

Our

# REFLECTIONS

WINTER 2023/2024

NEWSLETTER: HAPPENINGS, EVENTS AND ALUMNI NEWS



## FLAMES BURN BRIGHT AT OFSAA

WRITTEN BY AJ SNIDER, ROCKWAY SR BOYS' VOLLEYBALL COACH

From November 23-25, Rockway played host to the OFSAA Boys' A Volleyball championships. Our senior Flames entered the tournament seeded 6th and represented the school well with strong play. Fans who showed up to the quarterfinal match against Quinte Christian provided some raucous support and were witness to one of our best performances of the season. On the final day, Rockway made it to the bronze medal match and played 90 minutes of thrilling volleyball. At one point, on the verge of defeat, Ray Boehm gave an inspirational speech that turned things around and sent us on a 9-point serving streak. We fought to the final two points and the match ended with a close 4th place finish. The calibre of play among the top seeds at this

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**ROCKWAY**  
MENNONITE COLLEGIATE





year's tournament was especially high. It's amazing that Single 'A' schools can field programs that rival those of schools with more than 1,000 students.

The 3-day event was a great experience for our players, their families, and the school community as a whole. Graduating players will have many memories to take with them while returning players are already excited about making a run again next year. Thanks to the organizing committee who worked behind the scenes to make it all happen and to the students, past and present, who came and cheered their hearts out. It was a fantastic experience for all!

## FAMILY + FOOD = FUN!

On Friday, October 6, 2023, we held our annual Family Breakfast. Current students, faculty and staff invited their families, with a special invitation to include grandparents, to join us for a delicious breakfast prepared by the incredible Café Rockway team. The French toast, bacon and fruit were a big hit with the crowd of over 335 people in attendance. It was a wonderful opportunity to come together for an early morning breakfast before our students and teachers headed off to class.

We want to thank our parent and student volunteers for their amazing work replenishing food and keeping tables cleared. We could not have done it without your help!

Thank you to all those who joined us and made our Family Breakfast such a wonderful, community-building experience.



## 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](mailto: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!



*Little Avery, daughter of Stephanie Fast '09, is all smiles in her new t-shirt.*



# CONNECTIONS HOMECOMING NIGHT

What an amazing night! Thank you to everyone that came out on Friday, October 20, 2023, for *Connections Homecoming Night*. Over 500 people were in attendance for our Spaghetti Supper Student Fundraiser **raising over \$10,000 towards Trips Week in May!** This was the biggest turn out in Spaghetti Supper history and we are so grateful to everyone that made time to support such a worthy cause. Thanks to the support of the Rockway community, we can ensure that cost is not a barrier to any student wishing to be part of this important Rockway trips week tradition.



We made a few changes to the dinner layout that not only helped with our increase in numbers but sets us up well for growth in the future. We removed the round tables and substituted them with long banquet tables. This maximized our seating capacity and also helped to create a greater sense of community by bringing more friends and families together at the same table.

We also added new games and family-friendly activities to the evening's festivities such as: face painting, 9-hole mini putt course, giant connect four, cornhole and giant chess.

The added entertainment was set up in Gym B/C and the clean-up was finished in time for our Alumni Sports Challenge to start.

Our Senior Girls' Basketball, Senior Boys' Volleyball and Alumni Teams put on an incredible show! The Senior Girls' Basketball Team competed hard and did everything they could to win but, in the end, experience made the difference and our team of alumnae won the game, reclaiming the Alumni Sports Trophy. Our Senior Boys' Volleyball had a large team to contest with but managed to show our alumni a thing or two by overtaking them in an incredible five-set match. Thank you to all of our students and alumni that came out to compete. We hope you can join us for the next installment of the Alumni Sports Challenge during our Founders' Day Celebration on **Thursday, February 15, 2023.**





## ROCKWAY'S CO-OP PROGRAM

Everyone learns differently and has their own unique skill set. As educators, we recognize that and want to offer students educational experiences that are personalized and meaningful to them.

One way we are doing that is through Rockway's new Co-operative Education Program. This pilot Co-op program will give students opportunities to explore work environments, develop skills and gain hands-on learning experiences. Placements can include skilled trades, health care, agriculture, business, arts, education and even NGOs. **Any workplace has the opportunity to be a Co-op placement.**



In these early stages of our Co-op program, we are able to shape what Co-op looks like in some creative ways. One way is by creating strong community connections with Rockway alumni who are open to participating as Co-op placements. Having a broad network of placement opportunities enriches our students' learning experience as they develop skills in their areas of interest.

