A New Year with New Faces

A new school year has begun and on September 6 students flooded into the residence wing of Conrad Grebel University College, moving cardboard boxes, stereos, guitars and other possessions into their rooms. Each year, Grebel students embark on the school year with some annual Grebel activities: a commencement ceremony, orientation week, and the all-College retreat.

The commencement ceremony brings the entire College community together: staff, students and faculty, and initiates the community atmosphere that is central to Grebel. Ken Coates, the Dean of Arts at the University of Waterloo, spoke to the students about the opportunities that the University brings, challenging them to feel “the discomfort of a bed of nails” as they understand their privileged place in the world. Students were given a vial of coloured sand representing their faculty, and poured their respective colour into a vase symbolizing Grebel. The colourful sand sculpture illustrates the rich variety in this diverse community.

The theme for this year’s Orientation Week was “Scooby-Doo!” with students participating in activities that included dessert at faculty and staff homes, volleyball matches, square dancing, intense rock/paper/scissors, and other games.

“We are off to a great start!” Mary Brubaker-Zehr, Director of Student Services noted. “We have 104 new students who were welcomed into this community with the wide-open arms of our upper-year students. Already students are supporting one another...
Some 50 years ago, Mennonite leaders in Waterloo County were invited by the fledgling University of Waterloo to establish a residential teaching college on its campus. Much of this had, of course, been Mennonite farmland, a connection that David Johnston, the recently departed uWaterloo President, often noted.

And Johnston is famous for his frequent references to “Mennonite barn raising,” a tradition he credited for the collaborative spirit and generosity that has brought great success to both the University and the community.

That’s also the spirit which has characterized the relationship of the federated and affiliated colleges with the University under Johnston’s leadership. The agreement recognizing Grebel’s Master of Theological Studies as a conjoint degree – with full government funding – is a case in point. Johnston championed that development at uWaterloo and cheered when the first MTS graduates walked across the platform at Waterloo’s Convocation in June 2008.

And he cheered when Grebel surpassed its $3.5 million goal in uWaterloo’s “Building a Talent Trust” campaign. Thanks to the spirit of collaboration and generosity among our many alumni and friends, the College has raised over $9 million in the past 10 years, the most of any of the Colleges, and was testament to the barn raising spirit at Grebel.

I wonder what else we might accomplish together as we approach our 50th anniversary?

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**Helen Martens Book Launch**

Dr. Helen Martens launched her book entitled, “Felix Mendelssohn: Out of the Depths of his Heart”, on June 15 at Grebel and on September 15 in Toronto.

Dr. Martens was the first music faculty at Grebel in 1965 and retired in 1993. She was also the director of the Inter-Mennonite Children’s Choir based at Grebel.

Grebel archivist, Laureen Harder-Gissing, talks with Dr. Helen Martens about Martens’ new book.
With deep sadness, Conrad Grebel University College mourns A. James Reimer, Professor Emeritus of Religious Studies at Grebel, who passed away on August 28, 2010 just two days after his last Five-on-the-Floor concert.

Jim Reimer was a faculty member at Grebel from 1986 to 2008, as well as founding Director of the Toronto School of Theology, which is affiliated with the University of Toronto. Reimer received his Ph.D. in Theology in 1983 from the University of St. Michael’s College, Toronto; his M.A. in European intellectual history in 1974 at the University of Toronto; his Honours B.A. in history and philosophy from the University of Manitoba in 1971, and a theology degree from Canadian Mennonite Bible College in 1963. His special field of research and writing interest was 19th and 20th century German theology, particularly German theology in the 1920s and 1930s; theology and nationalism; history and theology of the Radical Reformation; and modern systematic theology, in particular Mennonite theology. He also engaged in dialogue with communist scholars from Eastern Europe and Muslims from Iran. He lectured widely in North America, Western and Eastern Europe.

