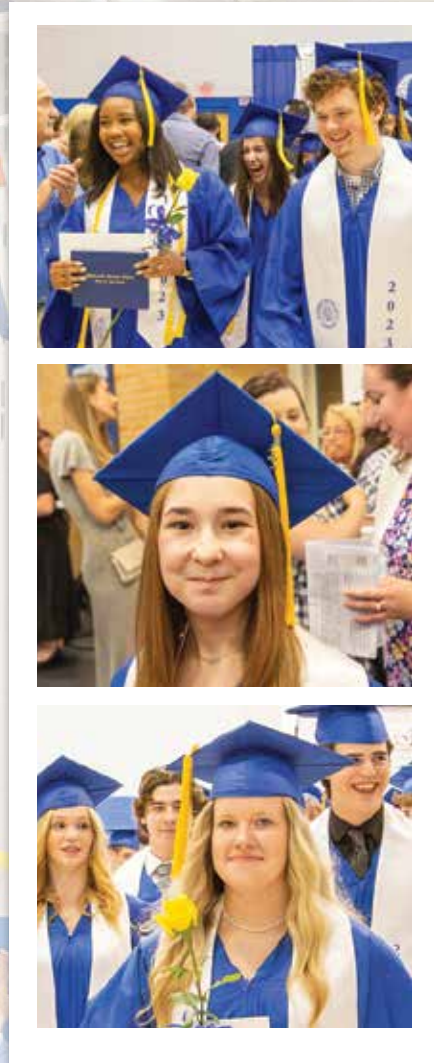
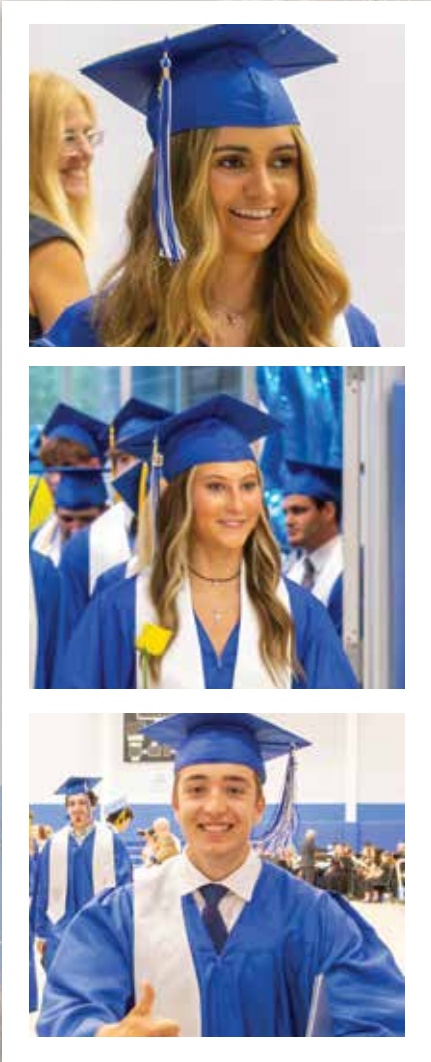


The Crusader Chronicle

REJOICE



What Does the Lord Require of You?

Erika Johnson, Class of 1995
President of the Board

It is with great joy and anticipation that I assume the role of the new President of the Board at Whitinsville Christian School. As I embark upon this journey, I am filled with gratitude for the past, appreciation for the present, and a deep sense of excitement for the future of our beloved institution.

When I think of the past, I am reminded of the rich tapestry of history woven by so many dedicated families, and the legacy of my grandparents, Jim and Jean Nydam. Their abiding faith and commitment to Christian education laid a strong foundation that has endured through the years. I rejoice in the knowledge that their values and devotion continue to shape the very fabric of this school community.

In the present, I am inspired by the remarkable achievements we have witnessed in our students: the academic rigor that permeates our classrooms, the triumphs on the athletic fields, the stirring melodies that resonate from our musical performances, and, above all, the nurturing of faith in the hearts of our students. These accomplishments speak to the dedication and commitment of our faculty, staff, and families who have nurtured an environment where our students can thrive and grow holistically. *We Rejoice* with you!

As we look to the future, I am filled with eager anticipation. I firmly believe that the next level of academic excellence is within our grasp. We have the opportunity to not only impart



knowledge, but to also cultivate critical thinking, creativity, and a love for life-long learning. As we strive for this goal, we must also embrace the

As we look to the future,
I am filled with eager
anticipation.

newest teaching philosophies, especially for our youngest students, ensuring that they are equipped with the skills and mindset nec-

essary to navigate an ever-changing world. The year ahead will also see additional Teaching for Transformation training and implementation. You will be hearing more about our *Deep Hopes* for our students, and the ways we explore our place in God's world.

The responsibility of leading such an esteemed institution is humbling, but I am reminded of the words of Paul: "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." 2 Corinthians 12:9. I trust that God has called me to serve Him and our school community, and I am confident that He will provide the wisdom, strength, and grace needed to fulfill this calling.

Together, as a united school community, we will face the challenges and seize the opportunities that lie ahead. With the departure of Rick Lukianuk at the end of the 2022/2023 academic year, the Trustees have launched a thorough search for a new Head of School. I am excited to have Sarah Bowler assume the role of Interim Head of School as this process takes place. This issue of the *Crusader Chronicle* includes a note from Sarah, as well as an introduction of Heather Rufo to our Advancement Team. As a team, the faculty, staff, and Board of Trustees looks forward to working alongside each and every one of you, as we strive to foster an environment where students can discover their God-given talents, grow in knowledge and character, and develop into future leaders who will impact our world.

These are exciting years ahead at Whitinsville Christian School, and I am honored to lead during this pivotal time. Let us join hands, hearts, and minds as we journey together, guided by faith, and inspired by the transformative power of education.

...guided by faith and inspired by
the transformative power of

EDUCATION

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Published by Whitinsville Christian School and the WCS Advancement Office.

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Kemp Publishing Inc.

ON THE COVER

Graduation photos courtesy of Jeff and Cece (Class of 2022) LaBonte

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Our Graduates Rejoice!

On Friday, June 2, 2023, the Whitinsville Christian School community celebrated the graduation of 40 amazing young men and women of the class of 2023. This was a beautiful celebration of the many accomplishments of these students, as well as the commitment of their families to provide a strong Christian educational foundation. The Class of 2023 chose 2 Corinthians 13:11 as their class verse. “Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.” We rejoice with you in your graduation, and we are inspired by the way you encouraged and loved one another.

Karen Exoo, retiring Spanish teacher and Student Academic Services Coordinator, offered the commencement

address, highlighting the themes in 2 Corinthians and noting the ways the students connected with each other, as well as younger students, at WCS. She gave thanks for the ways the Class of 2023 has served God’s kingdom through community service, caring for strangers, by tutoring their peers, and by mentoring younger students as team captains. She encouraged them to go in peace, to love and serve the Lord.



