

SUMMER 2021

MSCS

MENNO SIMONS CHRISTIAN SCHOOL



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THE JOURNEY HOME



Josh, Kenley and Dayle

The Journey Home is sometimes a straightforward one and other times it's a winding road. For Dayle the road back to Menno hasn't been a straight path but definitely a God-led one. When Dayle began her journey to Menno she was subbing days at CBE, CCS, Trinity, and working the box office at Jubilations theatre. She was hired immediately after interviewing with then principal Joanne Wiens in June 2005 to fill a French/LA maternity leave and went on to stay at Menno for 10 years. During that time, she recognized that she had a voice and wanted to use it for the betterment of the students and the school so she pursued her masters degree at University of Lethbridge specializing in Literacy & Globalized Classrooms, which is somewhat ironic as she vehemently hated LA in Jr High. Upon completion of her masters degree a position for Vice Principal opened up at Menno but at the same time an identical position opened up at CCS and she felt God confirming for her to leave. It was a difficult decision for Dayle as she saw herself as a lifer at Menno, feeling affirmed and embraced by the staff and school community, but she knew that God had plans. Over the past 6 years Dayle has embraced her

role in administration at CCS, her voice was heard and used for the betterment of the students and school and God continued to shape her for future plans. As her family grew with the adoption of her daughter Kenley, Dayle started to think about the kind of community that she wanted Kenley to grow up in and Menno tugged on her heart. When the posting for principal at Menno Simons Christian School came up, Dayle felt the nudge from the Holy Spirit to apply, the affirmation from other brothers and sisters, and finally the calling of the Lord to journey home.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO BECOME A TEACHER?

I've always wanted to be a teacher. Even during my Kindergarten years, I distinctly remember telling the teacher during "Kindergarten Interviews" that I wanted to be a teacher when I grew up. I loved being with kids and always saw myself in a role where I would work with kids. When I started as a teacher at Menno I thought I was set for life and intended to just be a teacher at Menno forever!

WHAT MADE MENNO YOUR FOREVER HOME?

Menno is special to me because it was my first school and it felt like home from day one. I grew up going to a Christian school (CCS to be exact!), which is actually where I first met Marvin Grasmeyer, who was one of my teachers at the time. After subbing at both public schools and Christian schools, I just knew that I wanted to be able to freely share my faith wherever I was at so I knew that I wanted to end up at a Christian School. I wanted to be able to just stop and pray with students if they needed, I wanted to be able to speak truth with students if they needed. When I walked into Menno, I had that sense of peace of being where I belonged, it was that feeling of being home.

YOU MUST HAVE SOME FOND MEMORIES OF YOUR TIME HERE AT MENNO... CAN YOU SHARE A FEW?

I remember when we held a car rally for one of the staff parties, the staff would move from one house to another house and complete a challenge or game at each house. I was hosting one of the "stops" and had a group of teachers busy

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completing the challenge. Another group led by Harvey Driedger arrived and was waiting for their turn. While they were waiting Harvey decided it would be funny to hide all the shoes of the previous group of teachers all around my house, since they were immersed in playing the game. When we convened back at the school, there was a group of teachers with no shoes on as they were in such a hurry to complete the challenge they hopped back in their cars and drove with no shoes when they couldn't find them! For days, the shoes were turning up: in my drawers, my closets, the oven, the dryer... shoes everywhere!

Another fond memory I have is of the closing song at every musical or theatrical production I was involved in. I got goosebumps every year when the kids sang and the curtain came down, because I knew that it would never happen again, it marked the end of each production. One year my dog Reuben even made an appearance as Sandy in the production of Annie.



WHAT ARE YOU MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO AS YOU RETURN TO MENNO?

The community. I look forward to knowing each and every child in the school and building relationships with each of them and with all of their families. I am looking forward to the intimacy of a

small community both the blessings and the challenges. And most of all being able to watch the students as they grow and develop from Kindergarten right through to Grade 9.

WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE SCHOOL?

My hope is that the students at Menno will know who they are in God's story. That students will be able to own their faith or be able to articulate the questions that might be holding them back. That their lives would speak for themselves and that they would have true wisdom and not just academic success.

Dayle is a born and raised Calgarian who grew up in a household with 2 other sisters. She has been married to her husband Josh for 19 years and is the proud mother of Kenley (2.5yrs) and doggy mommy to Reuben & Baxter. Her spare time is spent watching Kenley grow and if she has hours to spare she loves to scrapbook, photograph, and turn her puppies into Superdogs!

