

Our

REFLECTIONS

WINTER 2020

NEWSLETTER: NEWS, EVENTS AND ALUMNI UPDATES



FINDING LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

Normally, at this time of year we would gather with our community for Rockway's annual Christmas Concert, at which Principal Ann Schultz would present a timely message. This year, we are sharing her address with you here. We hope it brings you some of the comfort and joy our school has experienced this year, because of the kindness, grace and generosity of our community.

For many, 2020 has felt like a year of darkness. Globally, wildfires, COVID-19, and social and political upheaval have eclipsed their lives. For some, the darkness has been closer, too close, to home. We constantly asked the questions, "When will this be over? When will life return to normal?" Together, we have longed for light.

I have found Advent, the first season of the Christian church year, to be a ripe opportunity to reflect more deeply and thoughtfully on 2020. Advent, the start of the Liturgical Cycle of Lights, is the time we sit in darkness and long for the arrival of Jesus, the Christ Child to come. In these darkest days of the year, we light candles and sing hymns that speak of the light that will come: Jesus the Light of the World.

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Rockway
MENNONITE COLLEGIATE

FINDING LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS (continued from page 1)

There is a strong correlation this year between our personal experiences during 2020 and Advent. As the lights around the Advent wreath have been lit and more light has appeared, I have found myself connecting more deeply to the anticipation of the birth of Jesus and the light he brought to the world. I have thought of Jesus and his story, which included his own moments of darkness and challenge. I have reflected on Jesus being the light of the world and his support and identification with those who sat in oppression, were marginalized and oppressed. Jesus lived a life of darkness and light.

Additionally, as I have watched the light cast from the Advent candles, I have been inspired to think about the moments of light I have observed and experienced throughout the past year. Advent has presented the opportunity to reflect deeply on both Jesus as the light of the world, and the light of those around me. I celebrate and give gratitude for the people and experiences that have cast light and instilled hope in me throughout 2020:

- for those persons who have been critical to the COVID-19 response and delivering essential public services, including frontline workers in the area of medical and healthcare services, food, transportation, finance, social care and many others;
- for deeper connections with family and neighbours;
- for fun with pets;
- for technology that enabled connections both socially and professionally;
- for exercise and a deeper connection with nature;
- for the opportunity to help others;
- for the "me" time I experienced; and,
- for the grace and patience Rockway faculty, staff, students, parents, guardians and supporters have bestowed on me as Principal.

While we have not been able to gather, I leave you with the beautiful text of Bernadette Farrell, who wrote an anthem that is a favourite of Rockway students: *Longing for Light*. In this powerful hymn, Farrell acknowledges the longing for light in a time of darkness, and the challenge for us to have Jesus be our light. May these words of comfort and encouragement bring light and love to all of you during this unprecedented time.

*Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
Light for the world to see.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church/school gathered today.*



May it be so. Thank you to each and every member of our community who brought light and helped us be more resilient this year. Our students rejoice! I look forward to discerning more about resilience during Rockway's upcoming Spiritual Emphasis Week, February 23-25, 2021. In the spirit of joy, peace, hope and love,

Ann L. Schultz ('84), Principal

NEW ROLE CREATES MORE SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

As part of Rockway's COVID-19 Protocol and 2020-2021 Academic Plan, we created a new role in the classroom: the Cohort Counsellor.

In order to minimize the number of students and teachers any individual student comes into contact with during the school day, Ministry of Education guidelines recommended organizing classes into cohorts of fifteen. This presented three challenges.

The first was the need for more personnel, because smaller cohorts meant more classes — we had to hire more faculty and staff as we split each grade into the appropriate number of cohorts.

Secondly, how would we maintain cohorts for Gr. 11 & 12 students studying a mixture of elective courses? Half their day is spent studying in-person with one cohort. Students are invited to remain on campus for the other half of their day in their cohort studying various electives online with the academic support of a Cohort Counsellor present at all times.



This means that students can be on campus all of the time, and more importantly, receive the in-person support they need. It is telling that so many senior students are choosing to do their online learning on campus, because they value the social connection.

Thirdly, how could we build relationships and create community amongst students?

