

Our

# REFLECTIONS

SPRING 2025

NEWSLETTER: HAPPENINGS, EVENTS AND ALUMNI NEWS

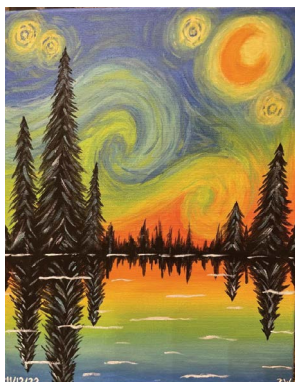
## IN LOVING MEMORY OF ZOE

*Rockway student, Zoe Wiebe, and her mother, Jennie, passed away tragically in January of this year. Zoe's friends have written a reflection of her involvement and the impact she had on the Rockway community.*

Zoe Wiebe was a grade 10 student at Rockway and embodied the very essence of kindness and empathy. Whether offering a listening ear to a friend in need or going out of her way to make others feel valued, she carried a warmth that radiated throughout the school hallways and classrooms.



*Zoe was very proud of this piece. It received a 100%, the first ever handed out by Mrs. Packull.*



Artist: Zoe Wiebe

Beyond her compassionate nature, Zoe was a force in the arts. Her talent in visual arts was undeniable, and the passion she poured into her work was a clear indicator of how much she loved it. Her passion for the arts went far beyond just the visual aspects. She had an incredible talent and love for singing, and because of that she participated in many of the music ensembles that Rockway offers, including the grade 9 and 10 choirs. Here, she was the unofficial but unanimous leader of the alto section. She was also a huge part of the all-school musical and Rockway's own Rockatonix. Her talent for trumpet was evident through her participation in band and Rockway Rhapsody.

These commitments, however, came with challenges. Juggling volleyball practices and musical rehearsals was no easy feat, yet she managed to handle both with passion and energy. Her dedication to Rockway extended beyond the school year as well. Zoe chose to work at Rockway over the summer, further strengthening her bond with the community she loved and valued.

At Rockway, Zoe wasn't just a student. She was an artist, an athlete, a performer, and above all, a beacon of kindness. Her ability to balance her passions while

uplifting others was a testament to her extraordinary character. Rockway was not merely a school to her – it was a stage where she shined and a place where she will be remembered for not only her talents, but the love and kindness she brought to the community.

*By Raphaël Airapetyan, Sophie Hopkins, Emma Peter and Laiklyn Snider*



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**Rockway**  
MENNONITE COLLEGIATE

# FAREWELL TO THE WORLD OF WONKA

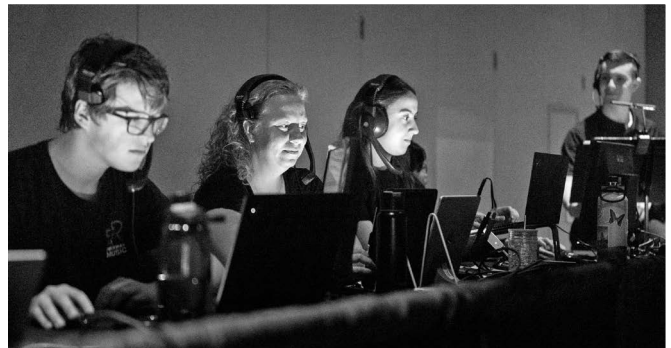
by Jocelyn Cameron, Production Manager

Our recent all-school musical, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, was a spectacular showcase of talent, creativity, and teamwork. While the story is a familiar favourite, this version had some exciting twists, hilarious musical numbers and character tweaks that brought unique flavours to the stage. From the quirky golden ticket winners and their over-the-top parents to the enthusiastic squirrel sorting crew, every student fully embodied their character, blending tidbits of their personal and stage personalities.



The audience was treated to magical moments — life-sized giraffe glimpses, swirling fog and stunning lighting effects, all crafted by our very own students. The intricate tech, props, costumes, choreography and set design truly brought Wonka's world to life, a testament to the incredible vision and commitment of everyone involved. Audience members raved that it only got better with each performance, especially as our lively cast embraced ad-libbing and improvisation to keep things fresh. Behind the scenes, rehearsals were long (even continuing on a snow day!) but the dedication never wavered. The students built an incredible bond, always supporting each other with encouragement and applause in the hardest of moments.