The 2023 Distinguished Alumni Award was presented to **Gordon De Young (Class of 1951)**. Deeply grateful for the education he received at WCS, Gordon has faithfully supported Pleasant Street Christian Reformed Church and WCS, recognizing the importance of supporting the institutions that shaped him. Gordon’s legacy extends to his family as well. All four of his children, **Kenneth (Class of 1971)**, **Susan Smith (Class of 1975)**, **Lori Degre (Class of 1983)**, **David (Class of 1972)**, and, followed in their father’s footsteps by attending WCS. Through his own example, Gordon instilled in them the values of faith, service, and education, leaving a lasting impact on his family and the school community. Gordon’s acceptance remarks were delivered by John Vriesema, at Gordon’s request. Gordon expressed his love for WCS, and shared a deeply personal story of the struggles he faced as a young student, and the support he received from then WCS Principal, Burton Breuker.



Distinguished Alumni Award Recipient



Emily Dill, Valectorian



Allison Anema, Salutatorian



We thank God for your gifts, your talents, and your time at WCS, Class of 2023. Go in peace, to love and serve the Lord.



High School Awards

Strong Academic Endeavor Awards

Grade 12: Hannah Pollitt
Grade 11: Kelly Keeler
Grade 10: Joanna Graves
Grade 9: Matt Dudley and Lily Wierenga

Academic Subject Awards

Art - Ellie Dishington
Band (John Philip Sousa National Band Award) - Alli Anema
Bible - Allison Cinelli
Business - Aidan Giunta
Choir (National School Choral Award) - Hannah Pollitt
Drama - Bella Roberge
English - Ellie Dishington
History - Emily Dill
Math - Alli Anema
Orchestra - Emily Dill
Science Biological - Alli Anema
Outstanding Science Award - Allison Cinelli
Science Physical - Emily Dill
Spanish - Emily Dill
Technology - Liam Menard

Administered Awards and Scholarships

RPI Medal Program Award - Avery Glidden
Global Seal of Biliteracy - Nic Belucio, Emily Dill, Fiona Donnelly, Annika Fortna, Meadow O'Connell,

Pedro Ramos, Bella Silveira (2), Alison Sim, Declan Smith, Justin Vos
Senior Athlete Female - Emily Dill
Senior Athlete Male - Jack Crowley and Noah Massotti
Heisman High School Scholarship - Chris Dudley
Brandeis Book Award - Kaylin Fogg
Harvard Book Award - Annika Fortna
Lasell Book Award - Kate Crowley
Smith College Book Award - Meadow O'Connell
Suffolk University Book Award - Caleb Deters

Annual Local and Memorial Scholarships

Blackstone Valley Rotary Club - Emily Dill
DAR Good Citizens Award - Trinity Ezedi
Garry and Annette Keessen Scholarship - Meadow O'Connell
Jim and Jean Nydam Memorial Scholarship - Julia Gibbons
Roland and Sandra Vander Baan Scholarship - Ethan Enoch
Milford Federal Savings & Loan Scholarship - Fiona Donnelly
UniBank Scholarship - Trinity Ezedi
Groot STEM Scholarship - Emily Dill
Najem Family Scholarship - Ethan MacGillivray
Fredericks Family Award, Perseverance and Personal Success - Evan Hand

Leonard M. Krull Memorial Scholarship - Ethan MacGillivray
Sadie DeYoung Memorial Scholarship - Ethan MacGillivray
Thelma DeYoung Memorial Award for Excellence - Ava Ibrahim
Arthur A. Wiersma Memorial Scholarship - Grace Hart and Jack Crowley
Eric J. Cook Memorial Scholarship - Grace Hart
George J. VandenAkker Memorial Scholarship - Allison Cinelli
Kimberly Hannon Memorial Scholarship - Grace Hart

Founders Award

(Graduates who have attended WCS since Kindergarten)
Alli Anema, Toby Bowler, Jack Crowley, Emily Dill, Sophia Dill, Jonah Duncan, Tory Fredericks, Joseph French, and Noah Robertson

Outstanding Senior Award

Lexi Foster

Congratulations to the students who received a Presidential Academic Award, and to each student who participated in our many clubs, service groups, and student organizations. We are thankful for your gifts and your talents!





Legacy Families

It is an honor to recognize our legacy graduates, students with one or more family members who have also graduated from Whitinsville Christian School.



Toby with mother, Sarah (Plumb) Bowler (Class of 1995)



Noah and Elijah Tetreault with mother, Jovanna (Partridge) Tetreault (Class of 1998)



Kira Simoncini with step-father, Kurt Savage (Class of 1998)

LOOKING AHEAD

Allison Anema	Messiah University
Gabrielle Bobolia	University of New Hampshire
Tobias Bowler	UMass Lowell
Allison Cinelli	Boston University
Michaela Clifford	Bryant University
Peter Cloutier	Liberty University
Jack Crowley	Nichols College
Nicolas DeNorscia	Stonehill College
Colin Deres	Keene State College
Angelina Dicoella	Liberty University
Emily Dill	University of Rochester
Sophia Dill	Endicott College
Eliana Dishington	Clemson University
Fiona Donnelly	Northeastern University
John Dudley	Gordon College
Jonah Duncan	Springfield College
Anela Esler	Samford University
Trinity Ezedi	University of Southern California
Alexondra Foster	Colby College
Victoria Fredericks	Belmont University
Joseph French	Worcester State University
Aidan Giunta	Nichols College
Grace Hart	Rhode Island College
Ethan MacGillivray	Calvin University
Noah Massotti	Roger Williams University
Peter McHugh	UMass Amherst
Anabella Mills	Southern Connecticut State University
Charles Palmatier	Liberty University
Hannah Pollitt	Liberty University
Margaret Redding	Johnson & Wales University
Bella Roberge	Savannah College of Art & Design
Noah Robertson	Bristol Community College
Abigail Shimko	UMass Lowell
Lucas Silveri	Assumption University
Kira Simoncini	High Point University
Naomi Swanson	Texas State University
Elijah Tetreault	United States Coast Guard
Noah Tetreault	United States Coast Guard
Michael Vardis	Springfield College
Amanda Witkus	University of Miami

Sarah Bowler (Class of 1995)
Interim Head of School
Preschool/Elementary School Principal

Living the Story

Since 1982, I have had the privilege of being a part of the WCS story. I vividly remember sitting with my classmates on the rug in Ms. Kenbeek's class singing *This is My Father's World*. Over the years, my story became more deeply interwoven with the mission of the school. When my oldest daughter was ready for kindergarten, we didn't need to discuss where she would attend school. We were living in Qingdao, China at the time and I emailed the school to express interest in enrolling her, consequently, launching a close working relationship with Dawn Lefrancois! This year, my youngest child will begin preschool at WCS, with two having graduated and one entering high school.

