalla joined our team and teaches Junior High Math, Science, Social Studies, Bible and Study Skills. We have been pleased to add Natasha Fry to our office staff. Natasha is our new part time receptionist. Alyssa Thiessen has returned after being off on a maternity leave. Jamie Rogalsky has also returned after taking a 2 year break from the school. Jamie has taken over our Junior High Physical Education program.

Do you remember sweating it out during chapel and choir rehearsals in the warm months of the year? That situation has been remedied! Together SCHS and SBC were able to raise the funds to install air conditioning in the Chapel, Choral Rehearsal Room and Library as well as to pave our south parking lot.

Next year is our 60th anniversary. Keep your eyes open for our celebration events. I would love to see you out.

Finally, if you are available, come and enjoy our Spring Concert on June 11th here at SCHS as well as Graduation on June 28th at the Emmanuel Evangelical Free Church.

2008-2009 Staff



Front row: James Fast, Scott Schalla, Scott Wiebe, Dwayne Martens, Sharon Fast, Jamie Rogalsky **Second row:** Michael Plett, Janice Loewen, Andrea Reimer, Jo-Ann Friesen, Adrienne Buhler **Third row:** Frank Chan, Darin Sunley, Alyssa Thiessen, Ryan Polinsky, Audrey Guenther **Fourth row:** Emery Plett, Jennifer Duerksen, Kevin Peters Dewayne Penner, Curt Plett

Quality Education with a Christian Perspective

SCHS Art Program

SCHS is pleased to now offer Art in grades 7-12. My name is Ryan Polinsky and I have been given the challenging yet rewarding task of starting this new art program. God has blessed me with gifted and curious students and as a result, staff and students have been able to enjoy the sights of their labour.

In the last year SCHS Art students have painted a new tree mural across from the mailboxes. Can you find the words Create, Learn and Grow in the top right hand picture? Art students have also displayed artwork at the Steinbach Arts Council Gallery, exhibited life-sized tape sculptures in the SCHS/SBC hallway and maintained a constantly evolving hallway of artwork in the Jr. High pod.

Certainly students have been challenged, stretched, and sometimes frustrated by my art classes, but more often than not they have grown to appreciate the visual arts, their own skills, and the beauty of God's creation.



Mini Bus Purchase Realized

What do blisters, dust, mud, leaves, grass, and a brand new mini bus have in common? They are all part of the annual SCHS workday experience. For the last three years students at SCHS have participated in spring cleanup type jobs to raise funds for the purchase of a new 23 passenger mini-bus. This combined student effort has resulted in the delivery of the new bus as this newsletter goes to print. Both SBC and SCHS teams, classes and clubs will now be able to travel together in greater comfort. Other than blisters and mud, work day does allow students to enjoy the outdoors, feel a sense of accomplishment when they complete a job, exercise and experience a tangible way to demonstrate a servant attitude.



Current Staff Spotlight



Mr. Scott Wiebe teaching physics

It's hard to believe that I have been at SCHS for 11 years already. I have been very blessed to be a part of this school. The Spirit of God is alive and active in this place and it's amazing to see the way He is transforming lives of students and staff alike.

Currently I am in my fourth year as part-time vice principal, part time teacher (which really means I do full time administration and then teach a few courses on the side). I enjoy seeing both sides of the educational process. It has been exciting to see the school grow in numbers. In 2005 when I became vice-principal we had 176 students and this year we have 239. God has blessed us richly and and I am excited to see what God has in store for the school.

In the classroom I am continually impressed with the abilities of our students. My grade 12 pre-calculus class once again had a provincial exam mark well above the provincial average. The grade 12 physics class recently completed a project in which they built bridges out of spaghetti and white glue; the bridges consistently held about 100 times their own weight. Students in grade 11 physics worked hard for weeks, preparing their Rube Goldberg projects. It is always fascinating to see the amazing 15 step contraptions that are created to accomplish something as simple as sharpening a pencil.

You are welcome to visit us at the school anytime. I would love to hear how you are doing.

Special Chapels

Twice a week we have the privilege of gathering together as an SCHS body to focus on worship and learning more of what it means to have faith in Christ. Occasionally we are blessed to have guest speakers. I'd like to tell you about two visiting speakers who had a profound impact.

