Leaving Room for God

MARK MAXWELL
PRESIDENT


When we want to go somewhere, a plan helps us stay on track. We have just celebrated another season of graduation and it has been gratifying to see our students reach the goals for which they have been striving these past years. For many, however, it has not been without struggles, changes in direction, and surprises that God has seen fit to send their way.

One of the most difficult tasks I have tackled since coming to Prairie has been that of writing a strategic plan, the holy grail of corporate North America. There were (and still are) several reasons for my misgivings: having the wrong priorities, missing something important, setting goals or deadlines that are unachievable. But the one that topped my list was, “What happens when things change?”

In my opinion, strategic plans often feel arrogant, making statements about where we are going, how we will get there, and when it will happen…when, in fact, everything depends on God to provide the people and the resources to bring the plan to fruition.

I relaxed a bit when I heard Bruce Miller, our former Board Chair, say that we should plan well, work hard, and leave room for God—a governing principle he had picked up during his career in corporate planning. Against that backdrop, let me submit to you our newly completed Strategic Plan for 2016, the result of many hours of thought and dedicated labor (the Strategic Plan can be found at www.prairie.edu/our-college).

This plan has been crafted by our efforts, with the best wisdom available to us, but every step of the way we have asked God, by his Holy Spirit, to give clarity, guidance and inspiration—to reveal his will, not ours. As we plant and water, we recognize that it is the Creator who gives the increase and we are genuinely dependent upon him for any success at Prairie.

Our “white hot why” is to be, and invite others to be, lovers of God. As we work together, we hope to grow as a learning community, live together well as a loving community, and most of all, that our results will be lasting, especially in the transformed lives of our students. May they go forth ready to endure with faithfulness through the challenges they will face around the world in the days and years to come.

We can make our plans, but the LORD determines our steps, and we humbly and happily submit to his direction.

COMING EVENTS

Sept. 20-22
Spiritual Life Week
Dr. Bill Jones, President of Columbia Int’l University

Sept. 23-25
Alumni Reunion

October 20-21
Global Leadership Summit

November 4-6
Purely Canadian Youth Workers Conference
Contact al.mertes@prairie.edu

November 25-27
Deeper Youth Conference
Contact al.mertes@prairie.edu
The Long Haul
Pursuing a dream

Phil Callaway
Boys will be boys

Saying Goodbye
Staff on the move

Celebration
Graduation 2016

Ukraine Journey
Until the fog clears

Special Offer
A summer read

Photo by Stephanie Willis
CELEBRATION
GRADUATION 2016
“...PRESS TOWARD THE MARK FOR THE PRIZE OF THE HIGH CALLING OF GOD IN JESUS CHRIST.”
PHIL. 3:14
Family Album

1950s

Goldsmith, Dan (BC’53) of Abbotsford, BC, has just released his second book of humor. Jump Start Your Day begins each day of the year with a bit of humor, a devotional comment and a Scripture verse. Check out his website for more information on how to order: (http://www.haveagoodday.wix.com/humor-with-a-purpose)

Shinen, Dave and Mitzi (Bergen, BC u’52) have left St. Lawrence Island, Alaska, where they lived for more than 57 years. Health issues required a move to Portland, OR, where they are living in Parkview Christian Retirement Community. They are thankful to be able to continue translation of the Siberian Yupik Eskimo New Testament from their new location.

1960s

Lavastida, Elmer (HS’60, BC u’61) and his wife Gisele have just completed fifty years of pastoral work in Cuba. They are now working in an interdenominational center for lay training and social service, locally known as Centro Cristiano Lavastida (Lavastida Christian Center). It was a real joy for them to dedicate their new headquarters as the Center reached its 20th anniversary in December.

1970s

Lillo, Rob and Adrienne (Henkle, BC’71) spent ten years in Nigeria with Global Scholars at the University of Jos. They now reside in Wisconsin and continue to raise funds for African university students and literacy projects. For two months of the year, they return to Nigeria where Rob teaches Greek modules for the university. Adrienne continues to illustrate children’s stories for African phonics readers. They have three children and four grandchildren and will soon celebrate their forty-second wedding anniversary.