In 2010, Lance Engbers called me to talk about a second grade opening. I was excited to begin living the WCS story as a teacher, and this excitement and joy continued to grow as I moved into the preschool and elementary principal position. Now I am taking on a new role as Interim Head of School. My goal in this role is to make sure that our students, staff, and families have the resources they need to live their stories in a way that upholds the mission of WCS, nurturing the whole child in cooperation with parents, preparing our



Sam and Sarah (Plumb) Bowler

... preparing our students
to live out their stories as
image bearers of God ...

students to live out their stories as image bearers of God and agents of restorative transformation.

The WCS theme verse for the upcoming academic year will be Micah 6:8. "He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." Our purpose as Christian educators is to reveal God's overarching story in all things. This is a verse that explicitly describes the actions that God desires to see in our life stories. While WCS has seen many changes over the years since my classmates and I first gathered around the piano, acting justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God continues to be a focus in the WCS story, and I am grateful to be a part of this next chapter.

Lucy (Class of 2021), Toby (Class of 2023),
Amelia (9th grade), and Sam (PreK)



Advancing the Mission

**DEDICATED,
caring
teachers**

**Performances
showcasing
God-given
talents**



Laural Plourde, Heather Rufo, and Miranda Osterman

**ENERGETIC,
eager students**

**Cheering fans
on the courts
and fields**

**Hands-on
lessons**

What do all of these things have in common?

They are vital to fulfilling the mission of Whitinsville Christian School. They also require resources to perform these roles. The Advancement Team at WCS is tasked with helping to provide many of those resources through admissions, fundraising, and promotion of our school.

Heather (Hannon) Rufo (Class of 1999) has accepted the role of Director of Development. In this role, Heather will foster connections with WCS and its donors and alumni. Heather's family ties to WCS run deep. She attended WCS in high school, each of her eight siblings, as well as nieces and nephews have attended WCS at a point in their education. Heather's three daughters are currently enrolled at WCS. "It's been a blessing being back at WCS where I've been able to blend both my corporate and arts background as the Director of Arts," Heather said. She has served as the Director of Arts at WCS since 2020. Prior to joining the Whitinsville Christian School team, Heather spent 12 years in sales and marketing, along with performing professionally in Boston and New York for 20+ years. Heather holds a BA in Communication Arts with an emphasis in theater and a minor in music from Eastern Nazarene College. Heather lives in South Grafton with her husband Bill, and their daughters Amelia, Brinley, and Daphne. Their family attends Pleasant Street Church. "WCS has meant so much to me and my family. I am honored to now be the Director of Development, and committed to being a part of the future of WCS."

Laural Plourde joined WCS in 2016 as a writer. With her experience in marketing and public relations, the role has expanded over the year. In her new role as Director of Marketing, Communications, and Advancement Events, she will continue to manage marketing and communications for WCS, in addition to directing fundraising events, as well as special events for alumni, donors, and volunteers. Laural has a BBA with a concentration in marketing from the University of North Texas. Laural and her husband, Derek, live in Uxbridge, and are members of Blackstone Valley United Methodist Church. Their oldest son, Riley is a 2022 WCS graduate, and their youngest son, Hayden, is a member of the WCS Class of 2024. "We have been part of the WCS family since the boys started preschool. We are currently experiencing first-hand how well WCS has prepared our sons for college, and for discovering their place in God's world," said Laural. "It's been a pleasure to tell WCS stories for the past seven years, and I look forward to supporting our mission in new ways this year."

Miranda Osterman has served as Director of Enrollment for three years, after 10 years as a faculty member. "I love giving tours of our school. There are so many great things happening every day in our classrooms and it is rewarding to see visitors respond positively to that," said Miranda. "Admitting mission-appropriate students means getting to know the families closely, and determining if WCS is a good fit for their needs and goals. My interaction with the families, their application, the admissions testing, and collaboration with our administrators all help me make those decisions." Miranda holds a degree in Elementary Education from Dordt University. She and her husband, Tim, live in Sutton with their two daughters, Letty and Addie. They attend Lifesong Church.

"I'm excited for this team to come together to advance the mission of WCS," said Erika Johnson, Board of Trustees President. "Anyone who is dedicated to Christian education, and our school, is also welcome to play a role. If you would like to learn more about getting involved as a volunteer with events, fundraisers, or as an alumni, I encourage you to reach out to one of these team members!"

The Beauty of Multiplication

Ben Cannistraci, Class of 2021

If you told me when I graduated high school that in two years I would lead a mission trip to South Africa, I would've thought you were crazy. Yet, this crazy idea became a reality this year. Through Southeastern University, I was given the incredible opportunity to co-lead a mission trip to Johannesburg, South Africa. At first, the idea of leading a team of young adults across the world terrified me, and I almost declined the offer. However, after praying about it a lot, time and time again God revealed that this was something He had in store for me. Though leading this trip did not become less terrifying after I accepted, God gave me the strength, wisdom, and boldness to lead confidently.

In preparation for this trip, my co-leader and I got in contact with an organization called Impact Africa. After speaking with them and spending a lot of time in prayer, we decided this was the organization we wanted to partner with on our journey. Impact Africa has had a significant impact on the communities in South Africa by establishing various programs throughout the area. One of their programs develops schools in the community, providing young children with a Christian education. Another program provides homes for abandoned babies in that area, as well as free counseling to young, pregnant mothers so that these women will not abort or abandon their babies. Also, Impact Africa hosts assemblies for teens and young adults, educating them on critical life topics such as sex, substance abuse, and more, all from a Christian perspective. Beyond these programs, Impact Africa does a lot of community outreach by going house-to-house evangelizing

and also hosting kids clubs within the communities.

On March 9, my team of 16 students left for Africa. Our first full day in South Africa consisted of learning all about the culture there and how we can best minister to the people there. The next day we went to a local church and were welcomed into this church family with open arms. We spent the rest of the day learning more about the culture and exploring the area.

On day three, we started working in the community. Our team mostly focused on community outreach by doing house-to-house evangelism and hosting kids programs in the communities. We were split up into groups of four, and each group had a local who knew the area and the language so we could navigate the community well. We would walk





even imagine. We were so blessed to see this in action on our last day in the community. One of our groups used an illustration to present the gospel to an individual, and that person received Christ as their Savior! A few hours later, the same group was walking back to our base and saw that individual using that same illustration to preach the gospel to his neighbors in the street. This is the beauty of multiplication! What a powerful God we worship!

“Just like the story of Jesus feeding the 5,000, the Lord can use what we give in ways we can’t even imagine.”

up to homes and begin talking with them. At first this was rather intimidating to us, and we were afraid to even begin making conversation. However, interacting with the people became easier as we discovered various ways to relate with the people and be open to sharing about ourselves. I felt a lot of pressure to share the gospel with them because that was our reason for being there. I was grateful to see that faith came up naturally in conversation as we shared our stories with them or asked if we could pray for them.

