

Our

REFLECTIONS

SPRING 2024

NEWSLETTER: HAPPENINGS, EVENTS AND ALUMNI NEWS



It is hard to believe the end of another school year is quickly approaching. It is with mixed emotions that we share with you that our Student Services Department Head, Deb Baxter Heeney, our Athletics Director, Ray Boehm '84, and our Visual Arts Department Head, Karen Scott Booth, have all announced their retirements and will be leaving Rockway at the end of the 2023-2024 school year.

Collectively, these three outstanding Rockway teachers have contributed immensely to the Rockway Experience for over 80 years! Ms. Baxter Heeney came to Rockway in 2003 teaching Social Science and a variety of English classes. Mr. Boehm arrived in 1995 and started out teaching Science, Phys Ed and Kinesiology. Ms. Scott Booth started one year earlier, in 1994, with the intent to cover the Visual Arts classes for one semester. Decades later, these individuals have given selflessly to our community and contributed to the success and growth of hundreds of students. We are saddened to see them leave, yet excited for them and their next adventures.

As a way of honouring these Rockway legends, we will be hosting a **Retirement Celebration on Sunday, June 9 from 2 - 4 pm** and we hope you can join us. There will be a short time of reflection and a lot of time to celebrate and connect together.

Please visit our Retirement Celebration webpage: www.rockway.ca/retirement to learn more about the event and to **RSVP**.

We hope to see you on June 9!

What's Inside?

- Handing Over the Reins: **PAGE 2**
- Founders' Day Celebrations: **PAGE 3**
- We Made a Pig Happy!: **PAGE 4**
- Alumni Updates: **PAGES 5-6**
- 29th Annual Golf Classic: **PAGE 7**
- Stay Connected: **PAGE 8**

HANDING OVER THE REINS

In December, Rockway Board Chair, Betty Pries, announced that Elaine Ranney would be retiring at the end of June 2024. In her announcement to the Rockway community, Betty wrote,

We have loved Elaine's leadership, energy, excitement for the school, unflappability, and the amazing tone Elaine has set at the school. Elaine has helped to steer Rockway out of COVID; implemented several steps in our strategic plan; hired and led a stellar Administrative Team, and planned a new school schedule, all in the midst of regular Principal duties. We want to thank Elaine for her outstanding leadership as Rockway's Principal. Elaine has brought a grounded, insightful, kind, and gracious presence to her role as Rockway's leader. Elaine's work with us has been phenomenal. We will miss Elaine so much.



We thank Elaine for her leadership and hard work during her time at Rockway and we wish her well in retirement.

In mid February, it was then shared that Josh Hill, Rockway's current Vice-Principal, would be moving into the role of Principal beginning July 1, 2024. Betty shared,

[Josh] is a dynamic leader, with passion and infectious energy that brings joy and delight to the school community. Josh is a reflective leader and team player who is committed to ensuring a school of excellence well into the future. Josh brings a clear sense of vision for the school and for the role Rockway can play in students' lives.

We are excited for Josh as he enters this new chapter in his career. In his short time at Rockway, Josh has established himself as a true leader in our community, committed to the mission of Rockway and the betterment of our students. Since the announcement, Josh has been overwhelmed by the reception he has received from the Rockway community.

It is a great privilege and honour for me to serve the Rockway community in the role of Principal. I am grateful for the opportunity and for the faith that the Rockway's Board of Directors has in me to lead this incredible school. The week the news was shared with the broader community was quite overwhelming and I was deeply touched by the many messages of support I received from parents, faculty, staff, alumni and even past Rockway Principals. However, the most overwhelming moment was the response from students when the announcement was made in Chapel. I was moved beyond words. Although the work of the Principal is primarily organizational leadership, strategic planning, operationalizing vision, etc., it is all work that is done on behalf of our students. The fact that our students support and affirm me in this role is perhaps what matters to me the most. I endeavor to work as hard as I can, on their behalf, to continue the incredible legacy that is Rockway Mennonite Collegiate.



