



TODAY

Volume 33, No. 3
February 2016

Academic Excellence

by Patsy Seitz, Director of Academics

Standing in front of classmates and administrators, sophomores from Ben Roth Shank's English 10 class proposed their aspirations for education. From flexible scheduling, more opportunities for outside-of-the-classroom learning, to improved vision for homework, these dreams of the sophomores tap into an important vein—the ever present drive to improve education. While EMS may be exempt from the vagaries of state-mandated testing, we do not exempt ourselves from the desire to ensure that our students experience excellence in the classroom. This drive means that we continually ask ourselves, "What might we do differently especially in light of who young people are and what they face in their future?"

The response to this question fosters important reflection upon several topics:

- **Ten-point grading scale:** Currently a task force is seeking to know if moving this direction will best help our students as they apply to college.
- **Online learning:** Many students supplement their learning with online courses. This year we have had 27 students (15% of the high school) explore accredited computer courses to earn credit. Online learning is likely to be required for them in the future, so we want to ensure that our students have the chance now to experience this kind of learning.
- **Experiential learning:** For decades, EMS has valued moving students beyond the classroom. We continue to make this a key feature of our program. Children at all levels have the opportunity to hear, see, and do firsthand.
- **Customized learning:** This term may mean different things to different people. At EMS, especially at the high school, we value working with each student to craft a course of studies that will allow them to explore their interests, be appropriately challenged, and discern best fit careers as future possibilities.



In addition to these topics, the school is exploring what alternative scheduling options might mean for our students, which might allow some of the ideas the sophomores shared to become part of our programming. We covet your prayers as we consider the future even as we celebrate nearly 100 years of education for students in the Valley.



See EMS creativity come alive in this issue (pages 3-4) and at "Evening at the Gallery" on March 12 at 7 p.m. All are welcome to come enjoy this free celebration of K-12 visual arts. (Photo by Jonah Clatterbuck '16)

SAVE THE DATE!

- Feb. 4-6: Mennonite Educators Conference (Winter Break)
- Feb. 8: Kennel Charles Lecture – John Sharp @ 7 p.m.
- Feb. 15-19: Spring Spiritual Renewal Week
- Feb. 18: Middle School Science Fair @ 6:30 p.m.
- March 3-5: Senior Play "Pride & Prejudice" @ 7 p.m.
- March 6: Senior Parent Vespers @ 4:30
- March 12: Evening at the Gallery & Bookfair @ 7 p.m.
- March 13: VOCES8 Concert to benefit Touring Choir @ 7 p.m.
- March 21: National Honor Society Induction @ 7 p.m.
- March 22: Spring Concert @ 7:30 p.m.
- March 25-28: Easter Break



faith excellence integrity service

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Doctor and Teacher from Class of '09

by Elwood Yoder

Since graduation from EMHS seven years ago, Vincent Morra '09 and Rose Jantzi '09 have pursued different career tracks, but each has given their time and energy to serve others in the midst of rigorous academic accomplishments. Their list of high school awards and accolades is almost endless. Vincent was class Valedictorian while the student body elected Rose as Student Council President. Rose performed in the musicals "Quilters" and "Cotton Patch Gospel" and sang in Touring Choir and Chamber Choir, and she earned the Rotary Code of Ethics Award. Vincent starred in Tennis, was Senior Class Co-President, and earned the Mathematics and Science Department Honors Scholar Awards. Rose was into the arts and music, while Vincent maximized his time in the Science Department.



Vincent Morra '09 at work near the Rotunda at the University of Virginia. (Photo by Editor)

After graduation, Rose spent a year serving and living at a daycare with Mennonite Mission Network in Asuncion, Paraguay. Upon returning to the states, Rose earned an Elementary Education degree at Eastern Mennonite University, with a minor in Spanish. She is now in her second year working at W. H. Keister Elementary School, Harrisonburg, where she teaches second grade in the dual language program.

