



A Calvin Christian School Publication

i n TOUCH

2017 - 2018 / Issue 2

SPRING MUSICAL

**CCS EVENTS &
ACTIVITIES**

**GRADE 8 CLASS
OF 2018!**

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ABC - Arn Boonstra Connections

by Arn Boonstra



Image by Steve Dobrenski

Spring is the favourite season for many people. That is probably no less true for students and staff here at Calvin Christian School. I often hear people say that winter is too long and that spring and warm weather are so welcome. This year in particular it seems as if winter was reluctant to release its grip on us. For the first time in years, we had to call a snow day in mid April. Yet, spring has arrived, and with that, a hub of activity at CCS.

We have concluded Christian Education Week, and we had the privilege of welcoming parents and visitors to our school for Open House Day on May 1. We recently revamped our Open House Day to include the Shine Festival. This year students in Jubilee through grade 3 exhibited their project work for the broader community. The SHINE Festival is a culmination of the hard work that students completed during the winter months. Classrooms were organized so that projects could be proudly displayed. Parents and visitors to the school toured the classrooms, while munching on snacks that the students prepared and listening to students share what they had learned. Having the opportunity to view the projects myself, I couldn't help but be impressed. The expertise of the students was amazing, and their excitement about their projects was contagious. A tremendous amount of work goes into preparing for our SHINE Festival, but it sure is worth it.

The day after our Open House we welcomed over 600 seniors for our annual Grandparents/Grandfriends Day. One of the highlights of the morning was the program that we shared with the grandparents in the gym. Under the guidance of their teachers, the students performed marvellously; the program ended with our primary choir singing Chris Tomlin's Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone). More than one grandparent could be seen wiping away tears as the students sang the song with passion and conviction. After the program, the grandparents visited their grandchildren in the classrooms. It was a wonderful day all around, and I'd like to thank the school's Public Relations Committee who did a wonderful job of hosting the events of Christian Education Week.

In addition to the events of Christian Education Week, there has been so much more going on. The school continues to implement the Responsive Classroom program, which focuses on the social and emotional intelligence of children. One of the components of Responsive Classroom is the Morning Meeting. I have had the privilege of visiting most of the classrooms to join in on the Morning Meeting that takes place at the start of every day. It's a beautiful time of setting the tone and goals for the day. Students and teacher greet each other respectfully and kindly. They work on sharing thoughts on a variety of questions, and they learn to listen to one another. Teachers weave the school theme into the meeting, which also includes a time for devotions. As you may recall from my fall message, the school theme is "Fix My Eyes on God" and is based on Psalm 121:1. A number of character traits have been selected for students and teachers to reflect upon as they "fix their eyes on God," traits such as perseverance, integrity, kindness, forgiveness, and honesty.

As the staff and I chat about our implementation of Responsive Classroom, we discuss whether we notice a difference in our students. Although it is difficult to answer that question definitively, we do see signs that it is making a difference. One step we have taken to help us accomplish the goals of Responsive Classroom was to invite an RC expert, Joe Tilley, to visit the school and offer an analysis of our implementation of the program. Mr. Tilley was very impressed with how things are going and encouraged us to explore other components of the program. We hope to continue to fine-tune our Responsive Classroom program so that students can be supported in their social interactions and in their emotional well being.

And what would spring be without our annual Spring Program. In the middle of April students in grades 4-8 participated in the musical, Once Upon a Mattress. We had 4 performances and close to packed "houses" for each. It was clear to me that the students enjoyed being a part of something special and this event that allowed them to develop their gifts in music and drama. The performances were amazing. Perhaps what made the program so special is that it was such a community event. Not only were the grade 4-8 students involved, but most of our staff was connected to the musical in one way or another. We also received wonderful support from parents and volunteers. A special thank you to the many folks who helped us out. Your investment in our students is greatly appreciated.

Finally, a great deal continues to go on behind the scenes. The board of directors has been very busy exploring our membership policy. We invited Ray Hendricks, the Executive Director of the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools, to come and talk to us about the history of Christian education in the province and about the choices other schools have made to deal with membership issues. The board feels very strongly about educating itself in order to provide direction for our membership. In addition to the membership question, the board continues to mull over the monthly reports provided by the Compass Committee (see the Compass Committee report in this issue). I have been so impressed by the board's desire to be informed and to show leadership on these very important issues. I think at times there is concern that the board is moving too slowly in addressing these topics, but given the significance of the issues, I believe the board is taking the time it needs to weigh options and to make the best possible decisions. At this time tentative plans are being made to involve the membership in both of these topics in the near future. Please pray for the board as they seek to do God's will in leading Calvin Christian School.