We look forward to welcoming Dayle back home to Menno and are excited for our journey forward.



IS THE MIC PLUGGED IN?



This year's production of The Complaint Department and Lemonade was like no other production Menno has ever done before. While most years consist of a staged show with a live audience, this year it had to be done differently due to the pandemic. Many even wondered if there would be a production this year, because it would be

for error, but when you know that another take can be done, it isn't as problematic if you make a mistake. Viewing ourselves on video also helped us to improve. When the cast saw the dress rehearsal that had been recorded, we were able to review our performance, and reflect on how we could do better. While doing a filmed performance may sound easier, it didn't come without its struggles. Sometimes we would have a perfect take, only to find the mic wasn't plugged in! We also had to be sure that we were speaking and acting inside the frame, in order to be seen and heard.

too complicated. These thoughts proved wrong however, as a group of students, teachers and staff were able to come together and make it happen.

Similar to the characters in the play, this experience taught us a lot about our peers and the people around us that we would not have learned about otherwise. It was great to be able to learn more about our characters through the course of these few months, as well as have the opportunity to develop our acting skills. As only one class could do the production this year, I am so grateful that our class had the pleasure of being able to do this play. Thank you to Mrs. Pan and Mrs. Carpenter for making this a great 'Menno Memory' for all who participated. (P.S. The Oreos were really good!)

In order for a Covid-19 performance to be done, certain adjustments had to be made. A filming set in the library replaced the stage, costumes and make-up were brought from home instead of done at school, and families watched from their own living room instead of in a large crowd.

Sarah Braun, Grade 8 Student
and actor with "The Oreo Complaint"

While it was disappointing to not have a live show, filming the show did have some benefits. Up on a stage there's no room



Manage Participants

Stop Video

Mute

Share

Invite

Chat

End Meeting





Ava Lonsdale



Avery Foster



Ayla Collins



Brandon Burnside



Dalila Vazquez Mares



David Roy



Isaac Gotmy



Isabella Goudreau



Jacob Somers



Jaiden Du Plessis



Jessica Lucas

THE GRADE 9 NARRATIVE



Joseph Jin



Joshua Zieber



Nevaeh Pan

HOW WILL YOUR CLASSMATES REMEMBER YOU?

"Tall, funny, and somewhat athletic." - David Roy

"By my kindness." - Ayla Collins

"Probably known as the odd one out, but aren't we all?" - Jacob Somers

"That I was probably the best prayer they have ever seen in their life and will never see a better one." - Ava Lonsdale

WHAT ARE THE THREE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS YOU LEARNED AT MENNO?

"It is good to be friends with everyone, don't take things for granted, and be grateful for your teachers because some subs are a little weird." - Avery Foster

"Help people, get assignments done, and make sure to bring your water bottle to school." - Joshua Zieber

"To be yourself, try to be friends with everyone, and to be confident in yourself." - Nevaeh Pan

"Talking with other classmates, learning more English, and reading." - Joseph Jin

"That God is at the center of all, friends are important, and the teachers want to help you." - Dalila Vazquez Mares

"I learned what kind of person I want to be, work hard - even if it doesn't seem to pay off, and life is better when you laugh." - Isabella Goudreau

"To just be nice and respectful and stuff like that." - Isaac Gotmy

WHAT WILL YOU MISS MOST ABOUT MENNO?

"I think I'll miss knowing everyone and also playing the washroom game. Another thing that I am going to miss is playing on the sports teams." - Avery Foster

"My friends." - Brandon Burnside

"The teachers, mainly because of how kind and compassionate they are." - Jacob Somers

"Hiding in closets and Ava." - Jaiden Du Plessis

"I will miss playing hide and go seek tag in the dark in the upstairs washroom. Also getting candy from Mr Potvin and hearing about Miss Brown's love life." - Ava Lonsdale

"I will miss the community and friendship I have with my class. Especially the fact that I could have a good conversation with mostly anyone or any teacher...I'll miss hiding in closets too 😊" - Jessica Lucas

THE MOST IMPORTANT PIECE OF ADVICE THAT I WANT TO PASS ON TO MY GRADE 1 BUDDY IS...