If you are interested in your business or workplace being added to a Co-op directory as a potential placement for Rockway students, or if you have any other questions, please reach out to our Co-op Education Teacher, Stephen Bryce at [stephenb@rockway.ca](mailto:stephenb@rockway.ca).

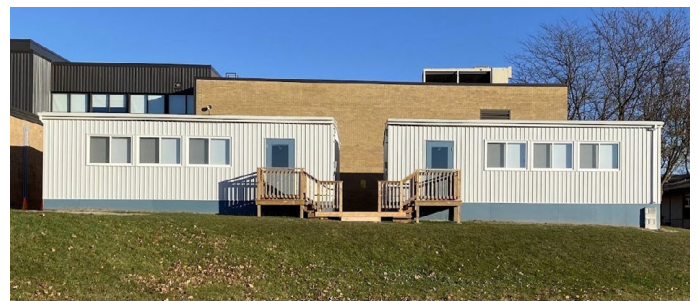
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## PORTABLES 1 AND 2 ARE BACK!

Do you remember French with Mr. Wikerd? Or German with Frau Tossell? Many Rockway students learned a second or third language, or took a variety of other classes in Portables 1 and 2. These portables were a constant at Rockway for many decades and, after a few years without them, NEW Portables 1 and 2 have returned!

Originally, we were told that we could no longer have portables in this location for fire safety reasons. However, after including some additional fireproofing and orienting the portable doors to face the field, Portables 1 and 2 were able to be restored to their former home.

Special thanks to Rockway's Facilities Team and CL Martin & Co. for making changes to the portables so they could go in this location. Thanks also to the many contractors who were involved in their installation. We are excited about the learning that will happen again in Portables 1 and 2!



*Portables 1 and 2 pictured in 2001 (left) and November 2023 (right).*



## VISUAL ARTS AROUND THE SCHOOL

Rockway is blessed to have numerous beautiful pieces of art in and around the school. On the next few pages are just a few of the pieces you will find. Next time you are here, take the time to look around.



**Artist:** Tom Hodgson

**Title:** Untitled

**Year:** 1973

**Installation Date:** September 2023

**Location:** Main Office

**Details:** On loan from the Winkel and Hodgson Families (current Rockway families)

**About the Artist:** Tom Hodgson was a founding member of the Toronto-based abstract expressionist group, the “Painters Eleven”, and is known for his distinctive use of colour in his abstract paintings. Post World War II, he attended the Central

Technical Art Program and was a graduate of the Ontario College of Art.

Like many other artists of his time, Hodgson began working in the advertising industry as a commercial artist and quickly became recognized as an emerging artist. He was known for his large-scale spontaneous gestural works. In 1953, Hodgson was one of seven artists to exhibit in the historically noted “Abstracts at Home” art work at Simpson’s department store. As a result of the success of this exhibition, the “Painters Eleven” group was born. Hodgson also explored “pop art” from 1965 to roughly 1972; this more figurative work was a detour from his abstract expressionism.

Hodgson was also a champion canoeist and represented Canada in both the 1952 Olympic Games in Helsinki, and in 1956 in Melbourne. Tom Hodgson is recognized as one of the early mavericks of abstract expressionist painting in Ontario and an important member of the “Painters Eleven”.

**Artist:** Gail Snyder ‘79

**Title:** Peace Arbour

**Year:** 2000

**Installation Date:** 2000

**Location:** Front lawn of school

**Details:** The Peace Arbour was designed by alumna and former faculty member Gail Snyder, after returning from a year-long leave of absence spent teaching at Xindu #1 Middle School in Sichuan, China, 1999-2000. At the time, peace gardens were a trend and it seemed appropriate that Rockway should have one.

The arbour is meant to reflect the importance of friendship with people of different cultural backgrounds, to promote peace.

The design includes an Asian temple roof line and cathedral styled windows on the sides. “Peace” is written in English, French, German, Spanish and Chinese characters. The arbour was built by Gail Snyder and her brother Darcy Snyder ‘69. Both graduates of Rockway.





