

Secretary's Report

Jeremy Kamminga

Welcome to this first Spring edition of the Beacon for 2010! I hope you're enjoying the beautiful weather today.



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[DISCLAIMER: AIMER:

The accuracy of the previous statement is completely dependent on the accuracy of Wednesday's weather forecast] Well, the weather in the last couple weeks has been quite nice, especially for working outside. I'm sure the students and teachers are enjoying it too (except the Lake Dufferin part I suppose).

It looks as though we've made it over what is arguably the largest hurdle we as Board have to jump each year – that is the hiring of teaching staff. We are happy to announce that **Jordan Ellens** has agreed to the contract we extended to him. Jordan grew up in Lacombe, AB,

attending the URC in Ponoka. He is currently finishing his last year of education studies at Redeemer University College in Ontario. He plans to get married to his fiancée, Amanda this summer and so they will (D.V.) make Carman their first home together. Jordan will be teaching in the high school end; mainly in Maths & Sciences. God has answered our prayers to supply us with the necessary teaching staff for 2010/2011 – thanks be to Him!

Recently the board has approved an updated and expanded version of the **Sports Policy**. The sports program at DCS is relatively new, so as the program has grown so the Policy needed to be adjusted. Thanks to Mr. Raap and Mr. Huisman for doing the leg work on this. While a large portion of the sports program at DCS is extra-curricular, let's not underestimate the value of this program. There is the

aspect of promoting physical activity and good health and there is the aspect of learning team work, among other things. Perhaps the most significant aspect is that of the opportunities it brings to be a light in this world. Of course the opposite is possible too, but all reports are that our athletes have used many an opportunity to shine the light of Christ by playing fair, being honest, and showing good sportsmanship. Let's encourage our (grand)child(ren) to keep this up – and so in this way too, honour God.

The elementary students' **Easter concert** last week was enjoyed by many. Thanks to the elementary students and staff for all the work they put into the Easter concert. Concerts like this do take quite a bit of extra work to put together – both for the teachers and the students. A job well done!

We hope that all parents who were able took the opportunity for **parent-teacher interviews**. This is a good way to learn more about how your child(ren) are doing at school and an opportunity to touch base with the teacher. It's important for us as parents to support

the teachers, and a brief meeting such as this helps to show that support.

There is not a lot to report on other than that. We have been busy working on/through a number of things, but at this point there is not much to pass on to the membership. On

behalf of the Board, I hope you all have and enjoyable and restful Spring Break – it looks like the weather will be beautiful (see *the Disclaimer above*). May God be glorified in our worship today.

Principal's Report

Andy Huisman



“And now, O Israel, what does the LORD your God ask of you but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.”

Deuteronomy 10:12

When I read these words of Deuteronomy, the one word that keeps jumping to the forefront is 'serve'. This verse is hinged around that word. It speaks of our duty to God in our everyday principles and our practices. What we do in His service we must do with a glad heart and good will. But we must also be taught and reminded of our service. I have addressed the issue of the mission statement many times over the last few years – *"to live a life of Christian discipleship in*

contemporary society". The other day I had the opportunity to substitute in the grade 7 class. We had an excellent discussion about that statement and how it applies to our lives on a daily basis. We also talked about the Bible text that is on the wall in the front entrance way (there were a few confused faces as some of them really couldn't remember the text). We went to the front of the school, where on a very large piece of art work the text of Deuteronomy 6:6.7 states:

"These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up."

It is amazing how something that has been on the wall at the front of the school for as long as I can remember (and I have been here 21 years) can apparently be 'overlooked'. I don't believe that we should become discouraged by the fact that some

couldn't remember, but rather see it as an opportunity to point things out. There is a lesson in that for us as teachers, parents and students. Do we sometimes take things for granted? Do we sometimes expect that what we say is so important that others will never forget it even if we have only said it once? We need to hear things over and over and over again. There is a reason why the 10 Commandments are read every Sunday. How many times haven't you heard yourself say "If I've said it once, I've said it a thousand times"? If everybody listened the first time and didn't ever need to be reminded, can you imagine what could be accomplished? But is that realistic? Sadly, no. We learn and grow through consistent repetition. That means that we have to realize that we may have to repeat things many times. We continually sin, even though we know how we should live. God continually forgives us those sins and we start a new day with Him every day. Let us never lose sight of the fact that we all as a people are a work in progress - continually growing and learning

daily. Isn't that the blessing we have in DCS? We are privileged to have a school where covenantal education is at the forefront of daily living. We should never take this for granted. Whether we are here daily, whether we volunteer once in a while, whether we show up for parent-teacher evenings, whether we come for a family fun night of skating or whether we support the school through prayers, let us always remember the gift we have in DCS. Let us always remember to fear the Lord and serve Him.