Spring is indeed a wonderful time. Just around the corner are class trips, field day activities and the graduation ceremony. We continue to have lots to look forward to, and we are grateful for God's leading as we seek to serve Him. As we finish the school year, I am reminded of the first two verses of Psalm 121 - "I lift my eyes to the mountains, where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth." Comforting words to guide us through today and tomorrow. May we all experience the help of our Lord and Saviour. •



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VISION - Calvin Christian School's vision is that all God's children are "thoroughly equipped for every good work." 2 Timothy 3:17

MISSION - The mission of Calvin Christian School is to assist parents by providing for each student a Bible based elementary education in a supportive Christian classroom community that nurtures growth in knowledge, maturity and commitment to God for sharing in the life and work of his people in the world.

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Navigating Growth At Calvin Christian School

By Krista Dam-VandeKuyt

How do we choose the right direction for Calvin Christian Schools' future? That question has surfaced repeatedly in conversations here at our school. As a parent serving first on the Education committee and now on the Board of Directors, the blessings and challenges of a school at capacity comes up in most of our discussions and decision-making.

Last year, after Ted Postma and Harry Meester prepared demographic studies, compiled the town hall discussion comments, and presented a "Next Steps" document to the Board of Directors and our school community, it was clear to us that we were just at the beginning of this journey. There was still much work to do in investigating the possible options.

We had several destinations but no map or compass to help this ship called Growth arrive at the right port. And thus, Compass was formed: a committee of passionate people invested in Calvin Christian School and in the overall growth of Christian Education in the greater Hamilton area

The Compass Committee - Mark van der Woerd, Rachel Schinkel, J.D. Alkema, Val Kloet, Rob Ouwehand, Tyler Eggink, and Arn Boonstra - meets regularly (even multiple times one week!) to continue the work of charting possible directions. Doreen Van de Ban and I serve as Board representatives.

The committee has met with community and school leaders, toured possible sites for a new school, and compiled research. We spent a lot of time discussing each development at length, considering its pros, cons, logistics and practicality.

I leave most meetings filled with gratitude for the energy and enthusiasm this group has in carrying out its mandate. There are times after meetings when the enormity of the task feels overwhelming. With many good and developing options, which way do we steer?

These are the times I need to remind myself that we are not actually the ones at the helm. God is steering the growth and we are called to be faithful; faithful in our work while serving on this committee but also faithful in prayer.

Next month, Compass and the Board of Directors will be meeting together to drill down on the most promising opportunities. If you have any questions or comments about addressing the growth and expansion at Calvin Christian School, please feel free to send us an email at boardchair@ccshamilton.ca.

We'd love to hear from you! Please keep Compass and the Board in your prayers as we continue this work for expanding Christian Education in Hamilton. •

Students in 3A are learning about the 10 Commandments. As the lesson wraps up, one student raises his hand and says:

"Everyone says that tablets are a modern day invention. But my dad told me they've been around since the time of Moses."



Image by Sandra Mulder

Grade 8 Class



Grade 8 Reflections

I liked being on the soccer team because I worked really hard in the summer and I got to miss some school. Chibu U.

I've had a chance to make great friends at CCS. Going to a Christian school is important because even when you are going through hard times, you know that God is there. You learn about him every day. Eden V.

I have learned many things at CCS, but by far the most important is that practice makes progress, not perfect.

Having an amazing role in the musical, *Once Upon a Mattress* has changed my life forever. Thanks for the best ten years of my life CCS. Lily W.

CCS is a wonderful place to be, surrounded with friends and fellow Christians. I loved composition, grammar and art. There will always be regrets, wherever you go, but attending CCS was not a regret. Vanessa K.

My favorite grade school memory was the Fair Glen trip in grade six. I liked it so much because we got to do a lot of fun things. Logan N

I'm thankful that my parents sent me to CCS. I've made great memories and connections. One of my memories was blowing up my noodles in the microwave. I may, or may not have started a fire.... Chelsea S.

I enjoyed having a class that loved to have fun. It was rare if a day went by where we all didn't break out into laughter! Ally D

I can remember way back to my very first day of school in JK. I remember crying because I couldn't take my indoor shoes home. Another good memory was my first time qualifying for Master Field Day. Toby UA

I enjoyed grade six, when we helped get two new soccer nets for the playground. Being in a Christian school meant that most of my friends had the same values and beliefs as me. Eli S.

Being at CCS has really helped me grow in knowing God. The teachers here are amazing and passionate about their work. I loved learning fun songs in grade three, participating in fun Bible activities in grade five and checking math with the teacher's mark book in grade six. CCS has been an amazing experience. I look forward to graduation and to attending HDCH. Jessica R.

Going to a Christian school is a good way to grow in your faith and get a great education. I really enjoyed the grade eight retreat at Christie's Conservation area. Zach M.

My years at CCS have been great! I enjoyed playing in the sports tournaments and bringing home the banner in basketball. Playing piano with the praise team in grades seven and eight has been so much fun. Being able to learn about God and the Bible at school is truly a blessing. I am looking forward to the end of the year class trip to Ottawa and to graduation. Carly S.