**Artist:** Morgen Schmidt '23

**Title:** Kaleidoscope

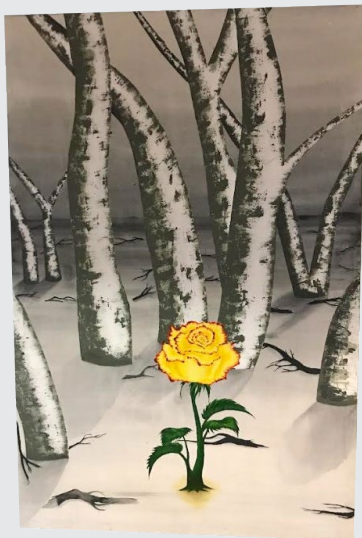
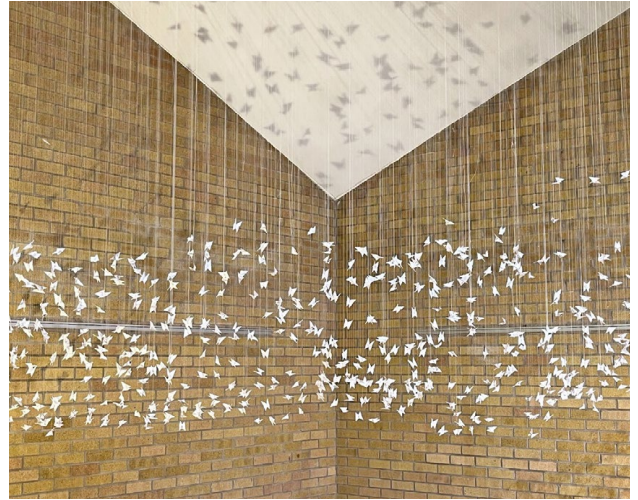
**Year:** Spring 2023

**Installation Date:** April 2023

**Location:** Assembly Area

**Details:** Kaleidoscope is the collective noun used for a group of butterflies. They are ever-changing, ever-growing.

Morgen created and installed this piece – containing approximately 500 origami butterflies – as a project for her grade 12 art class.



**Artists:** Maryam Daneshvar, Christine Zwart, Sandy Vazan; students from Rockway's class of 2007

**Title:** Surprised by Grace

**Year:** 2007

**Installation Date:** 2007 (Chapel Piece Commission)

**Location:** Foyer, near entrance doors

**Details:** This collaborative work was created in response to the Chapel Theme of the year 2006-2007 school year, *Surprised by Grace*.

**Artists:** Claudia Isaac in collaboration with Mackenzie Rae and Bethany Snyder; students from Rockway's class of 2015

**Title:** Wild Hope

**Year:** 2015

**Installation Date:** 2015 (Chapel Piece Commission)

**Location:** Foyer

**Details:** This work is emblematic of the theme of Wild Hope. A brave and fearless creature, the tiger epitomizes both strength and freedom. Every tiger is made unique by their intricate striping, much like the uniqueness of Rockway Mennonite Collegiate. This tiger, however, is not made of stripes, but people. Each figure plays a critical part in contributing to the overall image. This concept stresses the necessity of community and cooperation. The warm colours evoke a sense of passion and optimism. As a whole, this work provokes a wild hope for ourselves, hope for others and hope for the greater world.







**Artist:** Glen Fretz '65  
**Title:** Inner Peace, Outer Joy  
**Year:** 1992

**Installation Date:** 1992

**Location:** Outer silo wall

**Details:** Inspired by Guatemalan tapestry, this mural reflects the peace and joy that can be found in the creative expressions of persons in faith communities other than our

own. Its simplicity of form and colour invites celebration and encourages us to look within as well as beyond ourselves and the familiar. The mural also symbolizes Rockway's emphasis on building relationships with people of all cultures.

**Artist:** Zoe Fretz Corlis  
Gr 11, granddaughter of  
Glen Fretz '65 (above)

**Title:** The Dream

**Year:** Spring 2023

**Installation Date:** June 2023

**Location:** Media Arts Room

**Details:** This mural represents the relationship between humans and nature that is one where we work



together, respect the other and live in harmony. The green hand being nature and the brown one being humans. This mural serves as a symbol of hope, as something that we can work towards. The mural took many months to complete and tested me to learn and grow. I hope that this mural will inspire many.