Cohort Connections is a weekly opportunity to connect and play some fun games outdoors and indoors. Students have been having fun getting to know each other and build deeper relationships in their cohorts.

In the warmer fall months, students also enjoyed being outdoors a lot more on Rockway's beautiful campus.

Cohort Connections, along with Cohort Counsellors, weekly online chapels, and student clubs are helping Rockway students connect and stay well.





eRockway Practice Day

ePREPARED AND READY!

Last spring taught us to be prepared for anything. Should the need arise again, we want to ensure everyone feels comfortable and calm if and when we need to pivot to online learning. As a way to prepare for this possibility, we designated Thursday, December 10, 2020 as an eRockway Learning Practice Day.

The goal of practicing this pivot was to ensure the entire school is able to work out any issues in a very systematic and organized way, in advance of a potential immediate shift to online learning.

For one day, we intentionally had all students learning from home.

Some Grade 9-12 teachers taught from their classrooms in the school. Thanks to donor support, we have recently invested in the expansion of our bandwidth to accommodate greater online use. Some Grade 9-12 teachers hosted their online classes from home.

Meanwhile, Grade 7 & 8 students started the day with an online check-in with their teachers. They then settled in for a day of independent online learning at home while their teachers finalized the eRockway Junior High Learning Plan. Together with students and families, we are evaluating the exercise, prepared for whatever 2021 brings. #RockwayResilient



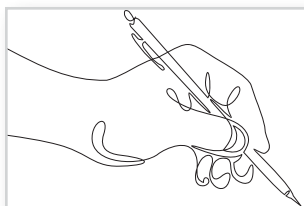
GETTING TO KNOW BILL

William (Bill) Grobe (pronounced Grow-bee) has been at Rockway for almost six months as our incoming Vice Principal. He recently reflected and shared:

"It still seems hard to believe that each day is better than it could have been imagined. Amid the chaos of COVID, the relationships and people are the foundation of what makes Rockway, and to be part of that...humbling and amazing all at the same time."

My family is THE most important thing to me and where my spare time is spent. I grew up as part of my father's family business and went from picking up grass clippings, to working loading cars, to selling Christmas trees, to having my own grounds crew. Belonging and that connection to my own father was always important.

That connection mattered even more with my own two sons, Liam and Jacob (pictured with me above), and being a part of their growing up continues to be what matters most. Whether it be track and field, baseball, or playing taxi for their part-time jobs – being there to cheer them on is where I find my greatest reward in my spare time. Even though I'm no longer a single parent, nor have my own dad here each day, it makes each day important and keeps me grounded when things become hectic at school."



Changing
their
STORY

Join me, and give the gift of education this Holiday Season!

Merry Christmas,

Mark Diller Harder

Mark Diller Harder
Rockway Board Member and former Rockway Parent



“We have always wanted our children to attend Rockway but realized that this would be a huge challenge for us financially with the equivalent of a one-income household. Rockway tuition assistance has allowed our children to experience true community, grounded in the Anabaptist tradition...Our kids say that Rockway is a great place to learn and make life-long friendships! We say that Rockway has helped to form our children into amazing individuals with a bright future and endless potential!” ~ parents, 'Amanda' and 'Jason'

CHANGING THEIR STORY BY SUPPORTING TUITION ASSISTANCE

This year has seemed overwhelming at times. Perhaps more than most years, we are asking ourselves, 'What can we do?', 'How can I help?'

As a parent of three Rockway Alumni, Mennonite pastor, and volunteer with Rockway's Board of Directors, I see how students' worlds have been turned upside down. In these difficult times, their education is even more important.

Together, we can take extra care this year to ensure students and families relying on tuition assistance continue to receive the support they need.

This year, Rockway has responded to the need for tuition support by allocating \$234,550. The average annual amount of tuition assistance awarded is \$3,600 per student, with families paying the remaining tuition.

Tuition assistance is a big promise, but it is an important one that helps keep Rockway affordable and accessible for students and families. On average, around sixty students per year receive support.

Thanks to the generosity of our community, we have covered almost two-thirds of this year's tuition assistance need, leaving a gap of \$85,000.