He published many articles in scholarly journals, chapters in books, and entire volumes such as *The Emanuel Hirsch and Paul Tillich Debate: A Study in the Political Ramifications of Theology.*

Friend and colleague Arnold Snyder noted, “Jim was a serious and thorough scholar. I loved that about him. But sometimes his carefulness drove me crazy. Sometimes it seemed that an entire piece would be devoted to carefully explaining someone else’s position. Jim would get to his own comments, critiques and views in the last paragraph or two. Of course, by then he would be out of time and space and couldn’t elaborate.” Many former students reflected on the fact that Jim was an excellent teacher of theology, but didn’t use a lot of class time to expound his own agenda.

Arnold also recollected, “I had the job of editing Jim’s *Mennonites and Classical Theology: Dogmatic Foundations for Christian Ethics* (Pandora Press, 2001) which was finally published at 650 densely-packed pages because Jim was determined to keep all those carefully-crafted sentences describing other theological positions. Jim’s books edited by his wife Marg, on the other hand, were wonderfully readable, and a fraction of that length.” *The Dogmatic Imagination* from 2003 is a good example of this.


Jim was a warm-hearted man with many deep, personal relationships with students and a love for the church.

Paul Doerksen (’99), an MTS graduate, reflected, “One of Jim’s most important contributions to my ongoing research and teaching was his exemplary open stance. He took my work seriously enough to be encouraging, but also pushed me hard for clarity and coherence. All the while he also displayed continuing care for me as a friend. His roles as a mentor and teacher have been pivotal in my life. He will be missed.”

Jim’s favourite activities were cooking, fishing in Algonquin Park with his kids, and singing high tenor in the bluegrass gospel group Five-on-the-Floor. He is survived by his wife Margaret Loewen Reimer, three children: Christina, Thomas, and Micah, and four grandchildren.
Conrad Grebel University College has long tried to keep a blend of first year and returning upper year students in its residence program, but this year, the balancing act became more complicated when the University of Waterloo insisted Grebel reserve 100% of its residence beds for first year students.

Grebel said no.

"This is not who we are," says Mary Brubaker-Zehr, Grebel's Director of Student Services. "Grebel would not be Grebel without a strong contingent of senior students who enhance and impact in profound ways the quality of residence life."

At the same time, Brubaker-Zehr had concerns. She brought the matter before Grebel's Board of Directors, concerned that if Grebel was no longer promoted under uWaterloo's "housing guarantee", the College might suffer from lower applications. Despite this risk, the Board supported the decision to stay true to the College's long-time identity of having 50% first year students and 50% upper year students along with a variety of programs, ethnicities and faith backgrounds.

As usual, Grebel was promoted through the University Viewbook and UW marketing website, but not through the "Guaranteed Housing" website where students choose their housing options. Grebel's recruitment team headed by Meg Bauman visited various churches and high schools in the area and across Canada and the US. The College also trusted that word-of-mouth would continue to be an effective recruiting tool along with its website, promotional material and on-campus recruitment events.

In the end, Grebel received virtually the same number of applicants as other years - far more than they could ever accommodate in its residence. On move-in day, Grebel opened its residence doors to a blend that included 56% first year students.

Brubaker-Zehr says current literature about academic success for students supports the College's decision to remain a multi-year residence. The recently-published Achieving Student Success: Effective Student Services in Canadian Higher Education demonstrates that the longer a student stays in residence, the better chance that student has of being academically successful. It also makes a strong case for the impact of students engaging outside classroom on their retention rates and academic success.

"This is something we have always emphasized when we interview students for a place in residence," says Brubaker-Zehr. "Grebel is not just a place to eat, sleep, and study – but a place to engage, to balance study and play, to use gifts. The role modeling that upper years provide is so valuable for younger students."

Upper year student Ben White says, "I spent my third year in the Grebel apartments and have come back to residence for my fourth year because I realized how vital it is that we as individuals serve others in whatever way we can. Living in a community-oriented setting like Grebel's residence is a catalyst for serving others and allows me to better serve other people and learn from them."

