

CROSSROADS

MENNONITE COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE

VOL. 33 ISS. 1 | SPRING/SUMMER 2023



TEN STORY CATCH UP

MCI's Vibrant
Community

MCI MUSICAL CELEBRATIONS

Rainbow Stage Award winning
musical - Little Women

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Youth Conference for teens
returns to MCI after 20 years

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MCI students during filming for
promotional video.

Managing Editor:
Kayla Giesbrecht

“

“Your word is a lamp to my feet, and a
light for my path.”

Psalm 119:105

”



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Above: Art piece by Kylee Henderson,
2023 Graduate, featured at the
Student Art Show at Gallery in
the Park in Altona, this May.
Below: Kylee creating the piece.





MCI students wearing their plaster masks from Art class

FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK

Guideposts are everywhere, on the road, at the airport, even in the grocery store. They direct us to a destination and even show us the way. Every December, I intentionally spend time reflecting on the year that has passed, and pray for the year to come. I pray asking for guidance and a verse that will be my guidepost for the next year. The verse for 2023 comes from Psalm 119, specifically verse 105, "Your word is a lamp to my feet, and a light for my path". It has proven to be such an apt verse for this year. The Lord's word has guided our feet and lit only the part of the path we needed to see as we took each step in faith. I am so thankful for each one of you who have stepped along the path with us with your prayers and financial support. Your partnership in our work is invaluable! Know that you are helping to build God's kingdom in this place. Enjoy your summer and we look forward to seeing you at MCI events in the Fall! May God continue to bless MCI for our faithful walk in His light.



*Jennifer Klippenstein
MCI Principal*

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TEN-STORY CATCH UP

Here are a few highlights from the last 8 months of the 2022-23 school year!

1



VOLLEYBALL PROVINCIALS

Back in December, MCI hosted the Varsity Girls "A" Provincial Volleyball Championships! Ten teams from across the province joined us at MCI for a weekend of high-calibur volleyball. The MCI Blues team had a memorable experience hosting and making new friendships, as well as bonding with their own team. The event was appreciated by all. We received many compliments on the facility and how well everything was run. This truly was a team effort and we all worked together as a school to put on a great event. We look forward to hosting more provincial championships in the future!

SPRING FUNDRAISER

This year, we invited Manitoban comedian, Matt Falk, to the stage for our annual Spring Fundraiser! It was an evening of laughs from the moment he took to the stage to the end of his set. He entertained us with stories from his own life and also had us bursting with laughter as he joked with a few audience members in attendance.

Thanks to the generosity from our donors at this year's Spring Fundraiser, we were able to raise just over \$52,000!



2

3

SAENGERFEST

It was another full and beautiful day in Buhler Hall on June 4th, as MCI held its annual Saengerfest. Students led us in worship through song in the morning service, as guest speaker Terrell Wiebe (former MCI board member 2017-2020) asked those in attendance to consider what song of faith MCI has been singing of God's faithfulness throughout its history. After a delicious lunch and a time of visiting, students showcased their year of hard work in the afternoon concert, with our band, vocal jazz groups, and choirs performing for a crowd of parents, alumni and guests. It was a wonderful day, highlighting a meaningful and important MCI tradition through the unity of faith in song.



TRACK PROVINCIALS

MCI's track team had a very successful season this year! We had many athletes put up personal best results in their categories at the Zone track meet and finished just outside of qualifying for provincials. Then we also had a handful of athletes who qualified for provincials!

- Aliyeh Jacobson finished 3rd at Zones for shotput, which qualified her for provincials.
- Nadia Thiessen finished 2nd overall at Zones in the 100m hurdles, and 4th overall at provincials (pictured).
- Annabelle Wiebe, Nadia Thiessen, Presley Schroeder, and Whitney Peters raced on the 4x100m Varsity Girls team and finished 2nd at Zones and 9th overall at provincials.

Congratulations to all of our Blues track athletes this season!



4

5

MCI GOLF CLASSIC

On June 10th, at Minnewasta Golf & Country Club, we had 76 golfers join us at our 9th Annual Golf Classic, presented by Access Credit Union! We had wonderful weather, delicious pizza, and a healthy amount of competition!

Congrats to our repeat winners, Craig Neufeld ('10), Reed Peters, Delwyn Doerksen & Cole Kehler for finishing their round at 16 under! (Just one shy of their 17 under from last year.) Thank you to all our sponsors and the golfers who came out to support MCI – you helped us raise just over \$22,000!