1990s

Sarmiento, Beth (Davis GS’99) went to Peru after graduation to work in an orphanage with Kids Alive. She met and married her husband Martin in Peru and is still reaching out to Peruvians and enjoying the women’s ministry in her church. They have one son.

2000s

Janzen, Andrew (HS’97, BC’02) and Aimée (Seng, BC’01) are on home ministry assignment in Toronto, ON. They continue serving with the same sending organization while Andrew is being treated for Crohn’s disease. Since 2006 the Janzens have been working
with indigenous peoples in Brazil as teachers and encouraging the use of indigenous music and art. They feel that their Prairie degrees in Intercultural Studies, as well as Aimée’s training in ethnomusicology with Dr. Vernon Charter, have been instrumental in their work. Andrew has been accepted into the M.A. in Ethnomusicology at the University of Toronto for September. They and their children, Anna, 9, and Elias, 3, look forward to their return to Brazil and

appreciate prayer for Andrew’s health and studies and for renewal as a family during this time in Canada.

Neufeld, Tim (HS’01, BC’09) and Laurel (Stevens, HS’01), along with their daughter Hannah, have been living and working in Peace River, AB, for the last four years. They are now preparing for their first term with Mission Aviation Fellowship and will join the program in Papua New Guinea.

Alumni Referral Bursary

Prairie alumni are one of the most significant influences in our student recruitment and for that reason we offer an entrance scholarship that allows alumni to provide an exciting impetus to young people considering Prairie.

Known as the Alumni Referral Bursary, the award provides a $1,000 tuition credit for first-time students who meet the criteria. On average, some thirty to forty men and women take advantage of the bursary to reduce their college fees each year.

Your referral might make all the difference in helping a young person choose a biblical life foundation!

For information go to prairie.edu/Bible-College/Alumni-Services, contact the Admissions office at admissions@prairie.edu or call us at 1-800-661-2425.
As the young missionary couple waved a sad goodbye to yet another family in the steady stream of departing co-workers, the confusion seemed almost overwhelming. They had waited so long to join this team and now everything seemed to be falling apart. What could God possibly be doing?

Raised as an MK in Ethiopia, Trish Adams had come to Canada as a boarding student at Prairie High School where she met Orban Bellamy, a staff kid. They became engaged in Bible college and married in 1990 right after Trish graduated. Orban continued his studies, earning two degrees from Prairie. Both wanted to serve the Lord, but weren’t sure where.

The next year they went to Ethiopia on a famine prevention project, asking God to show them if he had missions in their future. Orban had long been intrigued by the way his Bible college teachers spoke into the lives of their students, and when they visited an Ethiopian Bible school, something resonated in his heart: he too wanted to teach those who were hungry for the Word of God.

The years went by, however, with no further direction. Finally they connected with the Evangelical Free Church Mission in Canada and learned that the break-up of the Soviet Union had left the church in Ukraine with many new believers but little qualified leadership. Since pastors under the Soviet system had been denied education, the Dnepropetrovsk Bible Institute had been founded to help the church train its leaders. It seemed to be exactly what the Bellamys were looking for and in 2003 they arrived in Ukraine with their three young children.

It wasn’t an easy transition. Learning the Russian language was a difficult, never-ending process. Customs were very different and the early days were lonely and challenging, especially for Trish. After two years of language study, Orban finally began teaching full-time.

All too soon, however, it became evident that the future of the school was in

One by one their colleagues were leaving. What did God intend for them?
jeopardy. The student body was too small to sustain itself and there was no choice but to close down after graduation in 2008. One by one, their colleagues had left and while Trish and Orban didn’t feel led to join the exodus, they had no idea what God intended for them. Over many months they waited in a fog for God to bring about the plan he had in mind. As they prayed, trusted, and tried not to worry or be impatient, Isaiah 40:31 became very meaningful: “…they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.”