Day after day my team headed into the community to talk with people, encourage them, and pray with them. Personally, I saw God work in amazing ways in that community. In my group we saw a few individuals receive healing from physical ailments while some acknowledged their need for a Savior and accepted Jesus into their lives. Beyond these miracles, my team as a whole prayed for more than 250 people in their homes, gave out about 100 copies of the gospel of John in multiple languages, helped minister to more than 150 children, and also saw about eight salvations.

Even though we saw God work in so many ways during our time in Johannesburg, it seemed as though we barely made a dent in their community. In all honesty, we did barely make a dent, however one of my biggest takeaways from the trip was realizing that we serve a miracle-working God, and He is a God who multiplies. Just like the story of Jesus feeding the 5,000, the Lord can use what we give in ways we can’t



Senior Capstone Projects

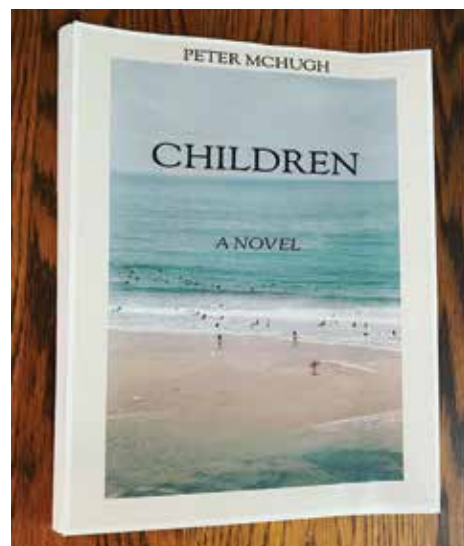
The Senior Capstone Project saw a significant change in the 2022/2023 academic year. This year-long project is no longer an option to replace the senior paper, a task now integrated into the English curriculum. Instead, students may opt to complete a Capstone Project for course credit. What hasn't changed? Students have a great deal of latitude in designing their projects, and learn valuable lessons in time management, collaboration, communication, and faith.



Peter McHugh, Emily Dill, and Ellie Dishington after their presentations to the community

Peter McHugh

Peter McHugh loves to write. Inspired by a sci-fi film, he began his first book at age 12. After several starts and stops with other titles, he realized his difficulty in finishing a project was due to his lack of understanding of his characters. He set a Capstone goal of completing a novel, and his completed work, *Children*, explores a character he knows very well – himself. The story is his own personal journey, in which he takes an honest look at himself, hoping to show that people are capable of change. Although Peter ultimately decided to keep this work to himself, he did write and share *A Parable*, a short story exploring loss, love, fear of death, growing up, and parenthood. Peter plans to keep writing as he studies Business and English at UMass Amherst's Isenberg School of Management.



Emily Dill

Emily Dill has always loved math and science. Some of her favorite high school courses include POE (Principles of Engineering), Honors Anatomy, and Physiology because of the hands-on approach to learning, allowing her to see science and math in real-world situations. After a tour of the Laboratory for Laser Energetics at the University of Rochester, Emily's interest in optics and lasers was piqued. For her Capstone, she developed educational materials, lessons, and activities for some of her fellow WCHS students taking Physics, and the Haiti Student Development Center. Emily has a new appreciation for the amount of preparation it takes to teach a class! She will continue her study of optics next year at the University of Rochester.

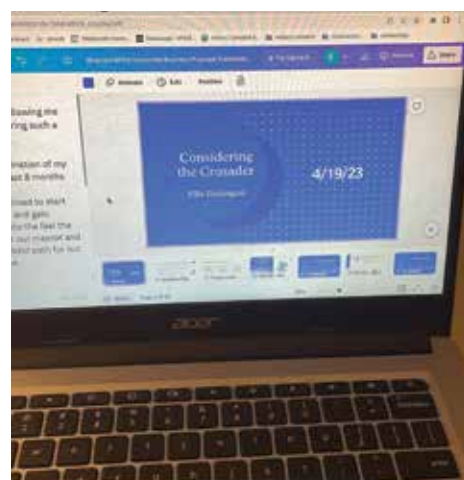


Ellie Dishington

Ellie Dishington joined WCHS to begin her sophomore year, and soon perceived a lack of enthusiasm for the Crusader mascot. Wondering if her observation was correct, she launched a year-long exploration of the WCS community's feelings about the Crusader. Through surveys and interviews, she discovered a range of opinions about its use and appropriateness. In one of the final pieces of her project, Ellie presented her findings at a WCS Board of Trustees meeting. After presenting her findings, she proposed three options for the Board's consideration:

- Fully embrace and relaunch the image and Crusader name
- Keep the current image of the Crusader but change the mascot to the Knights
- Adopt a new mascot name and image

Ellie will next be cheering for the Tigers at Clemson University, majoring in Biology and minoring in English.



Better Together

Mary Dykstra, WCHS Drama Club Director



brave teenager who stood up to his parents on behalf of others who, without him, wouldn't have a chance for a better future.

And while this is all set in Disney's fun, fanciful fantasy, the underlying storyline should be familiar to each one of us, because if we stop and think about it, this is the story and hope that Christ provides. He provides a future we can't even imagine. He provides a way out of what we may think we are stuck in. He provides an opportunity to be one body, His body, and He shows us all that we are "better together."



Descendants provides a wild ride as the children of the well-known Disney characters all come together to learn from one another, go to school together, and really find out how they are "better together."

Once again, this production teaches those of us who have worked on it together, how we are truly the body of Christ, not only working together on stage, but also through the message of the show. Ben, the son of the Beast and Belle (from *Beauty and the Beast*) has a vision for a better world. He believes in hope, and that everyone should be given a second, or even a first, chance for a brighter future. He believes that the past does not define us and that forgiveness and trust can be the groundwork for something new. As the story progresses, the age-old battle of good vs. evil arises, but instead of evil being wiped out, the characters see that change is possible and probable! In Disney's *Descendants*, kids on opposite sides learn to see beyond the surface. Kids who think they are destined for one path realize there is a whole different path awaiting them, ready for the taking, because of one





Young Storytellers

The Middle School Drama Club presented *Just So Stories* for two performances in February. Five of Rudyard Kipling’s *Just So Stories*, including *How the Camel Got His Hump*, *How the Rhinoceros Got His Skin*, and *How the Elephant Got His Trunk* are included here. The tales are brought vividly to life by Kipling’s young daughter, Elsie, and a group of new friends she has made during a visit with her aunt while her parents are away.



Grandfriends Day

This biennial event took place on April 6, 2023, as we welcomed grandparents and special friends, aka “grandfriends,” to an elementary musical presentation. Shannon May, Elementary Music Teacher, created a beautiful and meaningful program telling the Easter story. Friends also joined the students for refreshments, classroom tours, and games.