**Artist:** David Pike '07

**Title:** Untitled

**Year:** 2007

**Installation Date:** 2007

**Location:** Foyer, near the entrance doors

**Details:** This large Abstract Expressionist work was inspired by the artist's love of music and art and created as a part of his portfolio of abstract works during his senior art course. The piece was generously given as a parting gift to the school upon his graduation from Rockway in 2007.



# THINK

WRITTEN BY GRADE 12 ROCKWAY STUDENT, SAMANTHA LOBERTO, FOR THE MCC PEACE CONFERENCE

In 2019, a team of Rockway students were inspired to raise awareness about the environmental crisis around single-use plastic. As a committee, we felt deeply unsettled by how ridiculous and harmful single use-plastics are, and wanted to encourage people to THINK about the cost of their convenience, and to THINK about the long-term impact of these items. And so the THINK project was born!

The project started with then Grade 12 student Ellery Ezekiel '22 welding together a structure as part of her design class.

The Rockway community was then asked to hold onto their single use plastic bottles and bring them in instead of throwing them away so we could have the Grade 7&8 students stuff the THINK letters full. We figured if most of these bottles were going to be on the Earth forever anyway, we might as well turn them into art!

While we were very proud of the structure we created and were excited to display it on our school's campus, we couldn't help but wonder how much further our message could travel. We felt that what we created was worth sharing and started brainstorming ways to widen the scope of our impact. We decided that the best way to take our message further was to plan a music video that we could put on our social media to share our message with the world!

We wanted to highlight the complicated LOVE/HATE relationship we have with plastic, so we changed the words to the song "Hate Myself for Lovin' You" by Joan Jett and the Blackhearts to make the lyrics more relevant to the plastic crisis. We filmed the video here at Rockway, and it was a blast to make. After months of planning, rehearsing, costume and make-up design, and of course, plastic collecting, we created the [video](#) that you can enjoy on our [YouTube channel](#).

Excitingly, this video was not the end of the THINK project. Just when we began to come to terms with our project coming to a close, the local CBC radio station reached out to us to do an interview! Myself, Ms Wahl, and 2 other students were interviewed about why we thought this project was so impactful, and the song was played on the radio for all to hear. We were also featured online – and you can still [hear the interview](#), or [read the accompanying article](#) if you would like to.

At this point, our message was spreading further than we ever dreamed it would, but it still wasn't over yet. Our THINK letters started touring all over the region. They were displayed in the foyer at THEMUSEUM, the New Hamburg MCC Relief Sale, and in the foyer at 50 Kent. We also converted a wagon and mounted our THINK letters to be a float in the KW Oktoberfest parade! We were proud to be the only environmentally-focused entry that day. The band sang the song live, and our "bag dancers" led the way outfitted in hundreds of plastic bags. Most recently, our video was selected as part of the IMPACT Film Festival here in Kitchener, alongside other environmental/social justice focused films. And in November, we led two workshops at the MCC Peace Conference hosted here at the school.

Overall, we are incredibly thrilled with the impact our project has had on communities all over the region, and are hopeful that our efforts will inspire others to take action in this crisis.







## ALUMNI REUNIONS

Each year, Rockway invites alumni classes to organize a reunion during Connections Homecoming or another pre-arranged time. This fall a few classes took us up on this invitation.

### CLASS OF 1963 – 60 YEAR REUNION

Carol Shantz wrote: *On November 11, twelve 1963 Rockway grads, plus several spouses, gathered in Waterloo for their 60th Class Reunion. It was a special afternoon of reconnecting and sharing fond memories. We couldn't believe it has been 60 years!*



### CLASS OF 1973 – VISITING "ROCK BOTTOM"

During our Connections Homecoming celebration on Friday, October 20, the class of 1973 celebrated their **50 year reunion** at the school. During that time they took a tour to a less well known area of the school. Bernie Burnett explained,

*"Back in the day we went to the principal and asked for a space where we could gather as students to hang out, relax and play our guitars without interrupting school life. We were given the space underneath the stairs of what is currently the janitor storage area. We were allowed to paint the concrete walls and, in the spirit of the day, they were painted in multiple colors with bubble-art-like designs. With cushions on the floor, it became exactly what we had in mind. If you look closely at the photo [to the left], there are bare spots of concrete wall that still bear the coloured paint job of the past!! It was named Rock Bottom!"*

### CLASS OF 2003 – TIME CAPSULE OPENING

The class of 2003 enjoyed reconnecting at Rockway's Connections Homecoming celebration as well. Together, they opened and looked through their graduation time capsule from 20 years ago. Inside were letters that they had written to themselves, along with a few other treasured items from their time at Rockway.