"We are grateful that our residence is as full as ever with a terrific blend of students and we are looking forward to an exciting new year," says Brubaker-Zehr.
For the past two years, Grebel has hosted an event on September 21 in conjunction with the International Day of Peace, established by the United Nations to highlight efforts to end conflict and promote peace. This year’s keynote speaker was Shannon Moroney who spoke about restorative justice and her personal experience with crime. When Shannon was out of town in 2005, her husband committed a series of violent sexual assaults on two strangers, and then took them to the home he and Shannon shared. Shannon’s husband was sentenced to an indeterminate period of incarceration as a dangerous offender, Canada’s highest sentence.

Shannon shared a raw and honest account of the impact her husband’s crimes has had on her personal and professional and community status, as well as on her relationships with others. Using her artwork as a backdrop, she told of her remarkable journey toward acceptance and peace, leaving the audience with a lot to consider about the meaning of justice.

Michelle Van Rassel, a PACS major, commented that “[Shannon] blew me away with her incredible story filled with loss, honesty, and healing. Shannon is a peace hero and an important role model for those with a heart for restorative justice.”

As a capstone to Orientation Week, students, staff, and faculty headed to Camp Trillium on Rainbow Lake. The retreat included a variety of games, an introduction to student clubs, a worship service, team cheers, fishing, singing, and a lively campfire at which Pam Bartel, the new Administration Assistant for Student Services, was initiated!

This year Student Services is relating to over 260 students! There are 142 students living in residence, 32 in the apartments, over 70 associates, and 17 off campus residents who will move into residence when beds become available in the Winter term. Academically, there are over 1,700 course enrolments in 33 undergrad classes. Nineteen students are enrolled in the MTS program.
Fall Fair Day

Fall Fair Day is an annual event at Grebel that brings the families of Grebel students to the campus for a myriad of midway games, cotton candy, popcorn, and other activities. Families had the chance to see "samplers" of Grebel life including a mini lecture, a short chapel service, as well as a student life sampler that featured a talent show, slideshows, and videos.

Each year for the past 11 years, Grebel associates have honed their pie-baking skills and participated in the Annual Associate Pie Baking Contest. This year, the pies ranged from key lime to three cheese pasta to "not-your-grandmother's" pumpkin pie. All of the pies were raffled off, and three lucky pie makers: Sylvia Klassen and Michael Hook (first place), Kate Findlay (second place), and Cameron Rush (People's Choice Award), had their pies auctioned off with all proceeds going to Solar Grebel. See page 11 for more information on Solar Grebel.

Generations of Grebelites

Year after year, new batches of second-generation Grebelites move into residence and enjoy the same experience their parents had back when they were students. To have alumni bring their children to Grebel is a great testimony to the enduring value of this unique community.

Left: Gayle (Unger) Neufeld ('87), with Aaron and Don ('87)
Middle: Janna Flaming with Allen Flaming ('87)
Right: Lois ('82) and William Cooke ('82) with son Stuart
Not pictured: Stephan Autio who is a son of Karen Autio ('81) of Kelowna BC.

Compost is In

Grebel has been chosen as the first institution in the Region of Waterloo for a composting initiative. The two year pilot project diverts organic wastes such as leftover food scraps, paper towels, and pencil shavings to green bins located around Grebel. The bins are transported off-site to be turned into compost.

Grebel was chosen for this project because of its reputation in environmental leadership and the region hopes other institutions will follow. Everyone is taking an active part to take care of the environment and enhance Grebel's green reputation.
Cheesy Kraft Dinner Prank by Lynn Thomas

Grebel: a place filled with innovative ideas, hard work, and good old Kraft Dinner. These are classic components of university life, but also the makings of an epic prank. In November of 2009, Andrew Alkema wrote an e-mail to Pepsi, inquiring about the possibility of becoming a “university representative.” Essentially, Andrew asked Pepsi to send him free stuff, and in return he would utter a satisfied ‘ahhh’ every time he drank Pepsi in the presence of other impressionable university students. When he posted this letter on Facebook, an inspiration hit Ryan Hildebrandt. With the help of Laura Stobbe, a ‘Kraft University Representative program’ was concocted and Andrew was asked (from a legit @ kraft email of a friend on co-op) if he would like to be involved when it started a few months later. Needless to say, Andrew said “yes.”

