



THE REPORTER

“... they reported everything God had done through them.” Acts 15:4

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Two awards recognize excellence in science ed

by Abbie Altena

Biology teacher Audra Faber has been recognized with two awards from the Iowa Conservation Education Coalition for her outstanding work in teaching her students about God’s complex creation. Faber received the Bohumil Shimek Environmental Educator Award for outstanding efforts by an environmental educator and the Sylvan Runkel Environmental Education Award for her outstanding whole-school environmental education program.

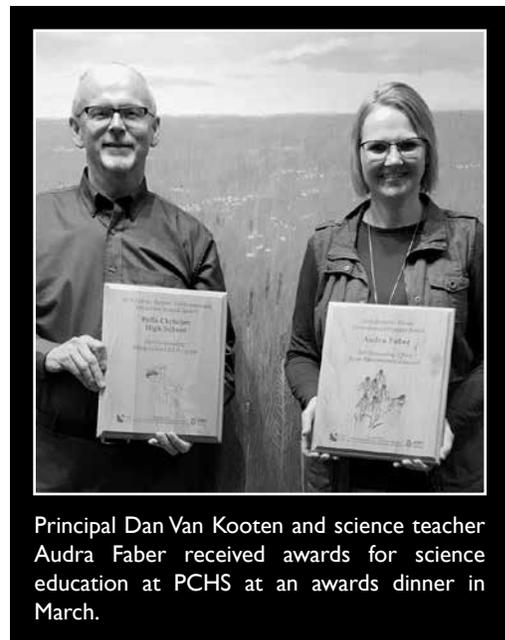
Faber has been driven by her desire to grow in her teaching and through the support of her coworkers. “The internal motivation is to keep growing as a teacher and honor God in my calling,” said Faber. “The external motivation is from the training we have been doing (Teaching for Transformation) and Mr. Van Kooten’s encouragement to try new things.”

The Bohumil Shimek Environmental Educator (EE) award is for new and interactive EE programming that goes above and beyond just learning in a classroom. The Sylvan Runkel Environmental Education Award is for involving the students in an outdoor classroom that also benefits the community.

“I am very pleased that Mrs. Faber is being recognized for her environmental education teaching. Her vision and hard work as a teacher are exemplary and noteworthy,” said principal Dan Van Kooten. “To be recognized at the state level is a testament to her excellent work as a teacher at PCHS!”

In Faber’s biology classes she has implemented many hands on activities that get students involved in what they are learning about. She was awarded with the Bohumil Shimek Environmental Educator award because of her lessons surrounding the sophomore biology field trip to local creeks and wetlands, as well as her involvement in planning and taking care of Pella Christian’s prairie.

“Through Mrs. Faber I have a new respect for the environment,” said sophomore



Principal Dan Van Kooten and science teacher Audra Faber received awards for science education at PCHS at an awards dinner in March.

Katelyn Vos. “She showed me how every single creature out there is important for the ecosystem that it lives in.”

Faber earned the Sylvan Runkel Environmental Education Award through her new activities involving the Biology II class last semester. The class was involved in leading a tree workshop for community members, presenting at the Pella Manor and The Cottages, and planning and planting 54 native trees on the Pella Christian High campus.

“Our campus is more beautiful because of the 54 diverse kinds of native trees that were planted this past fall. Our building will be more energy efficient because of the strategic planting of trees. Our athletic venues such as the tennis court will be more protected because of strategic planting of trees,” said Van Kooten.

Van Kooten and Faber attended an award dinner that concluded the Iowa Association of Naturalists workshop at the Jester Park Nature Center in Granger, Iowa, on March 7 to receive the awards.

The mission of Pella Christian High School is to educate and nurture each student to serve in God’s world.

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From the Principal's Pen: CACE affirms, recommends after site visit



Pella Christian High School is not a business like a restaurant or a hardware store. Or is it? While Christian schools like us are not-for-profit entities, it's readily apparent that good business practices are very important to their sustainability. The PCHS Board made a decision last fall to engage in a long term sustainability study, so in October, PCHS and PCGS engaged the Center for the Advancement of Christian Education (CACE), to help both schools with a deep dive into who we are and where we ought to be going.

In late February, four CACE fellows from around the country spent two days at PCHS observing our classes and culture and meeting with a variety of people, including students, teachers, parents, and supporters. The following week they presented us with a list of affirmations and recommendations.