They would have to focus on God and wait for him to lead. “It’s like meeting someone you love at an airport,” says Orban. “You’re filled with anticipation and hope. You may talk with those around you, but you keep checking and watching the doors. We learned, even while we went through the daily grind of life, to tune our hearts to the Spirit’s promptings and be ready to move when he gave the word.”

Slowly, the fog began to lift and a vision started to take shape: the Ukrainian church could still be taught in multiple formats and locations. A new ministry, the Centre of Christian Learning, came together and began equipping the churches to carry out camps and Sunday schools and train up leaders. Preachers’ forums were offered for lay people who preached and taught in the churches. Best of all, denominations that previously had little to do with each other were now coming together to learn about the issues that they had in common and Ukrainians themselves were taking ownership of the program.

The sudden outbreak of war with Russian-backed separatists in 2014 plunged much of the country into turmoil and displaced many desperate people. Ukrainian Christians wrestled with whether or not they should take up arms and what their part should be in protests and opposing the government. While the stress and fear of political turmoil caused some to isolate themselves further, for others the barriers were coming down. Every morning and evening all across the country, churches came together in the centre of their city for a joint prayer meeting to pray for Ukraine. Many Christians volunteered to take food and medicine to wounded soldiers in the hospitals, visiting them and sharing the gospel. Others donated clothes and supplies to the refugee centres, even opening their homes to displaced people who had nowhere else to go.

“As we saw the church in Ukraine maturing with a stable core of believers,” says Orban, “we realized that our presence was needed less and less. That really had been our goal all along and so, with a deep sense of peace, we made the decision to return to ministry in Canada. God has confirmed a new direction for us, but he hasn’t made known the details and so we face the fog once more. Perhaps the difference now is that we have learned to trust God’s faithfulness. When he calls, he provides and he has not brought us this far to abandon us. Beyond the fog, the sun will make everything clear.”
HEADED FOR THE GOLF COURSE OR ON A FAMILY VACATION WITH THE KIDS? LIVEN UP YOUR SUMMER WITH THESE SPECIAL OFFERS FROM OUR FAVORITE AUTHOR.

**The Adventures of Jake II**
PHIL CALLAWAY

Fans the world over have worn out their copies of *The Adventures of Jake*, an entertaining 75-minute CD that teaches Bible principles with hilarity and mischief. One mother writes, “My son has all 75 minutes memorized. He won’t go to sleep without them.”

Now the boys are back in a whole new set of adventures! Kids of all ages will learn about honesty in *The Case of the Missing Garden Monkey*. They’ll laugh and learn about kindness from *The Soap Gun Gang*, and snicker along with Jake while learning about fear in *The Flying Pig*. Makes a great gift for your child or grandchild.

Please see the enclosed envelope to order one of these products.

Offer available until October 31, 2016.

**With God on the Golf Course (updated edition)**
PHIL CALLAWAY

For some, golf is a game where you yell ‘fore,’ shoot six, and write down five. But Phil is convinced that in many ways it’s a metaphor for the Christian life: integrity, accountability, solitude—and so much more. In these short devotional readings, this longtime golfer (with a name like Callaway, it’s no surprise!) brings spiritual insight, hope-filled stories, and the perfect stroke of humor.

“This isn’t a book about the mechanics of golf,” writes Phil. “This is a book about life. Golf is a useful game, teaching us more about life and faith than we think…if only we will listen.” Deepen your time on the green this summer or share a great gift with the golfer in your life.

**DOUBLE YOUR INVESTMENT!**

Matching fund available this summer!

Through a generous friend, we are able to double every donation we receive towards our Education and Campus Renewal Funds this summer. See enclosed insert for more details.
**Possible Canadian First?**

**TAKING BIBLE COLLEGE TO PRISON**

From the days of the early church right up to the present time, the Word of God has found its way behind prison walls, bringing life and redeeming power to men and women who need the hope of the gospel. Prairie was recently approached with the idea of offering Bible college classes in local prisons and is now prepared to deliver to inmates the same college-credit Certificate in Bible courses that are taught on campus.