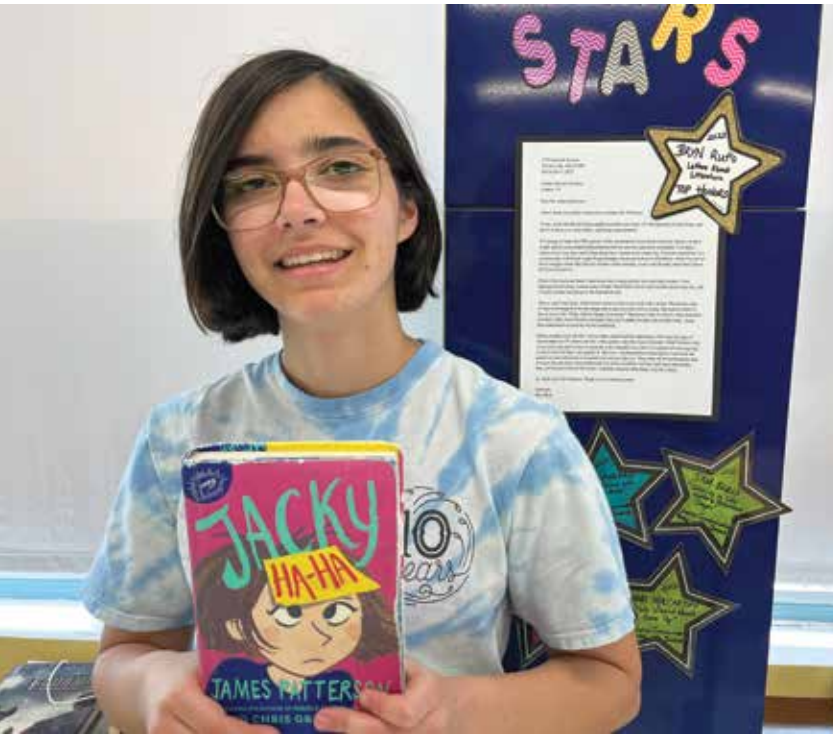
ArtWalk

WCS partnered with the Aldrich Heritage Gallery in the Whitin Mill for this year's Art Walk. Every middle and high school student that has taken an art class this year was represented with multiple pieces of their artwork on display. The Aldrich Heritage Gallery hosted an opening reception at the Mill on May 5, and the closing reception was held at WCS on May 19, just before that evening's choir concert. Artwork could be found at WCS, the Aldrich Heritage Gallery at Whitin Mill, and at Unibank for Savings!



Connecting with a Character

Terry Ebbeling, WCMS English Language Arts Teacher



Bryn Rufo, Class of 2027, was recognized as a Top Honors winner in Level II (grades 7 & 8) of the 2022-2023 Letters About Literature contest. This annual contest, sponsored by the Massachusetts Center for the Book and the Library of Congress, invites Commonwealth students in grades 4 through 12 to write a letter to an author about a work that has made an impact on them. The literature may have helped students understand something about themselves or the world around them.

Student letters went through three rounds of screening to create sets of “Finalists,” 20 letters in each of the three age-level categories. Judges then identified, from among the Finalists, five Honors and five Honorable Mention letters. One of the five Honors letters was accorded Top Honors: Bryn’s letter to James Patterson, author of *Jacky Ha-Ha*. In her heartfelt letter, Bryn thanked Patterson for writing a story about a “hero” to Bryn, a girl with a stutter - something that also challenges Bryn.

Bryn received a letter of recognition, an Amazon gift card, and a check for \$250. She was recognized at a virtual event on May 17, along with other Honors and Top Honors winners, and she was invited to read her letter as a Top Honor winner. Bryn’s parents and I attended the event and we could not be prouder of Bryn!

Dear Mr. Patterson,

To me, *Jacky Ha-Ha* isn’t just a giddy book that you wrote. It’s the opening of a new door, one that I’ve never ever seen before: stuttering representation.

... I’ve had a stutter since I was four, and I think about how I speak every single day. Everyone around me is a soaring eagle with broad wings flying through words and sentences effortlessly, while I’m one of those scraggly robins that hits my window in the morning.

... When I first read your book, I had never met a single person who also had a stutter... That is, until I met Jacky. Jacky knows what it’s like to be a kid with a stutter. She knows what it’s like to be laughed at for not being able to spit out what you’re saying. She knows what it’s like to receive the “Haha, did you forget your name?” ... Jacky Hart understands me and my stutter completely.

Before reading *Jacky Ha-Ha*, I never really understood the importance of having any type of representation in TV shows, movies, video games, and other types of media... But now, I understand how meaningful it can be to see people on your television or in a game who are just like you. They share all of the hardships that one goes through daily, they understand how nasty comments can feel, and most importantly, they can become a hero to the viewer. And that’s exactly what Jacky is to me: a hero.

JACKY HA-HA

95 Years of Christian Education

On May 30, 2023, family, friends, former students, and colleagues gathered to celebrate the retirements of Sue Cooper (28 years), Terry Ebbeling (23 years), and Karen Exoo (44 years). The evening included conversation and laughter, gifts for each recipient to enjoy in retirement, and of course, refreshments! Each educator was also honored with remarks delivered by a colleague, all of whom have become friends.

Honoring Susan Cooper – remarks shared by Sarah Bowler

Sue, you have been an integral part of our school, and your contributions have had a significant impact on the lives of countless students and staff members. As a librarian, you have always been dedicated to promoting the love of reading and learning among our students. Your knowledge of books and your ability to recommend the perfect book for each student has inspired many students to become lifelong readers. You spent hours reading children's books in order to share them with your classes and recommend them to students. You've brought your own likes and interests into your interactions with your students - your quilts, your cat books, the beautiful rocking chairs. You have always desired for our students to see God's story in books: the redemption and restoration. Your tireless efforts in organizing readathons, summer reading programs, and book fairs, have fostered a culture of reading in our school that will continue long after you retire.



Not only were you a librarian for 28 years, but you were also the curriculum coordinator for the entire school for a number of years. Your commitment to reviewing standards, best practices, and implementation of curriculum elevated our teaching and what we offer our students. You also were our NEASC accreditation coordinator for years. Another role that you took on was introducing our new teachers each year to what Christian education looks like at WCS, our reformed worldview, and what it means that our world

belongs to God. I know there are many other ways you have supported WCS over these years, including being a member of the tech committee, and co-leading the elementary chapel committee, but everything you have done has been done in a humble manner, looking to serve - a person who gets the job done, and gets it done well. Your colleagues appreciate your listening ear, your giving spirit - we all love your hand-woven dish towels, and your willingness to cover a recess or help out, if needed.