If you are able to, consider supporting Rockway students and families with an end of year donation toward tuition assistance by giving online at rockway.ca or by sending an e-transfer to accountant@rockway.ca or by mailing your cheque to the school (Rockway will issue 2020 charitable tax receipts for donations of \$10 or more received by or postmarked Dec. 31, 2020)

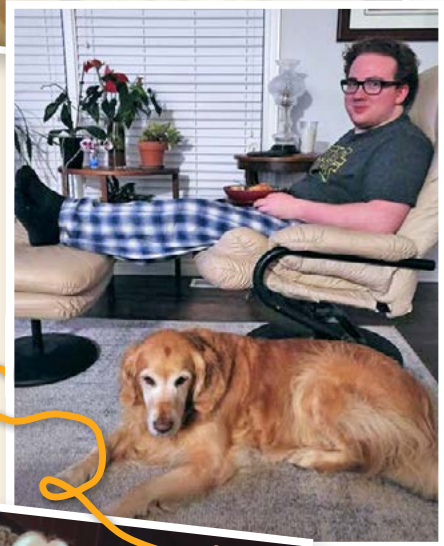
100% of your donation will be invested in tuition assistance. **Let's continue to change students' stories for the better!**

Thank you
for
Noodles of Fun!



- **Over 400** Spaghetti Supper... To Go! meals.
- **Over \$3,300** raised for more picnic tables.
- Lots of conversations, smiles and good times – **PRICELESS!**

Thank you!



Spaghetti
Supper

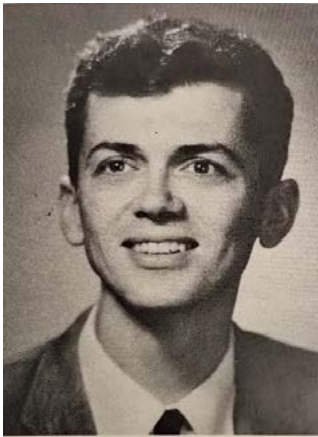
Eat, Share, CONNECT

= **TO GO** =



SNAKES, MICE AND FRUIT FLIES

BY DAVID NEWLANDS, ROCKWAY FACULTY MEMBER, 1963-1965 & 1967-1969



David Newlands, B.A.
Mathematics, Science,
Geography, English

"After my two years in alternative service, I taught biology and mathematics for two years at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate in the 1960's.

There were about one hundred students in the school, which was not enough to pay the bills and the Mennonite Conference of Ontario (now Mennonite Church Eastern Canada—MCEC) helped subsidize the school. At the time, an increasing number of members questioned the value of investing church money in a parochial school. One year the teachers, fearing the closing of the school, addressed a message to those gathered at MCO's annual conference. I wrote the submission. I was surprised to see that the paper is listed in the Mennonite archives and appears on a list posted on the internet over forty years after it was first written.

Most of today's graduates go on to further post-secondary education and enter into professions that help to mend the broken world that we live in. Surely this is a tribute to the struggles of earlier generations of students and teachers. I have a great degree of satisfaction in being part of that early

struggle, although at the time we did not see it as a 'struggle' but an opportunity to strengthen the spiritual lives of the students.