"Believe in yourself and you can do anything." - David Roy

"Everything changes and that's ok." - Ayla Collins

"Don't try to fit in. You were made to be you, so be you." - Nevaeh Pan

"Make many friends." - Joseph Jin

"Getting in trouble sometimes makes for good memories." - Jaiden Du Plessis

"It doesn't matter what other people think of you. You should be you no matter what, don't change who you are because they don't like you. If they don't like you, that's their loss." - Dalila Vazquez Mares

"Just have fun, you will never find another school like Menno." - Ava Lonsdale

"150 people are killed by coconuts every year. This year there were 13 people who died from sharks. So you should really be scared of fruit falling from tropical trees." - Isabella Goudreau

IN 10 YEARS I WILL BE...

"Hopefully in Miami or Switzerland playing professional volleyball." - Brandon Burnside

"24 years old." - Joshua Zieber

"In ten years I'm going to be 25. I'm most likely wrapping up college and working a part time job. I hope to be closer with my siblings and keep in touch with Josh." - Jacob Somers

"I will be with people I care about and hopefully on a warm beach. I might be a lawyer, a fashion designer or a basketball player, but regardless of what I'm doing I want to be in a nice place with the people I love." - Jessica Lucas

"Either a stock broker or a business owner." - Isaac Gotmy



THE NEXT CHAPTER



What does the next chapter hold for our amazing Mr. Potvin & Miss Brown? We had a quick interview with them to gather some thoughts and reflections of the past year.

WHAT IS YOUR FONDEST MEMORY AT MENNO?

"Where to start...wall sit and other physical challenges and competitions with the kids (of which I lost most of them), excuses Div III youngsters give for their shenanigans ("Weren't you 14 years old once Mr. Potvin and wanting to have fun?") Being asked by one student, regularly ("How are you doing today Mr. Potvin?") which I guess was meant to endear me and soften up any of my crankiness for assignments yet to be completed. All those being said, the quality of these educators here is going to be my fondest memory"
- **Bernie Potvin**

"How do I pick just one? The past four years have been full of amazing memories with the kids, staff, and community. However, the way the entire community came together for the Joelympics is something I will never forget." - **Meg Brown**

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHANGE YOU HAVE SEEN DURING YOUR TIME AT MENNO?

"The kids! I have watched some of them grow from 3 feet to 12 feet it seems. I'm so proud of them, and have loved being part of their journey here." - **Meg Brown**

"The emerging of a deeper understanding of the MSCS mission statement; how relevant, important and authentic it really is..." - **Bernie Potvin**

WHAT IS THE FUNNIEST THING THAT A STUDENT HAS SAID OR DONE?

"Thien Nhi challenging me to a race in the gym and when I said no, she said, 'Okay, I will race against myself.' And she did. It was a tie. (she claimed) And she said, 'That's why I love racing against myself'." - **Bernie Potvin**

"Oh there's too many to pick just one- the kids keep me laughing all day. I do often laugh about a particular kindergarten squabble on the playground though where a student looked at me with sorrowful eyes and said to me, 'But Miss Brown, I didn't hit him with ALL my might, just half'." - **Meg Brown**

WHAT WILL YOU MISS THE MOST ABOUT MENNO?

"There's a few things but mostly the people - each and every single one of them. I will miss coming here every day and seeing all of the people that I have come to consider my family. This staff is something else, and I keep telling them they're stuck with me in their lives, it just looks differently now. I still tear up thinking about the kids - it's always so hard to say goodbye. I have loved spending my days with the Menno kids and feel so blessed to be a part of their journey. I hope they stay in touch, and I keep telling myself they will because they will miss my jokes." - **Meg Brown**

"The sense of community, care and emphasis on right relationship trumping 'being right.'" - **Bernie Potvin**

We are excited for Miss Brown and Mr. Potvin as they move on to their next chapter. Mr. Potvin may still pop in here and there as he plans on maintaining a presence in our community. He also has his Old Guys in Action NPO, a potential Netflix series, and his beautiful wife Ann and many grandkids to spend time with.

Miss Brown is being called back to her home, it's been a journey for her to get there. A transfer to Calgary from Redvers, Saskatchewan and now a position as the Vice Principal of West Central High School in Rocky Mountain House, the same one she graduated from. She and Leroy look forward to moving home to wrestle her dad into taking her out for lunch and walking the dogs with her mom. We know this, they will be dearly missed but never forgotten.

A parting prayer from Miss Brown...

Loving Father,

Thank you for all who are part of our school.