We wish Josh well and know he is up for the challenge of leading our school into the future. Our current Principal, Elaine Ranney, indicates that the transition process has begun and is going smoothly. "I am thrilled to hand over leadership of Rockway to Josh. He and I are great collaborators and it is wonderful to begin the transition of leadership while both of us are in the building together."

FOUNDERS' DAY CELEBRATIONS

Rockway Mennonite Collegiate celebrated its 79th Anniversary on Thursday, February 15, 2024. Members of the Rockway community helped celebrate this milestone with a full day of activities.

The day started with a very special **Founders' Day Chapel** featuring guest speaker and Rockway alumnus, **Marcus Scholtes '02**. Marcus is an active violinist, pianist and conductor, based in Toronto. Most recently, he was named Co-Artistic Director of the Toronto Concert Orchestra. In addition to this, he serves as Associate Concertmaster of Sinfonia Toronto. Marcus shared stories from his time at Rockway, discussed the impact Rockway had on his life and then demonstrated his immense talent with performances on both piano and violin. Our faculty, staff,



Marcus demonstrating his musical talent on violin, accompanied by his mother, Pieternella Scholtes, on piano.



David Groh (left), was part of Rockway's first graduating class in 1948.

students and invited guests were thoroughly impressed and showed their appreciation with a standing ovation.

Chapel was followed by a **Tea & Pastry Reception** for our current families and alumni, along with retired and former faculty and staff. It was a wonderful time for members of our community to reminisce about their time at Rockway.



We were pleased to welcome members of the Groh family who were students in the first graduating classes at Rockway. Their father, Harold Groh, was Rockway's first Principal.

In the evening, we hosted our second annual **Soup Supper Fundraiser**. All of the funds raised from the Soup Supper go to support Trips Week for our students, in May. Unfortunately, a snow storm that afternoon contributed to a dip in attendance, but for those that were able to join us, it was a wonderful evening and another great opportunity for our community to come together.



Members of Roger Stover's family were on hand for the presentation of the trophy. Bryan '91 and his wife Sheri (Veitch) '91 are both Rockway alumni and former faculty.

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The stands were packed as the crowd cheered on the teams. Both games were closely contested but, in the end, our Alumni defeated the Senior Boys' Basketball team and our Senior Girls' Volleyball team defeated our Alumnae. What an exciting way to end our day of celebration.

We hope you will join us next year, **Friday, February 14, 2025**, as we celebrate Rockway's 80th Anniversary!

WE MADE A PIG HAPPY... AND REDUCED OUR WASTE!

This fall, Rockway worked to reduce our food waste by feeding Bluebell, the beloved 450 pound sow owned by Rockway teacher/farmer, Don Dyck Steinmann. Instead of sending food scraps to the landfill, Rockway students put them into a designated Bluebell Bin, which was hand-delivered to Grassy Flats Farm for Bluebell to enjoy.

You can meet Bluebell yourself by going to our YouTube channel, [@RockwayMennoniteCollegiate](#), and watching the [campaign intro video](#) which was shown in chapel.



FEED BLUEBELL – THE GAME!



To help our community learn what Bluebell could eat safely, students in our grade 11 Programming class developed a custom “Feed Bluebell” video game. The game involves swiping good items toward Bluebell and dangerous items away, as players strive to keep Bluebell healthy and thriving. Every aspect of the game was developed in-house by students: the code, graphics, and even the delightful background music (an 8-bit version of our beloved “My Soul Cries Out” hymn).

Students played the game on their mobile devices and worked to earn a spot on the leaderboard, a feature which inspired a good deal of healthy competition! Special thanks to grade 11 student, Colin VanderMeer, who was our lead programmer for the campaign. Want to try it yourself? You can play the Feed Bluebell game by going to <https://rockway.ca/feedbluebell/> on any phone or computer.

A BEAUTIFUL ENDING

The Bluebell campaign culminated with the announcement that Bluebell was going to be a momma! She delivered six precious piglets and the students were given the opportunity to name the new additions. The winning names were Marigold, Clover, Daisy, Fern, Buttercup and Wilbur.

Most importantly, since the campaign, Rockway has adopted a permanent composting solution for our food scraps and paper towels. The Bluebell campaign was not only successful from a waste perspective, but it brought our community together in a fun and pig-loving way.