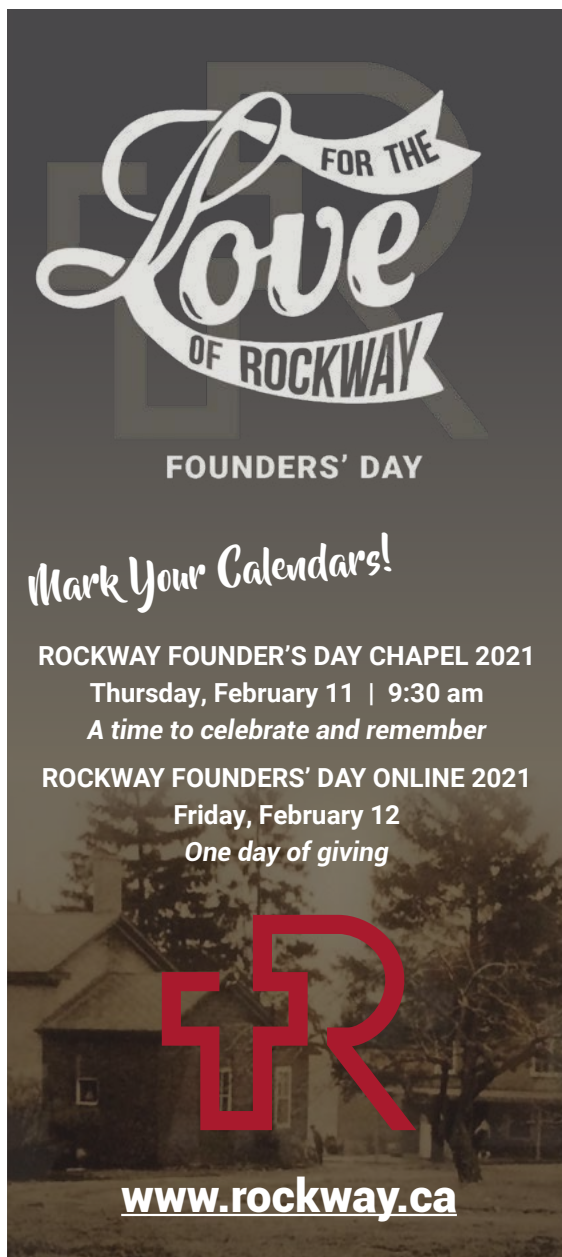
We organized work camps in the inner city of Toronto, sent students to a weekend work camp in Philadelphia, and there were also biology field trips to Algonquin Park. What we lacked in facilities we made up for in enthusiasm and energy. I tried to emphasize biology as I saw this closer to the Mennonites' commitment to supporting peace. In the midst of the Vietnam War, I thought that young people should be given the opportunity to consider the healing professions, like nursing, medicine, and veterinary medicine. I had a long shelf put along the side of the science lab so that we could have interesting plants and animals. Three particular animals attracted most attention: mice, snakes and fruit flies.

Occasionally the garter snake got out of its cage. One winter day it disappeared. A frantic search of the classroom proved futile. MCO had a small archives room at the school and once a week a volunteer came to help. One day the volunteer came out in a panic. The garter snake had found a home in the archives. When the volunteer took off her snowy boots, she provided badly needed water for the creature, and it slithered over her feet.

The only problem with live animals is that they had to be fed during school breaks and vacation. It became my practice to ask the students to take the mice home for the holidays. As many of them were from farms, this was not a serious issue. But the mice population kept growing so, mice became available to take home on a 'non-returnable' basis. I never had a serious complaint about mice, and only once had a very pleasant reminder from a parent of the panic that a mouse caused when her daughter took it out of the box.

Breeding fruit flies seemed an interesting way to teach about genetics. I ordered vials of variant fruit flies to breed with wild ones. Students were encouraged to bring fruit flies from home to use these in the breeding experiments. The only problem was that students had to find fruit flies at home and parents had to encourage fruit flies in their home. Then there was the problem of fruit flies throughout the classroom.

The students did dissections of earthworms and frogs to learn about the nature and function of animal organs and learned to collect and name flowering plants. In retrospect, I think the strategy of emphasizing biology worked, as many of the students did find careers in the health sciences, teaching and social work."



CONGRATULATIONS!

Harold J. Schultz '49 and his wife, Carolyn, celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary on August 27, 2020 in Kansas City, MO, where they now reside in retirement. Harold served as president of Bethel College, KS, the oldest Mennonite college in North America, for 20 years. As a professor of history he also taught in Florida, England (at Oxford and Sussex Universities), and as a Fulbright professor in Ethiopia. They have three children and nine grandchildren. Two of their grandchildren are also Rockway grads: Emily Huxman '13 and Connor Huxman '15.

Colin Rier '15 – B.A. Food History, McGill University, Class of 2020. Looking forward to his Editorial Internship with *Appetite* by Random House Publishing.

Rockway welcomed to our 2020-2021 Board of Directors the following Alumni:

- **Kathy Clemence '88**
- **Duane Heidi '89**
- **Craig Bechtel '08**

Send your Alumni updates and stories to Andrew at alumni@rockway.ca

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PROGRAM UPDATE

In our last issue of *Reflections*, we updated you on the situation of many Rockway international students. Their in-person studies at Rockway were delayed due to pandemic travel restrictions, and our staff was working with our local MP and the federal government to ensure Rockway was on the approved list of schools for study in Canada at this time.

