

WINTER 2018-2019

# MSCS

MENNO SIMONS CHRISTIAN SCHOOL



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## KRAHN FAMILY CHRONICLES

Dan and Jannette Neufeld were a part of the pioneer generation that made Menno what it is today. Both attended Foothills Mennonite Church where they hung out at youth group. Dan plotted to have them take a wrong turn down a tobogganing hill one evening and convinced Jannette to hold his hand as they climbed back up the hill. They eventually married at Foothills Mennonite Church in 1968 and had two daughters, Michelle and Lisa.

They sat in on meetings during the planning stage of Menno Simons Christian School and were excited at the prospect of a Christian school founded in Mennonite principles, especially for their two daughters who would soon be entering junior high. In 1983, they enrolled their oldest daughter Michelle to test the waters. She was one of the fifty-six students that started at Menno that year. In 1984 they enrolled Lisa.

Through those foundational years at Menno, Dan and Jannette worked tirelessly for the school. Jannette maintained involvement in all the fundraisers, garage sales and Sweet Interludes, at the same time balancing a full-time job. Dan, who owned his own construction company, would step in to help with any maintenance or building issues that came up at the school. To make ends meet, the school decided to flip houses, which was in Dan's line of expertise. He would schedule off time from his own construction contracts to work on homes for Menno, one time showing up during -20 degree temperatures, only to find that no one else had shown up to volunteer! Being the person he was, he still pulled up the tresses of



*Dan & Jannette Neufeld with Darcy & Lisa Krahn and the 4 Krahn grandchildren*

the house on his own so that the project could get another step closer to completion.

Menno Simons Christian School was not a school of convenience. In fact it was very inconvenient. Everyone was expected to participate and take ownership – the parents, the students and the teachers. But this was what made Menno special, what made Menno a community, what made Dan & Jannette persevere. Their daughters both thrived at Menno. Jannette remembers one of the teachers, Rosemary Nixon, and how she was able to really help their older daughter Michelle come out of her shell. For Lisa it was a safe place, to be herself and be surrounded by people who cared – an extension of the church that she had grown up in.

For Lisa, the richness of Menno has continued. Lisa went on to Columbia Bible College, where she met Darcy. They married in June of 1995. They settled back in Calgary in the area where Lisa grew up to raise their children, Kennedy, Nate, Sam and Charlie (Gr 9 at Menno). Lisa maintained her connections to Menno and enrolled Kennedy in 2001 and the three boys shortly after. Lisa was working as an educational assistant at Calgary Christian School when a job posting came up at Menno. At the time Joanne Wiens (one of Lisa's former teachers), was the principal. She invited Lisa to come in for an "interview", but it ended up being an amazing time of catching up and it's been fun ever since. Menno has not been a job for Lisa: it has been coming back to a community. It's like she never left.

CONT'D



Michelle's Grade 9 Grad 1986 (3rd student from the left)



Lisa's Grade 9 Grad 1988

## THINKING BACK THERE WERE SO MANY AWESOME MEMORIES...

*I remember hot dog day and being so excited... because we got chocolate milk. We always volunteered to help out and I remember going with Jenny Janssen (now Felsmen) and going to the office to grab the container of chocolate milk. I remember always doing so many things and being involved in all the activities, even the musical! I was background though because I didn't want to be front and center but I remember that we put on Heidi and at that time because there weren't quite enough students, we would have the teachers play roles, in particular Ed Enns (our teacher) played Heidi's grandfather.*

*A fond memory was our Grade 7 field trip. It was to Expo '86 in Vancouver. We had to get up really early to go to the airport to board our flight to Vancouver. When we got there we told the muster point and a time to meet back so that we could catch our ride back to the airport to head home for Calgary. Jenny and I walked around the whole day with a few other friends (no chaperones!) and it poured the entire day. Expo '86 from Calgary to Vancouver then back to Calgary - all in one day!*

*Another thing that sticks out in my mind is the Green Clover Taxi. The school wasn't big enough to afford busing so there was a taxi - one of those old station wagon styles that could take like 10 kids - and it went around Silversprings and Ranchlands to pick up the kids and deliver them to Menno! Can you imagine? Taking a taxi to school every morning?*