On October 31, 2008 we were privileged to hear Soreaksa Himm give testimony to the amazing power of God's love and grace in His life. Satan's work through Cambodia's Khymer Rouge (The Killing Fields) in the 1970's, left 13 members of Reaksa's immediate family dead. He was seriously wounded, covered by the bodies of his brothers and sisters, his executioners thought he was dead and walked away, laughing. Later that morning Reaksa climbed out of the mass grave. Hatred burned in his heart. Ultimately he made his way to Canada and here he found faith in Jesus Christ, but for years he wrestled with bitterness, hatred and the desire for vengeance – in Cambodia revenge is a matter of honor. Slowly Reaska Himm began to discover what it truly means to forgive. He decided to track down his family's killers one by one. He embraced them, told them he forgave them and presented each one with a friendship scarf and a Bible. Some received him in fear, others without emotion, some admitted guilt and asked for forgiveness. He forgave them all whether they wished to be forgiven or not. Because of his willingness to truly forgive the killers, Reaksa said he himself was released from the bondage of bitterness, depression, hatred, headaches, anxiety disorders and anger.

One year after meeting with the killers he helped to build and establish a church in their village and also built a school called "God's Grace Primary School". There are now 5 churches in the very same countryside where his family was killed, with more churches to come.

His painful story, which includes the ugliest of realities, meets with the transforming hope of the Gospel and changes Cambodian villages, and beyond as Reaksa Himm speaks to audiences all over the world revealing the resurrection power of forgiveness through Jesus Christ. Reaksa says that Luke 6:27-28 is the most important teaching in the Christian life. "Jesus said, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you."

On February 6, 2009 Daniel Julien, a mime-artist came to us from Quebec where he runs "Silent Witness Productions". Daniel is an extremely talented man, a comedian who writes musical dramas, composes his own music, sings, and presents pantomimes. He uses his gifts to bring glory to God. But that's not how it used to be. Daniel comes by his acting skills quite honestly as his dad was a trapeze artist travelling with a circus, but eventually Daniel's growing up years were spent in foster homes. This brought confusion, disappointment and painful abuse which led to a broken and cold heart, filled with hatred and addictions and that only God could restore. Despite that fact that Daniel was making it big in the world, with television and movie opportunities, he felt hollow, alone and wanted to die. God did not forget him and sent a friend who pointed him to Jesus. Over the years amidst ups and downs, Daniel found God leading him back into the Arts. Through miracle after miracle God has helped him establish a ministry that reaches the French-speaking world for Christ and more recently, the English-speaking world as well. Many have found salvation and deliverance from bondages as they watch and listen to what Daniel has to say, sing, and act about. At SCHS he began and ended the day working with both SBC and SCHS drama teams and gave our grade's 7 -12 students a fast paced show (2 hours worth) of mimes and song. He also shared his testimony which left us with our jaws open and hopefully our hearts softened to the power of God's love, forgiveness and redemption.

New Staff



Natasha Fry: We are excited to have Natasha join our team as part-time receptionist. Natasha worked at the Steinbach Credit Union prior to managing her home full time for the past 13 years.



Scott Schalla is a graduate of the University of Manitoba and is enjoying his first year as a teacher. He teaches Junior High Math, Science, Social Studies, Bible and Study Skills.



Mike Plett has joined the SCHS team as our Grade 7 and 8 English and Grade 7 Bible teacher. Mike taught in Mitchell for 7 years prior to pastoring for 8 years at the Prairie Rose EMC. Mike is an SCHS graduate of 1981.



James Fast has come on board as Director of the Music Program. He comes to SCHS having taught music and voice at Providence College for the past 13 years. James is an SCHS graduate of 1980.

Visit us on the Web

schs.ca

*Our website is a
current source of information.*

Alumni Spotlight



Amanda Pelland with her homework group

It's Amanda Pelland here from the grad class of 2007.

I can't tell you how many times I've sat here and thought, "How does God get a girl from Steinbach Manitoba, across the world and living in the heart of Africa?" To be honest, I don't have it figured out yet, but there is one thing for certain, if you submit to God's will, there's really no limit to where He can take you.

