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Vision Newsletter

Vision is a publication of UMEI Christian High School. It seeks to keep the UMEI family informed of the ongoing events in the lives of its students, faculty, and alumni. The contents of this newsletter will be guided by the UMEI Mission Statement, which states: "Anchored in the Anabaptist tradition, UMEI Christian High School exists to educate the whole person, cultivating full academic, spiritual and individual potential, in order to make young people "doers of the word" in the Community."



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SPRING 2017



**UMEI Christian High School
Hosts
MSC Choral Festival**

(Article on page 2)

MSC Choral Festival by Numbers!

As a music teacher with various interests in math and science, numbers are always intriguing and can often communicate the scope of a topic. So let's start small.

6 different schools: Bethany Christian School, Dock Mennonite Academy, Eastern Mennonite School, Freeman Academy, Lancaster Mennonite Schools - Hershey Campus and UMEI Christian.

9 hours and 45 mins of singing: Over the course of the weekend, the students sang for a combined total of 9 hours and 45 minutes, not including the time worshipping/singing at the host churches.

100+ volunteers: Any successful event like the choral festival takes many willing and dedicated volunteers. From the generous people who hosted the students in their homes to the people who constructed and deconstructed the risers, all were essential for success.

A very big thank you is given to those that served and gave of their time and energy, because without you, the festival could not have happened!

200 singers: In a school building that has rarely "witnessed" more than 100 students on any given day, UMEI hosted 200 students.

365 days of planning: The preparation and planning for the festival began in Iowa one full year before and was pieced together little by little, every day.

2841 miles traveled: The schools traveled a combined total of 2841 miles to arrive here at UMEI. Some took a direct route, others made some stops along the way.

4189 piano notes played: UMEI's own Joel Dyck (grade 12), accompanied the choir for the festival performance, during which he played 4189 notes.

Finally, as a music teacher, the experience of hosting this festival and of course attending it at other schools almost cannot be quantified. And I hope that the students who sang and all who were involved feel the same way I do... that the closest "number" to represent the worth of the festival is infinity.

Wesley Shuttleworth ('08)
UMEI Music Teacher



Photos Courtesy of Erica Derksen

New Electronics Lab

Over the years UMEI has put a focus on STEM related programming and is known for having a strong Science and Math program. Lately there has been an emphasis on building STEM courses such as Robotics, Communication Technology, Digital Imagery and Web Design.

Out of this focus on STEM, came a vision for a project that would greatly improve our existing STEM related courses and any courses we hope to introduce in the future. The idea was to create a space where much of our STEM related activity would happen. A space for the type of learning we encourage at UMEI.

A new electronics lab was built to provide a space where students are encouraged to collaborate and explore STEM related subjects. On any given day you can walk into our new space and see students working away and using the new resources. In the new electronics lab we have our new EV3 Robotics kits, high-powered computers, graphic design programs, a glass whiteboard and a state of the art sound system.

We want to thank the individuals and families who have so generously donated to our STEM fund. Come on by and check out the new electronics lab if you haven't already! There were a number of instrumental individuals in the construction of the new lab. We would like to thank Brown & Tiessen Construction Ltd., Counter Effects, Uni-Fab, Doug Toews ('86), Ken Brown ('92), Wesley Shuttleworth and Wilkinson Electric Ltd.

Chrissy Kelton ('05)
UMEI Admissions Director



Alumni Profile



From the day I took my first steps I have been fascinated with insects. Little did I know they would become the center of my studies. Having completed my BSc here at the University of Guelph, I am now 7 months into a Masters program. For the past several years, I have been managing my own apiary, selling honey and bees, and I'm having a blast doing it. I have discovered beekeeping is one of the most rewarding activities that a person can do. Naturally, when a masters position in apiculture became available, I did not hesitate to apply.

