

Catholic Community Newsletter

Compliments of the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board



Winter 2013

Bruce-Grey Catholic's Awesome Alumna Currently a Page in Ottawa

St. Mary's High School graduate Hannah Nicholls-Harrison has always been interested in science and she plans on taking a law degree in Bio-Ethics. Since graduating from high school however, she has taken advantage of two opportunities that required her to make some changes to her educational plans.

A native of Owen Sound, Hannah attended St. Basil's and Notre Dame elementary schools and St. Mary's High School. At St. Mary's, she took as many science and mathematics courses as she could. "The only arts classes I took were the mandatory ones," she said.

After graduating from high school, she applied to the University of Ottawa for admission to the chemistry program which is taught in French. "I was in French Immersion from grade one on," she said.

Hannah was accepted to University of Ottawa, but deferred her acceptance for one year because she had an opportunity to participate in an exchange program in Lille, France.

"I went to high school there – it was like grade 13 for me," she said. "But I also worked as a translator at the university there, travelling with the professors to conferences throughout Europe. In 10 months, I went to 10 countries. It was a fantastic experience."

Hannah returned to Canada in June 2012 not only to begin her deferred university program at the University of Ottawa, but also to begin a one-year contract as a Page in the House of Commons.

"I had applied for the Federal Page Program while I was in France," she said, "and I was accepted in May. The only hitch was, the Page Program doesn't allow students from science programs to take part because of the long lab hours. So I switched to Political Science and Ethics."

Federal Pages work 15 to 20 hours a week, taking and delivering messages to MPs, answering phones in the lobby, making photocopies, and delivering binders and briefing notes.

"I love it," she said. "And Question Period is the best; it demonstrates democracy at work."

Hannah gives credit to the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board for her academic success, as well as her involvement in extra-curricular activities.

"The quality of education in the Bruce-Grey Catholic Board is second to none. The teachers went over and above what I expected and the Director, Bruce MacPherson has always shown nothing but kindness."

Throughout her high school years, Hannah was on the swim and basketball teams, participated in public speaking, science fair and the green group. At graduation, she won an award for the most volunteer hours in the community which included the Owen Sound Aquatic Club, minor soccer, public speaking judging, the Compass Program and lifeguarding.

She also received the Women in Public Affairs award from the Owen Sound Zonta Club, both locally and for the region, as well as the Bruce-Grey Labour Council's Social Justice award, the school letter and the French Immersion award.

After she graduates from the University of Ottawa, Hannah plans on taking a bio-ethics program at law school, a joint program with the University of Toronto, McGill University, and the University of British Columbia.

"A great big thank you to Mr. Miller and all the staff at St. Mary's," she said. "They were fantastic. I am so privileged."



Page Hannah Nicholls-Harrison with House of Commons Speaker Andrew Scheer and Clerk Audrey O'Brien.



Sacred Heart High School hosts grade nine orientation

More than 160 grade eight students converged on Walkerton's Sacred Heart High School in early February, to get a taste of life in high school.

It was grade nine orientation which gave grade eight students the opportunity to

meet staff and become acquainted with the school and its programs. The school's Student Advisory Council leaders were on hand to answer questions and provide information to the future Sacred Heart students.

Director of Education announces retirement

Bruce MacPherson has announced his retirement as Director of Education effective this spring. "This is the second time I've announced my retirement from the same job," he chuckles.

Bruce had originally announced plans to retire in March of 2012, effective August 31. However, in June of last year, he agreed to stay on as Director at the request of Trustees, to guide the Board through Ministry mandated amalgamation talks with neighbouring Catholic boards. In December, then-Minister of Education Laurel Broten announced that all amalgamation talks were cancelled.

Trustees have accepted Bruce's resignation with regret and are actively searching for a replacement – with the assistance of the Institute for Catholic Education.

The Board hopes to have a new Director in place by early April to allow for a smooth transition into the 2013/2014 school year in September.

On behalf of the trustees, staff, and students, the Bruce-Grey Catholic Community News would like to thank Bruce for his dedication and leadership to the Board, and we wish him all the best as he embarks on another chapter in life's journey.

Visit our website!

www.bgcdsb.org



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Director's Message



Time of Reflection

This past year has been an exciting, and sometimes challenging, time for Catholic education. When we were informed that boards would be required to look for "partners" to engage in the amalgamation conversation, we were quick to ensure that our Board would have a say in the process. Numerous meetings were held with our board and two of our Catholic board neighbours and we quickly realized that we had many successful similarities. One thing in common for all three of our boards is we focus on students first. Although our meetings were very positive and each of the members participating in the conversations outlined our desire to continue to work together to support our students, our goal would be to maintain our own Boards. We were thrilled when the Minister of Education announced that amalgamations would not take place and savings would be found in other areas.