I enjoyed being on the CCS hockey team. I always enjoy hanging out with my friends at school. Kayden M.

My favourite year at CCS was when I was in grade five. I loved my teacher because she was so kind. My favourite unit was our social studies on government. I liked the class discussions. Lauren S.

I came to CCS in grade 4. It has been a great school for me. I have felt like I belong here and am glad that I was able to meet so many new people. Two of my favorite memories are the class trip to Wild Waterworks and the *Once Upon a Mattress* production. I'm really excited to start highschool and am ready to see what God has in store for me in the future. Bethany V

Two of my favourite field trips were Bingeman's and Fair Glen. Trevor DV

The best parts of school are my friends, Fair Glen and snow days. I'm really excited for the Ottawa trip at the end of the year. Alex M.

In grade one I met people I'd never seen before who became some of my best friends. In grade eight I got to be on a lot of the sports teams. This year has given me a lot of friendships with other people. CCS is a truly great school that will always be with me. Solomon Z.

My favourite memory was nap time in Kindergarten. I would always go under the slide with a friend and talk. We would always get in trouble. Being in a Christian school has brought me closer to God. Jacob V

I came to CCS two years ago. It was amazing. I immediately felt like I belonged. I can talk about my faith easily here and have grown closer to God in these two years. My favourite memory is the grade eight retreat. It was a nice time of getting to know each other better. Jolene W.

Being at CCS has been really fun. Hanging out with my friends, being on sports teams and going on field trips are all things I enjoyed. Thank you to all my teachers and friends for making it so fun. Gavin S.

In my years at CCS I have learned so many things. The teachers are so supportive, caring and always happy to help. I remember how much I loved the slide in JK and playing with the scooters and the parachute in grades 1-3. It will be sad to leave CCS but I'm excited to begin high school in the fall. Joel H.

Some of my fondest memories are of having class conversations with everything, just talking about things that don't seem important. I love laughing and making jokes with my friends. I wish it would never have to end. Matthew K.

CCS has been my favourite school. It's the first place where I've made real friends. Sam. S.

One of my best memories is the trip to Ottawa in grade six for the MusicFest Nationals. It was so much fun to travel to Ottawa with my friends, have our own hotel room, explore the city and have a chance to compete with the choir. Claire W.

I remember when in grade six, one of the girls in my group had a mouth full of water when she started laughing. She accidentally sprayed the water all over one of the boys in the group. We laughed hysterically. Spencer S.

One of my favourite memories was the opportunity to be the backstage manager for the *Once Upon a Mattress* production. I got to run the entire production from backstage. I learned so much. I was surrounded by fantastic actors and grew so close to them. I can call them all my family. Chloe VB

100 Day

By Diane Heeg & Rachel Koning



On February 13 the grade 1 classes celebrated the 100th day of school. The day was filled with “100” inspired activities and the students enjoyed showing what they had already learned. The grade 1A class decided that on the 100th day of school they would like to perform 100 acts of kindness. The students showed kindness through words and actions to those around them. They were very excited when the last heart was put on the 100th chart and most asked if they could try for even more. In grade 1B, a highlight of the day was bringing in a collection of 100 items. Students brought in collections such as hockey cards, noodles, hair elastics, straws, and lego pieces. It was a lot of hard work



putting their items into groups of 10, 20, 25 and 50. At lunch we celebrated our 100th day of school with some pizza that we made in the kitchen. We were successful in placing more than 100 pepperonis on our pizzas! •

Pioneer Day

By Julia Neven Gr.3



Grade 3 students had a Pioneer Day on February 15, 2018. At the start of our Pioneer day, Mrs. Eising rang a bell and all the grade 3 students lined up outside. We came inside and sang “O Canada”. After that the teacher did an “ear and nail check” and that was fun. Next, we had our 3Rs - which were reading, writing, and arithmetic. The reason they were called the

3Rs is because they all have Rs in the words. We did arithmetic first. The second R that we did was reading, and the third R was writing. After that, we looked at each other’s snacks. I had strawberries. Then, Mr. Boonstra walked into our classroom, We got out of our desks and stood straight and tall to greet him. Mrs. Eising called the girls by their first names and the boys by their last. That felt funny in the inside of me.



After recess, we split into 3 groups, and some parents came and volunteered to help. My mom came to help us make butter. We had to shake the cream to make butter. After my turn, my hands fell asleep. After we made butter, we made cornbread. Soon we did art and weaving. For the art we made two pictures look like one picture. When we finished the art, we ate our cornbread with our butter on top. The butter was the best butter I ever tasted!

Later that day, we did more pioneer activities without parents. At the end of the day I was so, so tired and sad - I wished pioneer day was longer.