We have since heard that our school has been approved as a designated learning institution to allow international students to travel to Canada for their studies in accordance with all government guidelines.

We celebrate this good news and look forward to welcoming some international students in the near future. Meanwhile, we continue to support those international students who elected to defer their studies and those who chose to study with Rockway online for the interim.

ROCKWAY ANNUAL FOOD DRIVE: STUDENTS MAKING CHANGE

For over twenty years, Rockway students and families have hosted an annual Food Drive in support of House of Friendship's Christmas Hamper program, which provides a gift of food to our neighbours in need during the Holidays.

Traditionally, students have gathered packaged food and donations, and our Music Program has performed at the Christmas Hamper warehouse. Many Alumni will have memories of food piled high in our school foyer and of singing for appreciative Hamper volunteers.

Sadly, this year we could neither gather food nor sing in support. The Student Council was undeterred. They quickly got creative and game up with a plan to raise \$15,000. They invited students to participate with their small change in fun Food Drive activities, such as Food Drive Bingo, and challenges – one student shaved his head!

They also asked students to raise donations by doing COVID-safe chores at home (e.g. snow shovelling for a neighbour), and invited Rockway faculty, staff and families to give online directly to House of Friendship.

In a matter of three short weeks, Rockway raised \$25,004 for House of Friendship's Christmas Hamper Program!!

Kudos to Rockway's 2020-2021 Student Council for leading the way! Special thanks to every member of our community who supported our neighbours in need. Although students could not sing this year, you could hear their voices ringing throughout the school hallways as they cheered the announcement of the Food Drive fundraising total.

We hope this will leave them with a lasting Christmas memory of a tradition that not even a pandemic could dampen.



Student Council members, Josh (left) and Jonathan (who's HomeStay is with Josh's family) enjoy the moment after Josh had his head shaved for a Rockway Food Drive challenge.




Student Council treat Principal, Ann Schultz a.k.a. Rockway's Elf on the Shelf, and Vice Principal, Bill Grobe, to some pie, whipped cream and sprinkles as part of their 'Pie in the Face' Challenge when the school surpassed \$20,000 in Food Drive donations.

GATHERING ONLINE TO REPORT TO OUR COMMUNITY

We recently welcomed our community online to Rockway's 2020 Annual General Meeting to report back on the 2019-2020 fiscal year, ending July 31, 2020.

Many knew how the story began as a 'normal' school year, and how it ended, in the midst of a pandemic. What they also learned at the Annual meeting was the tale of how, with the support of our community and the tireless efforts of faculty and staff, Rockway successfully managed the COVID-19 challenges and finished the year in a strong position, ready for 2020-2021. While there remains much to navigate, there is no doubt that Rockway's mission proved as resilient in 2020 as it was in its early days in 1945.



For more inspiration, read the report and audited financial statements at: <https://rockway.ca/about/about-rockway/> or request your copy from office@rockway.ca



ANNUAL REPORT
August 1, 2019 – July 31, 2020

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
EARTHSONG: SEEKING the HARMONY of GOD'S CREATION
Tuesday, November 24, 2020 @ 7:30 pm | online