It was thrilling when you came to me with your desire to start a makerspace program. Your vision and the hours that you put into creating a curriculum for the 3rd-5th grade students has been a blessing. Your commitment to creativity and innovation has been evident in everything you do. You have always been willing to go the extra mile to provide opportunities for our students to explore and experiment with technology, design, and engineering. You have nurtured their curiosity, challenged them to think outside the box, and empowered them to turn their ideas into reality. Because of you students know how to use a glue gun, 3D printers and software, create stop motion videos, weave, and build. But even more importantly, they have learned to take risks and collaborate.

Your presence in our school will be sorely missed, but your legacy will endure. The programs you have started will continue. Your passion for Christian Education has left an indelible mark on our school and our community.

Honoring Terry Ebbeling – remarks shared by Mark DeWeerd

When I joined WCS in 2002, I learned I would be starting with a teacher who had taught for a while, then had taken a break. I admit I was concerned she would be stuck in her patterns and unwilling to bend. Was I wrong! The first inkling I had that we would be able to work together was early that year when we both thought we had everything under control, only to return to our classrooms and find we both



had students waiting in our rooms for us to arrive.

Terry has shown great hospitality over the years. She goes to great lengths to ensure that “Pizza and Paperbacks” is a special event for students. She schedules the birthday treats for colleagues, telling us we don’t need to “do much.” Then she would be the first of the year to provide the birthday treat and set a very high standard for the rest of us.

There are many qualities that make Terry an incredible colleague. She is reliable and professional, a collaborator, a champion for others, and an anchor in the middle school. She celebrates her students and encourages their participation in various writing contests – her published stars. We will miss Terry’s wisdom - she was an anchor the rest of us grabbed on to. James 3 talks about aspects of our lives and who we are that can bring others and ourselves in closer or farther alignment to God. The book ends with this well-known passage from verses 13 and 17: “Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.” Thank you, Terry, for your wisdom.

Honoring Karen Exoo – remarks shared by Annaliese (Vander Baan) Wheeler

Karen has been an instrumental part of the WCS community and has left an indelible mark on the lives of innumerable people, myself included. From her consistency and reliability, to her abilities to seamlessly integrate herself into various educational roles, and to her unique approach to educating and supporting students and staff, Karen has touched the lives of many.

My first interaction with Karen occurred when I was just entering elementary school. I had arrived to watch my brother’s basketball game and was becoming increasingly frustrated with my Leap Pad reading assignment. Karen gently encouraged me to stay patient and to continue working hard when things become difficult. Fast forward several years to when I was a student in Karen’s middle school Spanish class - Karen knew how terrified the idea of Spanish was for me and knew how hard I had to work to learn the material. On day one, she went out of her way to check on me and make sure I knew I could always ask her questions. During the semester, she stayed after school and spent multiple prep times to help me prepare for tests. She made everyone in the class, no matter their ability, feel like they belonged and could actively participate. My current role in helping to educate students who learn differently is a direct result of Karen’s influence on me when I was in their shoes; Karen, I likely wouldn’t be here today without you.



We are all aware of the deep passion it takes to become a teacher, never mind a teacher in the world of special education. Karen’s fluency in both English and Spanish, along with her mastering the language of special education, underscores her dedication to educating all students. In turn, students feel supported and advocated for, and this directly translates to educational success across the board. Karen is perhaps one of the most adored teachers at WCS, hence her impressive college sweatshirt collection and numerous invitations to reunions and weddings!

Thank you, Sue, Terry, and Karen, for your dedication to Christian education, your passion for teaching, and your faithful service to WCS and your students. Your legacies will endure. You will each be missed. We pray for blessings in your retirement as you pursue your hobbies, and time spent with your God and with your families.

Crusader Athletics



Varsity Girls Basketball

Front row: Eden Cabral, Ava Ibrahim, Chloe Richey, Delia Moloney, Amanda Cinelli, Coach Emily Kreidler. Back row: Coach Kelly Styf, Margaret Johnson, Quinn Rice, Charlotte Bartlett, Ally Weedon, Meadow O'Connell, Coach Kelly Penning. Not pictured: Katie Godin



Varsity Boys Basketball

Front row: Dillin McAlister, Zach Casey, Aidan Giunta, Cam Desmarais, Nic DeNorscia, Noah Massotti. Back row: Jimmy Dudley, Matt Godin, Caleb Deters, Isaiah Plantinga, Ethan MacGillivray, Coach Brady Bajema



JV Girls Basketball

Front row: Eden Cabral, Jillian Lawson, Madi Amati, Amanda Cinelli, Coach Emily Kreidler. Back row: Coach Kelly Styf, Ailish Mitchell, Quinn Rice, Charlotte Bartlett, Brinley Gonnevill, Ava Ibrahim, Coach Kelly Penning. Not pictured: Katie Godin



JV Boys Basketball

Front row: JV Dasilva, Ethan Hand, Dillin McAlister, Matt Wren, Joseph Tatulli, John Kim, Josh Monteiro. Back row: Brady Gorman, Liam Mulroy, Mason Barnatt, Brad Jolicoeur, Micah Deters, Noah Garrant, Camden Morse. Not pictured: Sebastian Araujo



Varsity Girls Tennis

Front row: Aimee Jolicoeur, Meah Ryan, Mia Besong, Olivia Soden, Natasha Carreiro, Arielle Zdanis. Center row: Bryn Rufo, Maggie Redding, Siena Mueller, Joanna Graves, Naomi Swanson, Alison Sim, Charlotte Defrancisco. Back row: Avery Dertien, Anela Esler, Gabby Neves, Charlotte Barlett, Ally Weedon, Georgia West, Ellie Dishington. Not pictured: Coach Michelle Graves, Coach Abby Graves, Julia Gibbons



Boys Tennis

Front row: Liam Menard, Kent Cote, Josh LaBonte, Mark Yarger, Sam Christo, Joseph Tatulli. Back row: Brady Gorman, Pedro Ramos, Coach Sean Cote, Evan Benjamin, Eli Allen. Not pictured: Jeremiah Bourguignon



Boys Track and Field

Front row: Coach Dede Guertin, Will Johnson, CJ Najem, Ethan Enoch, Evan Hand, Ethan Hand, Jack Crowley, George Foint, Jack Carlin. Center row: Coach Jeff Curtis, Eli Fortna, Sean McGrath, Matt Wren, Matthew Dudley, Peter Cloutier, Colin Gava, Logan O'Connell, Joseph French, Corbin Swaim, Coach Mike Persenaire. Back row: Daniel Belucio, Caden Anema, Eli Focht, Justin Vos, Nic Belucio, Matt Godin, Dylan Brown, Asher Bell, Declan Smith, Coach Chris Vander Baan. Not pictured: Nathan Romine