I HAD THE BEST PIONEER DAY EVER! •

RAZ Kids Testing

By Amanda Breimer



In grade 3, students have been practicing 3 different types of reading: read to self, read to someone and listening to reading. This year the grade 3 teachers were asked to pilot a secure, engaging, online reading program, RAZ Kids, that allows students to read a book, listen to the book, record/listen to themselves reading and answer comprehension questions at their own reading level. In the fall, students completed the MAPS testing which assessed students math, language and reading skills. The results from the reading MAPS assessment allowed for the teacher to learn what reading level each individual

student was at and is able to give differentiated instruction, reading material and assessments simply by using RAZ Kids. Teachers are able to run several benchmarks (assessments) to establish the progress for each student and see a breakdown of the strengths and areas to work on for each student, through an in depth report on each comprehension skill. New reading material is added monthly, allowing for students to enjoy engaging, relevant reading material at their own reading level. •

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Fair Glen Grade 6 Trip

By Jim Hosmar & Aleida van der Woerd

Adventure Awaits. Grade 6 had a snowy start to their Fair Glen trip and with great anticipation we left only a little later than expected. Upon arriving, 50 excited grade 6 students, 6 parents, and 2 teachers unloaded and prepared for their first adventure; deciding on who is sleeping in the top bunk. Students went from high ropes, to cross country skiing, to team building activities. The second day students ran around playing the infamous animal instincts game and orienteering. Each night, students dragged their tired bodies to the basement of the Trent lodge to gather together, reflect on the day, and share stories.

Before boarding the bus on the third day the students were instructed to survive the wilderness and start a fire with only one match. They were given details on what they could use to build a fire and they worked together to accomplish a goal. In the end, students walked away with an experience they will always remember; one where friendships were strengthened, comfort zones stretched, and risks taken. This was such a wonderful experience to share. Thank you to the chaperones who braved two nights with 50 pre-teens. We couldn't do this without your willingness to hang out with us for three days. •



Student in grade 7B: Circles are pointless!

-

Second student in 7B: Yeah, they're never ending.

Fine Arts Festival: Drama Day

By Jacqueline DeJong

The Niagara Fine Arts Festival was something completely different this year! Organizers planned a Drama Day for the grade 6 students from five area Christian schools, at the Shaw Festival Theatre in Niagara-on-the-Lake. On Wednesday, February 21, students from all the schools were placed in four different groups. Each group participated in three workshops and then they were given a backstage tour of the Shaw Festival. In the workshops students learned and practiced voice

use and movement, as instructed by the Shaw actors. They also worked on Bible tableaux, led by a person who worked at the Back to God Hour. As part of the tour students saw the areas where the Shaw creates its own costumes, wigs, sets (some up to 5000 kg!) and props. We are given information about the Shaw's upcoming production of C.S. Lewis' *The Magician's Nephew*. Drama Day 2018 was truly a wonderful experience for our grade six students! •



Sports at CCS

Sports is a vital part of the extra-curricular program at Calvin Christian School. During the winter months, grades 7 & 8 students enjoyed playing intramural soccer, and grades 5 & 6 students participated in some intramural floor hockey action. In addition to the intramural sports, CCS students enjoy organized sports and competitions.

The Blazer hockey team competed in two tournaments this year, the Niagara District Christian School Tournament and the Hamilton District Christian High tournament. The Blazers won all 5 games in the first tournament and all 4 games in the second, resulting in winning the championship in both tournaments. Including exhibition games and all hockey tournaments over the past two years, CCS is undefeated in 23 games! Not even the best NHL team can match that record!

The boys basketball team learned a lot about playing as a team after some hard losses in the Hamilton District Christian High Tournament. From here, they went on to win all of their games in the Niagara District Tournament in Jordan Station. The most difficult loss of the season for the girls and boy basketball teams was losing in the Students vs. CCS Staff game. Overall, it was a great basketball season for our CCS players.

The girls basketball team placed first in the Niagara District Christian Schools tournament and in the Hamilton District Christian High tournament. They had a perfect season, not losing to any team!

The Indoor Track team enjoyed a great day of competition at the 93rd annual Hamilton Indoor Games on February 19, at the FirstOntario Centre. There were 36 teams from 30 schools (public, catholic, and private) competing at these games. Thirty CCS athletes from grades 6-8 went to participate in running events, long jump, and triple jump. The CCS team placed fourth in several events and second in five events, winning silver medals.

