



TODAY

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Grandpa Groff and Jennifer
Leaman Blosser '09. (Courtesy photo)

Give and Help EMS Age Well

My Grandpa Elias Groff passed after living 101 incredible years in service to others. A man of good health and memory for nearly all of his years, I remember him praying daily for his children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren - each by name. His legacy lives on through many memories and namesakes, including my own daughter Jennifer Elise pictured here with her great-grandfather. "Great is thy faithfulness" was Grandpa's story despite increasing physical and mental limitations with age.



Head of School
Dr. Paul Leaman.
(Photo by Andrew Gascho)

So it is with EMS! God's great faithfulness has allowed EMS's 1917 birth to sprout into faith-based educational programs from Kindergarten through a university and seminary. Godliness, in tandem with many lifelong friendships, business partnerships, and marriages enrich the quality of life for alums and reflect the enduring benefit of EMS. "Great is thy faithfulness" rings true for EMS over the years.

Turning 100 does not secure the future. In fact, organizational age brings added challenges just as biological age does, yet we strive to live well and age gracefully through these challenges. Educational costs outpace inflation due to being a personnel-based industry. Additionally, maintenance and building updates require more operational support with age. Amidst challenges, the EMS community joins hands to provide a permanent home for our elementary program and make tuition affordable for families through generous scholarships. This year, EMS faculty and staff are taking a combined \$95,000 reduction in retirement account contributions to help the school reach for a balanced operational budget.

We believe our 100th birthday merits celebration and we trust in God's faithfulness to see us through for many, many more years, but getting older is not easy. As part of EMS' community, I ask for your loyalty in helping to continue our mighty work of calling students to faith in Jesus Christ through a robust academic experience. Pray daily for EMS, nudge students our way and consider giving to any of EMS' needs as part of your year-end giving. Together we can help EMS age well and keep its legacy alive for many generations of great faithfulness to come.

Gratefully,

Paul G. Leaman, Ph.D., Head of School

SAVE THE DATE!

*Join us for these events -
details at www.emhs.net*

December 1 - January 5 - Student-led
Christmas Fund Drive campaign

December 8, 7p.m. - EMMS Concert

December 12 & 14, 7:30 p.m. - EMHS
Christmas Worship Service

January 15 - Student Visitation Day
(middle and high school)

January 25-28 - *Into the Woods* (high school
musical). Reserve tickets at tix.com.
Search "*Into the Woods*."



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Mary Fairfield (11th) and Joseph Yutzy (5th) painted a parking lot mural to envision the future of EMS during History Day. (Photo by Andrew Gascho)



Senior Nathaniel Solomon's History Day "family group" celebrated the EMS Centennial with this creative use of groundbreaking hard hats. (Photo by Andrew Gascho)



EMES Groundbreaking October 12, 2017, with Harrisonburg Mayor Deanna Reed, former EMS Principal Samuel Weaver, EMS Board Chair Kathleen Roth, and EMES Principal Maria Archer. (Photo by Andrew Gascho)



History teacher Randa Hendricks '96 taught students about EMS life in the 1990s. (Photo by Andrew Gascho)



A Centennial Reunion... music director Jay... only house of 650 a...



Celebrating our Century!

History Day Centennial Party

by Elwood Yoder

EMS kicked off its Centennial celebration when a large crowd gathered on October 12, 2017 to break ground for a new elementary school facility, located adjacent to Main Campus in the former MennoMedia building. After shovels turned dirt in the morning, teachers and staff celebrated "History Day" by creating 15 learning centers for students which were focused on our Centennial theme.

History Day activities were as varied as the faculty in our school. Librarian Julianne Ross '01 invited experts to help teach students the heritage art of quilting. Music Director Jared Stutzman taught students about the development of hymns from the Reformation to the present. Principal Phil Landes '81 invited owners of vintage cars to bring them on campus so students could catch a glimpse into earlier eras of the school's history. History teacher Randa Hendricks '96 told stories about EMHS life in the 1990s, when she was a student at the school. Former history teacher James Rush taught students about the first fifty years of the school, while first year Art teacher Malea Gascho provided materials for students to create a mural of the school's Centennial logo.

Vision for History Day, now in its fourth year, came from EMS social studies teachers. In 2014, students learned about the Burning of the Shenandoah Valley during the Civil War. In 2015, history teachers created learning stations to teach students about the '50s and '60s in the US, and last year focused on the French and Indian War. Many juniors and seniors joined in with teachers to help plan and lead family groups with students from third to 12th grade.