Over the course of my 2-year study, I will be managing over 100 colonies and running tests with the hopes of improving honey bee gut health. Honey bees here in Ontario are under constant stress from many contributing factors. These factors can be of environmental origin, such as low forage quality, low pollen diversity and pesticide exposure. Other factors contributing to stress can come from within the hive, such as pests, viruses, diseases and beekeeper applied pesticides (yes beekeepers apply some pesticides to control in-hive pests such as the varroa mite). One of the diseases that affect many honey bee colonies world wide is the microsporidian fungus *Nosema ceranae*. This fungus is highly infective and slowly destroys the gut lining of the bee, impairing nutrient absorption and contributes to an early death. In Canada, we currently have one single product registered to treat *N. ceranae* in honey bees, the antibiotic fumagillin. There are several issues with fumagillin, the most concerning being the contamination of hive products with antibiotic residues and the possibility of antibiotic resistance developing in *N. ceranae* strains. To address the need for an alternative to fumagillin treatment, I will be testing the use of several promising prebiotics and probiotics to control *N. ceranae*. Getting stung is a part of everyday life in this line of work and one thing I do not require is acupuncture.

I graduated from UMEI in 2012, and many of my experiences from high school have contributed to where I am today. Being in the sciences, my time spent in the lab with Mr. Fittler was monumental in sparking my interest in biology. One of my favorite memories was learning how to make gun powder or "Party Material" from Mr. Fittler. We then proceeded to make a cannon and fire it on the UMEI grounds (I don't know if that would fly today). The Agriculture Club was another part of UMEI that really left a lasting impression on me. Coming from an agricultural background, the Agriculture Club let me explore branches of Canadian agriculture I was not familiar with. The faith atmosphere of UMEI made such a big difference in my life, especially as I was going through those transition years of high school. I want to thank all of the teachers and staff at UMEI for all of their patience, and especially Ruth Harnadek for all of the passion you added to chapel and drama. Congratulations on your retirement!

The community that formed around me during my time at UMEI is one of the things I miss most when I am away from the Leamington area. To remedy this, an important stop for me to make when I am home is to visit my dear friend Henry Driedger. Henry and I look forward to our annual trip to Horse Progress Days, a showcase of everything horse powered. You probably assume the show is mainly a historical event but you would be pleasantly surprised. Farming with horses is NOT a thing of the past in many areas of the United States (and Canada for that matter). Companies like Pioneer equipment still manufacture "state of the art" horse drawn farm equipment and showcase their latest models at Horse Progress Days every year. This is right up our alley and if any of you know Henry Driedger, he really likes plows. The show takes place in a different community in the northern US every summer. Most of the time an Amish community is chosen to host the show as they provide the horse power. The community atmosphere of this event feels remarkably similar to the Mennonite community of Leamington, and in the sea of Amish and other Mennonites, Henry and I fit right in. This year's (2017) show is June 30th and July 1st in the heart of Amish country, the beautiful county of Lancaster Pennsylvania.



As life continues to demand my time and presence, I will always look forward to visiting my friends, family and my home at UMEI.

Shane Klassen ('12)

Water Colours



In 1998 I got my first look at old growth pine forest in Temagami, Ontario. Everything I saw on the trails I walked on had a heightened, saturated quality. The canopy was ten metres higher than anything I had known and the ground cover was verdant and diverse. It provided everything I needed to embark on a new project. That winter I worked with the photographs I had taken, making tall, full scale watercolours of tree trunks. As I worked my way through them,

each subsequent painting grew closer to my idea of a window into the forest. I returned to Temagami numerous times discovering new areas and pockets of old growth, and each trip produced new paintings.

It was inevitable that I would also look to the area I live in. I realized that the forests and streams here are also worthy of protection and could become the source of inspiration and subject matter. I began to look more closely at the every day things around me like fallen branches, rotting logs and trees in my own yard. I planted native trees as well; species like butternut, hickory, oak, maple and pine. What will survive is anyone's guess, just as how a landscape changes over time is unpredictable. What we see and how we look at it is what makes the difference.

Robert Wiens ('71)
Prince Edward County



Robert Wiens ('71) was born in Leamington, Ontario in 1953. Since 1978 his work has been presented in solo and group exhibitions internationally in Los Angeles, London, Amsterdam, Bologna and New York. In Canada he has exhibited at the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa; The Power Plant, Toronto; The Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto; The Southern Alberta Art Gallery, Lethbridge; Oakville Galleries, Oakville; The Dunlop Art Gallery, Regina; The Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Kingston; and The Art Gallery of York University, Toronto. Since 1997 his work has been concerned primarily with environmental issues; native trees being the principal subject matter of this work.