I am very proud to say that even during challenging times, all members of the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board continue to maintain a very supportive and engaging learning environment for our students. We have worked to demonstrate that we are a distinctly different educational system based on Gospel values. Our focus on our Virtues of Deep Caring and the Catholic Graduate Expectations support our desire to provide students with a faith filled learning opportunity.

The recent Ontario Catholic School Trustees Association's (O.C.S.T.A) public awareness campaign "Faith In Our Future" calls upon all members of our Catholic school system to share the great things taking place in Catholic education. We are a people of faith and it is our faith that will continue to guide us as we support our students in reaching their full potential. Please take a moment to visit www.FaithInOurFuture.ca for further details.

I have had the privilege of being a part of the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board for the past 31 years. The team work and sense of family I have experienced as a Teacher, Principal, Superintendent and Director, have provided me with an incredible vocation for which I will be forever grateful. You have taught me well the words of Edward Everett Hale, "I am only one, but I am one. I cannot do everything, but I can do something. And I will not let what I cannot do interfere with what I can do."

God bless and thank you,
Bruce

Owen Sound's St Mary's High School students help Toronto homeless

Twice a year – at Advent and Lent – a group of St. Mary's High School students travel to Toronto to help that city's homeless.

Students are guided through the streets with a representative from a local church.

Prior to arriving, the students gathered clothes, scarves, hats, mitts, and socks for the people who call the streets their home. They

also packed two bagged lunches to serve to the homeless.

According to St. Mary's Chaplain, Lydia Foch, the trips provide some important Catholic social teachings. In addition, students have an evangelizing experience as they speak to home room classes throughout the school about their experiences.



Sacred Heart School enters challenge

Teeswater's Sacred Heart School has taken on a huge challenge. With the support of the Bruce-Grey Catholic community, the school could win an electronic library.

Earlier this year, the school entered the Follett Challenge, a contest open to schools from across Canada and the United States. As part of the submission requirements, they were asked to describe how using technology helps to impact learning.

"Technology helps our small rural school connect to the real world, and prepares our students for their future," said the school's Principal, Janey Campbell. "Technology also keeps our students fully engaged in learning. Should we win, the resources gained will have a huge impact on the learning of our students."

Janey, and Janine McTeer, the Librarian, submitted an application along with a video explaining how they embrace 21st century learning at Sacred Heart School. They qualified for the contest and now have a chance to win a grand prize of \$60,000 in Follett products and services.

"Our whole school community got behind the contest by voting on line," said Janine. "Voting closes March 16."

For updates on their progress, Like them on Facebook at www.facebook.com/SacredHeartFollettChallenge

Follett Corporation was established 135 years ago and is based in River Grove Illinois. The company employs some 10,000 people. It's website describes the company this way:

Today, Follett generates more than \$2.7 billion in annual sales by providing universities, libraries and schools and school districts with a wide range of educational tools and services that fuel the learning process and spark the imagination. We bring together our capabilities in traditional and digital textbooks, course materials, e-commerce and software to create a unique platform of support for our customers.

In fact, through our seven business units, we touch the lives of millions of students ranging from adults taking classes on college campuses and in cyberspace to grade school children surfing the Internet in their school library.

Two schools to get additions

Immaculate Conception School in Formosa and St. Joseph's School in Port Elgin will each get additions next year.

The Formosa school will get a five-classroom addition costing \$2.1 million, while two new classrooms will be added to St. Joseph's School at a cost of \$1 million.

"The additions will replace 'temporary' facilities that have been in place for well over 25 years," said Cathy Colton, Bruce-Grey Catholic's Superintendent of Business.

Before construction begins however, the Board has created planning committees at each school, comprised of parents, staff, trustees and students who will help develop a plan that will best address "21st Century Learning" opportunities.

"We want to make sure we do it right," said Cathy. "That's why the planning process will have a large public component."

Construction is expected to begin in September, 2014.

Board plans major partnership with proposed Walkerton daycare facility

The Bruce-Grey Catholic DSB is hoping that a proposed daycare facility in Walkerton will be established at Mother Teresa School and will provide a major learning opportunity for Sacred Heart High School students.

The Board plans to partner with Georgian College in a Specialist High Skills Major program that would give the high school students an opportunity to earn credits and experience toward a career in early childhood education, by working in the new daycare.

"Of course, our plans are contingent upon the daycare being built," said Catherine Montreuil, the Board's Superintendent of Education. "And that is up to the Province."

The Bruce-Grey Catholic Board has submitted a \$300,000 funding proposal for Ministry approval. Total cost of the project is \$900,000, with the remaining cost to be shared by the Board, Brockton and Bruce County.

