

PASSPORT

magazine



WHITTAKER HALL 

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Summer 2017

AT A GLANCE

July

August

BRIERCREST DANCE CAMP
JULY 24 - 27

VOLLEYBALL SPORTS CAMP
JULY 30 - AUG 4 (CO-ED)

While we miss the energy and buzz of activity that our students bring to campus, we're taking advantage of the summer months to make some updates to our facilities. One of our main projects is the renovation of Sinclair Whittaker. The dorm is getting a new look in both the rooms and common areas. New carpet, new beds, fresh paint, no more wood paneling, and pot lights with dimmers are just a few of the changes being made to improve dorm life for our students. Our Campus Operations team has been working hard on this project, and we appreciate their work. Take a look at some photos of the progress that's been made and check out the video [here](#) for more details.



ust

September

BASKETBALL SPORTS CAMP
AUG 6 - 11 (GIRLS)

ORIENTATION (COL) / CLASS START (CHS)
SEP 6

RETHINK CON.
SEP 15 - 16

BASKETBALL SPORTS CAMP
AUG 13 - 18 (BOYS)

COLLEGE CHECK-IN
SEP 5 (8:30AM-12:30PM)

CLASSES START (COL)
SEP 7



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SUMMER STAGE 2017

ARTICLE BY: **MICHAEL KING**

Briercrest Summer Stage 2017 wrapped up on June 8 with a sold-out final weekend of performances. This year saw the highest attendance in the program's five year history, with three sold-out shows throughout the run!

Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* was presented on May 11 – 13, 18 – 20, and June 7 – 8. This production included a cast of 50 college, high school and elementary school students, staff, faculty, and community members. Our second production of the season was Gilbert & Sullivan's *The Gondoliers*, a hilarious story of mistaken identity set in the idyllic city of Venice, Italy. Comprised of a cast of 35 college and high school students, staff, faculty, and community members, the production was the fifth Gilbert & Sullivan musical presented by Briercrest Summer Stage.

Briercrest Summer Stage gives students the opportunity to gain real-life experience in musical theatre performance. Students will typically work a job during the day and attend



rehearsals and performances in the evenings, which is characteristic of professional theatre companies. Our unique ensemble of students of various ages, staff, faculty, and community members also provides the opportunity to build meaningful friendships with people outside the typical peer circle. Through Summer Stage we are thrilled to see friendships and mentorships blossom that last for years to come. High school students are given the opportunity to work alongside college students, and college students are able to learn from Briercrest College's performance faculty.



Revenue from Briercrest Summer Stage also goes toward supporting students in their growth as performing artists at Briercrest College. Student scholarships for Briercrest College Vocal Performance students are funded by Briercrest Summer Stage. Also, Summer Stage allows us to bring in guest faculty each year to enrich the students' music and performance education. In the past we have had renowned instructors such as Professor Lorna MacDonald (University of Toronto) and Dr. Janette Ogg (professor emeritus, Shenandoah University) visit us to offer private

lessons, master classes, and lectures.

Briercrest Summer Stage is a highlight of the year for many within the Performing & Worship Arts department. Similar to the Briercrest Christmas musical, Summer Stage gives us the opportunity to reach out to our local community and the greater community of southern Saskatchewan. During both productions we invite the community to join us for an evening of musical performance, and perhaps to leave with something more.

A young man with short brown hair, wearing black sunglasses and a bright red t-shirt, is shown in profile from the waist up. He is smiling slightly and looking towards the right. He is holding a black tennis racket with a yellow ball in his hands. The background consists of a chain-link fence and a dense line of green trees under a blue sky with scattered white clouds. The overall scene is outdoors and appears to be a tennis court.

SERVING ON AND OFF THE COURT

student story: Dan Dekoning

ARTICLE BY: KARA HARMS

PHOTO BY: SIMONE CAPOZZOLO / SIMON PELLA

*Dan is entering his second year in a
Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration.*

Dan Dekoning's uniform will look a little different this summer. Instead of his usual jersey, stick, and skates, Dan will be sporting a camp shirt and tennis racquet.

The second-year Briercrest hockey player is spending his summer investing into the lives of the campers at Muskoka Woods.

"I have always had a passion for kids," Dan explained, "and I saw working at Muskoka Woods as a great opportunity to be able to shape the lives of many children."