SAVE THE DATE



ARE YOU PART OF THE CLASS OF 1967, 1992 OR 2005?
JOIN US FOR YOUR REUNION BANQUET ON JUNE 24, 2017

Memorial Tributes

I am writing in memory of Dave, but being identical twins, the term “we” is hard to avoid as we not only looked alike but lived very similar lives and shared many of life’s experiences. People often confused us but we were used to it.

Dave and Dennis (me) were born on June 18th, 1950. We grew up on the family farm in Peanut Center – that’s what the area around Highway 77 and the 6th Concession in Mersea was sometimes know as in the old days. Home was conveniently around the corner from the UMEI and a short walk for us throughout our high school years.

Growing up there were lots of kids our age to play with in the neighbourhood and we had great fun. We learned to swim in local ponds (some of you may remember the ones on UMEI grounds), played hockey on them and any patch of ice we could find or make in the winter. We enjoyed baseball in cow pastures (look out for them pies), kick the can, silly games we just made up when we got bored, adventures in local bushes, bike polo, homemade go karts, forts and tree houses, and lots of other exciting stuff. Parental supervision in those days left a lot of leeway for kids to experience things.

We had to work pretty hard in the fields and greenhouses but it wasn’t so bad and probably helped us a lot in later life. Dave and I grew up fixing things when needed, build it yourself if at all possible and don’t quit until the job is done.

We enrolled in Engineering at the University of Windsor. Dave completed three years of a four year degree but wanted more of an outdoor and be your own boss kind of life and came home to the family farm. He farmed together with our brother Ken for many years, successfully expanded the greenhouse and field operations, and raised a family while doing it. Dave also found time to restore a 1970 Mustang that is still proudly in the family and is a real show piece.

Dave and his wife Linda (nee Flaming) raised three children Phil (‘78), Jennifer (‘80) and Marla (‘82). Funny how my wife and I had our three at the same times – twin things happen. We had great fun with Dave and Linda and their family on camping trips and in later years we went to Hawaii and Alaska together without the kids. Dave and Linda were blessed with six grandchildren that all miss their Opa.

Dave was always doing crazy things – one example is when we were in Alaska and took a ski plane that landed us on a glacier in Denali. Dave decided to take off his shirt (it was warm & sunny) and headed off across the glacier on his own. Our pilot freaked out – apparently there are crevasses that are snowed over into which tourists can disappear. We will all miss Dave’s adventuresome spirit.

Dave and Linda retired in 2006 and moved to a house in Leamington and enjoyed 10 years there together with children and grandchildren nearby. Unfortunately Dave was diagnosed with brain cancer in Dec 2015 and passed away the day before his 66th birthday. He had a faith to be admired. We all miss him greatly.

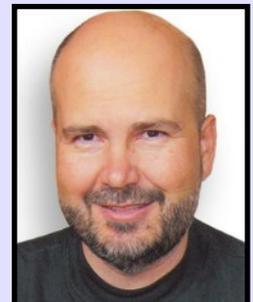
Dennis Enns (‘68)



Dave Enns (‘68)
1950 - 2016



Ron loved and genuinely cared about a lot of people. After his passing, a Facebook post stated, “Ron was a very fine person with a big heart and so positive and brave. He was fighting for his own life and at the same time helping others so much.” At the young age of 20 years old, Ron was diagnosed with a brain tumour. This began a lifetime of brain surgeries, the gamma knife, CT scans, MRI’s, radiation and doctor visits. Years later, the type of tumour in his brain popped up as a 6 pound tumour in his liver requiring surgery. Last year the tumour was found in his hip requiring more radiation. He was also in car accident in 2015 and sustained injuries to his ribs and wrist.



Ron Tiessen (‘84)
1966 - 2016

Memorial Tributes

Despite his health issues Ron never lost hope or faith. Along with his neurologists, neurosurgeons and oncologists, we were all amazed at all he continued to do even though he had physical deficits. He would always say these doctors give you the worst case scenarios because they have to and was never worried about it.