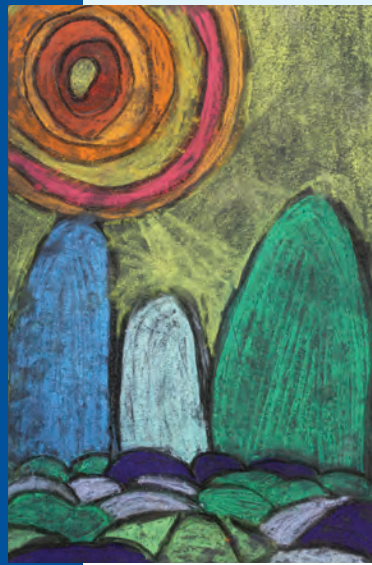
After high school Vincent completed a major in Economics at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, with a minor in Foreign Affairs. Vincent then earned a Masters in Biomedicine at EMU. Throughout his undergraduate and graduate studies, Vincent worked at Sentara RMH, Harrisonburg, as a Patient Care Technician in the operating room. He transported patients, turned over operating rooms between surgical cases, and worked with and shadowed physicians and nurses. Vincent has been

accepted to begin studies in the fall of 2016 at the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine in Lewisburg, WV.



Rose Jantzi '09 at Keister Elementary School. (Photo by Editor)

Both Rose and Vincent speak highly of their years studying, learning, and building relationships at EMHS. They remember teachers who cared for them and they value friendships that were formed. In their respective career pursuits each has continued to serve others. Rose is involved in a local church, and Vincent works long hours at the Center for Christian Study, an outreach ministry to students that is located in the shadow of Thomas Jefferson's famous Rotunda on the UVA campus.



Brayden Kratz (3rd Grade)



Mac Lehman (4th Grade)

K-5 Art



Lela Jenkins (4th Grade)



Ethan Kratz (1st Grade)



Stephen Wright (K)

VISION:

Eastern Mennonite School aspires to reflect Christ's light as a learning community where every student belongs, thrives, and lives God's call.

High School Printmaking



Caroline Hayes '19 - Cross Country



Lucia Martinez '16 - Three



Lily Byer '19 - Sunset Dreamcatcher



Kerinna Good '19 - Triumph

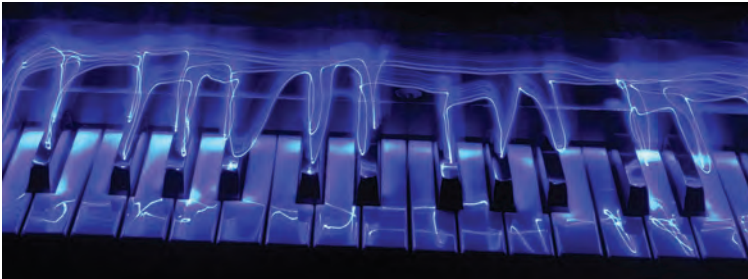


Josh Wenger '19 - Students were given the task of taking 10 'perfect' pictures in only 10 clicks of the shutter. This helped them think about all aspects of the shot before they took it.

Cover photo - This abstract light painting was created by using handheld colored lights and a 4-second exposure.



Deanna Byler '16 - The guitar was traced using a cell phone flashlight over a 30-second exposure.



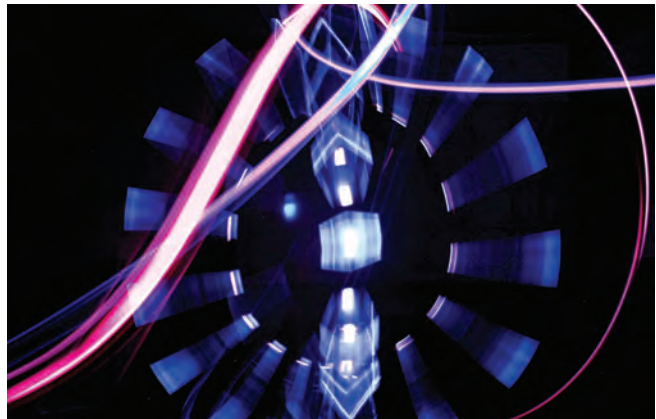
Leah Huyard '17 - A blue light was used to trace piano keys over a 25-second exposure.



