



# THE REPORTER

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

## In this issue . . .

Principal's Pen ..... p. 2

Teachers Not Returning .... p. 2

Alumni Reflections..... p. 3

D Groups ..... p. 3

FFA First Year ..... p. 4

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

### Pella Christian High School



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## Seventy seniors graduate, staff recognized

by Kaylee Bandstra

The class of 2019 graduated on a rainy Saturday evening on May 18. Graduates, per tradition, wore maroon and white robes and entered the gymnasium to the grand piano's strains of "Pomp and Circumstance." After head senior sponsor Dan Vermeer opened the ceremony in prayer, senior Parker Schnell, chosen by his classmates as their student speaker, compared the seniors' lives to a Rubik's cube and gave 9.5 steps to success. His premise was that, just like solving a Rubik's Cube, we all want our lives to end up perfectly. However, life can be messy, and we are not called to solve every problem; instead, we are called to work in God's kingdom and do what God asks of us whether it looks successful or not.

Pastor Doug Van Der Pol, from Oskaloosa Bethel CRC and father of graduate Olivia Van Der Pol, addressed the class next. He reminded them to follow God, not just their heart. His sermon was based on the class verse, Proverbs 19:21 — "Many are the plans in a person's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails." Pastor Van Der Pol said that many graduates will be told to follow their heart, but the Bible states that the heart is deceitful.

After his address, the class was presented with

their diplomas with names read by principal Dan Van Kooten, and diplomas presented by board president Robert Bandstra. The Concert Choir then sang "Child of God," written by 19954PC graduate Layton De Vries. This powerful piece granted our seniors a blessing with its message of God's abiding presence, despite the circumstances of our lives. The choir also presented "My Soul's Been Anchored in the Lord," a lively, upbeat spiritual.

Biology teacher Audra Faber, administrative assistant Penne Fox, and food service staff Rayma Rozendaal and Jan Boender were recognized and thanked for 20 years of service to our school community.

Staff not returning were also recognized: shop teacher Paul Monsma, band teacher Shannon Dykstra, Spanish teacher Jason Noble, and art teacher Joe Hoksbergen. Reverend Daniel Smith, father of graduate Natasha Smith, closed the ceremony with prayer.

Both graduates and audience sang the Pella Christian Alma Mater to close the ceremony, and the class of 2019 officially finished their high school career. Graduates formed a congratulatory line in the commons rather than the traditional setting in front of school given the rainy conditions.



Senior Parker Schnell and Pastor Doug Van Der Pol addressed the seventy graduates on May 18.

## From the Principal's Pen: Seniors reflect on their PCHS experience



Part of what any good school does is ask questions of stakeholders like students, parents, and supporters to gauge their satisfaction with the school. We have recently done just that through the CACE (Center for the Advancement of Christian Education) strategic planning process during which several parents and supporters met with CACE to give feedback about PCHS. We engage in that process as a staff when we ask students to complete surveys regarding their experience in their classes. I ask my staff to complete a survey on my leadership to help me know where I need to grow. Opening up the results of these surveys causes some anxiety, of course, but the feedback is necessary for continued growth in what we do.

For several days in May, I meet with most of our seniors in my office to hear their verbal feedback after four years at Pella Christian High. I have mini candy bars and bowl of candy ready to help motivate them, but they are always ready

to talk about their time at PCHS. I ask each small group, "What are the good, the bad, and the ugly as you think back on your four years at PCHS?" I ask for their honesty. Here is some of what this year's seniors had to say:

- our teachers at Pella Christian really care, especially regarding our faith walk
- our teachers really know us
- the teachers want to be mentors to us
- we should do a leadership retreat at the beginning of the year
- help us know how to help our peers with mental health issues
- we loved having some new fun activities like Chaos Day and Midnight Madness this year
- at a small school like ours you can be involved in a variety of extracurricular activities
- D groups are good; keep them
- Winterim is great; never get rid of it
- I wish we had more AP classes
- faith is integrated into all our learning;

it gives great depth to everything

- we have too many schedules around here
- discussions about doctrine can be difficult and even divisive
- we have good community here and it shows in how our fans show up at events
- we understand why the school has GoGuardian (internet filter) but we don't like it!
- do more assemblies on difficult topics that we need to hear about
- we are really prepared for the next chapter, especially in life science and writing
- we're ready to go, but we'll really miss PCHS

**"Our teachers at Pella Christian really care, especially regarding our faith walk." — PC senior**

Join me in thanking God that our students can identify that they are getting a good education at PCHS, but also that they are cared for here. It's gratifying to see that we are successfully meeting our mission to educate and nurture each student to serve in God's world.