He graduated from the University of Windsor with a degree in education. He taught music lessons at Ron's school of music at his parents' home and tutored. He also taught Sunday School at NLUMC and directed the Sunday School choir. He was passionate about his guitar, music, family and friends, his dog, the Windsor symphony orchestra of which he was a member, and the Brain Tumour Foundation where he formed the Tiessen Tumour Raiders who walked every year for the fundraiser. He would compete with his brother Jerry to see who could raise the most money for this foundation. Ron also loved swimming and had a membership at the Sherk complex where he met a lot of people with his outgoing personality. In addition, he loved social media and would update us all on his health which left us inspired. Ron would always say hi and check to see how everyone was doing through messenger. He met other people battling brain tumours on Facebook and was thrilled when he met a girl who had the same rare tumour as he did. He loved black coffee, meeting up with friends, attending concerts with his high school buddies and was a huge Detroit Lions fan. He was always willing to help others out with the connections he had.

Ron was an optimist and was determined that a cure for brain tumours would be found. He was knowledgeable about all of the types of tumours and the cutting edge treatment available for them. Just last August, Ron celebrated being a 30 year brain tumour survivor and really wanted to inspire all those who were battling some type of cancer. Unfortunately he could not recover from this disease after battling it like a warrior for 30 years. He leaves behind his mother Rosemarie (his father Pete passed in 2013), his brother Jerry and wife Holly and nieces Olivia and Abby whom he adored. He also leaves behind a very supportive extended family and many friends. He is dearly missed.

I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Jesus Christ. Philippians 3:14

Lisa (Derksen) Tiessen ('84)



Harry was born in Wheatley, March 13, 1934. He was the youngest of four children, and was one year old when his mother died suddenly. He then lived with Henry and Agatha Wiens of Kent Bridge until his father married Anna Friesen a year later.

He received his high school education at UMEI, graduating in 1952. He lived in the dorm at UMEI while attending school, loved practical jokes and made life long friends.

After high school, he worked for his father as a salesperson at Alex Fischer Realty. In 1955 he took a trip with three friends delivering a white 1954 cadillac convertible to a dealership in LA California, having the time of their life, making the 4 day trip in 2 days, sight seeing and being called on stage of a live televised game show.

He married Ann Goertzen in 1960 and had 2 boys, Kevin and Craig. He worked as a real estate agent and farmed in Kingsville growing tobacco, asparagus, soybeans, corn and later peaches.

Harry was an avid bowler, and card player, enjoyed yearly moose and deer hunting trips up north and summers at their cottage in Magnetawan.

He attended LUMC all of his life, struggling with his health in January 2011, he suffered a stroke and passed away peacefully at the age of 82 on October 14, 2016.

Kevin Fischer



Harry Fischer ('52)
1934 - 2016

Memorial Tributes

Allen Ronald Derksen was born in Leamington on August 25, 1963, son of Ronald ('55) and Ruth Derksen ('60). Allen had two younger siblings, Sandra ('84) and Andrew ('86). Sadly Allen was predeceased by his sister Sandra and father Ronald, both in 2004.

Allen lived in Leamington his entire life except for a few years while he attended University at Wilfred Laurier.

When he was young, Allen worked on the family farm on the 4th Concession where the family had 20 acres of peach trees and an acre of greenhouses.

After graduating from University, Allen worked for several Accounting Firms and obtained his Certified General Accountant designation in 1993. For most of his career though, Allen worked as an Accountant out of his home. In his last year, Allen was employed by Double Diamond Greenhouses, which was a real match for him with his earlier background on the home farm.

Allen married Mary Quiring on August 28, 1999. Mary brought 2 children with her, Amanda and Peter. Later Allen and Mary had 3 children together Alexandra, Brock and Blake.

Beyond his family, Allen's love was sports. He loved watching them and loved playing them. Some years Allen played for as many as 4 different ball teams in the same summer. In playing sports, Allen's motto was always grip it and rip it. He never played half way. Many of us can picture him taking a swing in baseball or golf, or taking a shot in floor hockey, and letting it all hang out on each and every swing/shot.