Our students look forward to the annual Field Day event, where the students compete as teams in 8 events - 4 competitive events and 4 games events. We thank our grade 8 students for the work they put in to leading these teams! On Track Day, the grades 4-8 students participated in the 800m run, 200m run, and high jump. The athletes who attained a first place standing in the competitive events will compete for CCS at the Niagara District Master Field Day, at the Mohawk Sports Complex on Upper Kenilworth Avenue. •



The Ski Trip

By Jim Hosmar & Aleida van der Woerd



On February 16, about 50 excited grade 7 & 8 students boarded a Calvin Christian School bus, travelling to Snow Valley Ski Resort in Barrie to enjoy a day of skiing, snowboarding, and tubing. After a two hour bus ride, students were anticipating a fun day and were eager to hit the slopes. For several, this was their first experience with these types of activities, and in order to ensure safety, students were required to take what is called a stripe test. Most students were able to hit the slopes by lunch time after passing their test and receiving their green stripe. An opportunity for an upgrade to the blue stripe was offered and several students took advantage of this as well. We enjoyed our activities until 4 pm, and then it was time to head home. All in all, God granted us a great, injury free day. A special thanks to the chaperones who came along, and to Mrs. Mantel for all the organizing. •



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Once Upon A Mattress

By Karis Schoon and Jenna Versteeg

From a student perspective.

It's been a long journey for those in this year's musical production, *Once Upon A Mattress*. From our first read-through back in December for the cast, to the many meetings only days before the production for hair and makeup or props teams, we can all agree we've come a long way and we've all grown a lot. This production would not have been possible, even in the slightest, without the dedicated help of many different groups: tech, hair and makeup, actors, costumes, choreography, props and other helpers like our babysitters or Shane Construction, who donated lunch for our all day Saturday practice. It's hard to find someone in grades 4-8 or even a teacher who wasn't involved in the play in some way. From two actors' point of view, this play really instilled a love of theatre in us. It was so much fun interacting with all the other groups and actors, just getting to have fun onstage. One of our favourite memories was the first day when everyone tried their costumes on for the first time. It was really awesome to see Jenna and Amie (Queen Aggravain) in their elegant gowns and Lily and Kaitlyn (Princess Winnifred) with their swampy dresses and slime!

All of the costumes definitely helped to pull the production together, as well as the set. We had so many talented people working on the set and the stage looked amazing! Props to the props crew for their amazing work, and to Mrs. Arlene Mussche for creating those amazing sets.



A special shout-out to our directors, Ms. Weber-Van Barneveld, Mrs. van der Woerd, and Chloe Van Barneveld. Without them we wouldn't have made it on stage on time for any scene and we wouldn't have had nearly as much fun!

Another favourite part was backstage dancing, especially for "The Minstrel, the Jester and I" and "Shy," even though we may not have known all the actions. In the hall just behind the stage, you could see the Jester or a princess acting as Winnifred in "Happily Ever After." As you can tell, being backstage was just as fun as being on stage.

This play was a lot of fun and has definitely been a highlight of the year for many of those involved. Last, but certainly not least, we'd like to thank our audiences for coming out and seeing our shows! •





Christian Education Week

Open House & Grandparents Day

By Stephanie Haanstra

The first week of May was a beautiful and busy one at CCS!! It was Christian Education Week and we were proud to be a part of this wonderful week of celebration! On Tuesday May 1, Calvin Christian School hosted an Open House for the community and parents to come visit the classrooms in action. Classrooms were all open and welcoming. Visitors were welcome to attend a morning meeting, a math class, lunch hour, or even a gym class. Many visitors filled our hallways and there was a lot of excitement in the air!

On Wednesday May 2, we hosted Grandparents Day! We were honoured to welcome approximately 700 of our dearly loved grandparents! The morning started off with a beautiful program in the gym where our students from JK-8 sang, played music, and acted. There is so much talent at CCS, and it was nice to be able to share that with our grandparents! Students then had time to visit with their grandparents in their classrooms and show off some of their most recent artwork and projects. We ended the morning with a lovely luncheon in the gym. We are so blessed as a school community to have such a large, loving, supportive foundation on which to raise our children. The love between grandparent and grandchild was evident everywhere you looked. We thank the staff at CCS and the PR committee and many volunteers for making Christian Education Week a true celebration! As the primary choir sang, "And like a flood, His mercy reigns, Unending Love, Amazing Grace!" •



Shine Festival

By Deb Van Egmond

This year, the Jubilee, SK, and primary classes hosted the Calvin Christian School Shine Festival. The festival provided the students with an opportunity to share their beautiful work with family and friends of CCS. In the weeks leading up to the festival, the students completed Project-Based Learning activities to investigate and respond to an engaging question or challenge. The students were motivated to learn and explore God's creation in their studies of birds, fish, the amazing human body, movement, and cross-cultural lands and people. Students were able to answer questions such as, 'As ornithologist, how can we care for our feathered friends?' or 'How can we design a vehicle for exploring that is safe to use and cares for God's creation?' or 'How can we inform others about healthy living?' The students worked very hard and went through multiple steps and revisions to get to their final product. There was much excitement on the day of the festival, and the students thoroughly enjoyed being able to share their work with the visitors. We thank the teachers and paraeducators for their work in preparing all the students for this special day! We also thank our many guests for taking the time to visit and affirm the students for the beautiful work they were so proud of. Shine reflections from Grade 3:

"I had butterflies in my stomach, but when I presented I felt better..." Danielle K.