In January 2010, Ryan purchased one of every type of Kraft dinner stocked at the grocery store and mailed them to Andrew, who shared it with friends and e-mailed detailed evaluation reports and comments to his “Kraft correspondent”. Several weeks later, a photo contest and video contest for “all” Kraft representatives was announced. Andrew’s enthusiasm for winning a lifetime supply of Kraft Dinner and $10,000 (the photo contest and video contest prizes respectively) increased and Laura convinced him to make an announcement at Commie supper asking for assistance. With this help, he submitted 10 pictures and a 60 second professionally edited video, both of which prominently featured Kraft Dinner, himself, and other members of the Grebel community.

At the talent show following the Winter 2010 banquet, in front of gathered residents, associates, staff, and other honoured guests, the prank was revealed onstage, completely shocked as he realized there was no real contest. However, they wouldn’t have the last laugh. Due to a strange turn of events, Kraft Canada found out about the prank and sent Andrew a plethora of Kraft paraphernalia including: 1 backpack, 7 t-shirts, 400 stickers, and 140 boxes of Kraft Dinner.

CD Release

Music talents abound at Grebel. That fact is brought to light by Joelle Ritsema who recently recorded and released her first CD which focuses on her life experiences and interpretations of the Bible and God’s presence in her life. The CD release party was held on October 15.

Music Award Winner

Rosalind Adams (right) is the inaugural recipient of the John Ford and Winston Harrison Church Music Award. Due to her heavy workload, she quit a part-time job just 2 days prior to receiving the award, which coincidentally made up for her lost wages. She is pictured at the October 17 the Scholarship and Bursary Award reception with Johanna Wall, former pastor at Warden Woods Mennonite Church, the congregation which established this award.
In July 2010 a baker’s dozen of former Grebelites and partners descended on Europe to honour a pact struck in 1993. “Travel we will to Greece in 2010”, was the pledge among the group, contrived at the wedding of a mutual Grebel friend in an effort to stave off the doldrums of middle age.

The group met annually around Groundhog’s Day for a potluck, trip planning and investment reports on the annual investment of $201. The turbulent market made this group of Menno travelers think they should stick to potlucks and leave their cash stashed under a mattress. When it came to choosing villas, the trip to Greece morphed into Croatia, ironically known in the travel business as the “new Greece.”

Among the many highlights of our week-long stay, three stand out: a walk atop the wall that encloses the old city of Dubrovnik, overlooking the marble streets, and baroque buildings of this UNESCO world heritage site. A “Three Island” boat tour of the Elafiti islands, with an on board “fish picnic,” and hymn-singing in an underwater cavern. A day trip to Korčula Island, renowned as the birthplace of Marco Polo, capped off with a nearby winery tour and visit to an oyster farm.

Croatia has left a lasting imprint on a community of friends -- as a destination with captivating history and culture, a place where peace has overcome the tremor of war, and where old friendships were renewed.

The 2010 Party

In December of 1999, not long after I had graduated from Conrad Grebel, I mailed a simple note to many friends stating, “In 10 years, on June 26, 2010, we will have a party. And you will be there.”

I wanted a party where I could bring together everyone who touched my life, including life-long friends from Grebel as well as people who popped into my life for only 15 minutes, to celebrate life, love and relationships. I decided the only way it could work was to give enough advance notice – 10 years. So in 1999, the June 26, 2010 party was born!

Through the years, the party took on a life of its own. The list of invited guests grew to over 1,000 people and I was interviewed about the party on both national radio and television. I sent out an annual reminder so that no one could possibly forget the date: fridge magnets, bookmarks, and bumper stickers. You can see pictures of “June 26, 2010” signs at www.2010party.com.