"My teammate this past year, CJ McCartney, has been an employee at Muskoka Woods for many years and explained how the place has changed his life," Dan continued. "I've been extremely excited to jump into camp ministry this summer and to be able to build meaningful relationships with many kids."

Although Dan can usually be found on the ice, he will be exercising his tennis skills these next few months.

"I'm the tennis area head this summer at Muskoka Woods," he said. "In a snapshot that means that I plan and organize the training for the tennis instructors. I also plan the day by day lessons for the kids and supervise the tennis area as a whole."

Dan adds that his job includes a number of other responsibilities, including setting up programs and welcoming guests.

Having spent many years playing organized sports, Dan has learned to work well within a team context.

"I work on a team with my instructors to ensure the kids get the best experience possible. My experience playing on the hockey team this past year, as well as other teams in the past, has taught me to have a team-first attitude," he said.

Having just completed his first year at Briercrest, Dan shares about the impact it has had on him and how it's helped prepare him for working with the youth.

"Briercrest has had a huge influence on me this past year and I have grown as a man of God because of it. Attending a class like Youth Ministry with Ken Moser has been helpful when I am constantly a mentor for the youth at Muskoka Woods. I have the chance to implement what I have been taught at my time so far at Briercrest," Dan said.

Dan is most excited about the opportunity camp provides to share his passion for Jesus with the kids he interacts with.

"Camp ministry is the perfect opportunity to display my faith in front of kids who might not know or understand Christianity. I have the chance to be the Christian influence in a kid's life that they might not get anywhere else."

GOODBYES, SEE YOU SOONS, AND WELCOME BACKS

ARTICLE BY: KARA HARMS

At Briercrest, we love seeing the different journeys our alumni take after graduation. Some use their passions and gifts overseas, while many others are dispersed throughout Canada and the United States. Yet there's a small number of alumni whose journey takes them back to Caronport (which is exciting for us!).

Denver Barg is an alumnus whom we said "goodbye" to in 2016 after his graduation from the College. At the time, we didn't realize it was going to be a "see you soon," as Denver plans to return in August to join our staff as the residence director in the Eliason and Sundbo 3 dorms.

The summer after graduation, Denver contacted a number of different churches in hopes of finding a pastoral position to begin in the fall after tree planting season.

"I spent that summer worrying about what the fall would bring for me, since

no churches seemed to be replying to my resumé emails," Denver said.

"Eventually, I got in contact with my childhood pastor who is still a good family friend," he explained. "I asked him what his church would think of maybe adopting an intern for the year. He replied immediately that he thought that would be a great idea, and that I should prepare to move to the great state of Nebraska in the fall."

After tree planting season ended, Denver ventured south of the border to begin his internship in the small town of Waverly, Nebraska. During his eight months with the church, Denver spent most of his time working with the youth group, as well as the elderly people in the community.

"I never thought I'd be hanging out with 80-year-old Nebraskans after graduation, but I'm really thankful that I had the opportunity to do so," he said.





As his internship drew to a close, Denver planned to continue his studies by pursuing a master's in theology in Toronto.

"Then, not a week after receiving my letter of acceptance, I was told that there would soon be an opening on the Student Development team [at Briercrest]. So I spent a number of weeks being really torn between going to school and working at a school. As I considered it more and more I realized how much I miss Briercrest and the culture that is fostered there, so I sent my resumé in," Denver said.

Denver adds that in the past, he jokingly tried to persuade the Student Development team to create a position for him so he could continue to be part of Briercrest.

Having successfully convinced Student Development to hire him, Denver is eager to return to Briercrest and be part of its mission.

"Since my graduation, I have realized how influential Briercrest has been in so many lives, and I had always thought it would be rad to have a chance to participate in that influence," Denver said.

"I often miss the opportunities to worship, pray, discuss, and debate with other people, and I believe provides a unique setting to do each of those things. I'm excited to watch people grow as they study and learn together. I'm excited for the academic element and walking with people as they struggle through new concepts. I'm fired up for all of it!"

We are looking forward to having Denver back with us on campus and are excited to serve alongside him in our community.

UP CLOSE AND CANDID

with Susan Wendel

How did you decide to become a biblical scholar?