Once the funding is approved, the three partners will finalize the business plan for the daycare. After that is in place, the Board will work with Georgian College on the development of the Specialist High Skills Major Early Childhood Education program.

**Catholic Education Week
May 5 - 10, 2013**

**Growing
Together
in Faith**

Save the date!

8th Annual Catholic Education Week Dinner



Guest Speaker Jerry Creedon

Wednesday May 8, 2013

**6:30 pm
Knights of Columbus Hall
Walkerton**

**Reserve your ticket by calling
519-364-5820**

Formosa students win third prize in Ontario video contest

Students from Immaculate Conception School in Formosa recently entered the Ontario Catholic School Trustees Association (OCSTA) Faith in Our Future video contest.

Please see related story on the "Faith in Our Future" initiative (at right).

Students were asked to create 60-second videos that highlight the unique and distinctive way Catholic education has helped or inspired them in their educational journey.

Students in Ashley Turcotte's grade seven and eight and Deb Meyer's grade six, seven and eight classes accepted the challenge and created seven 60-second videos.

One of those videos won third place in the contest and the group will receive a \$50 gift card from Indigo/Chapters.

"The competition included videos from Catholic schools across the province," said Ashley, "and we are very proud that one of the winning submissions came from our little school board in Bruce-Grey."

Deb points out that "you can view all seven videos on our Bruce-Grey YouTube channel, including the third place winner, entitled We All Belong."

<http://www.youtube.com/user/brucegreycatholicdsb>



Immaculate Conception students who created We All Belong video.



Educating students to transform the world

Catholic trustees in Ontario have launched a special awareness campaign that focuses on the heart of our system – Catholic school students and graduates.

The campaign is called Faith in Our Future and offers opportunities for the Catholic community to speak up about the value and contribution of Catholic education to the life of the province.

"Whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me."

Matthew 25:40.

Catholic schools inspire students to reach their full academic, spiritual, social and physical potential so that they can be transformative in their efforts to promote social justice and become part of the active building of the Kingdom of God.

This educational journey is reinforced and protected by Catholic school trustees, superintendents, principals, teachers, board staff, clergy, parishioners and the support of Ontario's 2.2 million Catholic ratepayers.

"Join us in this recognition of the vital role of Catholic education in Ontario by completing the subscription form on the Faith in Our Future website at www.faithinourfuture.ca."

– Norman Bethune, Chair, Bruce-Grey Catholic DSB.

Learning, the 21st century way

A recent search on Google News for the term "21st century learning" resulted in 9,620 results. A "general" search on Google of the same term resulted in over 38 million hits. It's a simple and straightforward term, but it has stirred a great deal of interest recently.

"Much has been written about 21st century learning," said Catherine Montreuil, the Board's Superintendent of Education. "Depending on the author, the list of skills to be focused upon varies. Regardless of the source however, there seems to be consensus on the development of skills in the areas of communication, collaboration, critical thinking, computer/technology literacy and citizens who work in accordance with our Virtues."

A key outcome for 21st century learning is higher achievement for all, including students who learn in different ways.

"By providing students with learning tasks that allow them to benefit from technology," said Catherine, "we are calling on our teachers to shift learning tasks, assignments, tests and exams from those asking for recall of facts and dates, to those using the dates, facts and other information to analyze and synthesize information, to make accurate predictions and evaluations, and to create new knowledge and solutions."

Students are no longer required to enter assignments they have written on paper into the computer. They now use computers to research, to develop thinking webs, and to

collaborate with other students – in their own classes, and around the world.

Closing the achievement gap is a cornerstone of 21st century learning. In order to increase achievement for students with special learning needs, the Bruce-Grey Catholic DSB has invested in Apple iPads to assist with literacy, numeracy and the development of higher order thinking skills.

Over the first two years of the iPad program, student achievement in grades three and six increased in reading, writing and mathematics from 14 to 30 per cent. Students have increased both the quality and quantity of their work by using the technology.

This initial iPad strategy has given root to a growth in iPad technology in general education. Two of the Board's elementary teachers have been successful in applying to the Ministry of Education for funding to expand the practices teachers are learning with respect to technology for learning. Currently, the number of iPads is increasing through school funding, Catholic School Council Funding as well as from some other innovative funding sources.

"We have some early successes in 21st century learning," said Catherine. "Our teachers, administrators, support staff and students have much to be proud of. Our next steps will be on redesigning our teaching and learning tasks to deepen thinking skills, increase collaboration between our students and explore the role our Virtues play with respect to our resources and decisions as we move further into the 21st Century."