Any graduates from 2003 unable to make it to the time capsule opening who would be interested in receiving their letter can contact Kristen at [alumni@rockway.ca](mailto:alumni@rockway.ca).



Visit our [Class Reunions](#) page on our website under *Alumni Activities & Events* to see which classes have milestone anniversaries and how to start organizing your class reunion!

## ALUMNI MEMORIES

Leading up to the 2023 Founders' Day earlier this year, we asked alumni to share some of their Rockway memories with us. Below are a few of the responses we received. Do you have a memory that you would like to share? Please send it to Kristen Hines at [alumni@rockway.ca](mailto:alumni@rockway.ca).

*In Senior Choir rehearsals, it was a common practice for director, Janet Weber, to get our attention by saying "Eyes up front!". One of the boys in the back row was also an art student. One rehearsal he came prepared. When Janet said "Eyes up front!", he rolled two perfectly painted eye-ball ping pong balls to the front of the choir. We didn't get much singing done for a while because we were all laughing so hard.*

Beth is a registered early childhood educator preschool teacher. She and her husband Rhandy have 5 children and 4 grandchildren and live near Owen Sound.

Beth Patton '82 (nee Gingerich)



**German Class, 1979-80.** Pink Floyd's album "The Wall" had just come out, with its hit "Another Brick in the Wall, Pt. 2." I translated the song's lyrics into German and wrote them on the blackboard before class one day. "We don't need no education..." became "Wir brauchen keine Erziehung..." The teacher was amused, I didn't get into trouble, and she even corrected my minor errors.

Durrell Bowman is a full-time FedEx driver, occasional musician, and former academic (Ph.D. in musicology). He has also developed and taught dozens of university courses and researched and wrote published books on the music of Rush and Peter Gabriel.

Durrell Bowman '83



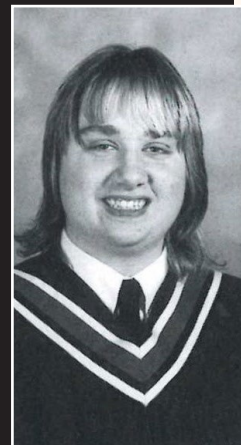
*I'm so grateful for friendships made then, that still continue to this day. So many great memories of choir trips, including when the tire came off the bus! Henry Janzen kept us safe! Caring staff that listened and cared! So grateful for how Rockway shaped me and molded me as a teenager! Blessings,*

*wisdom and grace (and lots of energy) to staff there now! Shalom!*

Colleen Zehr '85 has been teaching elementary music for Thames Valley District School Board for 23 years.

## ALUMNI NEWS

It is with sadness that we share news of the passing of Rockway Alumni, Corie McLaren '05 this past August. Corie's mom shared that Rockway was a very special place to him.







*Join us for*

# FOUNDERS' DAY!

**Thursday, February 15, 2024**

- 9:15 am Founders' Day Chapel  
followed by a Tea & Pastry Reception
- 5-7 pm Soup Supper Student Fundraiser  
Prepay online ahead of time OR pay cash only at the door.  
MORE ticket information will be available at  
[www.rockway.ca](http://www.rockway.ca) in the New Year.
- 7-9 pm Alumni Sports Challenge  
Alumni vs Sr. Boys' Basketball  
Alumnae vs Sr. Girls' Volleyball  
Join a team ([alumni@rockway.ca](mailto:alumni@rockway.ca))  
or cheer in the stands!

VISIT  
**rockway.ca**

FOR MORE  
INFORMATION



#LifeatRockway

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Charitable #: 119122091RR0001

## STAY CONNECTED – GET INVOLVED

Stay connected and get involved by watching your email and visiting our website ([rockway.ca](http://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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# GOLF CLASSIC

- Monday, May 27, 2024
- Grey Silo Golf Club
- Registration opens February 1, 2024

Stay tuned for more information @ [rockway.ca/golf](http://rockway.ca/golf)

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](mailto:advancement@rockway.ca), [alumni@rockway.ca](mailto:alumni@rockway.ca) or 519-743-5209 x3011. Thank you.