CHOIR TOUR

MCI's Resonate and Chamber Choir groups had the opportunity to travel to Niagara Falls in mid-May for *Musicfest Canada The Nationals*. Both groups received Silver Standard Plaques for their performances, which indicates they demonstrated an exceedingly high standard of musical performance. Grade 11 students, Whitney Peters and Milo Klassen, both received honour awards in their respective ensembles.

The school kicked off the trip by putting on a concert in Crystal City, MB. After three travel days, students worked with Mark Vuorinen at Conrad Grebel University College. The Toronto Zoo, CN tower, and Niagara Falls were a few of the sight-seeing highlights along the way. The final destination was Musicfest, where students enjoyed a concert by the Central Band of the Canadian Armed Forces, watched other festival participants, gave their own performances, and had clinic time with Greg Jasperse, before heading back home.



FUZZY WUZZIES

At the end of the school year, gr. 9-11 students took time during chapel to write encouragements and well wishes to the graduating class in a card delivered to each graduate on grad day. Students took their time and shared memories, inside jokes, and things they would miss about each gr. 12 student. It was a good way for the rest of the student body to process how different our community will be without these students next year. Some tears were shed, with a few students asking if this will become a yearly tradition - it may just have to be!



SPORTS BANQUET

In June, we celebrated the sports accomplishments of our Blues athletes at the MCI Sports Banquet. Athletes across all sports were recognized for their achievements, such as Most Improved Player, Leadership Awards, MVP's, Rookie of the Year, All Star Awards, and many others!

Our Athletes of the Year were: Cyrus Falk (JV Female), Nadia Thiessen (Varsity Female), Leo Dyck (JV Male), and Sam Regehr (Varsity Male).

We appreciate all of the athletes and coaches who dedicated time, energy, and skills to the various sports teams this year!



GRAD TRIP

School trips have a tendency to be very strange events filled with fun and surprises. So of course, all participating graduates looked forward to the grad trip as a fun, exciting, spontaneous adventure! Little did we know how right we were going to be. The bus left early in the morning on a Saturday, with the unfortunate consequence of cutting into our beauty sleep. Fortunately, there was nothing to do on the bus but sleep. The first day of driving was blessedly uneventful and we made it to Briercrest without anything even remotely memorable happening. The



next day started just as uneventfully, until it didn't. The bus broke down outside of Chaplin, a small town in Saskatchewan, whose only attraction was a salt mine that smelt bad. By some miracle, our bus driver, Rudy, managed to flag down a family that had room for 13 disgruntled teens and 3 stressed adults. These wonderful people, named Karen and Monty, lent us the use of their guest house and even fed us meals. We crammed in the guest house, eating snacks and obsessively playing Mario Kart (except for Eric who was glued to the Switch for 5 hours straight). On day three, we were finally on the road again (yay!) and headed straight to West Edmonton Mall. The two days that we spent at the mall were a blast! There was much shopping done, along with much time spent in the waterpark and the amusement park, going on terrifying waterslides and rollercoasters. Alas, all good things must come to an end, and before we knew it we were on the road back to Gretna. Just two more days of driving and it was all over, a very brief, but very memorable interlude at the end of our high school days.

- Greta Wiebe, MCI Graduate 2023

GRAD 2023

Friends and family of the Class of 2023, joined us to celebrate the 16 graduates as they received their diplomas at the Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church on June 25th. Graduates gathered together for photos before the ceremony and then headed to Buhler Hall to share a delicious meal together at the banquet. We listened to touching tributes from graduates, parents and staff, enjoyed a variety of performances at the talent show, and watched students receive "Oscar Awards" in the Old Hollywood themed graduation.

Congratulations, class of 2023! You will be missed!



MCI ART AT GALLERY IN THE PARK

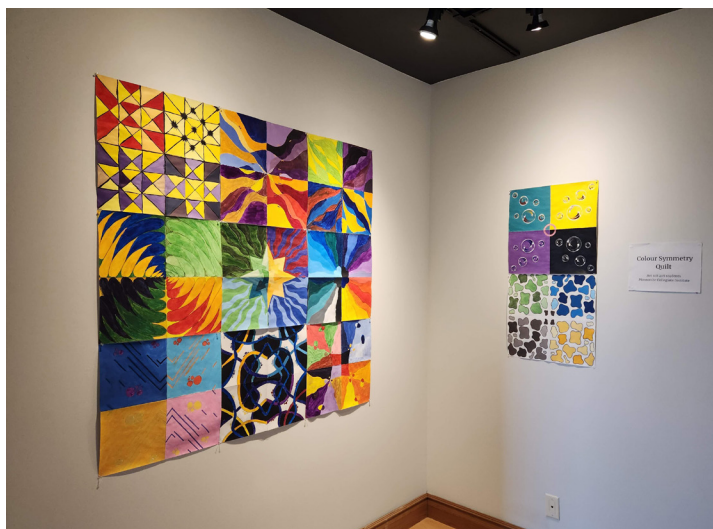
In May of 2023, Grades 9 - 12 art students at Mennonite Collegiate Institute had the wonderful opportunity to participate in the Student Art Show at Gallery in the Park in Altona. Along with other schools, art students displayed their hard work, creativity, and artistic growth from the school year.