## WHAT KIND OF IMPACT DID THE SCHOOL HAVE ON YOU?

*I remember the community, feeling like I belonged, like I had a place. The intimacy of the environment. Real friendships, friendships for life. I remember meeting up with Jenny again at an alumni event and we clicked immediately. We had all these special memories of Menno that brought us together again.*

*I didn't like school but when the teachers said, "come see me after class" I didn't panic, I knew they really wanted to help me (it was also harder to hide when there were only 7 other kids in the class). I went to public school for elementary and high school, but I REMEMBER Menno. I remember doing macramé with Judy Epp - which I regifted to her on her 30th Menno anniversary, German by correspondence - the whole process of recording on the cassette player, mailing it off and then receive it back with comments, the sports programs.*

## WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO SEND YOUR CHILDREN TO MENNO?

*It's all I've known. That was a no brainer. If my kids can hear at home at school and church the same core values, why would I not give it to them? Kennedy, my oldest could have stayed forever. In fact Kennedy was the first graduate of an alumna at Menno. I remember Kennedy being in pre-school when we cut the ribbon to open the Elkton Drive location in 2001. She cut the ribbon with Dave Bronconier. Nate thought he was ready for high school when the time came, but quickly came to realize how great things were for him at Menno.*

*You can tell when a child has graduated from Menno - they are more confident in who they are and willing to stand up for what they believe. The child and teacher relationship, if my kids truly needed something I knew that they could go to a teacher and that teacher would always care and listen. One day, I would love to be a grandparent here.*

## WHAT DOES MENNO MEAN TO YOU?

*Community. Family and people who truly care.*



The Krahn Kids Charlie (Gr 9), Sam ('17 alumnus), Nate ('14 alumnus) and Kennedy ('12 alumna)

## FUN FACTS ABOUT THE KRAHNS

- Hardcore Disney lovers!
- Kennedy was the first graduate of a Menno Alumna
- Have visited Penticton every summer (except for 1) for the last 45 years
- They have 4 living generations in their family, Lisa's grandmother Helen is 93 and grandfather John is 95
- They are a LOUD family!

# INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS



Jacob Huizinga and Nicolas Pulido Matamoros

Menno had the pleasure of welcoming Nicolas Pulido Matamoros as part of Menno's international exchange program. Nicolas is from Bogata, Columbia. While attending Gimnasio Los Pinos School, he heard about the Palliser Beyond Borders Program. The Mission of the Palliser Beyond Borders Program is to provide students an education enriched with opportunities to engage with learners from other countries and cultural backgrounds. Nicolas decided in Grade 7 that he wanted to participate in an international exchange, but his father felt that he was too young to go alone. When his Grade 9 year approached, Nicolas had the opportunity to come to Canada, a country that he had never been to.

At Menno Nicolas has been able to pursue his education in a different language, develop his independence and make friends. In his home country Nicolas is ranked 83 in professional tennis and is also the lead French horn player in his school band. His favourite subjects are math, science and english.

## NICOLAS, WHAT IS IT LIKE TO BE AN EXCHANGE STUDENT?

*Being an exchange student is an amazing experience. It is something I believe that everyone should experience. This experience allows for independence, growth in confidence, and many opportunities for personal development. Obviously you are going to have some mistakes along the way, but these mistakes allow you to mature and grow as a human being.*

## WHY WERE YOU INTERESTED IN DOING AN INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE?

*I was interested in being an international student because it is such a unique experience to meet people across the world and get to*

*know more about another country's culture (in this case Canada). I also was interested in studying in an English speaking country, because it will help me to accomplish my dream of becoming an airline pilot.*

## WHAT HAS BEEN THE BIGGEST ADJUSTMENT FOR YOU IN CANADA?

*The independence. Columbia is not the safest country so I was never allowed to go to places on my own. As an only child my parents were very protective. In Canada, I have this freedom to go and do many things on my own. The other evening my host family let me go to a hockey game with their son who is 11. When the game finished they asked if I wanted to be picked up, but I told them it would be no problem for us to take the C-train. So we did!*