Gwen Wagner '19 - Students had to take a collection of photos using F-Stop 1.8. This challenged them to get pictures in focus with a shallow depth of field.



Michael Bender '16 - This light painting was created by placing steel wool inside a whisk, lighting it on fire and swinging it in a circle over a 30-second exposure.



Michael Bender '16 - This abstract light painting was created by attaching a flashlight to square pieces of plexiglass covered in colored paper, and attached to string so they could be swung in a circle over a 30-second exposure.

Photography



Deanna Byler '16 - This panorama was created by stitching together 25 vertical pictures to make a wide angle horizontal photo that would be 50 inches wide if printed at full resolution.

The EMES Distinction

by Maria Archer, Elementary Principal



Maria Archer, Elementary Principal, works from her office at the Route 11 North Campus. (Photo by Editor)

The focus of spiritual growth at Eastern Mennonite Elementary School centers on following Jesus. By reading the stories Jesus told to others and hearing about Jesus' life, our students gain an understanding of God's love for them, while opening their arms to others. Students meet weekly in "Gathering" to sing, reflect on Jesus' ways, share faith stories, and to hear how others live out their faith. A weekly peace-building class allows students to discern ways to serve, to care for

the world, and to contribute to community life. We learn to live peacefully together and to demonstrate God's love for all people. Each classroom teacher integrates these themes into daily routines. In all classes, students are challenged to look at the world through the eyes of Jesus and find ways to serve and help those around them.

At EMES, leadership skills blossom through circle times, class meetings, event planning, public speaking and interactions across grade levels. Committees comprised of students in grades K-5 plan special spirit day events for the whole school. Reading buddies allow younger and older students to form special friendships. Students sit in multi-age groups during lunch and play at recess with those from other classes, allowing connections between students without the boundaries of grade levels. Student confidence grows as they share their talents, ideas, and beliefs with the whole community.

EMES creates a place where students are engaged academically and emotionally. Learning takes place in an experiential learning environment where students are given time to explore, create, and wonder, whether in the classroom or outdoors. Time is given for exploration, making connections, reflection and discussion. Together these activities allow for deep understanding to take place. A natural bridge between school and life is made each day as students discover the wonder of science, math, social studies, reading, writing, art, and music all around them.

These components of the EMES experience—faith development, community building, and a rich curriculum—work in tandem. Together they provide a learning community where students actively learn, grow in self-confidence, find their place in God's world, and go beyond themselves to help others. We invite you to visit our campus at 314 Cornerstone Lane anytime to see these principles in action. You are warmly welcomed to experience the EMES distinction first hand!

EMES students sing during their weekly K-5 Gathering.
(Photo by Andrew Gascho)



Today is published six times a year for families, alumni, and friends of Eastern Mennonite School. We value your input. Send your feedback and story suggestions to: Elwood Yoder (Editor), Mary Golden Hughes (Managing Editor) & Paul Leaman (Head of School) by emailing today@emhs.net.



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MISSION:

Eastern Mennonite School joins home and church in calling students to faith in Jesus Christ, academic excellence, personal integrity, and compassionate service in the world.

Centennial Spotlight

Just over a hundred years ago on December 4, 1915, a committee met at Weavers Mennonite Church and decided to keep the new school in Virginia, rather than locate it in Maryland or Pennsylvania. They agreed to lease the main building in Assembly Park, across the road from our current main campus building, for the first classes. It may have been at that meeting when Christian H. Brunk named the new school "Eastern Mennonite School."

Save the Dates:

- Homecoming 2016, October 21-23. Reunions are for classes ending in 1's and 6's.
- Centennial Homecoming 2017, joint celebrations with Eastern Mennonite University: October 13-15, 2017. Reunions are for classes ending in 2's and 7's.



Left to right: Susan Melendez, swarmed by her class, teaches sixth grade at EMMS; Jesse Blosser '98, EMMS teacher with a Masters in Mathematics, helps Ava Galgano '20 in Algebra I class; Jodi Nisly Hertzler '91, English 8 teacher and College Counselor, helps Michael Landes '20 (Photos by Editor); Making tamales in Spanish class with teacher Wendell Shank '98. (Photo by Andrew Gascho)