Artwork included acrylic paintings from all students, a project entitled "Heart Songs", where students painted a visual representation of a favourite or meaningful song from their life. Other projects included clay gnomes, a giant 'quilt' displaying colourful symmetry paintings, and abstract acrylic works. Several independent art projects were also displayed, which included a variety

of media, including salt mixed with acrylic paint, watercolour, and pencil portrait sketches.

Art students helped with set up at the gallery, as well as sitting at the gallery during viewing hours, to provide a welcoming presence to all those in the community coming to view the art work. Participating in this student art show was a unique and valuable opportunity to showcase the creativity and talent of MCI students to the local community. Visitors were overwhelmingly positive, expressing their appreciation for being invited to share in the talents and lives of our young artists.

- Jolene Friesen-Stoesz, MCI Art Teacher



Above: Portraits of Marmee and Jo March used in *Little Women: The Musical*, drawn by Maddy Friesen (2023 Graduate) and Neveah Giesbrecht (Grade 11).

Left and Below: MCI Student art displays during the Student Art Show

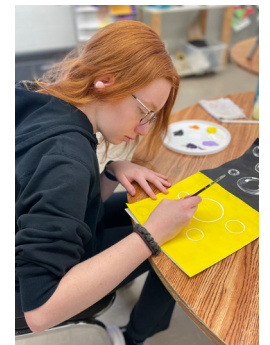




Art students creating plaster masks and a couple of finished pieces



Before and after photos from the glazing and firing process of student ceramic creations



Art classes visiting Barb Wiebe's pottery barn



MCI MUSICAL - LITTLE WOMEN



Little Women was the perfect musical for this year's student body at MCI. While the cast size was smaller than previous years, students gave their all into the production, making it a hit. The March women, and important characters in their lives, came to life through their character development, voices, and choreography, making the audience fall deep into the story. Despite a snowstorm keeping many audience members away for the last two shows, the students did not waiver in their dedication, and the leads continued to shine bright, thanks to the amazing crew behind them. We are honoured to be presented with a hard-earned Rainbow Stage Award for Little Women this year.

- Jody Friesen, MCI Music Director 2022-23



YOUTH ORBIT CONFERENCE

A WEEKEND OF LIFE-CHANGING FAITH EXPERIENCES

“Stories we heard from our fathers, counsel we learned at our mother’s knee. We’re not keeping this to ourselves, we’re passing it along to the next generation—We will tell them all about His strength, power, the miracles He has done”

- Psalm 78:3 & 4

After a 20-year hiatus (almost to the day!) Youth Orbit is back! The conference held at MCI (April 14-15th) was nothing short of extraordinary, as teens gathered for a weekend filled with powerful worship, inspiring speakers, and life-changing encounters with the Holy Spirit. The event featured artists, Jenny Franz and Bread We Break, who led the worship with fresh and dynamic energy in Buhler Hall. The lineup of speakers was equally powerful, with Robb Nash (MCI Alumni), Daniel Fewster, and Courtney Reimer (She Wears Worth), delivering thought-provoking messages that resonated deeply with the teens. Their stories of faith, hope, and overcoming challenges, left a lasting impression on the hearts of the youth, igniting a spark for living out their faith in action.

The Holy Spirit was obvious throughout the conference, moving in miraculous ways, as many teens experienced breakthroughs in their faith journeys. From tearful testimonies of healing and restoration, to moments of deep intimacy with God, lives were transformed during this unforgettable weekend.

And let’s not forget about the fun we had! Volunteers transformed the gym and halls into a Big Top extravaganza, complete with Inflatables, Velcro wall, carnival games, a coffee bar, photo booth, games, crafts, and more. It was a blast to see everyone enjoying themselves, laughing, and making memories together. Whether we were trying our luck riding the mechanical bull, sipping on delicious drinks at the coffee bar, striking a pose in the photo booth, or getting creative with crafts, there was something for everyone to enjoy.