## HOW HAS YOUR EXPERIENCE AT MENNO BEEN?

*Menno is an incredible school in my opinion. My experience at Menno has been very positive. I remember that on the first day, I was impressed with the kindness that the staff and students received me with.*

*"Like Nicolas, I was also new to Menno this year, and so the shared experience of coming into an unfamiliar environment was definitely a huge contributing factor in the early days of our friendship. As we got to know each other a little more, we found that we had a lot in common, such as our shared love of Star Trek, science, and music. Every day, as we are learning about each other's cultures and interests, we continue to grow our friendship. Also, I think that because we are helping one another in academics, we have created a sort of symbiotic relationship. Nicolas often helps me with math problems that I don't understand and sometimes I offer a helping hand with some of the more difficult English concepts. I think we work a bit like pace cars for one another. All in all, Nicolas is an excellent friend and I have found that he brings out the best in people."*

**Jacob Huizinga,**  
*Grade 9 Student*

*"When I arrived to Menno on the first day, I was pretty nervous, because I didn't know anyone in the classroom, but then, Jacob approached me and we started to hang out everyday at school. We discovered how much we had in common, like the love we have for science and space. Also I think we complement each other at school. For example, he often offers me help in projects associated to LA class to help me improve my English level. But I also help him with subjects like math and science, because there are some topics that we have already seen in Colombia, so we can say that is like a symbiotic relationship. I can say with complete certainty that Jacob is one of the best friends I have ever had in Canada."*

**Nicolas Pulido Matamoros,**  
*Grade 9 Exchange Student*



## OBEDIENCE IN HIS VISION

In Septembers of 2017, Menno Simons Christian School welcomed Amy Stephenson to the Junior High Teaching Team. Amy has a degree in Behavioural Sciences (AUC 2013) and Education (AUC 2015) so she naturally took on the roles of Junior High English and Science at Menno. She also leads the Student Leadership and CTS options at the school.

But Amy isn't just one of the new faces at Menno, she is also the founder and Executive Director of CHILL - Christ Heals in Low Lights, an organization that works with individuals within Calgary who have been trafficked and exploited. CHILL provides communities of safety and belonging for individuals impacted by exploitation. Furthermore, through education and partnership, they work to prevent human trafficking and intervene where it is occurring. Amy passionately leads the CHILL team and is relentless in bringing hope and freedom to those who have been trafficked and exploited. She believes prevention, intervention and recovery are necessary pieces in fighting the darkness of sexual exploitation.

**// CHILL**

## WHAT IS THE STORY BEHIND CHILL?

*My passion for justice became apparent to me at a very young age. In high school, I was drawn to marginalized populations within Calgary. I volunteered at local shelters and I took every opportunity to learn more. During that time in my life, I really had to lean into God for hope. It was at that point God started showing me His vision.*

*As Bill Johnson wrote, "It is interesting how God takes what we think are insignificant confessions and prayers and uses them to shape our lives." That is exactly what happened. I asked God to break my heart for what breaks His. That question was answered by a vision that came over me. I found myself weeping for an entire weekend as God gave me His eyes for injustice, specifically human trafficking. It was the weekend that God gave me the name CHILL - Christ Heals in Low Lights. I knew God had a plan to bring His light into some of the darkest and most unimaginable places.*

*I embarked on a journey of trying to clarify God's vision. One night, I attended an evening of dreaming offered through the Alliance District, where young people were encouraged to share their hearts. It was that night when I had CHILL on my heart. I was encouraged by one of the leaders that perhaps it had to do with what I had studied:*

trauma, trafficking and exploitation. That night, I felt God giving me the choice to commit to the plans He has for this ministry, not knowing what it might look like. As I surrendered this into God's hands, I asked for a team to serve with.

The next morning I woke up with several e-mails from individuals sharing their desire to be a part of something called Christ Heals in Low Lights. The crazy part was that most of these individuals were people who I had never met, let alone individuals I had shared the dream with. Once again I was weeping before God – as I began to understand God's faithfulness and the power behind He who fulfills.