Incredibly, on June 26, 2010 over 400 people from six different countries gathered together on a farm in southwestern Ontario... simply because I had asked them to. The day felt like a dream. Every time I turned around, there was a new face from some corner of my life to joyously greet. Far from being “my” party, all of the guests owned it by pitching in with preparations, bringing food, sharing talents, and rejoicing in all the faces they, too, had been missing through the years. June 26, 2010 is much more than a date to me; it is a promise fulfilled.*

*And, in an important footnote, an event that was definitely NOT planned in 1999 took place on June 25, 2010. The morning before the big party, I married my love, Louis Helbig, making the weekend doubly memorable and special.
1995-2000 Reunion

A lot of reminiscing took place at Grebel on Saturday, September 25, 2010 as alumni gathered together and caught up with friends, some for the first time, since they graduated from Grebel. Over 105 alumni along with over 50 kids came to the 1995-2000 Grebel Alumni Reunion, making this a record breaking alumni gathering.

Even though it rained, alumni and their families enjoyed activities inside, including a bouncy castle in the atrium and a toy area for younger children while their parents conversed with old friends and enjoyed a bountiful spread laid out by the kitchen staff. “It was great,” beamed Kendra Ellis (BA ’00, MTS ’04), “the friends and fun were as plentiful as the food!” Later on in the afternoon, there was a talent show hosted by Karim Award (BA ’00) showcasing musical talents that included songwriting, spoken word versions of popular songs, and Matthew Bailey Dick playing a few songs on a handsaw!

“It was fantastic to see and hear what people have been doing,” Karim Awad commented. “A lot has changed, but Grebel is still the same.” See more photos online at grebel.uwaterloo.ca/alumni95-00.

people

Allen Pengelly (’97) and Jenna Paikowsky are happy to announce the birth of twins Sarah Isabelle and Natasha Claire

Henry (’92-’96) and Carolyn Ensley are pleased to announce the birth of Joshua Henry Ensley on Sept 24, 2009.

Jonathan (9) and James (7), were very excited to welcome little Joshua to the family. The Ensley family live in Waterloo where Henry and Carolyn work at UW and WLU respectively. Henry moonlights as a wood artist and was featured on Waterloo’s "Mary Allen Studio Tour". http://www.mgl.ca/~jhCole/MaryAllen/maHome.html

Joel Dick (’97) has been living in Toronto and practicing law for the past ten years. His partner Dara Douma (’97) is a firefighter for the city of Toronto. Running for council means that in addition to their day jobs, Joel, Dara, and a small band of committed volunteers are trying to knock on each door in Ward 27 to meet each of the 40,000 residents prior to the election on October 25. For more information, visit: www.joeldick.com.
Yvonne Rogalski ('95) completed her PhD from the University of Florida in May, 2010 in Speech and Language Disorders. After leaving Waterloo in 1995, Yvonne spent five years teaching English in Taiwan where she met her future husband, Ted Bowman. Yvonne, Ted and their dog Libby have moved from Gainesville FL to Ithaca NY where Yvonne will be teaching at Ithaca College.

Dr. Pamela Jantzi Carlson M.D. ('06) graduated from the University of Ottawa, Faculty of Medicine. Pam is doing her Residency in Family Medicine in Chilliwack, B.C.

Linda Mills ('67, '73) retired 6 years ago from elementary teaching, where she was a music specialist, librarian, as well as a classroom teacher the last 18 years on Salt Spring Island at one of three elementary schools. Her life has taken many twists and turns, but music remains her first love and she intends to bring it back into her life in a big way this year. Linda is currently conducting a small a cappella women’s choir in Victoria, BC called Giving Voice. She would love to hear from anyone who remembers her or who was in that first year at Grebel in 1964-65.

Steven McDowell ('82) received the Arts in Academics Award on October 22 at the 50th anniversary of the Arts Faculty at UW.

Sarah Johnson ('07, '08) began serving as Associate Pastor at Ottawa Mennonite Church in August 2010.

Alissa Bender ('01) completed her term as associate pastor at Calgary First Mennonite Church and accepted a call to serve as pastor of Hamilton Mennonite Church beginning November 2010.

Mark A. Schaan ('02) has been selected as the recipient of the 2010 Faculty of Arts Young Alumni Award. This award recognizes young alumni who graduated within the last 10 years with an undergraduate and/or graduate degree from the Faculty of Arts at the University of Waterloo and who have made an outstanding contribution to their professional field, in the community, and public service.