It was a great way to unwind and have some lighthearted fun after the powerful worship and messages. It’s moments like

these that remind us that faith doesn’t have to be serious all the time - we can also have a ton of fun as we grow in our relationship with God and with each other.

Through all this action, MCI was thrilled to host 70 students from other schools, who got to experience the unique atmosphere of our campus. Our goal was to showcase the heart and soul of MCI, and we were thrilled to welcome these kids into our community. Throughout the weekend, these students were able to experience, firsthand, the warmth and sense of belonging that makes our school so special. It was a beautiful representation of the power of faith to bring people together, regardless of their backgrounds or experiences.

The atmosphere at MCI during these 2 days was electric. Revival could be felt at MCI! Friendships were formed, hearts were stirred, and a renewed sense of purpose was instilled in the hearts of these young people.

As the weekend ended, the impact of Youth Orbit was evident in the smiles on the faces of the teens as they left with memories that will last a lifetime, and a renewed passion to live out their faith boldly in their communities.

This event left a mark on the lives on those who attended. It was a celebration and a testament to the life-changing power of encountering God in a vibrant and dynamic way. We can’t wait for next year!

- Megan Hildebrand (MCI Staff and Parent) & Jaime Falk ('04 and MCI Parent) Youth Orbit Coordinators



UPCOMING EVENTS

SEPTEMBER

23



ALUMNI VOLLEYBALL TOURNAMENT & HOMECOMING

Enter a team for the MCI Alumni Volleyball Tournament on September 23rd! Grads of 2023 are also welcomed back to join current students for Homecoming and signing of yearbooks. Keep your eye out on our social media for more details in the upcoming months.

NOVEMBER

3

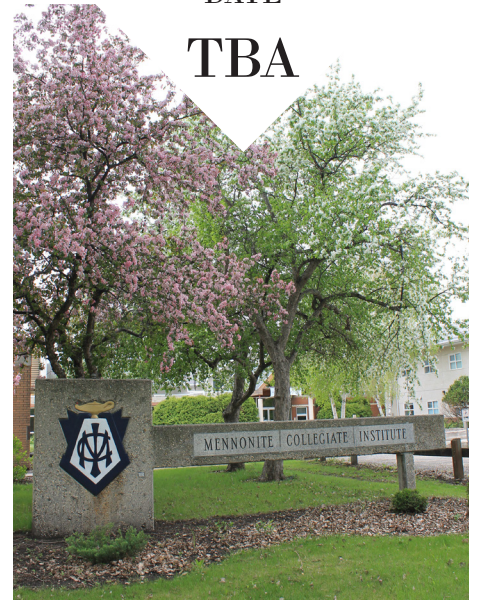


SOUP & PIE AND FALL CONCERT

We are excited to have our annual Soup & Pie Fundraiser on November 3rd! Join us from 5-7pm for soup and pie, followed by the Fall Concert at 7:30pm.

DATE

TBA



MCI AGM

All are invited to attend the MCI AGM. Please follow our social media accounts for details in the upcoming months. We will also send out an email reminder, so be sure to update your contact information with us.

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Varsity Girls 4x100m Team at Provincials



MENNONITE COLLEGIATE BLUES



Varsity Girls Volleyball Team at the Opening Ceremonies for Volleyball Provincials



Staff dressed as students for Spirit Week



Whitney Peters (front) and Presley Schroeder competing at Badminton Zones



FINANCIAL UPDATE CORNER

“Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”

– 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Many of you received an email on June 24, 2023, announcing that MCI will remain open—an announcement accompanied by a profound sense of relief and gratitude. For those of us around the Board table, that announcement is the miracle we prayed for as we deliberated about MCI’s future. I know many of you echoed that prayer. We are also aware that some of you may have been surprised to hear about the challenges that MCI faced or may still be unaware of those challenges.

This past year has been a difficult one for MCI—a year in which it has not always been easy to “give thanks” for MCI’s circumstances. MCI entered the 2022-23 school year with lower enrollment than anticipated and an unsustainable financial outlook. As a Board, we struggled to communicate the urgency of MCI’s situation, while simultaneously portraying a sense of hope for the future of our school. On April 25, we hosted an Information Meeting, in which we launched our 2023-25 Strategic Plan and answered questions from those in attendance. At that meeting, we clearly expressed the need to raise \$500,000 by June 30 and the need for stabilized enrollment for the 2023-24 school year.