Mr. Van Kooten

## New career paths draw four PC teachers to different places

by Austin Dart

Four PC teachers have decided to explore different ventures next fall: band instructor Shannon Dykstra, industrial arts teacher Paul Monsma, art teacher Joseph Hoksbergen, and Spanish teacher Jason Noble.



Dykstra, having worked at PCHS for seven years, has enjoyed the parental and community support here, as well as hard-working students. "Students are deeply involved and give 120% all the time. I will deeply miss my students," she said. Dykstra has taken a position with Wichita Schools in Kansas, where she and her husband will be closer to family.



Monsma has taught a variety of classes in his 21 years at PC, ranging from welding to P.E. to mathematics. Monsma has seen God at work in the student body. "It

is evident in so many students lives that they want to serve God. Seeing all the service projects they go on to help others has been a great encouragement," he said. Monsma is looking forward to building and remodeling houses and spending time with his wife, kids and grandkids.

Hoksbergen has always had a passion for art, as well as a heart for his students in his 12 years at PC, saying he has spent "many sleepless nights ruminating over how to ignite excitement in kids who are more apathetic toward art." He has seen God at work at PC in a variety of ways. "I have seen the Lord strengthening students as they pass through incredible personal challenges," he said. "I have seen God using students to faithfully encourage one another. I have seen the hearts of committed staff members who daily live out the Gospel, albeit imperfectly." Hoksbergen plans to focus on his own art business, freelancing in art,



illustration and graphic design.



Noble has been a Spanish teacher at PC for eight out of his 15 years teaching. He has also taught at Canton Community Christian in Georgia and the Ogden CSD in Iowa. Throughout his teaching career, Noble taught many classes, including 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grade, Digital Literacy, English as a Second Language, and Spanish classes.

At PC, Noble enjoyed the students in his classes, among other things. "I love this school and the students, teachers, parents, and supporters. I love being able to teach Spanish and how it relates to the Gospel," he said. Noble will be working to raise support as he and his family move to Spain to pursue mission work.

We wish them all well in their future endeavors and thank them for their years of faithful service!

Alumni Reflections**Christian ed helped De Young ('80) develop 'view of God's kingdom'**

"In a nutshell, (Christian education) was foundational," says Mary (Vos) De Young ('80). Her time at PCHS was bookended by a Christian grade school education and a Christian college experience. De Young states that Christian education helped develop her view of God's kingdom and working in it as salt and light. "For me, in my profession, it is all in how I approach the needs of an individual who is created in the image of God," she said.

De Young has been a nurse for 35 years, working for most of her career in intensive care units (ICU) across the western U.S. and Canada. She was also Clinical Outreach Coordinator for the Nursing Department's BSN Completion Program at Dordt College for 5 years.

She and her husband Gary have two adult sons and have lived in Michigan, Utah, California, Alberta, Iowa, and Colorado – some of these places more than once! While living in Canada, she worked in a very high level Pediatric ICU and fell in love with

the world of pediatrics, leading her to get a Master's in Nursing and becoming a pediatric nurse practitioner. Most of their moves were for Gary's career, but their last move back to Colorado was for her current position as a nurse practitioner.

De Young has seen God's faithfulness as she cares for children in her everyday practice, in the connections she has made with people from various walks of life around the world, and very personally as she and her family experienced the death of a baby. They continue to testify, "God is good all the time."

An advocate of Christian education, De Young points to the different perspective one gains about the world and each individual's role in God's kingdom. "(A Christian perspective) gives motivation to caring and nurturing those around us," she said.

She sees Christian education as a gift to children, more than money well spent, because it teaches students that they are part of God's kingdom, called to give glory and honor to Him in all that they do. She



Mary (Vos) De Young and her husband Gary have lived in five different U.S. states as well as Canada. De Young currently works as a nurse practitioner in Colorado.

and her husband did not hesitate to give their children a Christian education from grade school through college, feeling it was worth the sacrifice, just as their own parents sacrificed for them, to provide this foundation of learning what it means to work for Christ-centered renewal in every area of life.

**D Groups provide place to be 'known'**

Over 30 Discipleship Groups (D Groups) led by PC teachers, staff, and administrators, as well as local youth leaders and parents of students, met twice most months this past school year to reflect and share as well as just "hang out" and be together. According to coordinator Joel Rietema, "D Groups are meant to provide a place for students to be known by their peers and at least one adult in a deeper and more connected way."

D Groups teamed up for Chaos Day in brother/sister groups early in the year, and then also paired up again some additional times throughout the year. Sometimes groups played interactive games and shared food, but not always. "The time and space (provided by D groups) is, I think, a positive one because there are little to no expectations, and it's a nice break from the norm of classes and the daily grind of school," said Rietema.