Girls Track and Field

Front row: Tori Foster, Maria Ramos, Megan Foellmer, Meredith Johnson, Allison Cinelli, Abby Flagg, Emily Flagg. Second row: Coach Dede Guertin, Tory Fredericks, Lexi Foster, Delia Moloney, Kaylin Fogg, Cadence Murzycki, Erin Wyndham, Emma Oosterman, Coach Jeff Curtis. Third row: Coach Mike Persenaire, Meadow O'Connell, Margaret Johnson, Hannah Walton, Angie Dicolella, Annie Mills, Emily Dill, Kira Simoncini, Ava Ibrahim, Grace Conners, Coach Chris Vander Baan. Back row: Lilly Wierenga, Emelyn DeWeerd, Molly Burkhart, Orla Donnelly, Avery Glidden, Emma Wierenga, Sophia Dill, Annika Fortna, Abigail Guertin. Not pictured: Faith Najem, Rebeca DaSilva, Elyssa Pastor



Cross Country

Front row: Abby Flagg, Abby Wozniak, Meredith Johnson, Eve Gergis, Cadence Murzycki, Delia Moloney, Erin Wyndham. Second row: Coach Annaliese Vander Baan, Emelyn DeWeerd, Emma Wierenga, Orla Donnelly, Molly Burkhart, Fiona Donnelly, Annika Fortna, Sophia Dill, Emily Dill. Third row: Coach Joel Alberts, CJ Najem, Justin Smith, Owen Neal, Eli Fortna, Evan Hand, Jack Carlin, Jack Crowley. Back row: Caden Anema, Matt Wren, Isaac Kling, Declan Smith, Colin Gava, Peter McHugh, Justin Vos, Coach Chris Vander Baan



Co-op Alpine Skiing

Liam Menard



Co-op Baseball

Wesley Burns



Girls Soccer

CMASS Champions

Boys Soccer

CMASS Champions

HS Girls Cross Country

Central Mass District E Champions
DVC Champions
D2 C Divisional Championship
Second place in D2 States

HS Boys Cross Country

DVC Champions

Boys Basketball

CMASS Champions

Girls Indoor Track

D4 State Runner-Up

Boys Track and Field

DVC Champions

Girls Track and Field

District E Champions
D6 State Champions

Coop Lacrosse

CMASS Champions



Softball

Front row: Emily Bastien, Hannah Ostroff, Jillian Lawson, Abby Wozniak, Elise Bastien. Back row: Madi Amati, Carrie Keeler, Alli Anema, Emma MacCarthy, Bella Carolino, Coach Lina Avila. Not pictured: Eilish Mitchell, Katie Godin



JV Girls Soccer

Front row: Coach Emily Cutler, Liza Gaudiano, Quinn Hicks, Neola Nigh, Tessa Grelewicz-Ferreira, Lara Alves, Izzy Menard. Back row: Jillian Lawson, Cadence Calarese, Madi Amati, Bella Carolino, Ryleigh Shanahan, Raegen McAlister, Abby Place. Not pictured: Aislyn Butzke



Varsity Boys Soccer

Front row: Declan Mitchell, Ethan Hand, Max Defrancisco, Noah Massotti, Caleb Deters, Joseph Tatulli, Corbin Swaim, George Foint, James Pollitt, Josh Monteiro. Back row: Hyun Joon (John) Kim, Dillin McAlister, Zach Casey, Ethan MacGillivray, Logan O'Connell, Charles Palmatier, Noah Robertson, Pedro Ramos, Sean McGrath, Dylan Brown, Coach Greg Massotti



Girls Indoor Track

Front row: Tory Fredericks, Abby Flagg, Meredith Johnson, Megan Foellmer, Erin Wyndham, Tori Foster, Emily Flagg. Back row: Emily Dill, Sophia Dill, Lilly Wierenga, Emma Wierenga, Avery Glidden, Kira Simoncini, Faith Najem, Coach Chris Vander Baan. Not pictured: Isabella Aloise, Lexi Foster, Finch Harvey, Siena Mueller, Abby Wozniak



Boys Indoor Track

Front row: Brady Yakimowsky, Jack Carlin, Enson Enoch, Jack Crowley, Evan Hand, Eli Fortna, CJ Najem, Declan Mitchell, Owen Neal. Back row: Coach Mike Persenaire, Ethan Enoch, Daniel Belucio, Justin Vos, Nic Belucio, Colin Gava, Owen Brown, Corbin Swaim, Coach Chris Vander Baan. Not pictured: Dylan Brown, Sam Christo



Co-op Golf

Micah Deters, Camden Morse, Jack Post, Chase O'Connell, Connor Kitchen, Gabe Deters. Not pictured: Coach Dennis Richey



Varsity Girls Soccer

Front row: Scarlett Shaw, Hannah Lashley, Jillian Lawson, Madi Amati, Carrie Keeler, Amanda Cinelli, Hailey Kindl. Center row: Coach Bryan Johnson, Addison Boone, Alison Sim, Jillian McGee, Chloe Richey, Kate Crowley, Assistant Hannah Pollitt. Back row: Coach Rocky VanTol, Ava Ibrahim, Camden Forget, Charlotte Bartlett, Margaret Johnson, Hannah Walton, Meadow O'Connell, Coach Beth Cutler



Varsity Volleyball

Front row: Kelsey McCormick, Hannah Ostroff, Siena Mueller, Hadasyah Mestres, Maria Ramos. Back row: Rebeca Dasilva, Emily Burkhart, Hannah Rejmer, Quinn Rice, Faith Najem, Coach Kelly Penning. Not pictured: Ally Weedon



JV Volleyball

Front row: Julia Monteiro, Meah Ryan, Emma Whitsitt, Charlotte DeFrancisco, Lucia Gaudiano, Natalie Tubo, Brianna Cardoza. Back row: Kyria Sedzro, Kendall Lynch, Jocelyn Hackathorn, Abigail Guertin, Genevieve Tatulli, Emma Oosterman, Ashley Jeong, Coach Adelaide Dykstra



Co-op Lacrosse

Declan Mitchell, Liam Mulroy, Noah Garrant, Jimmy Dudley, Chris Dudley



Co-op Wrestling

Caleb Tetreault, Ella Brochu, Noah Tetreault, Elijah Tetreault. Not pictured: Coach Baird Lashley, Ben Barron, Matt Dudley



Co-op Football

Micah Allen (third row-second from left), Peter Cloutier (second row-sixth from left), Jimmy Dudley (third row-first on left), Chris Dudley (second row-first on left), Matt Godin (third row-eighth from left)

The Power of Authenticity and Servant Leadership

Sam Hearn (Class of 2019), recent Political Science and International Relations graduate of Siena College, is heading to Bulgaria as a Fulbright Scholar, where he will serve as a Cultural Junior Ambassador. We recently caught up with Sam for a conversation before he heads overseas.

It's great to see you, Sam! Congratulations on being named as a Fulbright Scholar. What will you be doing in Bulgaria?

Thank you. I've been so grateful for every step in this process. As a Junior Ambassador in Bulgaria, I'll be teaching English, Business, and Leadership courses in the beautiful area of Smolyan. I'll also be coaching our school's team for the national English speech and debate tournament.