This production was a true community effort, taking over space, time and programming — with devoted support from faculty, staff and administration to make it all happen. And as we step away from Wonka's world and into the unknown, we remember his words, "*Just imagine the adventures still to come!*" Thank you to all for making this show such a sweet success.





# ROCKWAY'S YOUTH LEADING CHANGE PROGRAM

by David Penny



This year, grade 11 and 12 students from Rockway took part in the first year of *Youth Leading Change*, a program developed last year in partnership with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). Created with the hope of helping to uplift the next generation of peacebuilders, the *Youth Leading Change*

program seeks to both educate and inspire students to become compassionate leaders in their communities. With workshops in active bystander training, refugee experiences, Indigenous history and climate action, students explored the many ways in which the issues that create and intensify conflict are interwoven.

One of the foundational sessions focused on *Training Active Bystanders*, empowering students to recognize and safely intervene in harmful situations. This session opened important discussions about accountability, courage, and the impact one person can have when they choose to stand up rather than stand by. The workshops helped root the students in the everyday examples of conflict, and how working for peace is in all the small but effective ways that you can intervene, disrupt, and be a voice for peace.

Students explored the stories of refugees through the *Forced to Flee* workshops, exploring the global issue of migration, and how in times of uncertainty and conflict, more and more countries are closing their doors to others. Students stepped into a simulation, making difficult choices around when to flee, and how to try and make their way to another country, building empathy for the kinds of choices so many who are seeking to escape violence are forced into.

As part of the *Climate Action for Peace* workshops, MCC provided the students with \$800 and students set to work designing a local action. Ultimately, students drafted a proposal for the planting of fruit trees on Rockway's property creating an orchard under the title *Growing for Peace*. From this plan, students hope to inspire future generations of peacebuilders to continue to grow the orchard and harvest the fruits and create opportunities for community engagement and food security through the fruits of this program.

As the final core activity, students took part in the *Blanket Exercise*, an interactive educational activity that explores the history of colonization from the perspective of Indigenous Peoples in Canada. Unlike reading from a textbook or listening to a lecture, this exercise invited students to physically and emotionally engage with the stories and experiences of Indigenous Peoples and the painful and violent history of colonization. This exercise highlighted not only the past injustices but also the enduring legacies of colonialism that are still present today, and invited students into a space of discomfort, empathy, and a call to action.

In addition to each of these core activities, students are completing 30 hours of volunteering with MCC as a way of putting their faith and knowledge into action in their community. Students are able to select roles within MCC that they are most interested in, and get firsthand experience working in the field of peacebuilding, through opportunities like the MCC thrift store or MCC's Material Resources warehouse in New Hamburg.

You can learn more about Rockway's *Youth Leading Change* program at [www.rockway.ca/about/faith-in-action](http://www.rockway.ca/about/faith-in-action)

# PROTECT THIS BARN.



We are thrilled to announce the launch of Rockway's 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Capital Campaign – *Protect This Barn*.

This past February 15 marked the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of Rockway and to honour this significant milestone, we are moving

forward with a major renovation project! This project will not only address some accessibility concerns within our “barn” but will provide some key upgrades to our gym space, washrooms and change room areas.

As you can see from the three artist renderings, there are a number of obvious improvements being made to our aging infrastructure, including: a new moveable wall separating Gyms A and B, Rockway-branded bleachers, digital scoreboards, a new weight room and basketball nets along with a fresh coat of paint with our Rockway branding. Some of the upgrades not included in the renderings are a fully accessible washroom, the addition of another barrier-free washroom, new sound and lighting equipment, a fully accessible meeting space and new fixtures and privacy stalls added to our washrooms and change rooms.

We have been quietly fundraising behind the scenes and, at the time of writing this, we are over 60% of the way to our fundraising goal of \$2.2 million. Some of the upgrades will start as early as this summer with the majority of the work taking place during the 2026 summer break.