## HOW DID YOU COME TO MENNO?

After graduating and starting CHILL, I wasn't sure if I was being called to teach in the classroom. One evening at a prayer group, I was challenged by a friend to go before God and pray specifically. Specifically I prayed for an opportunity that would be 5 minutes from where I live, that would involve Jr High Students and that would include Science and English instruction. Within 12 hours a job posting came up that was 5 minutes from where I live, that involved teaching Jr High Students Science and English – that job was at Menno Simons Christian School. Through this journey of prayer God knew where I was to be in this season and in His grace He even ensured that my human parameters of distance and subject were answered.

## WHAT INITIALLY INSPIRED YOU TO BECOME A TEACHER?

My family always knew that I had the gift of teaching. I had a whiteboard always ready to go in my room and was eager to share my knowledge with those around me, so no one was surprised when I ended up pursuing education. I love people, which initially led me to start CHILL and later on pursue teaching in the classroom. I believe in the power of education to impact lives and communities. Everything that I've been drawn to has always had an element of teaching or creating safe spaces for people.

## AS AN EDUCATOR WHAT ARE YOU MOST PASSIONATE ABOUT?

My personal philosophy of education looks to impact on a micro and macro level – relationships at an individual level and then

mobilizing students to contribute to change on a macro level. I think through education we can inspire students at the micro level to develop empathy and compassion. Helping students to recognize and develop their social and emotional intelligence is essential to whole student development. By creating safe and loving teaching spaces we can help students to develop themselves. In these spaces we can teach and help them to have an awareness of the greater issues that are happening not just in the classroom: but in their city, in their country, in their world. Students can then become agents of change and see beyond the classroom and how they can have an impact on the rest of the world.

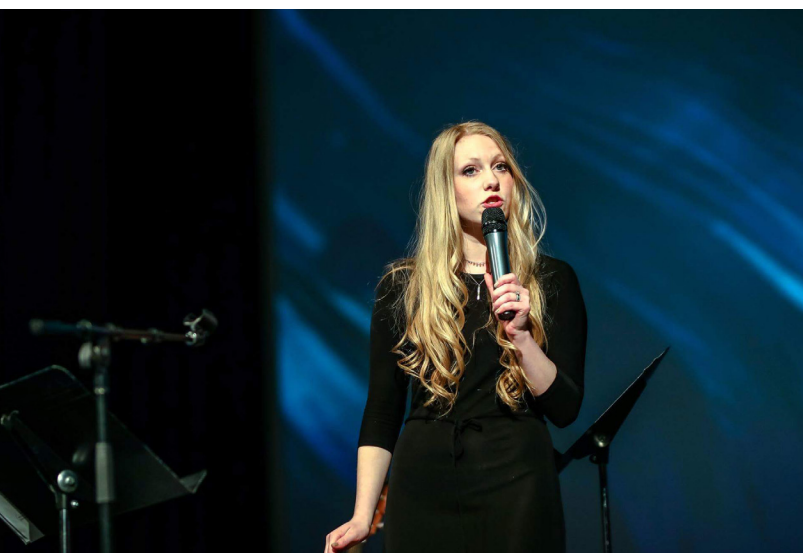
## HOW DO YOU SEE YOUR COLLABORATION WITH MENNO AND CHILL?

The primary reason I wanted to work at Menno was because I recognized the emphasis on social justice. I felt that as a teacher at Menno, I would have the freedom to pursue my philosophy of education and also share and integrate my experiences working with marginalized populations into the classroom. Also, the ability to be able to explore and teach from a faith perspective as an educator was essential. Furthermore, being able to incorporate the Mennonite belief of peace and service to others has helped me grow and expand my understanding of restorative justice, which has complimented what I do at CHILL and aligned with my personal core values.

## WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR YOUR CLASSES AND YOUR STUDENTS?

I want a culture where students can feel safe – safe with one another and safe with staff. Unity and trust would also be an extension of that. This is essential for a productive learning space. Beyond academics, I want to teach students to develop their emotional and social intelligence. I am passionate about making learning real for students and connecting it to practical everyday experiences. Lastly, I hope that my students will be inspired to be agents of change in the community around them.