With the aim of becoming better equipped to serve the Church, my husband and I left our established careers to attend seminary. When we entered seminary, I assumed that my husband would become a pastor and I would work alongside him as a pastor's wife. After only a short time of studying, however, my husband began to note how I thrived in a setting where the Bible was studied at the academic level. As I continued to study, and as my husband continued to encourage me, my love for the discipline grew. For the first time in my life, I felt as if I could use my intellectual abilities to serve the Church effectively. After seminary, I entered a doctoral program and now teach New Testament at the same seminary where I first learned to study the biblical text.

Tell us about your work (past and current). What are you most excited about right now? What do you hope your work will contribute?

*My publications thus far have circled around the question of how interpretation of the Jewish scriptures shaped the identity of early Christ-believers. My work in this area includes a monograph entitled, *Scriptural Interpretation and Community Self-Definition in Luke-Acts and the Writings of Justin Martyr* (NovTSup 139; Leiden: Brill, 2011). More*



Susan Wendel is the associate professor of New Testament, as well as the interim dean of the seminary.

*recently, I co-edited the volume *Torah Ethics and Early Christian Identity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016). Besides composing other articles on this topic, I am currently working on a chapter for a volume in a series for Bloomsbury/T&T Clark on the reception of Paul in early Christianity. In one way or another, all of these research projects shed light on how the Jewish scriptures helped to frame the worldview, practices, and identity of early Christ-believers.*

Although I will continue to work in a similar area of research, I also hope to broaden my writing program over the next few years. At present, for example, I am working on a book that develops a biblical theology of vocation. This project arises out of my passion to see people more fully grounded in a biblical understanding of what it looks like to respond to the call of God. While the project charts a new direction for my research, it still revolves around the question of how the scriptures provide a framework for articulating the identity and practices of Christ-believers.

Who has most influenced you as a scholar? Tells us a bit about it.

Several people have influenced me over the years, but my dissertation supervisor, Stephen Westerholm, has played a particularly important role in my development. Steve always

encouraged me to pursue my own research interests and empowered me to find my own voice as a scholar. His quiet encouragement in these areas, as well as his relentless commitment to academic rigor, contributed significantly to my growth as a scholar. Eileen Schuller, a scholar of early Judaism at McMaster University, also had a vital role in my academic training and formation. Her commitment to excellence alongside her humility and concern for others continues to serve as an important example for me.

What are the most pressing issues or concerns you have related to the broader field of biblical studies?

I am especially concerned that there are so few publications which integrate faith and serious study of the Bible. While I am not opposed to studies that have a purely academic focus—indeed, most of my work falls into this category—many churches could benefit from books that address faith concerns with a more intellectually rigorous approach. Even as the church needs to be challenged to think more carefully about the scriptures, so academics need to find ways to make their work more accessible to those outside of their academic circles.

Why study the scriptures/biblical text?

For as long as I can remember, the scriptures have had a profound impact upon the way I see and interact with the world. In short, no other collection of texts has transformed my life and practices like the scriptures have. This is not surprising since the biblical authors themselves assumed that their message communicated the “Word of God” to His people. To receive these ancient texts in a manner that respects their intended purpose thus involves embracing the way God can and does speak through them. Because the biblical texts have such an influential role in the life of God’s people, I want to study them for myself and to help others learn to study them.

What do you like to do for fun?

As a mother of four energetic children, I developed a deep appreciation for watching athletic activities. When my children began to play varsity sports, my enthusiasm for sports grew. Although I expect that I will continue to enjoy these activities, now that my children are finished university, I will probably return to a more quiet life of reading novels and going on camping trips with my husband.

A big thanks to Women Biblical Scholars for letting us reshare their interview with Prof. Wendel. Visit their website [here](#) to read about more women who are in biblical scholarship.

CARONPORT HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 2017

*Congrats to the CHS grad class of 2017! Graduation celebrations took place June 10-11.
We wish you all the best as you enter into a new chapter of your lives.*



ALUMNI CONNECTIONS

coming to a city near you!

We are in the planning stages for our Alumni Family Connections for the **upcoming year** and would love to hear from you if you would be willing to help us **host an event** in your city.

Please contact Marilyn Muller, chief advancement officer, at **306.756.3295** or **mmuller@briercrest.ca**.

Has your contact information changed? Not receiving the information you need from Briercrest? Update your alumni information at briercrest.ca/alumni/connections/

Find out more online

BRIERCREST.CA