A SMALL SCHOOL  FOR A **BIG WORLD**

ALUMNI UPDATES

We love hearing from our alumni! If you have an update to share, please email Kristen at alumni@rockway.ca.

SARA WYNGAARDEN '11

I graduated from Rockway in 2011. In my final year, I participated in a learning tour in Guatemala through Rockway's partnership with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). Because of what I learned on this trip, I was inspired to study Agricultural Sciences and International Development Studies in the Arts and Sciences program at the University of Guelph.

In my undergraduate classes, we studied lots of examples of "development gone wrong", but we also studied positive examples of development and MCC appeared among them. By the time I graduated in 2016, I was ready to gain some meaningful experience working in community development, so I decided to participate in MCC's Serving and Learning Together program. From 2017-2018, I lived in Korba, Chhattisgarh, India working with an MCC partner in rural development and living with a local Mennonite family.

Returning to Canada, I completed a Masters in Public Health and Health Systems at the University of Waterloo, studying youth livelihood decision-making in rural Honduras. This research opportunity allowed me to learn Spanish (I studied in Guatemala!) and to develop program evaluation skills, which set me up for my current role as the Planning, Monitoring, Evaluating and Reporting Coordinator for MCC Guatemala-El Salvador. I started that role in 2021, 10 years after I had first visited Guatemala with Rockway.

Looking back, I see so many moments where God guided my steps and prepared me for what was coming next. In particular, as I write this from my apartment in Guatemala City, I'm smiling about how that high school trip with Rockway planted a seed that went on to shape my life and career so significantly.



Sara (left) and fellow Rockway alumna, Laura Carr-Pries '13. Laura is currently serving with MCC's SEED program in Zambia.



Congratulations to alumni **Robert MacGregor '14** and **Kat (Katarina) Klassen '16** on their recent engagement! Robert was also a Cohort Counsellor at Rockway during the 2020/2021 school year.

BABY T-SHIRTS

Is there a new addition to your family? Let us know and we'll send a size 2T t-shirt for the future Rockway alumni!

Email Kristen at alumni@rockway.ca with the date of birth, names of the baby and parents along with a mailing address.

When you receive the t-shirt, we'd love for you to share a photo of you and/or your little future alumni!



Evelyn, daughter of Joel Steingart '01, seems very interested in her new t-shirt.

ALUMNI UPDATES – Continued

JOHN BENDER '61, sent us a reflection on his experience at Rockway.

1958: How do I, an Amish-Mennonite farm boy, jump from the familiar pond of a two-room public school to the amorphous big pond beyond? While high school was still an uncommon pursuit in the Ontario Amish-Mennonite Conference in the late 1950s, two uncles were among those who had broken the ice. This shy, quiet, sometimes studious lad found Rockway (Class of 1961) foundational, expansive, faith-forming; a vital link to all that followed. Right as rain: fine, hunky dory, tickety-boo.

1961: Loretta Martin wrote our class poem, ending, “Now as we leave these well-known halls, / And finally close the door, / We do not end, but just begin / To see new heights to soar.”

Board chair Norman H. High wrote: “May God’s blessing attend your future learning—for continue to learn you must—or die spiritually and intellectually.”

1961-2024: Tall orders, Loretta, and Norman. Right on. My life has included further education, vocation as a writer-editor among non-profit agencies, and avocation of reading, travel, photography, volunteering, walking, blogging and occasional cooking.

Current: Marty (Mishler) and I live at Greencroft Goshen (Indiana) Continuing Care Retirement Community. In May, we celebrate 51 years of marriage. For the 13th time, we are spending three months of winter/spring in County Cornwall, UK. Footpaths, history, prehistory, gardens, friends and more underpin our hop across the pond, to home from home. Three cheers, and more, for Rockway!