I'm living in a small, very poor country in the heart of Africa called Burundi. Although the house I live in is not in a poor area, I have seen poverty beyond anything I could have previously imagined. The culture here is completely different. It's sobering to get out of the western culture and have your eyes opened to a much bigger world full of need for Jesus. In all our North American wealth, we HAVE faith. But here, with the daily pressing need for the bare necessities of life, they LIVE by faith. It may seem like splitting hairs, but the difference is vast. The genocides that started in 1994 have only ended a few years ago. There is currently peace in Burundi, but the country bears the scars of war. There is hope yet for this country, and Jesus is that hope!

I teach art and sports in The King's School which is a Christian school based out of A.R.M. (African Revival Ministries). The school was originally started for the 47 kids who live at what is called the C.R.I.B (Children Rescued in Burundi) orphanage. During the genocides, a woman named Chrissie Chapman rescued babies and young children and started this orphanage. A lot of what I do here is focused on helping them. I live in the ladies teacher house with 5 other women, all older and more qualified than me. I'm amazed that God has me here at age 19 with only a high school education working alongside fully qualified teachers. Let me walk you through a bit of what life looks like for me. Three afternoons a week I have a homework group with three girls from grade four named Darlena, Kwizera and Ruthy. I love these girls. Once a week I supervise a swimming group - by supervise I mean play with!

In addition, a group of us have started pursuing a vision for a children's church and a youth church. Those who know me will be shocked to know that I play guitar in a praise and worship band that practices twice a week! We have an eight person team including some of the older C.R.I.B. kids, and we organize a monthly church service at the orphanage for all the kids and teens that live there.

It's a really exciting part of my being here. Band practice two times a week occupies some of my time. We also have a bible study group that meets every other Tuesday, and a household fellowship every Thursday. It's good to be doing things that make a difference.

I must say however, that being here has brought some of the hardest trials of my life. God has really challenged my character and solidified my faith and dependence on Him. Though I'm still a work in progress, I have learned through very hard circumstances that God truly is all I need. Many of you will have probably read over that statement and miss it because of the million times you've heard it. Hear me out. I had my family, my boyfriend, my friends, my job, my hobbies, and my life; to some degree, everything has been taken away from me. There is nothing else for me to lean on anymore but God. He really is all that I have here, and I'm testifying right now that He has been more than enough - A perfectly faithful and true friend through my every need! God has led me to Burundi, Africa and it's not always comfortable. But followers of Christ are not called to live comfortably are they? They're called to live passionately, and be obedient to God's voice. I'm learning so much, and I hope to come back different than when I left.



I do have a blog that I try to keep updated with what I'm up to, with pictures and prayer requests. If you're interested in my day to day life through all of this, feel free to check out my blog. www.amandapelland.com



Alumni Updates

The information that follows is from the last couple of months unless otherwise indicated.

2001

Stephanie (Friesen) Henderson



Since grad 2001, I've spent most of my time working in radio. In 2007, I released a CD of original music. I've also done some traveling – Nicaragua in 2005 and Tanzania in 2008. I recently got married in Calgary and honeymooned on Maui, where we chased whales on an ocean raft, took a helicopter up to the world's tallest waterfall and viewed amazing coral reefs

in a submarine! We also just moved into our new house. I currently host a weekday drive home show at Shine FM in Calgary.

Matthew Knight

I got married in July 2008 to Yok. We just bought a house and I am currently in my second year of teaching (choir and English) at a Winnipeg high school.

Abby (Neustaedter) Peters

Sheldon and I have been married for 3 1/2 years, and are still attending Steinbach EFC. We just bought a different house in Steinbach, and are having fun remodeling and painting. I opened up Abstract Salon with my sister over a year ago, and we are loving it! Right now we are busy planning our spring hair/ fashion show... it's crazy I get paid for something this fun! In our spare time we spend a lot of time with family, and last summer I fell in love with golf, so we are counting down the days until the courses open up this year!