GRADE THREE POETRY CAFÉ

You could feel the excitement buzzing through the Grade Three class on the day of the Poetry Café! The students had spent a lot of time writing their poems and practicing them for the poetry reading. Invitations were made to the parents and other students. The library was set up as a Café. Parents were ushered to their seats, and the hours of hard work came to fruition. A hush fell over the audience as the students one by one recited their own creative poems. At

intermission, they acted as waiters and waitresses, serving the guests various refreshments. With that done, they proceeded with a recitation of their second poem. There was even enough time left over for them to sing one of their favourite songs - "*Love the Lord your God with all your heart*". My congratulations to Mrs. Veenendaal and her students, a job very well done!

EASTER CONCERT

Easter - a time of year when we remember the death and resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. As Mr. Gunnink put it in his opening comments, Easter is the culmination of Christmas. It was for that reason that we gathered at the church on Friday, March 19th. That evening was another fine example of many hours of hard work coming together. What a blessing when so many young people can put on a concert of such high caliber. The choice of songs, recitations and skits combined to really speak to us about Easter. I commend all the staff, students and parents (who undoubtedly practiced some of the songs at home) for their dedication.

DCS HONOUR ROLL

Now that all of the first semester marks are finalized and organized, it is time to update the DCHS Honour Roll. There are four plaques in the High School wing of the building that contain the names of all of the students who have met the criteria for placement on the honour roll. (Honours: 80 – 89%, 1st Class Honours: 90%+) As well, there is an "Honours with Distinction" category for students who maintain an overall average of 80% or higher in all of their courses. You will find a copy of the Honour Roll published on the school website.

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

This past week a registration package was sent home. The package contains all of the necessary information and forms needed to enroll your child in kindergarten for 2010-2011. If you did not receive this package, please contact the school office and you will be sent a package.

The "new" Kindergarten students are invited to **Kindergarten Orientation Day**, to be

held **Tuesday, June 1, in the morning.**

HIGH SCHOOL COURSE SELECTION

As well, shortly after Spring Break, the **High School course selection information package will be going home (April 8th)** with the students in the present grades 8-11. This package will contain all of the necessary information to enable the students to choose the course of studies for the 2010-2011 school year. The information gleaned from these forms will aid the administration to ensure that, as much as possible, student's selections will be available. To give parents an opportunity to ask questions, discuss career options/goals or to confirm that your child has the correct type and number of credits, **an information evening has been scheduled for Monday, April 12th** starting at 8:00 pm at DCS.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Thank you to all who showed up for these interviews. It is appreciated by the teachers to see so many parents come to the school and share their thoughts as to the

education of their children.

CHOIR/BAND EVENING

By special arrangement, the Senior High Choir from Immanuel Christian School in Lethbridge will be performing in concert with the DCS Senior Band. As some of you may know, Immanuel Christian School is where our former principal, Mr. VanSpronsen, is currently the principal. Their choir is on a tour of Saskatchewan and Manitoba. **The concert will be held in the Carman-West Church on Friday, May 7th.** As that date draws closer, look for more information in the newsletter and the website.

LIBRARY SOFTWARE

Normally the purchase of software is not that exciting, and not really something that finds its way into the Beacon. However, the Library Committee and Librarian are quite excited about the new software. The current software that is used to manage and maintain the library books is outdated and is no longer supported by the manufacturer. As a result, it causes many difficulties for the users. The new software will do many things for the library but probably the

most noticeable for the society is the ability to eventually access our library through the internet. That means that you will be able to search our library resources from your home computer. We will let you know when that system is up and running.