He sees the groups as a nice supplemental piece to chapel, which still happens once or twice a week, since social interaction usually does not happen in that venue. D groups also tied some activities into the chapel theme of "See God's Story, Live God's Story." Senior group members were offered the option

to share their story, which many of them did. "The adult leaders also became more vulnerable and shared their life story and testimony as well," said Rietema.

With last year being the first year for D Groups, Rietema felt this year built on what was achieved last year, and that the seniors did a nice job this year taking a leadership role in many groups. "It seems like groups are becoming more and more connected and relationships are growing stronger as time passes," he said. "This is very encouraging, especially since the members come from different classes, friend groups and grades."

Next year Rietema hopes to continue what has already been established in the first two years and that relationships become even stronger. One additional option being considered is having students sit with their D Group members during chapel, to allow for more connectivity and relational tie-ins during chapel, according to Rietema. "We plan to keep the leadership structure the same, but also perhaps allow upperclassmen the opportunity to take on leadership opportunities more frequently as well in structured situations," he said.

**SRT develops five-year plan**

The PCHS school board has engaged the services of the Center for the Advancement of Christian Education (CACE) to assist our school community in the process of intentionally mapping out the next five years. We also asked representatives from within our school community to serve on what CACE identifies as a Strategic Roadmapping Team (SRT). This team has met for three days, tasked to find creative ways to improve the student and family experience at PCHS.

Embedded in this process is the development of a financially sustainable tuition model, a healthy governance structure, and the continued development of a teaching and learning culture that engages teachers and students to "See the Story and Live the Story."

This team will meet one additional time to finalize a plan for the school board's consideration. If you have any questions about this process, don't hesitate to contact Mr. Van Kooten. Team members are Ryan Agre, Brad Engbers, Audra Faber, Troy Hugen, Brad Jungling, Steve Larson, Helen Luhrs, Matt Roozeboom, Noreen Vander Wal, Dan Van Kooten, and Greg Wojczynski.

## Supporting Businesses

Thank you to the following businesses for their support of PCHS through the annual business drive and through their advertising support of PCHS publications. (Businesses in bold supported through both efforts!) Show your appreciation to these businesses by thanking them and returning their support with your patronage!

### **Allen & Neumann Family Dentistry**

American Family Insurance

### **Bruxvoort's Decorating Center, Inc.**

### **Cabinet Design of Pella**

Center Point Electric, Inc.

Central College

Culver's

Dahm Dental

De Bloemen Hof

### **De Bruin Electric, Inc.**

De Jong Greenhouses

De Ruiters Lawn Equipment

### **De Vries Electric, Inc.**

Larry E. & Rosie De Vries

Ducts in a Row

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Edward Jones Investments

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The Funky Zebras Pella

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### **Home Realty**

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### **Leighton State Bank**

### **Marion County Bank**

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Vander Ploeg Bakery

Van Dyk – Duven Funeral Home

Van Gorp Corporation

Van Hemert Chiropractic  
Center, P.C.

### **Van Maanen, Sietstra, Meyer & Nikkel, P.C.**

Veenstra Construction, Inc.

Vermeer Corporation

Village Cleaners

## FFA finishes inaugural year

Students were busy exploring the agricultural world this year in PC's new Ag Program, which included four new classes as well as FFA activities, such as a fruit sale fundraiser. Students in FFA attended the South Central District Career Development Event (CDE) Day last fall in Osceola, where they enjoyed participating in livestock evaluation, dairy food judging, FFA knowledge quizzes, vet science, and horse judging.

PC's first FFA chapter also traveled to Indianapolis for the annual FFA National Convention. While there, the group attended leadership workshops, went to a Garth Brooks concert, and visited the Indy Speedway track. During FFA week this winter, hosting a teacher breakfast and participating in Ag Olympics kept the members busy.

This spring PC's FFA officer team went to Des Moines for the Iowa FFA Legislative Symposium at the State Capitol, where they met with senators Ken Rozenboom and Amy Sinclair as well as other leaders in Iowa agriculture. An FFA banquet closed out the school year with 105 members attending. FFA activities will continue this summer, with exhibits being readied and displayed at the Southern Iowa County Fair in July.

## Upcoming Events

### July

1-12 2019/20 On-line  
Registration

13 ACT Testing

### August

12 Fall Practices Begin

19 Board Meeting 7:00

26 First Day of Classes

New Students Only

11:30 Dismissal

27 First Day of Classes

All Students

## Memorial Gifts

Memorial gifts were received in honor of **Don Rozendaal**. PCHS expresses sympathy to his family and friends and gives thanks for his life, which was a blessing.