"I worked hard on my project, and I love how it turned out when I was done. I like to do projects, and this was my favourite one." Jessica G.

"I felt nervous, excited, and proud on the day of the Shine Festival. It took me a minute to remember my research, but once I did I just kept talking about it. I'm sure the people who came to see us present learned a lot about our countries." Nadia D.

"At first I felt nervous, but after I did a few presentations I didn't feel so nervous. Everyone loved my Tim Tam Cheesecake. Nathaniel's dad came back four times to my project to get cheesecake!" Claire D.

"When I first presented, I was really nervous, but when I got to the third time, I got the hang of it. I was very confident...it was fun presenting." Cole V.

"On Shine Festival I was so nervous, but I think I can do it again now... My favourite part of the projects was the variety of foods. It was hard work, but I still did it. I was very proud of my work." China U.

"When the Shine Festival first started I was very nervous. Then, after the first person, I didn't feel so nervous. After that it went smoothly. I got about twenty-four visitors to speak to." Elijah B.

"For my country project, I did the country of France. I loved learning more and more about France every day. The food I brought in was cream puffs. They were really good. Some people took two of them." Amber B.

And some Shine Festival presentation advice from Leah G.:

'Be confident, be brave, be ready to present your country project. Amaze your teachers, amaze your parents, amaze your customers. Be who you were made to be.' •

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Saying Goodbye

by Arn Boonstra

I remember back in my university days that one of my education professors told me that one of the most important people you want to get along with at school is the custodian. Those words have never rung so true to me as now when I write this article. John VanArragon has worked at Calvin Christian School for 23 years, and during that time, he has been a constant source of support for the CCS staff and students. It is with sadness that we say goodbye to John as he transitions into retirement.

Little did we realize back when John was hired what a tireless and conscientious worker was being added to the CCS team. I can't count how many times people have commented to me on how great the school building looks. People are often surprised at the fact that the building is actually 17 years old, and I believe that is a testament to how hard John has worked to keep it looking so great.

When I think of my professor's comment about getting along with the custodian, I reflect upon the position of custodian. I know John has been called "janitor," "custodian," and "caretaker." However, John's work at the school has been so comprehensive that we actually had to change the name of the position when looking to hire a person to replace him. We now call the position Facility Manager. In addition to looking after the day-to-day affairs of keeping a building looking great (sweeping, dusting, scrubbing, vacuuming, wiping, etc.), John has also done so much work behind the scenes. John has shoveled snow, cut grass, raked leaves, changed light bulbs, groomed the track, trimmed trees, fixed pencil sharpeners, and so much more. He has dealt with fire alarms in the middle of the night and on weekends. John was responsible for overseeing rental situations in the evenings, as well as on weekends. He has been on-call 24/7.

Yet probably two of the greatest contributions John has made to CCS are the introduction of our recycling program and the construction of the ice rink. I think these two programs, in particular, speak to the kind of person John is. He cares! He cares about the environment and God's call to be stewards of this earth. Taking shortcuts was unacceptable to John when it came to looking after the school and in dealing with stewardship issues. And I am sure that



in the eyes of many students, John's construction and maintenance of the ice rink is his greatest contribution to student life. Students were provided the opportunity to engage in a fun and healthy activity because of the yearly ice rink. John arrived at school early and often stayed late to make sure the rink was ready for the students. His Zamboni ice rake could probably be patented.

You are probably getting an idea of how important John has been to the CCS community. His attention to detail, his organizational skills, and his ingenuity are all characteristics that define John's ability as the custodian of the CCS building. Although John's position is now called facility manager, the word "caretaker" still best embodies all that John has brought to CCS. His ability to look after the school went far beyond the bricks and mortar of the building. John cared about the people inside the building. When teachers asked for support in dealing with maintenance concerns, John was quick to respond and I can't ever remember him saying no to a task. John made a point to come to coffee almost everyday to be sure to connect with staff. He joined us for staff devotions and prayed with and for us on a regular basis. John's relationship with the students went beyond the call of duty. He interacted with students in a caring and kind manner, and his gentle words encouraged students to do the right thing. John always provided a listening ear to both staff and students.

Calvin Christian School has been blessed with an amazing caretaker for over 23 years. John will be missed, not only for the wonderful work that he did on behalf of other people, but for the wonderful man that he is. We wish John God's blessing as he transitions into retirement. I am thankful for those words of my college professor so many years ago, and they ring more true today than ever before. •

Ice Rink

by Vanessa Koens and Bethany Veenstra

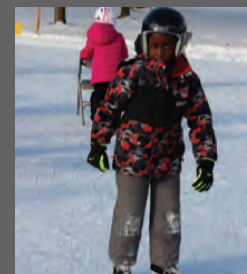
Once again, our custodian Mr. van Arragon and a grandparent, Mr. Groenewegen, built a wonderful ice rink on our playground. Before the Christmas holidays, the grade 8B class helped spread out the tarp and put down the edges.