During Allen's tenure at UMEI he was known as Locomotive Al. This basically came from his basketball years – when Allen would get the basketball, he would drive to the net in a straight line with all his might and basically run over anything in his path, just like a locomotive.

Allen passed away suddenly on December 22, 2016. He is sadly missed by his family and friends.



Allen Derksen ('81)
1963 - 2016

Andrew Derksen ('86)



Robert Wayne Schmidt was born in Leamington on September 2, 1947, the first of 5 children, to John and Elizabeth Schmidt. This family of 7 lived in a 2 bedroom house on the 6th Concession until Robert was 11 and then moved into a new home built by his father. He attended a 2 room elementary school where he skipped a grade, graduated from UMEI and went on to earn a degree in History and Economics from the University of Windsor in 1969. Following graduation he was self-employed as a farmer and contractor.

When Robert was receiving his formal education, much was happening in the world. President John F. Kennedy was assassinated, Nelson Mandela was sentenced to life imprisonment, Dr. Martin Luther King won the Nobel Peace Prize, the Beatles had their first appearance on the Ed Sullivan show and Bob Dylan released "The Times They Are A-Changing".



Robert Schmidt ('64)
1947 - 2016

Memorial Tributes

We are not certain what the influencing factors were but Robert devoted much of his life to community service. He served as Councillor, Reeve and Mayor for Mersea Township and as Warden for Essex County in 1996 where he worked to accomplish the province's mandated amalgamation of 21 municipalities down to 7. As Leamington Deputy Mayor in 2010 he declared a state of emergency following the 2010 tornado, he questioned why his municipality should be the "guinea pigs" when wind turbines were proposed for Lake Erie and he was engaged in the issue of changing the local police force to OPP.

Robert was an active contributor to our community's elder care where for 16 years he served as Chairman of the Board at the Leamington Mennonite Home, a position he still held at the time of his death. In the wider community he volunteered as President of the Windsor/Essex Unit of the Canadian Cancer Society. In 2012 he was appointed as member of the Windsor-Essex Advisory committee to give input on how and where their acute care services would be provided in the future and whether or not a new site would mean better quality care, better value for money and ensure proper health care service access.

Robert and Karen, his beloved wife of 45 years, enjoyed travelling to destinations such as the Rhone, the Rhine, British Isles, Iceland, the Baltic Sea, the Caribbean and Mexico. He cherished the time he spent with his children Bryan ('92), Greg ('93) (Nicole) and Scott ('01) and adored his grandchildren Allison, Evelyn, Quintin and Luke. On Dec 27, 2016 he passed away at the age of 69 with his loving family by his side.

Betty Schmidt ('73)

CREATIVE GIVING

While cash gifts are the foundation of revenue for any charity, there are other opportunities for giving that can make a huge impact.

Long-time UMEI supporters, John P. Driedger, and Herm and Liz Dick, transferred ownership of unneeded mutual fund accounts to UMEI. Thanks to John, Herm and Liz, UMEI received the benefit of growth in these investments until the best use for the funds was identified.

UMEI can also be named the **beneficiary** of mutual funds, RRSP's and RRIF's. A beneficiary designation allows you to remain in control of your funds during your lifetime; you continue to receive the income and benefit.

After your death the gift is then received by UMEI outside of your estate (**so no probate fees are incurred**) and a charitable tax receipt is issued to your estate which can offset taxes otherwise payable.

If you would like more information about this or other creative giving opportunities, please contact your professional adviser.

"Invest in Future Generations with Your Gift to Christian Education"



Shop UMEI Update: Now, at the end of May, we should have about \$22,000.00 in the Shop UMEI account. This is a little less than last year. It is a little less each year because more people are collecting points for their own groceries etc. Times change and this is also changing as credit cards compete for customers and use the cash for points system. It is still a worthwhile fundraiser though, and I still enjoy keeping track of everything. If anyone has ideas as to how to compete better with credit cards, let me know. Thank you for the trust bestowed upon me.