"It is a challenge that will continue to ensure our students are successful as they move into their adult lives," she said.



Students at St. Joseph's School in Port Elgin use iPads.





Members of the Sacred Heart Crusaders team pay their respects to former teammate Wes Cameron's family: brother Wendel, mother Yolanda and father Jamie at the Wes for Youth Online.ca High School Boys Hockey Tournament in Walkerton. Owen Sound Sun Times photo.

Sacred Heart Crusaders play in tournament to remember former teammate

The first annual Wes for Youth Online.ca High School Boys Hockey Tournament was held in January at the Walkerton Arena, with six teams playing in medal games. But this was not an ordinary hockey tournament. This tournament was in honour of former Sacred Heart Crusaders student Wes Cameron, who committed suicide on September 26, 2011.

The tournament featured three local teams: the St. Mary's Mustangs, the John Diefenbaker Trojans and Sacred Heart. All three teams had players who were former teammates of Wes in the Grey-Bruce Highlanders AAA organization.

The Camerons started the Wes for Youth Online.ca Foundation following their son's death. The foundation offers information, guidance and resources for children and teens with the help of professionally trained online counsellors. The tournament was expected to raise some \$5,000 for the Foundation.

The Crusaders won their final game, beating Centre Wellington 1 – 0 in the silver medal

event. Dustin Goetz scored the only goal and goalie Mike Ratchford earned the shutout.

"There was a huge emotional investment in this tournament by our boys and it shows how wide-reaching Wes' influence was. He played minor hockey with a lot of guys in this area," said Mike Orr, Sacred Heart coach, after his team lined up to shake hands and exchange hugs with the Cameron family.

"It was a spontaneous show of support by our boys and I thought they showed a lot of class by doing that," he said.

The arena's lobby featured a display with a photo of Wes, and information and pamphlets about mental illness.

Wes' father, Jamie, commented that "the outpouring of support from the community and the kids the last two days has been amazing. Even the kids from the other teams have been fantastic with the way they've behaved. They've listened to the message and taken the pamphlets that we've had for them. It was a wonderful two days."

St. Mary's High School French Immersion students test Notre Dame students' crime solving abilities



SMHS students host Notre Dame students in French Immersion event.

In December, French Immersion students from Notre Dame School were "recruited" into "police college" at St. Mary's High School. Both schools are located in Owen Sound.

The St. Mary's students planned a number of games and activities under the "police academy" theme, including an obstacle course.

At lunch time, the "recruits" graduated from "police college" and received a certificate. In the afternoon, the group

participated in a murder mystery to put their French language and "police college" skills to the test.

The event was entirely planned and run by the high school students, under the supervision of teacher Kristen Fitzsimmons. It gave the elementary students an opportunity to experience a day in high school while using and developing their French skills through interaction with the older students.

Bruce-Grey Catholic DSB employees receive Canadian Forces Decoration

Charlene Stanislow, a teacher at Sacred Heart High School in Walkerton and Chris Stanislow, Head Custodian at Sacred Heart School in Teeswater, were presented the Canadian Forces Decoration (CD) in January.

The CD is awarded to officers and non-commissioned members of the Canadian Forces who have completed 12 years of service. The decoration is awarded to all ranks who have a good record of conduct.

Both Charlene and Chris are commissioned officers who work in the Canadian Forces Reserves as part of the Cadet Instructors Cadre. In addition to their daily jobs within their schools, they put in countless hours at the Air Cadet Squadron in Hanover where Charlene is the Commanding Officer and Chris is the Training Assistant of the Squadron. Earlier this year, Charlene was one of 30

recipients of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal for Huron Bruce.



Learning Management System another product for 21st century learning

The province's Learning Management System (LMS) is a powerful tool that allows students to use new technology in a safe environment.

"LMS provides computer-based tools to post homework, reminders, changes to activities, tips/prompts, upcoming events, and school spirit/motivational thoughts as conversation starters," said Denise Buttenaar, the Board's eLearning Consultant. "The LMS also includes a calendar to post due dates and field trips, and can be used to generate quizzes and collect assignments from students."

Other features include a drop box that allows students to submit work from home and to access assignments to work on at home. Teachers can edit files and return them to students

with feedback. Students have access to ePortfolio which creates and archives items to demonstrate student growth or competence in a skill area.

"Students can even blog safely through this system," said Denise.

Content is provided by eLearning Ontario or teachers may use their own content.

The Ministry has issued a directive that 25 per cent of students in the province should be actively using the LMS by the end of the school year.

"At the Bruce-Grey Catholic DSB, that amounts to 970 students," Denise points out. "To reach that goal, the Board will be holding a number of professional development sessions and workshops for teachers."