What was the application process like?

The process takes months. I began in the spring of my junior year and was so happy to hit "submit" in October of that year. The application goes to the US National Screening Board for vetting through the State Department where they decide whether or not to recommend you on behalf of the U.S. It was an honor just to be recommended at that stage. Next, I interviewed with my host country of Bulgaria and a bilateral commission between the two countries evaluates you and makes final selections. Then, the school makes the ultimate choice.

Were you assigned to Bulgaria or was that a choice?

I was able to choose. In fact, you can only apply to one country so it's important to understand that nation and why you would want to travel there. Bulgaria is one of the oldest nations in the world and sits at the crossroads of Asia, the Middle East, and Europe. I'm driven by community, working with others, and a love of business. Because of this, my advisor, the associate director for international programs and fellowships at Siena, recommended Bulgaria as a great fit.

What excites you about the people in Bulgaria? And what challenges do you anticipate?

The people are incredibly authentic and have a rich history. While I'm excited to share my knowledge and love of business, I'm also looking forward

to hearing what is important to my students and what they want to learn. The language will certainly be a challenge, but I'm excited to have those off-the-beaten-path experiences, conversations, and meals.

How long will you be in Bulgaria and are you making plans for beyond that time?

The position could go beyond the initial one year term. As I mentioned, I have a passion for business and leadership. I've begun work on my MBA and I hope to pursue a PhD in Industrial and Organizational Psychology. I want to help organizations be more mission-centered, to fulfill their missions strongly. I was so inspired by my time with Paul Newman's camp, Hole in the Wall Gang Camp, for kids with serious illness. I served as an expedition leader, creating impactful experiences for the campers. Working with that type of a mission-driven organization gave me a deeper sense of appreciating the moment and listening to God's call.

Who are the mentors who have shaped you?

Chris Vander Baan is one of my first mentors. As my principal and coach, his love of community and helping others, beyond the immediate task, have been impactful. He has a great love for the Lord and his sense of humor allows him to connect with so many people. There are many other teachers and friends from WCS who are authentic people, with a deep love of the Lord. I think of Mr. Craig, Mr. Lee, Mrs. Masselink, Mr. Godeke, and Mrs. Hudson, just to name a few.

Two other people who have shown me the meaning of servant leadership are Dr. Charles Seifert and Jerry DeFrancisco, both at Siena College. They both embody the prayer "Lord, make me an instrument of your peace." And of course my mother and father, with their strong faith, have inspired me my entire life.

It's interesting that you mention people in your life who are authentic, and that quality is also what stands out for you about the people of Bulgaria.

It's just such an important part of faith. Authenticity in your faith allows you to have care and compassion, and truly live out your faith. It's wonderful to be His servant, be guided by His love, and be active in people's lives.

Thank you, Sam. Congratulations again and we'll keep you in our prayers as you travel to Bulgaria at the end of the summer!



Serving as the College's Executive Intern at the Student Presidential Leadership Council at Siena



Fulbright Advisor and Associate Director of Study Abroad & International Fellowships at Siena College, Matt Schiesel with Sam Hearn

Milestones



REJOICE

Preschool Graduation

On Monday, June 5, our youngest graduates took the stage to celebrate this big step in their growth as God's children.



Eighth Grade Advancement

On Tuesday, June 6, we celebrated our eighth grade students as they prepare to move to high school.



Spring Auction

This year's Spring Auction had the feel of summer thanks to a beautiful day of soul-warming sunshine! The Spring Auction Committee is incredibly grateful for our sponsors, donors, attendees, online bidders, and student volunteers for another successful fundraiser for the mission of Whitinsville Christian School. Because of the generosity of this community, we raised more than \$96,000, including \$12,000 for our special appeal to provide new Chromebooks for our younger students. We look forward to seeing you next year!



Golf Outing

This year's Golf Outing saw good-natured competition, new participants, and great golf weather! We were thrilled to welcome quite a few student golfers – several of whom will be joining WCS's own golf team this fall!



ALUMNI UPDATES

BIRTHS



Peter (Class of 2009) and Samantha Bloem welcomed Baker William in early November.



Katiegrace (Youngsma) Dudley (Class of 2005) welcomed Elizabeth Grace in October 2022.



Mike and Kellsie (Ebbeling, Class of 2008) Whitner and big brother Colton Alexander welcomed Seth Anderson to the family on November 21, 2022.

ANNIVERSARIES



Henry (8th-grade class of 1943) and Gladys Ebbeling (8th-grade class of 1949) celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary on October 15, 2022.

WEDDINGS



Scott Ebbeling (Class of 2013) and Mariana Adami were married on June 24, 2022.



Parker Carlin and Dimitar Milev (Both Class of 2022) were married on June 10, 2023.



Annaliese Vander Baan (Class of 2011) and Aaron Wheeler were married on July 8 of this year.

CONDOLENCES

Cindy (Plantinga) Hart (Class of 1987) passed away in March of this year. Cindy was a great competitor on the basketball (first player to score 1,000 points) and volleyball courts. She was inducted into the Athletic Hall of Fame at Becker Jr. College, and later earned an additional Associates degree from Quinsigamond Community College in Early Childhood Education. She worked at the Worcester Head Start Administration before owning and operating Children at Hart Daycare for 10 years in Whitinsville.

Heather L. (Pilibosian) Whitney (Class of 1995) passed away in May of this year. She leaves behind her daughter, Ava, and her parents, John and Carol. Heather was a cheerleader at WCS and after graduating, worked as a stylist, later owning Studio 79. She loved Narragansett, art and music of the 60s and 70s, her two dogs, and all animals. Her daughter, Ava, was the greatest joy of her life.

Melissa Lynne Haringa (Class of 1999) passed away in July of this year. She leaves behind her husband, Samuel Nelson, and twin daughters, Emerson and Ellie. Melissa was a talented musician and a member of the orchestra at WCS. After graduating from college, she worked in healthcare as a home health aid and as a scheduler at Worcester Surgical Center.

NOTABLE NEWS

Aaron Gray (Class of 1992) is a chef for a hospital in Sioux Center, IA. His dessert biscuit took first place in the dessert category in the national Pillsbury contest in May.



REUNIONS



Members of the Class of 1988 gathered in June for a 35th reunion. Front row L-R: Ron Swanick, Patricia Jorritsma Begin, Deborah (Jorritsma) Herrick-Breault, Karen Casey Smith. Second row L-R: Bob Vanderbrug, Sean Grenier, Melissa VanderBaan, Laura Pelley, Deanna Grammenos, Kirk Steigler, Daryl Plantinga, Tom Commerett. Third Row L-R: Christopher Ananda Grant, Wayne Oosterman, Lisa Manley. Back Row: Troy Miedema, Jim Barnatte.



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COMMUNITY TOGETHER!**

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