Elfrieda (Konrad) Brown ('66)

Donate a Car



Oldie Goldie retires after 20 years of service

Oldie Goldie's last trip to UMEI happened on Dec 13, 2016. Oldie Goldie knew the way to school well! Oldie Goldie was a gold 1996 Dodge Grand Caravan and came to serve the growing Epp family in December 1996, as the number of daughters exceeded what could reasonably be expected to fit in any backseat. Oldie Goldie wasn't always known as "oldie", as originally, it was new and shiny - making many trips to town, to music and swim lessons, and to baseball games. It also made several trips west to Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, and many trips south along the I-75 to see a certain Mouse. Over the years, much family time was spent inside "the Van", as its carpet soaked up the many different liquids associated with a growing family!

Eventually, "the van" became less shiny and not so new as the stains in her carpet, and dings in her fenders could testify. Family trips to see a Mouse began to happen inside "The Hearse", and so "the Van" became known as "Oldie Goldie" - but it still had purpose! As the oldest Epp daughter began to drive, Oldie Goldie's main function became transportation to "the School on the Sixth". And so first Alyssa, then Carina, then Brenna and finally Kiana became familiar with Oldie Goldie's idiosyncrasies. And the number of spilled liquids, stains and dings increased! Kiana often remarked "you know that Oldie Goldie is older than I am" whenever discussions turned to potentially graduating Oldie Goldie to University duties.

Over the years, Oldie Goldie seldom let its owners down, always bouncing back from necessary repairs, until all thoughts of auto immortality had to be dismissed as Oldie Goldie's second transmission began its slipping slide to idleness. With over 20 years and 356,316 kms under its fan belt, a third transmission was not in its future, and its days were numbered. And so, Oldie Goldie made a final trip to UMEI and 'Donate a Car Canada' took care of the arrangements and stipulated UMEI as a beneficiary of the proceeds.

In the spirit of many other UMEI supporters, Oldie Goldie was a giver, even beyond its days of active car pooling. **Thank you, Oldie Goldie!**

David Epp ('79)

You can turn your vehicle donation into generous dollars to support United Mennonite Educational Institute! Working on our behalf, Donate a Car Canada will accept your vehicle for donation -- running, or not! Old or new!

There is no cost to you, and the process is incredibly easy! Donate a Car Canada will facilitate all aspects of your car donation from the pick up to the final sale, ensuring that your vehicle will be sold for the highest sale outcome possible. They will then forward the net proceeds on to us here at United Mennonite Educational Institute and we will send you a tax receipt!

To find out how, go to www.umei.ca, click on Support and Donate a Car.



School Corner



UMEI
LIGHTNING BOLT
5K
10K
RUN
5K WALK
KIDS 1K DASH

Proceeds to support UMEI Roof Project
 Saturday, September 30, 2017
 Point Pelee | 9:00 a.m.
 More information at umei.ca
 Register at raceroster.com

CAMP EXPLORER
 EXPLORE YOUR POTENTIAL

JULY 17 - 21, 2017 9AM - 3PM
 GRADES 3-6

VISIT UMEI.CA FOR CAMP INFO AND ONLINE REGISTRATION

JULY 17 - 21 | 2017 | GRADES 7-8
 JULY 24 - 28 | 2017 | GRADES 4-6

ROCKETS & ROBOTICS
 IMAGINE. OPEN. INSPIRE.




Bill Derksen ('76)

Back to the 70's

School Corner

Grade 12 Trip to Chicago

One of the highlights of the UMEI experience is Off-Campus Education week. Each year, students take off to different locations to experience enriched learning opportunities and time bonding with their classmates. This year, the Grade 9 class went to Silver Lake Mennonite Camp, the Grade 10 and 11 classes went to Ottawa and the Grade 12s traveled to Chicago.

Chicago is chosen as the final trip because of its world-class museums, art and entertainment. The students travelled by Amtrak train from Dearborn, MI to Union Station in Chicago and stayed at the HI Chicago Hostel in the heart of “The Loop.” An integral educational component to this trip is learning to take public transit. Students receive a transit card and take the bus, subway and L-train throughout the city.