At its meeting on June 19, after two months of hard work, the MCI Board made the unanimous decision to remain open. Despite ongoing financial and enrollment challenges, the overwhelmingly positive signal we received from the MCI community was a major consideration in that decision. In those two months, we received approximately \$600,000 in donations and pledges, the majority of which could be applied to this fiscal year (ending June 30). These gifts came from more than 130 individuals and corporations, ranging in value from less than \$100 to \$100,000. Donors included alumni from all decades since the 1950s, estates of alumni, Society churches giving above budgeted amounts, individual donors from former Society churches, businesses, and local community members.

In addition to financial gifts, we have received more than 15 new student applications for the 2023-24 school year,

and we anticipate a re-enrollment rate close to 100%. We hope that additional students will be led to MCI over the summer months and we welcome their applications.

Beyond this, we also had the opportunity to reconnect with many in the MCI community. Here are a few things we heard:

- There was deep appreciation for what MCI has meant to them personally, but also to the larger church and community throughout its 134-year history.
- Most people were eager to continue their support of the school with donations and/or pledges for future donations. This spirit of generosity was astonishing and humbling!
- There was concern about the school’s present circumstance regarding financial challenges, low enrollment, and differences within the constituency. For some, the situation seemed too precarious; even hopeless.
- There was a clear sense that MCI needs to improve communication with its stakeholders: Alumni, donors, churches, and the local community. Better utilization of MCI’s facilities could contribute to establishing and enhancing those connections.
- Many expressed agreement with and support of MCI’s 2023-25 Strategic Plan “Renewed Hope for the Future”.

A feeling of gratitude is natural—even easy—when considering what MCI has received over the past few months. But Paul’s message to the Thessalonians suggests that we should also look back on difficult circumstances, and look ahead to future challenges, with a posture of gratitude. That is not so easy. Yet, as I reflect on the past two months, I know that God was present in many ways, through many people, and at just the right moments. May we be reminded of God’s enduring faithfulness so that in all circumstances, we can give thanks as a reflection of God’s will in Christ Jesus.

- Jonathan Regehr, Incoming Board Chair



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ALUMNI NEWS & UPDATES

Do you have news to share? Email alumni@mciblues.net to be featured!

BIRTHS



Katrina (Schulz, '13) & Justin ('10) Rempel welcome daughter, **Jane Ariel Cosette Rempel!** Born March 4, 2023, weighing 6lbs 8oz, and measuring 19 ¼ inches.

DEATHS



Margaret (Marge) Elaine Bock
June 3, 1965 - April 10, 2023

Margaret Elaine Bock, beloved wife of Ray, cherished mother, sister and friend, died on Monday, April 10, 2023 at Riverview Health Centre at the age of 57 years.

Margaret (Marge) Elaine Klassen was born to Peter and Maria (Wiebe) Klassen in the Altona Memorial Hospital on June 3, 1965. She grew up on the farm near Gretna, Manitoba and attended Gretna Elementary School and Mennonite Collegiate Institute. She was the 4th daughter born into her family. Upon graduation from highschool, she moved to Winnipeg to pursue a hairdressing career. Since she needed funding for the beauty school courses, she started to work at the University of Manitoba in the Department of Physiology, in February 1984. She washed glassware for the research labs in the department. In July, 1987, she accepted the position of laboratory technician in Dr. Peter A. Cattini's laboratory in the Department of Physiology. She learned many biological techniques and helped to train the many Cattini lab graduate students (both MSc and PhD). Her hairdressing career never came to fruition, but she had many wonderful years as a lab technician. She worked very hard, supporting all the graduate students and staff. Marge was known as the "lab mother".

The year 1987 was a great year for Marge, when she met the love of her life, Ray Bock. They were married on September 29, 1990, in Winnipeg. They have called Lindsay Street their home in River Heights for many years. Three boys were born to Marge and Ray: Lucas, Nathan and Levi. Marge was very proud of her contribution to the Bock family name for the future generations of Bocks to come through their boys.

Marge is survived by her husband Ray Bock of 31 years, children Lucas and Machaela Bock of Lorette, Nathan, and Levi and Katie Bernard of Winnipeg. Her siblings: John and Kathie Klassen (Headingly), Hilda and Gordon Peters (Wymark, Saskatchewan), Dorothy and Nick Molchan (Winnipeg), Lydia and Larry Neudorf (Winnipeg), Dwight Klassen (Altona), Richard and Cindy Klassen (Winkler), Christine and Jason Peters (Gretna), Becky and Terry Toews (Gretna); many nieces and nephews and their families.



Attention Classes of 2014, 2004, 1994, 1984, 1974, 1964, 1954: **This upcoming year is a BIG reunion year for you!**

Contact MCI to assist in planning your reunion gathering.

Give us a call at **204-327-5891** or email alumni@mciblues.net

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