Rockway
MENNONITE COLLEGIATE
A SMALL SCHOOL FOR A BIG WORLD







Rockway
MENNONITE COLLEGIATE
A SMALL SCHOOL FOR A BIG WORLD

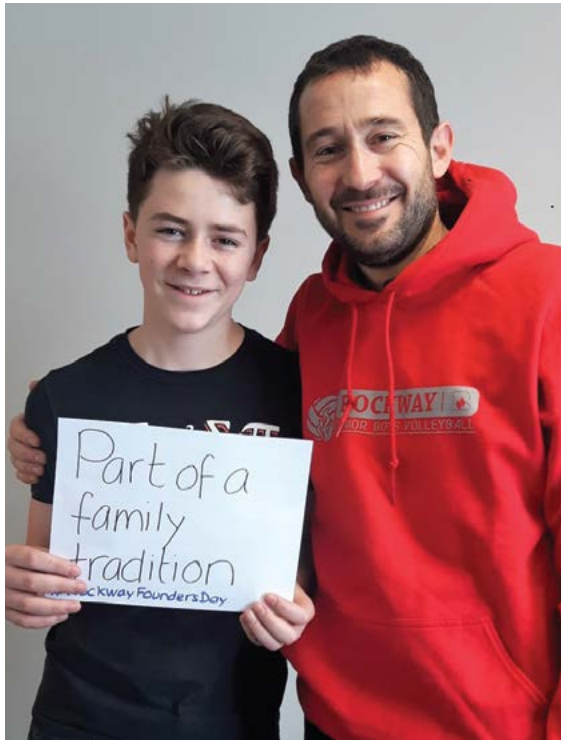
BOOK YOUR TOUR TODAY!

My time at Rockway was the best six years of my life. Rockway is so much more than just a school. It's family and it's home. Rockway's faculty and staff inspired and pushed me to grow and prepare for my future in ways that assure me that I am prepared for whatever lies ahead. Rockway will always be with me, and I will forever be grateful for my years there.

Ruth Charette – Class of 2020
Gap year as an Au Pair in England

    [#lifeatRockway](https://rockway.ca/about/about-rockway/)

admissions@rockway.ca



75 conversations FOR 75 YEARS

We love our son.

We love our community.

*We invest in his education
at Rockway.*

*We invest in the education of future
generations with a gift in our will.*

DAVID ('96) & LEANNE'S LEGACY STORY

"Mennonite roots run deep in our families. David's father, Albert 'Bert' Lobe was a leader in Mennonite education, including serving as Principal at Rockway (1989-1996). David is currently serving as Rockway's Director of Admissions & Recruitment. Leanne's family too, cares deeply about their Mennonite faith and traditions.

"We want to ensure our son has the opportunity to learn about and live out our Mennonite values, which is why he is a Rockway student. We want to give back to the school that has been such a big part of our lives, and to give other children the same opportunity to attend Rockway. Together, in our will, we are leaving a meaningful legacy for the future of Rockway. For us, this is part of a generous life well-lived."

As Rockway celebrates 75 years of faithful education, we are engaging our community in reflecting on the school's future. We hope this will spark conversations across our community. What does Rockway mean to you?

If you would like to discuss making Rockway part of the footprint you leave behind, please contact Christine in Advancement at 519-743-5209 x3011 or advancement@rockway.ca

*"It [true wealth] is measured in the legacy we leave behind for those we love
and for those we inspire." ~ Cesar Chavez*

STAYING CONNECTED

Our school has remained healthy and safe this year, and we are committed to keeping it that way.

At this time, we are not hosting any rentals, special events or Alumni Basketball on campus. We continue to monitor the situation, adjust as we are able to, and look for new and fun ways to stay connected. We hope to host the Class of 2020 and Class of 2021 Graduations in June 2021.

Please stay tuned to your email and www.rockway.ca for announcements and updates.

Thank you for your support and understanding through this time. Together, we are **#RockwayResilient**



As a Christian educational community within the Anabaptist Mennonite tradition, Rockway Mennonite Collegiate integrates sound academic learning with growth in character and faith, together with a passion for peace-making and service to God and all creation.



School Break for the Holidays
December 19, 2020 -
January 3, 2021, inclusive

25TH
Annual

Mark Your Golf Calendars

ROCKWAY MENNONITE COLLEGIATE'S

GOLF CLASSIC

- Wednesday, June 2, 2021
- Willow Valley Golf Course

Save the Date!



BIG BACK TO THE BARN
NIGHT OUT
SATURDAY, MAY 1, 2021



Steckle
Heritage Farm
Connect, Educate, Grow and Inspire the City

Stay Connected

We'd love to hear from you!
You can connect with us at:

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Charitable Number: 119122091RR0001



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Reflections is a publication of Rockway Mennonite Collegiate. Please let us know if you prefer to receive your copy by mail or email. Contact us at advancement@rockway.ca or 519-342-0007 x.3011. Thank you.