SCIENCE FAMILY FUN NIGHT

A number of years ago, DCS held a Science Family Fun Night. On that evening all participants, young and old were put into various teams to compete/participate in a wide variety of fun science-based activities. Whether it was building that tallest free-standing structure out of newspaper, racing balloon powered cars, or making pop-bottle xylophones, a good time was had by all. Once again, we are planning on holding a similar event scheduled for **Friday evening, April 30th**. As the time draws closer check out the newsletter or school website for more details.

STAFFING NEWS

Congratulations are in order for Harry and Jellie VanKammen.

God has blessed them with **25 years of marriage. This is indeed a special**

milestone in their lives and we wish them all the best as they spend time with family and friends from near and far.

We also are thankful to our Heavenly Father who has been with Mrs. Marcy Vandebos during her second eye operation. From what I have heard, it was successful and she is seeing more clearly now. Truly a rich blessing that should not be taken for granted.

As Jeremy already mentioned in his report, God has blessed DCS with a full complement of teaching staff next year. Jordan Ellens and his soon to be wife, Amanda, will be moving to Carman at the beginning of July. Lisa Oosterhoff will also be taking up residence in Carman this summer as she prepares for her role as teacher at DCS. Congratulations are also in order as Lisa recently became engaged to Eric Bergsma.

As I come to the end of my report, Jeremy started his report with welcoming spring. It is indeed beautiful outside and a wonderful time of renewal. Looking at the forecast for next week, it really looks like spring has arrived. But, do you remember last year at

this exact same time? That was the week that the DCS Band students left for their band trip to B.C. It was a very cold, wintry day. In fact, we travelled 2 ½ hours through a blizzard to get from Carman to the Winnipeg airport. After enjoying the warmth and sunshine of B.C. we returned to Winnipeg, where it again took another 2 ½ hours to return to Carman, through yet another blizzard. So, next week is looking pretty good. Enjoy your spring break!

I would like to end with the words of a song that the elementary students sang at the Easter concert. Those words resonate with our mission statement and purpose of DCS. It is not through our strength or might, our intelligence or ability, but only through Christ that we may do what we do.

*In Christ alone my hope is found,
He is my light, my strength, my
song;
this Cornerstone, this solid
Ground,
firm through the fiercest
drought and storm.
What heights of love, what
depths of peace,
when fears are stilled, when
strivings cease!
My Comforter, my All in All,
here in the love of Christ I stand.*

Phonological Awareness

Jane Stad

Kindergarten parents have heard this term a lot lately. What does it mean? It is basically a complicated way to say that we are looking at the sounds of a word. In Kindergarten we have decided to look at this more closely and to do an eight week set of one hour sessions of phonological awareness activities. We have five centers to which students will go to during this hour and each center focuses on words, parts of words or sounds. The centers are based on the following five areas: *rhyming, segmenting, blending, deletion and beginning sounds*. We are playing with words orally and listening for the different syllables and sounds that we hear.

I have included an Overview of Phonological Awareness which I found in the LinguSystems Catalogue. It explains some of the skills of phonological awareness in a concise, simple way. I hope it will help you see what is involved in becoming aware of sounds.

Phonological awareness is something children begin to learn as soon as **they are exposed to language. This means that playing rhyming games, teaching nursery rhymes and reading to young children helps them to become aware of sounds at a very early age.**

How can you help your child learn? READ books, **TALK ABOUT** the sounds in words, **NOTICE** together that two words begin with the same sound, **HAVE FUN** with nursery rhymes or silly songs that play with words, **TALK** about rhyming words, **PLAY** with language. *God has given us the great gift of language. It is one of the most important ways to serve Him and to learn about Him.* Explore that gift together with your children, especially your young children. ***There is never enough time to read books with your children but do it as often as you can...It will help them in learning to read later on.***

These past few weeks the Kindergarten students have been working with rhyming skills using the song **"Down By the Bay"**. You may be familiar with this song. The words are as follows:

Down by the Bay
Where the watermelons grow,
Back to my home
I dare not go,
For if I do
My mother will say,
"Did you ever see a whale with a polka dot tail?"
Down by the bay.....

The song focuses on rhyme and playing with words. The students were asked to help make up other verses for this song. ***The results are what follows. Enjoy!***