2003

Clinton Kroeker

I feel like a lot has happened since 2003. After graduating, I spent a year working and then was accepted into the Faculty of Music at U of M. While completing a four year general music degree, I met my wife Jen and we were married in July, 2007. Since then I have been involved in various musical endeavors and am now completing my first year of a Masters of Divinity degree at Providence Theological Seminary. Though I'm not sure how, but I do want to spend my life spreading good news and grace to people around me. Since I'm not planning to finish this program as a full time student, I am now looking for work in the Winnipeg area to support my family and plan for the future.

Jonathan Thiessen

After graduating in June 2003, I attended the University of Manitoba for one year, taking psychology and American history. Since May 2006, I have been working full-time at ICI Paints on Meadowood Drive in Winnipeg. I have done some travelling within Canada, and also become quite active in federal politics. I still live in Niverville, Manitoba. I hope to attend Red River College within a couple years to take Business Administration.



2006

Ofelia (Bartsch) Unrau

After graduation I moved to Chihuahua, Mexico with my sister. There I spent a year working in a pharmacy, learning all sorts of new things. I got to know the Old Colony Mennonite culture as well as the Spanish culture. I moved back to Canada in the summer of 2007. I met Kevin whom I married on August 24 2008. We bought a cute little house on Home Street where we live with our cat named George. I work at Strictly Amish Furniture which is owned by my family. Any extra time I have, I to spend with friends and family.

Melinda (Hiebert) Dueck



It seems like a long time since grad in 2006. Following graduation I worked as an instructor/guard at the Steinbach Aquatic Centre. I also taught first aid and lifesaving courses. In 2007 I married Hector Dueck. In 2008 I was taken off work due to a heart condition that was causing fainting spells and blackouts. After a friend prayed for me, a series of tests showed that my heart was completely healed. At that point I decided to waitress part time until our daughter, Athalia Emily Dueck, was born on February 26, 2009. I am now enjoying being a full time Mom.

Paul Penner

W It's been a while since I last strolled through the halls at SCHS, and many things have come and gone, but one thing has not changed, and will never change, His name is King Jesus! He leads and guides me even this very day!

For the first year out of school I milked cows on a neighboring farm. Next, I found myself swinging a hammer on a three man framing crew. Now I find myself once again pushing a pencil, this time not at SCHS, but at Red River College. Jesus has led me to study Mechanical Engineering Technology. Sometimes I find myself wondering what on earth I'm doing back in school, but it all comes down to obedience. "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind." (Luke 10:27) Then hang on and enjoy the ride!

Trenton Penner

Since graduation I have been attending Steinbach Bible College. I am in the theology program and will be graduating at the end of April this year. With SBC I have gone on three separate Mission Exposure trips, to Inner-City Winnipeg, to Pikwitonei, a Native community near Thompson and this January to Guatemala. It is exciting to look back over the past three years and observe how God has molded me more into the image of His Son. In the next year I plan to work off my debt and after that I may end up moving into the inner city Winnipeg to volunteer at various ministries. We'll see; it's up to God and where He leads me I will go.

Jodie (Wiebe) Banman

My husband and I are living in New Bothwell where we are both youth leaders in our church. I am still a massage therapist working out of Gatten Chiropractic Clinic in Steinbach. I also have a couple of piano students which is strange because I thought I would never teach. We went to Halifax this last summer and we're planning to go to Louisiana this July with our youth group to work with MDS. We are almost done finishing out our basement and planning to start building a garage this summer. We're busy. But it's good, I love it!

Past Staff Spotlight



Doris Penner enjoying a colourful garden in Morocco.

Greetings from Doris Penner. Despite the fact that I taught only one year at SCHS—from 2002 to 2003—I suppose I qualify for “past staff.” That year added many precious memories to my storehouse of life’s recollections: I became acquainted with many wonderful young people some of whom I meet from time to time, I had the opportunity to fully indulge in my favourite pastime—pursuing classic literature (such as works by Charles Dickens and Shakespeare)—and to learn more about juggling time in a fairly hectic work schedule.

In fall of 2003, I felt the need to return to my writing job at The Carillon, “southeastern Manitoba’s largest rural newspaper” as our masthead says, where I write and edit the Family Page, cover arts events and do general news and feature articles, as well as take photographs. While the writing demands sitting in front of the computer for hours at a time, the job also entails plenty of visits to various communities and taking pictures of interesting people and places.