ROCKWAY VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION WEEK APRIL 22-26, 2024

During Rockway’s Volunteer Appreciation week, we took the opportunity to celebrate and thank the many volunteers who give their time, talents and energy to serve our school community. Rockway depends on parent, alumni, student and community

volunteers to fill many roles. Some positions, like serving on our Board of Directors or running exciting activities during Soup Supper on Founders’ Day, are more visible. Others, like setting tables to prepare for our student Christmas Banquet or mentoring our students in Rockway Robotics, are more behind the scenes. Regardless, the work of each of our volunteers helps to make our Flames shine bright! **THANK YOU** Rockway Volunteers for fanning the Flames!

To find out more or to get involved as a volunteer, please reach out to our Volunteer Coordinator at volunteers@rockway.ca. We’d love to have you join us!

#VolunteerAppreciation #LifeAtRockway



*For the Love of Rockway – Special thanks to volunteers **Leanne Baer** and members of the KW Garden Club, who created these delightful centerpieces for our Founders’ Day Tea & Pastry Reception and to **Catherine Unrau**, who captured the photo of them.*

29TH ANNUAL ROCKWAY GOLF CLASSIC

Join alumni, faculty, staff, students and members of the Rockway community on **Monday, May 27, 2024** for the 29th Annual Rockway Golf Classic presented by Strassburger Windows & Doors.

This is a scramble tournament, so you do not need to be a great golfer to participate. It is just about having fun and raising money for a good cause. All of the funds raised go to support Student Tuition Assistance; an important program that helps make the Rockway experience more accessible to families in our community. Over the past 28 years, we have raised over \$600,000 to support this worthy cause.

For the second year in a row, the tournament will be hosted at Grey Silo Golf Club in Waterloo. Registration has been going very well and we expect at least 100 golfers in attendance. If you are interested in participating, you are encouraged to **sign-up before our registration deadline on Monday, May 20, 2024.**

We have a number of **new contests and prizes available** that are sure to add some excitement to your round!

We've enhanced our Hole-in-1 Contest and added a Hole-in-2 Contest for anyone wanting to show off their game. Our **Hole-in-1 Contest** requires you to hit a hole-in-one from the tee blocks and includes



Last year's winning team, Chris Steingart '99, Nick Martin '99, Dan Shantz '04 and Scott Bruinsma.

airfare for yourself and a guest to **Maui, Hawaii**, 3 nights at The Hilton Ka'anapali Beach Hotel and 1 Round of Golf at the Kapalua Plantation (where the pros play).

Our **Hole-in-2 Contest** requires you to hole out from the fairway. If successful, you will win airfare for yourself and a guest to **San Francisco**, 2 nights at The Pebble Beach Lodge and 3 Rounds of Golf at Pebble Beach, Spyglass Hill and Spanish Bay.

Please visit www.rockway.ca/golf for more information about the tournament and click the "Register Now" button to sign up. We hope to see you on Monday, May 27 at Grey Silo!



29TH Annual
INCLUDING More Chances to WIN!

ROCKWAY MENNONITE COLLEGIATE'S
GOLF CLASSIC

Monday, May 27, 2024

Proceeds support Student Tuition Assistance

#ForeRockway #LifeatRockway

STAY CONNECTED – GET INVOLVED

Stay connected and get involved by watching your email and visiting our website (rockway.ca) for all the latest news and updates about events. Stay engaged by liking, sharing and following us on [YouTube](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn](#).



Our Mission

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.

Stay Connected

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

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Principal: Elaine Ranney

Charitable Number: 119122091RR0001



#LifeatRockway

Save the Date!
CONNECTIONS
HOMECOMING NIGHT
Friday, October 18, 2024

ROCKWAY MENNONITE COLLEGIATE'S

29TH
Annual

GOLF CLASSIC

Monday, May 27, 2024

Register by May 20
www.rockway.ca/golf

GRADUATION 2024

- GRADE 8:
June 13, 2024 | 6:30 pm
- GRADE 12:
June 22, 2024 | 3:30 pm

Details to follow.

SAVE THE DATE

Family Picnic & Outdoor Movie Night

★ FRIDAY, JUNE 14, 2024 ★
Details to follow.

YOU ARE INVITED

Retirement Celebration

SUNDAY, JUNE 9, 2024

VISIT www.rockway.ca/retirement to RSVP

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, alumni@rockway.ca or 519-743-5209 x3011. Thank you.