CACE *affirmed* for PCHS its

- Longstanding generational support
- Compelling stories of students that show the value of the PCHS experience
- Board's decision to develop a comprehensive 5-year strategic roadmap and financial forecast
- Quality of instruction as well as professional/personal rapport between faculty, coaches and students
- Overall program rigor as evidenced by ACT scores and evidence of college success
- Quality and variety of programs

available for students relative to our size

- Forward thinking and new program implementation and the contributions these decisions have made to the school's long-term sustainability
- Commitment to student care/well-being and the comprehensive teaching of a biblical world and life view by all faculty, staff, administration, coaches, and parents
- Commitment to prioritize accessibility of families to Christian schooling with regard to tuition setting

CACE *recommended* that

- PCHS include in the strategic 5-year plan the provision for an Office of Advancement that includes a Fundraiser, a part time Director of Admissions and a part time Director of Communications and Marketing
- The Director of Admissions lead an effort to increase the presence of PCHS staff and students on the campuses of the community K-8 schools that feed PCHS as well as at the broadening demographic of churches PCHS students attend
- The Board and Principal use the strategic roadmap and financial forecast (to be completed no later than August 15) to guide all current and future key issues and decisions
- The Board composition be evaluated by skill set, and the election process be structured to ensure the board is staffed with the correct composition to build

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sustainability and lead PCHS into the future

- An intentional strategy and comprehensive plan for the acculturation of new students and new families be created
- PCHS gather additional evidence to support teaching and learning through data tools like Curriculum Trak and MAP and displayed student learning
- The PCHS Board develop a 5-year financial forecast that closes the sizable and unsustainable gap between the per pupil cost of education at PCHS and the tuition charged per student and provides

for need-based financial assistance validated by a third party financial need evaluation service

Next steps for the strategic plan are for a group of ten individuals selected by the Board to meet three times in the next four months to study and prioritize CACE's recommendations. This group consists of parents, faculty, board, and supporters. Their goal is to complete their work and compile their SRFF (strategic roadmapping and financial forecasting) 5-year plan by August 15.

We are thankful for this opportunity to steward well the gift of Christian education in south central Iowa. We ask each of you to support and pray for this effort to strengthen our school for generations to come.

Mr. Van Kooten

PENS provides research opportunity

PC's 18 physics students are once again partnering with PENS (Pella Explores Near Space) to send a high-altitude helium balloon with six student-designed and built experiments to a height of nearly 100,000 feet. The projects will study infrared and visible light, weather conditions, static charge, plant growth, and photography.

Volunteers Mike Morgan and Jim Emmert spend many hours working with students to make this a true hands-on learning experience. The goal is to launch the balloon sometime in April when conditions

at the jet stream level are favorable.

During the approximately three-hour flight, the 8-foot balloon can be tracked in real time online. A chase team of students will also follow the balloon to recover the experiments.

Science teacher Greg Beekhuizen appreciates how students are involved in a real research project. "They design the experiments, they build the boxes which fly, they learn basic programming, they have to consider both weight and financial budgets, and at the end of the project they analyze and share their results," he said.



Volunteers Jim Emmert and Mike Morgan led a Winterim class that experimented with a Pico balloon. This semester they are assisting the physics students with experiments using a larger PENS balloon.

Over 90 percent of PC students involved in athletic program

450 events?! Did you know that our athletic teams participate in more than 450 competitive events against other schools throughout the course of one year? That's about 2.5 athletic events for every day of school! Athletes at PC are busy year-round, with more than 91% of our students participating in one or more of the 17 extra-curricular athletic programs during fall, winter, spring or summer seasons.

The Athletic Department surveyed parents of athletes to determine what they want most out of the educational opportunities that are afforded through athletics. PC parents stated that their children's experience would be positive if they were able to develop Christ-like character, to grow spiritually, to be loved and valued by their coaches, to have fun and to learn to be a great teammate, and to learn the value of grit and effort.

More than 50 individuals are employed as coaches at PC. They seek to continue the work that is being done in the classroom by educating, nurturing and investing in the lives of our students. The Athletic Department seeks to accomplish a few goals through the athletic programs they offer:

1) Pella Christian students need to know that athletics are not just about winning and losing. Rather, they provide a platform to worship, witness, grow to be more like Christ and to enjoy fellowship with others.

2) Athletics are also valuable because they seek to develop the character of young men and women. Students learn to fight through adversity, they learn to push themselves, they learn to be a great teammate. The list goes on and on. Athletics provide great teachable moments that can't always be simulated inside the classroom.

3) Last, the Athletic Department strives for excellence in all activities. Pella Christian is a great school that is represented well when students are successful on the court, or on the field, or in the gym. It's a great thing for students to learn to work hard to be successful.

Ag meal to precede April 25 Society Meeting

The annual PCHS Society Meeting will be held on Thursday, April 25. This year's meeting will begin with a free meal prepared and served by the Pella Christian High FFA and Ag Advisory Committee at 6:00 p.m. The Society meeting agenda will include voting for new board members from three districts as well as a presentation of the 2019-20 PCHS Budget for Society approval. Principal Van Kooten will provide a pictorial report on events and activities from the 2018-19 school year. The Society will also hear firsthand regarding:

- strategic planning work currently taking place
- the upcoming Spanish Immersion program
- a proposal for a change in governance
- the current financial outlook for PCHS

We invite all PCHS supporters to attend this meeting on Thursday, April 25 at 6 PM! The dinner will take place in the commons and the Society meeting to follow will be in the auditorium.