Amy was born in Regina, Saskatchewan before moving to Bragg Creek in her Grade 6 year. She and her husband Brian have been married for 3 years and live in Calgary with their dog Lewy.





One really great thing about Menno Jr. High are the volleyball teams. All junior high students get the opportunity to play on the Mustangs sports teams. There are no cuts. Since there were so many students in our class who were interested in playing volleyball, both our senior boys' and girls' teams were all grade 9's... and what a Fun! Great! Fantastic! season we had!

Both senior teams had good success this year, both winning the bronze medal in our divisions and I have to give lots of credit to the amazing coaches we have at our school.

I didn't realize at first how much I would connect with the other girls in my class through being on the same volleyball team. I had played volleyball for Menno in grade 7, but I was placed on the grade 8 team instead of the team where most of the other girls in my class were. Even though I had great teammates and had a really fun season in grade 7, I was hoping that in future years I could be on a team with a few more of my close friends. This year I was on a team not only with my close friends but with many of the girls in my class. I now realize that being with my close friends wasn't as important as reconnecting with the girls in my class that I don't spend as much time with.

I think it's fair to say that the Mustangs have amazing team spirit, integrity, and sportsmanship. Menno teams cheer each other on at tournaments and it's great to have our future Menno volleyball stars -- our Division 1 and 2 students -- cheering us on and helping out with lines and scorekeeping.

The tournament that the senior teams look most forward to is Three Hills. You get to spend the night at a hotel with your team, which of course is a lot of fun... My team did not place very well in this tournament but we had an amazing time and not only grew closer as a team but also as a class. Even though the boys' team won gold in this tournament, I know that they had a lot of fun too...

Being part of the volleyball team was a great start to my year and has helped me grow so much closer with the girls in my class because of it. For the students younger than me, I encourage you to join a couple of the Mustang teams. Even if you think you won't like the sport, or be super good at it, it is definitely worth participating as you will grow closer to the people you spend so much time with at school.

**Julia Sully,**  
Grade 9 Student

## MARKET COLLECTIVE

I often dreamed about having a sale booth in a big convention centre, and interacting with people while selling my art works. I then wondered about what it would be like to see people love my products and enjoy them. Guess what? I had a taste of my dream through our Market Day!

I had the great pleasure of taking an option class called 'Exploring Entrepreneurship', which hosted 'Fall Market Day 2018.' It was all about learning entrepreneurship: how to create, prepare, and run a business from scratch. The students in the class had to make a business plan, which contained their detailed ideas of product, financial plan, the target market research, manufacturing plan, and advertising plan. Through the process of making the business plan, I was able to learn every aspect of launching a business.

At last, all new entrepreneurs from the class set up their own booths in the atrium to sell their unique products, such as wood coasters, candy cane bath salts, charms, art work, Christmas cards, toys, sweet goodies etc. Since I was a sole proprietor, I created a business by myself, and named it 'Golden Goods Co.' I was selling handmade keychains, watercolour Christmas cards, and sponge toffee, and I made them myself. I was so excited to present my products on Market Day, and couldn't wait to use the strategies and sale techniques taught from the class. It was a little crazy handling money, greeting customers, and encouraging sales all at the same time, but it couldn't be better than what I experienced that day. By the end of Market Days, I felt that it was the most practical learning experience that I have ever had.

Over all, our Market Day was very successful. I believe it was the most successful Market Day so far. The Exploring Entrepreneurship class donates all of the profit from Market Day to a charity of our choice. Our class chose the 'Mustard Seed' as the charity to donate to, and we raised over \$2000 by the end of Market Day.

Through the entrepreneurship education, I have learned that it takes lots of effort to start a business and you need good planning and strategy to be successful. I also learned to manage my time efficiently to meet deadlines. Lastly, I was so grateful for being able to support a charity with the profit we made from Market Day.

**Eugena Lee,**  
Grade 8 Student





for years. Eight years ago, as my wife and I explored sending Jessica to Menno we were told that it would take a miracle to get Jessica into Menno's kindergarten because we were number 13 on the waitlist. I was so intrigued, wondering what was so 'special' about Menno that people would actually wait to get in.