This is a very exciting time at Rockway and we are calling on the Rockway community to help turn this project into a reality! We are close to our fundraising goal but it is going to take everyone's support to reach our target. Please remember that every donation counts! We have a number of ways to contribute to the renovation. To learn more about the exciting changes coming to Rockway and how YOU can help PROTECT THIS BARN, please visit: [www.rockway.ca/campaign](http://www.rockway.ca/campaign)





CAPITAL CAMPAIGN





## ALUMNI REUNIONS

This year, we are celebrating 80 years of Rockway and with that, 80 years of friendships.

Are you wondering what your classmates have been up to? Do you want to see what has changed at Rockway since you graduated? Consider organizing a reunion for your class. Rockway can help!

We can provide assistance with:

- Communicating reunion information with your class
- Booking a room at Rockway where your group can meet
- Planning a guided tour of the school

## COME TOGETHER AT CONNECTIONS HOMECOMING NIGHT

Connections is a great evening to bring your class together and experience the Rockway Community once again.

This year, Connections will be held on **Friday, October 17, 2025**. Gather with your class for the delicious Spaghetti Supper and then stick around for (and participate in!) the Alumni Sports Challenge. **Class of 2005, this is your year to open your time capsule!** Come see what treasures you included and read the letter you wrote to yourself.

If your group would prefer to meet at a different time or location, no problem, let us help communicate your plans.

To reconnect with your friends, contact Kristen Hines at [alumni@rockway.ca](mailto:alumni@rockway.ca) and let's start planning!



## COMMUNICATION CORNER

### Help us reduce our costs and make the switch to digital

We know that some of you really enjoy receiving a physical copy of our communications and we're happy to keep mailing them to you. However, the cost of postage made a big jump at the beginning of 2025, significantly increasing our mailing expenses. If you and your family members would prefer to receive communications from us by email instead, please let us know.

To make the switch to digital or to update your contact information, visit the Alumni section of our website and click on Stay Connected. You can also contact **Kristen Hines** at [alumni@rockway.ca](mailto:alumni@rockway.ca) or 519-743-5209 x3980



# 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration



**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2025**  
– Join us at Steckle Farm

- **Festival and Food Market Fundraiser**
- Live bands, delicious food, wagon rides around the farm and so much more...
- Proceeds go towards our 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Capital Campaign ([www.rockway.ca/campaign](http://www.rockway.ca/campaign))

Visit  
**[rockway.ca/events](http://rockway.ca/events)**  
to learn about ticket sales  
for Saturday and for  
more details about  
the weekend.

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2025**  
– Join us at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate

- **80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Open House and Hymn Sing**
- Memorabilia displays (email [alumni@rockway.ca](mailto:alumni@rockway.ca) to contribute something)
- See what renovations were started over the summer as part of our campaign project

**PROTECT  
THIS BARN.**



1946-1947



THE ORIGINAL  
BARN

1950s



NEW CLASSROOM  
WING

1979



NEW CHAPEL  
SPACE

1992-1993



NEW CLASSROOMS &  
GYM SPACES

2025-2026



FACILITY AND  
ACCESSIBILITY UPGRADES





## STAY CONNECTED – GET INVOLVED

Stay connected and get involved by watching your email and visiting our website ([rockway.ca/events](http://rockway.ca/events)) for all the latest news and updates about upcoming events. Stay engaged online by liking, sharing and following us on our [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#) accounts. Check out our all-school videos on [YouTube](#)!



## SUMMER OFFICE HOURS

- Monday, June 23 – Friday, July 11:  
NEW HOURS 9am to 4pm
- Tuesday, July 1:  
CLOSED for CANADA DAY
- Monday, July 14 – Friday, August 8:  
CLOSED for SUMMER
- Monday, August 11:  
RE-OPENS at 9am



## Mark your Calendars!

- September 13 & 14 –  
80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
Weekend
- October 17 – Connections  
Homecoming  
Night

## WE NEED YOUR HELP!

As part of our 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations, we are creating a decades display and we need your help. Do you have any memorabilia from your time at Rockway (clothes, pictures, textbooks, etc.) that you would be willing to loan or donate to our display? If so, please contact Kristen Hines at [alumni@rockway.ca](mailto:alumni@rockway.ca).



## 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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#LifeAtRockway