Mr. van Arragon has been making a skating rink since 2001. He enjoys watching the students skating and having fun every year. We really appreciate his hard work in maintaining and building it. We also appreciate the people who have volunteered their time to help with the upkeep, building and taking down of the rink. We want to thank those who have donated supplies, because there is certainly some cost to making the rink! Not only have people donated time and materials for the rink, some people have also donated skates for students to use. Students can borrow a pair of skates for the season, and return skates they have outgrown. Some of the senior students help in maintaining the rink by shoveling the ice rink in the morning and/or afternoon.

This year's ice rink was a success and thoroughly enjoyed by all the students of CCS. Everyone had fun skating on the rink during recesses and P.E. class. From Kindergarten to grade 8, we all had a chance to play and skate on the rink during the winter season. There is plenty of joy spread throughout the school when the students of CCS hear that the rink is ready for use.

Mr. van Arragon will be retiring from his job at CCS, but he still plans to help with our rink during winter!

THANK YOU SO MUCH MR. VAN ARRAGON! •



Student Council

by Amanda Breimer & Megan Vandenberg



Student Council wanted to start off the year with the focus of establishing community. With that in mind, in the fall, we began with a school wide mural that each student was able to contribute to by colouring in a quarter of a circle. Each quarter circle was then connected to the rest of the student body's contributions. This mural is now hanging in our front foyer and has been a great reminder of our school community. During our Christmas Spirit Week we had many fun activities including Deck the Halls, Tacky Tuesday, Warm-Up Wednesday, Thankful Thursday, and Flannel Friday. We also had a Canadian Spirit day during the Winter Olympics when the student body came dressed in Canadian gear or the colour red. During the week of Valentine's Day we were able to appreciate our support staff here at Calvin. Each class was assigned a staff member for whom they created an appreciation card which was then hung somewhere in the school. To end our school year we look forward to hosting an escape room for the students! We cannot wait to see which class will get out the quickest! •

World Life

by Amanda Breimer

This year students in grades 7 & 8 have had the opportunity to explore God's world and the people that live here in their project focused World Life class. In grade 7, we began by learning about and celebrating different cultures and traditions from around the world, by focusing on countries different from our own. Students presented information and provided experiences to their audiences to bring attention to these unique cultural similarities and differences that make our world so wonderfully diverse. We then shifted focus to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and not-for-profit organizations, as students explored different ways that we can help support the people in our world. The grade 8 class has been researching NGOs as well, with a focus on how the international community is finding its home in Hamilton. They are concluding their research by writing news articles that will be submitted to the Hamilton Spectator in the hopes of being published. The grade 7 and 8 students will then be exploring our Canadian government and they will participate in a mock vote. Through this, they will learn about the different political parties and how voting can allow us to have a voice in how our city, province, and country is run. •



Music Festival

by Deborah VanEgmond



The Senior Choir is an extra-curricular activity for students in Grades 7-8. The choir is well received as they present at school functions, and in the community of Hamilton. Some favourite past events include school musicals, most recently the Once Upon a Mattress production, and the Christmas celebration tour, including performances at the Wellstone Senior Residence, the Juravinski Hospital, and local shopping malls. Choir festival events include the Golden Horseshoe Music Festival and the National MusicFest.

The National MusicFest is the most challenging event, as students are evaluated at a high level for musical accuracy, tone, and expression. They need to 'captivate' the audience with their musical interpretation and style. We are pleased to say that the choir received a Silver Standard in the 2018 festival, indicating that the choir achieved 'an exceedingly high standard of excellence' as described in the Musicfest syllabus. The festival was a great experience for the students as they performed selections from Once Upon a Mattress, including choreography as a new element in their performance. We are very proud of the students as they worked so hard in preparation for this event. Thank you to Mrs. Marsha Heeg for accompanying the choir, and to Mrs. Sonja van der Woerd for coaching the students in choreography! •



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Writer in Residence

by Christine Mantel

What better way to motivate students to become better writers, than by having them connect to a published author? This year Calvin Christian School signed up to have Canadian author Sigmund Brouwer as our Writer-in-Residence. Mr. Brouwer stopped in for a visit in the fall to connect with classes and to encourage students to find and write STORY! There are ideas all around us, just waiting to be written!



7B was excited to utilize the resources provided from Mr. Brouwer in order to write our own historical fiction and make Canadian history come alive! We took a look at a manuscript in progress, demonstrating that mistakes, changes and edits are a part of the writing process. We watched videos connecting to the various writing components that we were trying to put into practice. Then after we researched, wrote, and edited our work, Mr. Brouwer sent a personal note of encouragement to the class via a video chat with myself, Mrs. Mantel.