Angie Hostetler ('10) was invited to participate in a juried exhibit at Art Mûr, one of the largest private contemporary art galleries in Montreal. Five of Angie’s sculptures were selected to be shown alongside the works of 31 other student painters and sculptors from Ontario, Quebec, and Nova Scotia. One of her pieces, Orange Elephant, was selected for the cover of the exhibition brochure.

David Crome ('76) and three daughters, Sarah ('07), Rebecca, and Maria, are deeply saddened at the passing of Marian (Quapp) Crome ('77), wife and mother, who passed away on the weekend of October 2. Marian was 55 years old.

Timothy Corlis ('98) (a Juno-nominated composer) is currently doing his Doctorate in Music Composition at UBC. He is the Artistic Director of the Vancouver Peace Choir, a 40 plus community choir in its third season, that offers an expression of peace through music. In particular, the choir has attracted numerous Grebel alumni now living in BC: Andrew Block ('98), Leanne Heinrich ('97), Heather Mann, Norm Kaethler ('01), Sara Fretz ('98), Laura Shantz ('02), and Jared Penner ('04). The Choir puts on 4-5 concerts a year. Visit their website at vancouverpeacechoir.ca.

John Rempel ('66) (third from left) came to Maple for a party hosted by Cate Falconer Lichty. Other guests included (left to right): Lois Cooke ('82), Kerry Gerber ('84), Cate Falconer Lichty ('83), Scott Brubaker-Zehr ('85), Sue Schultz ('81, '88), and Savio Wong ('84). John served as Chaplain at Grebel from '73 to '89 and is currently on faculty at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhardt, IN where is reducing his workload as he anticipates retirement in 3 years.

Fred Lichti ('76) began serving as pastor at Elmira Mennonite Church in September.

Keep us in the Loop!

Tell us about address and vocational changes, general updates, retirement adventures, information about births, marriages, or deaths. Send your name, year graduated, address, email, phone, and news to greblweb@uwaterloo.ca.

Please note that Grebel Now is posted on the website and is searchable.
"Greening Grebel"

Ben Brubaker-Zehr (left), Christian Larsen, Ben Wiens, and Madelin Bonsma are part of Solar Grebel, a group of students who initiated a project to research and install a solar thermal collector to preheat domestic hot water in the residence. The cost for this project will be $47,000 and generous bidders supported this cause in a Pie Auction at Fall Fair day on October 2 with bids and donations of $3,675 thanks to the help of auctioneer Nello Romagnoli.

Students still need to raise $12,000 for this project and installation is planned for early December. Contact solargrebel@uwaterloo.ca or Fred Martin if you want to support this project.

Annual Fund Update

Each year Grebel relies on the support of donors and alumni to keep Grebel's unique programs strong and financially viable. Donations support leadership development and chaplaincy in our residence program, they help our music department mount an impressive Noon Hour Concert series, and give PACS some additional support to our PACS students for Field Study placements. Donations to the Annual Fund can also be designated to our Library and Archives or to our graduate programs in Theological Studies.

We invite you to participate through our fall mailing or to visit grebel.uwaterloo.ca/giving for information on on-line giving options to Grebel through uWaterloo’s website.
Distinguished Alumni Service Award

NOMINATIONS WANTED

Alumni nominated for the award must have:
1) been a resident or associate of Grebel for four terms, or a graduate of one of Grebel's academic programs;
2) made a unique contribution to the church, community, nation, world that is significant and worthy of recognition;
3) made a contribution representing the ideals and purposes of Conrad Grebel University College.

Nominate deserving alumni by December 31, 2010.

Send nominations to:
Fred W. Martin
fwmartin@uwaterloo.ca
Conrad Grebel University College
Waterloo, ON N2L 3G6

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Become friends with Conrad Grebel UC to see videos, pictures from past years and reunions, tag your friends, and get brief communication from Meg Bauman, Karl Juhlke, and Fred W. Martin via status updates. There is also a general Conrad Grebel University College group you can join, or become a fan of Grebel.

Do you want to receive Grebel NOW in your email inbox? Contact us at greblweb@uwaterloo.ca to be added to our Grebel NOW email distribution list.