The travel bug hits me fairly often, so as soon as my bank account has built up after one expedition, I plan for the next one. Two years ago, I flew to Hawaii to experience a little bit of “paradise on earth” and last year, I toured Morocco, Spain and Portugal, which because of its ancient history and architecture proved to be a truly fascinating venture. This summer, God willing, I will attend Mennonite World Conference in Paraguay and visit several other countries in South America. Worshipping with Christians from around the globe at the conference in Asuncion will be an “awesome” experience, I have no doubt.

I enjoy living in Landmark in my parents’ old home built in 1940 and keeping a fairly large vegetable and flower garden. Last fall I added a three-season sunroom to my house, so I anticipate sitting in a mosquito-free environment, taking in the warm summer breeze, listening to birdsong and reading a book.

SCHS Chamber Choir



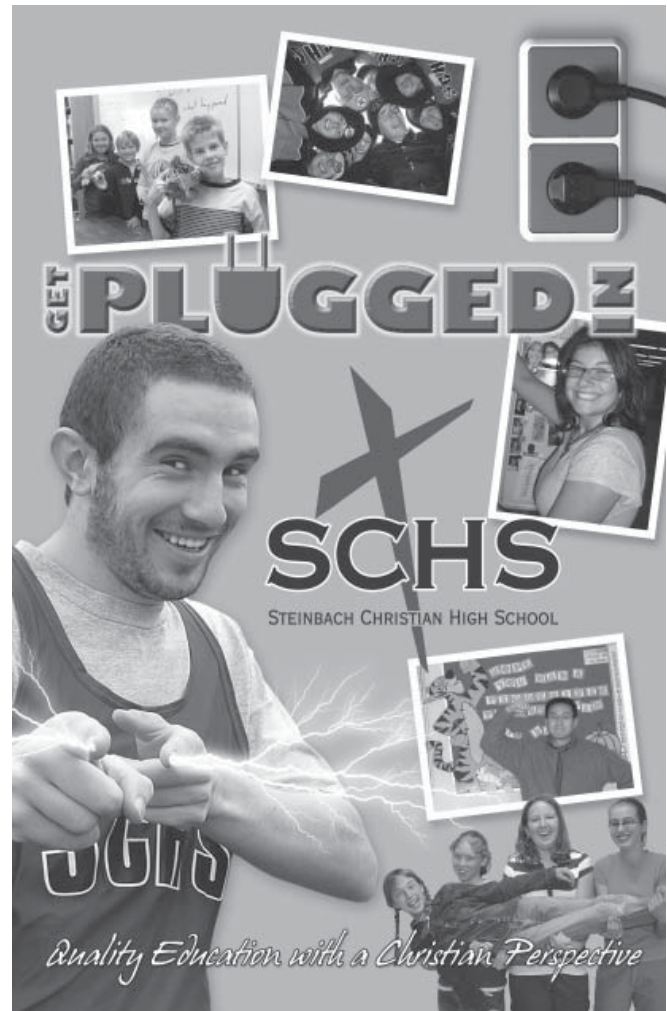
2008 2009 Chamber Choir with SCHS Music Director James Fast

Over the past seven months, the Chamber Choir has been diligently fundraising for a tour to Chicago. The tour runs May 6th to May 11th. The Chamber Choir will be performing at the Heritage Music Festival in Chicago where they will perform along side other choirs from the USA and Canada. This will be a great opportunity for our students to hear and learn from performances by other groups.

Of course sight seeing in downtown Chicago and deep dish pizza Chicago style are on the agenda. Just before we head for home, we will be stopping for a Sunday morning church service at one of the Willow Creek churches. We are looking forward to an awesome time in every way!

60th Anniversary

Hey there Alumni of SCHS - did you know that in 2009 - 2010 SCHS will celebrate it's 60th Anniversary? Keep your clicker on schs.ca to find out what events are being planned and how you can be a part of them. We are excited about all the incredible things God has been doing here. Let's celebrate His goodness together!



Upcoming Events

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|--------------------|----------------------------|
| June 11 | Spring Concert |
| June 28 | Graduation Ceremony |
| September 9 | First Day of School |
| December 15 | Christmas Concert |

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