To create a unique one-of-a-kind event like History Day is a testament to the creative willingness of the entire K-12 faculty to use innovative methods of teaching that enliven our academic program. With the elementary school groundbreaking in the morning and student-painted parking lot murals that envisioned our future in the afternoon, History Day was a fun beginning to our four-day Centennial Homecoming celebration.



...ion choir of over 300 alumni, led by former Hartzler, gave a concert to a standing-room audience members! (Photo by Elwood Yoder)



We broke ground for our new elementary location with community leaders, administrators, and both current and former EMES students turning dirt. (Photo by Andrew Gascho)



EMES' Grandparent's Day was celebrated at the new elementary site this year. (Photo by Andrew Gascho)

Seniors Chan-Kyoo Hwang (left) and Nick Olsen helped make our Centennial quilt. (Photo by Andrew Gascho)



Matt Weaver '92 (left) received the Young Alumnus Award of the Year from Alumni Board President Jay Yutzky '90. (Photo by Mary Golden Hughes)



EMS Class of 1977 gathered for their 40th high school reunion during Homecoming. Beryl Jantzi (front row, right) was honored as the 2017 Alumnus of the Year. (Photo by Mary Golden Hughes)

VISION:

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

In the News



We caught up recently with the Abid-Kons family to get an update on where life has taken them since EMS. Pictured here from left to right are Abbas '14, Mustafa '11 and Sukainah '19. Abbas is currently a senior at the University of Richmond and is preparing to graduate with a degree in Economics with a finance focus. He is the President of the Student Government Association of Richmond College and stays busy with Senate affairs. He dedicates any spare time to playing Rugby at U of R. This past summer he worked at BB & T Investment Banking in Richmond as an intern and has accepted a job offer from them starting July 2018. After graduating from Davidson College in 2015, Mustafa traveled to Jordan for a year as a Fulbright scholar, working with NGOs for his research on how to optimize aid for refugees. He returned to the States in July of 2016 and in August 2016 started his first year at Wake Forest's Bowman Gray School

of Medicine. This past summer he returned to Jordan with a grant from Wake Forest to continue his research while interning with the WHO. He is currently in his 2nd year in medical school and is thinking he might like to specialize in emergency care or pediatric care. Current EMS student Sukainah is a Junior at EMHS with a love for English and her cello. She is involved at EMS with both the Chapel Planning Committee and the editorial team of *Windsock*. The highlight of her year was her Discovery trip this past summer. She is planning another fundraiser for the Collins Center this spring to draw attention to women's issues here in the Valley. The siblings' mother, Margot, continues to work for JMU Dining Services and spent part of the past summer hiking the Camino de Santiago. We're proud to call the Abid-Kons family, and their many talents and interests, part of our EMS family! (photo from Margot Kons)

Today is published five times a year for families, alumni and friends of Eastern Mennonite School. We value your input. Send your feedback and story ideas to: today@emhs.net.

Look for previous issues of Today online at <https://issuu.com/easternmennoniteschool>

**Editorial Board:
Elwood Yoder (Editor),
Mary Golden Hughes (Managing Editor),
Christine Fairfield (Copy Editor),
& Paul Leaman (Head of School).**



Ranked third in the state, EMHS Flames Soccer team greeted fans after losing a tough match 5-1 in the VISAA Semifinals, at Sports Backer Stadium, Richmond, Virginia, November 9, 2017 (photo by Elwood Yoder)



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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.

Jan. 26, 27
7:30 p.m.

Jan. 28
2:00 p.m.

Into the Woods

Music and Lyrics by **STEPHEN SONDHEIM**
Book by **JAMES LAPINE**

Originally Directed on Broadway by James Lapine Orchestrations by Jonathan Tunick
Directed by Joy Anderson Conducted by Jared Stutzman

INTO THE WOODS
is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI).
All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI.
www.MTIShows.com

EMS proudly presents the classic Broadway musical *Into the Woods* by Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine. Save the dates: January 26 and 27 at 7:30 p.m. and January 28 at 2:30 p.m. A Pay-What-You-Will dress rehearsal will be open to the public on Thursday, January 25th at 7:30 PM. Tickets go on sale on December 1. Reserved tickets \$15, all ages. General Admission tickets \$12 adults and \$10 for students/senior citizens. Go to www.tix.com and search "Into the Woods." Save the date and spread the word - you won't want to miss this fantastic musical production!