Please grant them your encouragement, wisdom and peace. Strengthen teachers with heavy workloads. May they be firm, yet patient, expecting excellence but forgiving mistakes. May they continue to always support their students, playing to strengths, helping with struggles and motivating them to do their best. Take care of those living under shadows. May they find comfort from you in their daily lives.

Fill all who walk these hallways with Your amazing grace. Please pour out Your blessings upon our whole school community.

In Jesus name,
Amen.



Rudy Janssen Sr.

November 18, 1923 - September 24, 2020

Rudy had a deep rooted legacy at Menno. He was on the original steering committee when Menno was just a dream and he used his business expertise and networks to make that dream a reality. Rudy offered a prayer at our 35th Year Sweet Interlude Celebration and he started it with "We may need your money, but we must first pray!" His legacy at Menno continues with a daughter-in-law and granddaughter who sit as members of the board, as well as great-grandsons who attend or have graduated from Menno.



Colleen Gail Schellenberg

November 25, 1956 - December 4, 2020

Gail was one of the many Schellenberg's that were a part of Menno's heritage. Sister of Terry Schellenberg (Menno's principal 1986 - 1996) and sister-in-law of Byron Thiessen (Menno's principal 2009 - 2016) Gail taught at Menno when it was located on Northmount Drive. She is fondly remembered by the staff as a bit of a prankster with an amazing sense of humour. A recollection that comes to mind for some of the staff is playing baseball in the hallway with batons and erasers. Gail, who liked to pitch, ended up with a rogue baton in the face during one of the games!



Jan Grasmeyer

June 7, 1934 - February 16, 2021

In 2000, Jan Grasmeyer subdivided the land he owned and gave Menno Simons Christian School first dibs to build their dream facility. His son Marvin Grasmeyer has spent most of his teaching career at Menno and has fond memories of his dad walking across the parking lot to watch him coach games, or waving from the kitchen window at the start and end of day. Protective of the school property, Jan would often scare away potential vandals or enforce the no skateboarding rules of the parking lot. He was a great neighbor and we were blessed to be able to share a school-wide thank you and prayer in his backyard when he decided to sell his house to Menno and move into a condo.



BEING IN *AND* BUILDING COMMUNITY



2021... What a year this has been! A big part of this past year has been persevering through COVID-19. Our year was filled with mask-wearing, sanitizing 24/7, and the occasional weeks of online school. Through all of this the grade nine class never failed to stop having fun and entertaining others - like playing hide and seek in the bathroom, although to be honest, I never participated, because really? The BATHROOM!?!)

Our journeys through Menno have all been different, and we've all had good and bad experiences. I know my years here have been filled with lots of learning experiences and laughter. Memories of going to Camp Valaqua and participating on the various sports teams will never be forgotten. I think my class can agree though, that the best memories were those times we spent with each other, getting to know one another. I wish we had more time to do just that.

One of my fondest memories was the volleyball sleepover in my grade 8 year. Most of the girls in my class slept over at my grandparent's house. That weekend, we were competing in a tournament in Millarville. Throughout the weekend, we had to work as a team; relying on each other and believing in one another. It was also a time where we had fun, got a little annoyed with each other, but most importantly, got to know each other better.

From kindergarten to grade nine, I feel like I have grown as a person. The teachers and my classmates have helped shape me into who I am today - in a good way. They have taught me to be confident, to try my best, and that it is okay to make mistakes as long as you learn from them. Being at this school has given me the opportunity to stand up for what is right and to not be afraid to be

me. The teachers, classmates, staff and parents at Menno have felt like a family to me. Looking around the room, I know every single person in my class would say the same thing. They have felt safe, cared for and loved. Menno Simons Christian School isn't just about grades or doing well at school, it's about being in and building community.

“ For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another – Romans 12:4-5 ”

My class chose Romans 12:4-5 to be our graduation verse. We saw how this verse applied to our lives and how it relates to our class. We recognized that we all have our own giftings, and we are all unique. Alone, we cannot accomplish much, but together we can do great things. We have to build each other up and support one another. Thinking back all these years, our class has grown and matured into young men and women who will accomplish much in the future.

Our school theme this year was PEACEMAKERS, and I think we have lived up to this acronym's standards. Whether it's participating in buddies or playing basketball with the new kid, the grade nines never fail to disappoint. We continually support each other and are there for each other. As we journey now through high school and go our separate ways, we will never forget the lessons we have learned at Menno - we leave this school as PEACEMAKERS.

Nevaeh Pan, Valedictorian
Grade 9 Student