Each day is jam-packed with activities to both educate and entertain! Day One started with a trip to the Navy Pier, Chicago’s #1 tourist destination, for some sight-seeing and lunch. Then it was off to the Museum of Science & Industry, where they experienced a coal mining tour, flight simulation, and the many exhibits including Science Storms and Numbers in Nature. For supper, all enjoyed some Chicago-style deep dish pizza at the famous Giordano’s restaurant. After supper, they enjoyed the panoramic views from the top of Willis Tower and braved The Ledge, a glass box which hangs 110 blocks above the busy city streets. The day was topped off with a walking tour of Millennium and Grant Parks (including many photos taken at “The Bean!”).

Day Two included a visit to the Lincoln Park Zoo and the Shedd Aquarium where the students took in an Aquatic Show. They then visited the Art Institute of Chicago and viewed some of the world’s most famous paintings. They capped off the day with supper and fun at Dave & Busters, a large restaurant and arcade. The last day started with a visit to the world-famous Field Museum of Natural History. There, the students got to meet Sue, the largest, best-preserved and most complete *Tyrannosaurus rex* ever found, and take in a film on Ancient Egypt, among many other exhibits. Finally, the students enjoyed free time exploring the city, using public transit on their own and spending time with each other.

UMEI’s mission is “to educate the whole person.” Helping students discover and explore a world-class city like Chicago supports this mission and also provides memories for years to come. Thank you to all alumni who generously supported the fundraising efforts that made this trip possible!

Chani Wiens

UMEI Math Teacher



Faith In Action

Students at UMEI Christian High School are experiencing what it means to be a newcomer to Canada first-hand. The Faith in Action club has been learning about the war in Syria and the resulting refugee crisis for the last year. "I am eager to keep students informed and passionate about what's happening in the world," said the club's leader, Mrs. Chani Wiens. "However, I was anxious to find ways to be active in welcoming newcomers to Leamington. I think it's so important to model putting our faith into action - hence the name of the club." Wiens was excited to hear that the North Leamington United Mennonite Church was in the process of sponsoring a Syrian refugee family through Mennonite Central Committee. When they were matched with family living in a refugee camp in Lebanon, she involved the UMEI students in preparing for their arrival. "We made signs in Arabic welcoming them to Canada," explained Grade 12 student Camden Driedger. "We wanted them to know we are making the effort to understand them and their background." The club also welcomed South Essex Community Council settlement workers Badiah Abdelnabi and Sylvana Sleiman in a presentation after school. The Arabic-speaking workers told stories of their experiences working with Syrian refugees settling in Leamington and also shared some Muslim faith and cultural practices with the students. "Being in our small community, we don't know a lot about the Muslim culture so it was cool to learn about that," said Grade 11 student Hayden Epp. "It helps us better understand our new family." Elle Klassen, also in Grade 11, was surprised at how quickly newcomers are expected to integrate into Canadian life. "It made the whole process seem more real," Klassen explained.