We anticipate having our stories and artwork in published form sometime in the spring as Mr. Brouwer is helping us to pull the final writing project altogether as a published book. We cannot wait to share our stories! •

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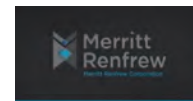
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In grade 6A, Ms. Van explained to her students that Mr. van Arragon is retiring at the end of this month. A student responded with "How can he do that??" and another student responded with "But WHO'S going to do everything??" and some more responses were: "Who's going to do the rink and sharpen skates? What if they put the mats up wrong and we break a leg?"

Book Fair



Come-Along K Teacher: "April showers bring May flowers, but what does April snow bring?"

Student: "I guess God isn't done with winter yet!"



Calendar of Events



Graduation: June 19

Last Day of School: June 22

First day of school: September 4

Back to school dessert social: Friday, September 14

Thanksgiving - October 8, 2018

P.A. Days for Edifice Convention: October 25 and 26

Christmas Holidays: Friday December 21 (1/2 day) to January 4.

Back to school Monday, January 7

March Break: Friday, March 8 to Friday March 15

Last Day of School: Friday, June 21, 2019

TheSource Thrift Shop

The re-Source Thrift Shop

at 1050 Upper Gage is 100% not for profit, 100% volunteer run, and 100% donation supported.



We need summer help!

There are times when we are in need of more people willing to work sorting clothes, guys to do heavy lifting work at the back, occasional help on the Wednesday truck run, staffing our cash register, cleaning the store early on a Friday and with customer service more generally.

If you or anyone you know would like to help us out on a particular morning or afternoon shift for any of the weeks between now and October please contact the us at info@re-sourcethriftshop.ca.

It is your store! It's our job therefore to make sure you are aware of all the opportunities we have for volunteer service. With thanks to you all. •



FundScrip

Tuition Reduction Incentive Program (TRIP): Thank you for your support of the TRIP program! TRIP's year end is April 30th and over the past year we were able to raise just over \$23,300 of which 50% is directed towards reducing tuition for the 2018/19 school year for participating families. The remainder is directed towards the school which in turn helps to keep tuition costs down. A win-win for everyone! This was also the first full year of the online Fundscrip program. We are encouraged by the support of the 190 registered (90 current) participants. Fundscrip offers over 200 retailers to meet your purchasing needs from health and beauty to department stores to your favourite restaurants. The online website is very user friendly and one of our top earners at over \$400 commented "I love how easy it is to use Fundscrip. I simply browse the retailers from my computer on the weekend and on Thursday the cards arrive, ready for my errands and grocery shopping on Saturday."

If you haven't participated in TRIP yet, now is the time to get started as we begin a new cycle of savings for the 2019/20 school year. If you are a member of the community at large, this is a great way to support the school throughout the year simply by purchasing gift cards for groceries, gas, Tim Horton's – items you purchase every day. We are grateful for the success of this gift card program that continues to be a benefit to both parents and the school. Please contact Lianna Reitsma at lreitsma@ccshamilton.ca if you would like to learn more about this great opportunity. •

Student: Who are you? I haven't met you before.

Mr. Benjamins: I'm Mr. Benjamins, the new assistant custodian filling in for Mr. Flowersmith.

Student: Are you related to the librarian, Mrs. Benjamins?

Mr. Benjamins: Yes, I'm her son actually.

Student: Wow! You're so lucky to have a librarian as your mom!

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Wedding News!



This summer, three of our staff members will be getting married. Mr. de Schiffert will be marrying Katrina Alblas, Ms. van der Woerd will be marrying Chris Dean, and Rachel Kieneker will be marrying Zachary Huizinga.

We wish them God's blessing as they begin this new stage of lives together.

The final number is \$68,900 for the Bazaar

The money raised by the Bazaar is directed towards the General Budget of the school, supporting things like salaries, tuition assistance, and ongoing expenses related to the facility.

Thank you for supporting Christian Education in Hamilton!



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2017/18 Campaign Drive

Yes, there is still time to participate in our 2017/18 Campaign Drive! We are very close to meeting our annual goal. CCS would like to thank our donors who helped raise \$54,000 to-date. We are tremendously blessed by the support of our community! Without your support we would be unable to meet the needs of tuition assistance, ongoing facility redevelopment, and bus maintenance. If you would like more information on these key areas that the annual Campaign Drive focuses on please visit the website at www.ccs-hamilton.ca and click on the link to the 2017/18 Drive, or contact Arn Boonstra, Principal, at aboonstra@ccshamilton.ca or Lianna Reitsma at lreitsma@ccshamilton.ca

If you would like to contribute to the Campaign Drive, please complete the form below or donate online at www.ccs-hamilton.ca – and click on the “Donations” button.

Yes! I would like to contribute to the 2017/18 Campaign



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Help continue to make Christian Education affordable so that our children may be

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*I lift up my eyes to the mountain, where does my help come from?
My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth. Psalm 121:1-2*

i n TOUCH



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