Well, here we are seven years later. I have lived in the reality of how special MSCS actually is. For me 'special' means that our children will live everyday with an understanding of how valuable they are and how much the world around them needs their involvement. And when the time comes to leave Menno after grade 9 they will be well equipped to go to other schools and excel in their academic studies. But, more than just an academic education, I believe that I am called to ensure that our kids leave Menno with a sense of their worth before God and the world around them. Worth will be realized in all aspects of their lives as we program, structure, and build facilities that enhance every aspect of their spiritual, social, and educational lives.

### WHAT MAKES MENNO A SPECIAL PLACE?

The beauty of Menno Simons for me is that there truly is a desire to bring families together in a collaborative space of learning and friendship. It is in this space of 'coming together' that great relationships have been realized and enhanced. My life is better because of the people I have met and become friends with at Menno.

## THE LITTLE SCHOOL THAT CAN

Our new Executive Director, John Lucas, first came to know Menno Simons Christian School as a youth pastor over two decades ago. He was looking for gym space to rent and secured some space with Menno. Driving up to the school with his youth group, John was surprised when he came upon a small building in Manchester with a makeshift gym. When he was greeted by the caretaker, he asked almost callously, "What school is this?" and he was told, "This is Menno Simons Christian School, we're the little school that can."

John Lucas is a born and raised Calgarian. He graduated from Queen Elizabeth High School in the 80's and went on to further his education at Foothills Christian College and Providence University where he graduated with a BA in Religious Studies. As a pursuer of life-long learning, he also completed his Masters in Counselling.

John is a third generation pastor in Calgary. He has been in ministry for the last twenty-nine years and has given care and leadership to his inner city community at the same time receiving a life enriched by God because of his service and dedication.

Someone asked John, "Do you really need another job?" John replied, "Absolutely not, but I do want to be part of the dream of seeing Menno Simons Christian School become all that it possibly can be." The Society is excited that John has taken on the role of Executive Director.

### WHAT IS YOUR VISION?

Can you imagine with me a place where families have heard so much about the good things that happen at Menno that they are willing to wait however long it takes to get their child into MSCS? I can imagine that thought. In fact, I have lived in the reality of that thought



John, Nanette, Savannah, Amaris, Jessica, Bobby

## FUN FACTS ABOUT MR. LUCAS

**Family:** My family consists of my wonderful wife Nanette and three children (Amaris, Bobby, Jessica) and a granddaughter (Savannah). They each are the apple of my eye in many different ways. I can't imagine living my life without any one of them.

**Favorite Color:** Blue

**Favorite Food:** Broccoli (just kidding) For real: steak

**Dream Vacation:** Any beach on the Atlantic side of the ocean, as long as I'm with my wife.

**Fun Fact that no one knows:** Always wanted to grow up to be a rockstar! Truly.

**Favorite Bible Verse Today:** "And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue His work until it is finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns." *Philippians 1:6*

**My prayer for Menno:** "Thank you Lord for Your love and faithfulness in all of our lives. I thank You for Your protection and care over our Menno families. I pray that you would make us more like You, and more aware of Your constant presence in our lives. In Your Mighty Name, Amen."

# MSCS

MENNO SIMONS CHRISTIAN SCHOOL



As we celebrate our **35<sup>th</sup>** year we are excited to present a logo refresh that captures all the qualities of Menno.

## THE CROSS

The Cross of Jesus Christ is the foundation of who we are as Christians. It reveals to us the character of God: His love for humanity and His perfect justice fulfilled in the work that was accomplished on the Cross by Jesus Christ.



## THE OLIVE BRANCH

The Olive Branch is a symbol of peace, harmony and hope. It is a symbol that has a similar meaning across all cultures.



## THE HELPING HANDS

The Helping Hands are a symbol of uniting and working together. The Hands coming together in a handshake are a global understanding of agreement and the brokering of peace.



## THE DOVE

The Dove represents the Holy Spirit who indwells every believer after they have put their trust in Jesus Christ and received salvation. The Dove delivers the message of peace and the cross to all people.