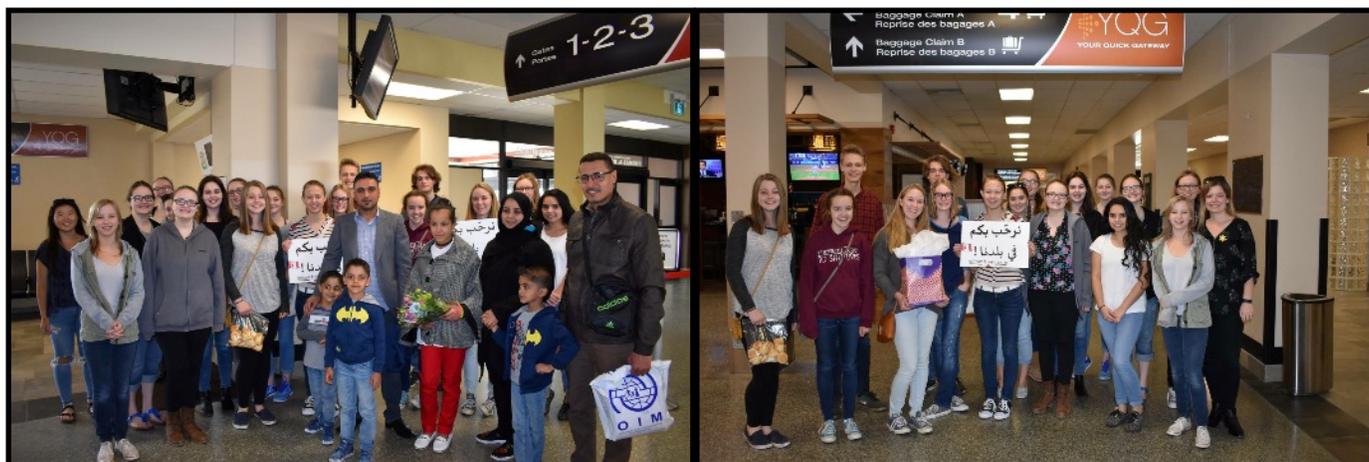
The Faith in Action club planned a bake sale to raise money for a welcome package for the 12 year old newcomer. "Through communication with the family, we learned that she is an artist, so we purchased art supplies and a tablet with the \$400 we raised," said Wiens. "We wanted her to know that there is a big group of students who care about her feeling at home here."

When Wiens heard the family was arriving on April 12, she was excited to be able to invite 16 students to welcome them at Windsor Airport. They brought their welcome signs, the gift and some traditional Mennonite baking to welcome the family of 3. Students describe the experience as "incredibly powerful." "We already knew they were people just like us and that their lives in Syria were just like ours here," said Klassen. "But when you see them come off that plane, and shake their hands and say hello, it gets rid of the stigmas that still exist in your head - stigmas that you weren't even aware still existed."

UMEI students look forward to continuing to welcome the new family to Leamington.

Chani Wiens

UMEI Math Teacher



Check out current and past issues
of **Vision** at
www.umei.ca.

Become a fan of UMEI on Facebook!

VISION EDITORS

Evelyn (Konrad) Greenwood ('70)
Anthony Balzer ('08)
Jane (Sawatzky) Wiens

News & Notes



Upcoming Events



- * May 31.....Athletic Banquet
- * June 3.....Community Sale
- * June 8.....Strawberry Social
- * June 24.....Graduation & Alumni Banquet
- * June 25.....Graduation Ceremony
- * July 9.....Pancake Breakfast & Service
- * August 18.....Surf & Turf

WE WOULD LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Contact UMEI by email:

Office@umei.ca

Or by phone:

519-326-7448 for

Announcements for News & Notes

Address/email changes

Feedback and Suggestions

Births

* **Greg ('02) & Amanda (Dyck) ('02) Tiessen**

~a daughter, Larissa Claire, November 29, 2016

* **Dan Chan & Erin Dick ('96)**

~a daughter, Summer Elizabeth, November 29, 2016

* **John Bartel ('02) & Karen Founk ('02),**

~a daughter, Beau Violet Jude, December 8, 2016

* **Mike & Kerri (Epp) ('03) Coppola**

~a son, Dylan Matteo, December 29, 2016

* **Jeremy ('02) & Karin Willms**

~a son, Alexander Noah, January 4, 2017

* **Brandon & Jessie (Winter) ('03) Gingerich**

~a son, Samuel Henry, February 9, 2017

* **Michael & Shelby (Tiessen) ('02) Foster**

~ a daughter, Molly Jane, March 6, 2017

* **Bryce Miller & Emily Toews ('93)**

~ a daughter, Anna Eirene Toews, March 7, 2017

* **Wes & Jocelyn (Kroeker) ('00) Barnwell**

~ a daughter, Addison Taylor, May 3, 2017

In Memoriam

* **Allen Derksen ('81),** December 22, 2016

* **Rob Schmidt ('64),** December 27, 2016

* **Shelley (Sackett) Phillips ('81),** January 2, 2017

* **Anita (Brown) Schmidt ('68),** March 14, 2017

* **Jacob Dick ('51),** April 6, 2017

* **Ron Janzen ('67),** April 12, 2017