Forensics teams set records



Seniors Emma Stravers, Tyler Egesdal and freshman Trent Van Gilst were named All-State performers for individual forensics this season. Having three students and four events selected to perform at the All-State Festival at UNI on March 25 was a new record for PC speech, as was receiving straight ones for ten events at the State forensics competition at North Scott High School on March 9. Senior Tyler Egesdal is the first PC performer to receive All-State awards in two categories: musical theater and improv. Egesdal appreciated watching other high quality forensics events at All-State. "I really enjoyed seeing a bunch of talented, hardworking people who love speech as much as I do," he said.

Earlier this season, large group forensics also set a new school record, sending four events to All-State: choral reading was nominated as non-performing, and readers theatre, musical theater, and short film were selected to perform for the All-State Festival held on Feb. 16 at ISU. "I am very proud of all the accomplishments and hard work our speech students gave this year," said coach Marlo Van Peurse. "It was great watching them further develop their talents in the arts!"

Eagle Boosters prepare for Tulip Time fundraiser

What do Dutch spiced beef sandwiches, bologna on a stick, walking tacos, Bonnie's chocolate chip cookies, cotton candy, sno cones, beautiful weather and 120 volunteers mean? Tulip Time, of course, but also over \$25,000 in proceeds that go back to academic, fine arts, and athletic requests made each year by PC teachers and coaches.

Eagle Boosters are gearing up for another round of Tulip Time, ordering supplies, sprucing up the booth and drafting the volunteers needed for this major fundraiser. Volunteers can sign up to take orders and money, help with food prep or hand out drinks by going to the Booster sign link on the PC website or by contacting Amy Bokhoven (stuamybok@gmail.com). The three shifts a day are four hours in length — 10:15-2:15, 2:00-6:00, and 5:45-9:45.

The PC Booster booth is located at the corner of Franklin and East First diagonally across from the Vermeer Windmill. If you can't volunteer, consider stopping by for a meal or a snack. "PC Boosters appreciate the great support we get during Tulip Time from all those who volunteer or eat at the stand," said Bokhoven.

Alumni Reflections

Groenendyk testifies to encouragement of PC teachers, coaches

Eli Groenendyk ('09) says it is funny how God works. He remembers sitting at the top of the old wooden bleachers in the old PCHS gym during chapel and not paying attention at all. Now he is a pastor and has the opportunity to speak at local Christian high schools for their chapels – wondering if those students are paying attention!

Eli attended Northwestern College in Orange City, Iowa after graduating from PCHS. He worked various jobs during the summers, one of them being a part time youth director at a church in Spirit Lake, Iowa. This experience and the guiding of the Holy Spirit led him to attend seminary in Chicago after graduating from Northwestern. He now serves as a pastor for Calvary Church in the Twin Cities and is married to Hannah who is a middle school teacher.

Groenendyk says that PCHS set him on a trajectory of Christian education for which he is thankful. The support and inspiration he received from his teachers and coaches helped him through tough times in high school. He also attributes much of the positive experience he had in high school to the good friends that God blessed him with at PCHS, remaining in close relationship with many of them even though distance separates them now.

“Jesus gives my life



Eli Groenendyk ('09) currently serves as pastor for Calvary Church in the Twin Cities. He graduated from Northwestern College in Orange City, IA, before attending seminary in Chicago.

meaning and purpose,” says Groenendyk. He hopes that he passes the hope and love of Jesus to those around him in his work as a pastor. Although he and Hannah do not have children yet, they hope they, too, will be able to send their kids to Christian schools. “I have always appreciated the opportunity to wear the name 'Christ' on my jersey, shirt, or jacket and represent Christ in my life.”

Eli Groenendyk testifies to God's faithfulness no matter where you live or what you are going through or how old you are. He is thankful PCHS was part of this story for him.

Upcoming Events

April

- 22 Theater Celebration Parent Night
- 23 Grandparents Day
- 24 2:30 Dismissal-Faculty Professional Learning
- 25-26 Senior Class Trip to St. Louis/MAP Testing
- 25 FFA Supper/School Society Meeting
- 28 Chamber Choir at Pella II CRC evening service
- 30 STO Financial Aid Applications Due

May

- 2-3 Tulip Time-11:30 Dismissal
- 5 Tulip Time Worship Service-Chamber Choir Sings
- 6 FFA Meeting to Elect Officers
- 8 2:30 Dismissal for Faculty Professional Learning
- Spring Choir Concert 7:00 p.m.
- 14 AP Calculus Exam at PCHS
- Band Pops Concert 7:00 p.m.
- 15 Senior Awards Night 7:00 p.m.
- 16 Seniors Last Day
- 17 Commencement Rehearsal 9:30 a.m.
- 18 Commencement Ceremony 7:00 p.m.
- 30 Exams-11:30 Dismissal
- 31 Exams-11:30 Dismissal/Last Day of School

Memorial Gifts

Memorial gifts were received in honor of **Winnifred Pommer, Sherry Westra and Jan Vander Wal**. PCHS expresses sympathy to family and friends of these individuals whose lives were a blessing.