The instructors, supplied by Prairie, would come from both resident and adjunct faculty. The school will provide textbooks, as well as a resource library for the prison, and inmates would study one course at a time, which would allow them to complete the ten-course program over two years. The goal is to see twenty students taking classes, the first of which will be offered at Alberta’s Bowden Institution.

After many hours of work on curriculum and logistics, Dr. Glenn Loewen, Prairie’s Dean of Education, has been amazed at the way things have come together. “This was not our idea,” he says. “It has totally been God’s doing. The impetus has come from within the prison system, not from the college.”

President Mark Maxwell agrees. “We have been told this may be a first in Canada and we have no idea where it will lead, but we share the dream with our partners that God may want to impact our nation through prison inmates. If so, we would like to be a part of that picture and are delighted to have been invited to join them. We’d love to see a summer 2016 start date, but that will depend on security requirements. Please join us in praying that doors will remain open for this opportunity.

“Prairie would be part of a concerted effort in four-part harmony that also includes: the invitation of 1) prison administration, along with the support of 2) prison chaplains and 3) volunteers to coach the inmate-students through the course work. Each is critical to the success of this effort, all have been most welcoming, and we are honored to work with them.”

The cost of the program is approximately $1,000 per student per course ($900 for tuition plus textbooks), bringing the total cost for one student to $5,000 per year. Contributions to Prairie’s Education Fund will provide scholarships to allow inmates to find hope and new life through the Word of God.

Will you help us cover the cost of this training?

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**Correction:** The Income total in the Annual Report in the last Harvester should read: $8.45 MM and not $8.58 MM as printed.

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**GIVING MADE EASY**

The value and stability of a regular monthly income to a family cannot be measured and Prairie College is no different. Since donations and student tuitions rise and fall with the seasons, God often uses our team of faithful supporters who give on a monthly basis to help carry the school through the lean times.

It’s easy and convenient to set up a regular, pre-authorized donation to Prairie’s General Fund by credit card or direct withdrawal. See the enclosed envelope if you’d like to support Prairie in this way. We’d love to hear from you.
**With the Lord**

**Black**, Muriel (BC’48, staff) was a missionary nurse in Burkina Faso. After four terms with SIM she returned to Canada and served in the school infirmary at Prairie. Muriel was living in Hamilton, ON, at the time of her passing on April 25, 2016.

**Budd**, Alvena (Bauman, BC’48) of Mission, BC, went to be with her Lord on November 6, 2015. After Prairie she went as a missionary to Japan where she met and married John Budd. They spent forty years in church planting, teaching and other ministries before retiring to BC.

**Canfield**, Bonnie (Wilson, BC’38) and her husband John enjoyed 41 years of missionary service and Bible school ministry, mainly in Brazil with UFM. Bonnie was gifted at home schooling, speaking, children’s ministry and hospitality. She died in Three Hills on January 23, 2016, just short of her 100th birthday.

**Ewert**, Shelley (Hicks, BC’72) and Reg served with Janz Team Ministries in Europe and Brazil. They came to Three Hills in 1999 to work with International Student Ministries and Shelley found a unique role serving seniors at Golden Hills Lodge. She passed on March 31, 2016, following complications from surgery.

**Fawley**, Gerald (BC’60) and his wife Beverly (Waddell, BC’62) served with SIM in Nigeria. In 1989 they relocated to Carlsbad, CA. Jerry managed SIM’s retirement center there and later worked in the maintenance department at the SIM Retirement Village in Sebring, FL. He succumbed to cancer on September 5, 2015.

**Fuller**, Ruth (BC’44, staff) trained as a nurse before coming to Prairie. She was involved in teaching and private nursing at the school until 1958, then taught at the Biola School of Missionary Medicine in California. She passed away in Spring Valley, CA, on February 29, 2016, at the age of 98.

**Gillman**, Ellen (BC’45) pioneered with WEC in northwest Thailand. In 45 years of service, she planted churches, worked with lepers, and was deputy field leader. Ellen passed away in Maple Ridge, BC, on November 14, 2015.

**Hanson**, Tony (BC’45) held pastoral roles in Alberta and BC with the Evangelical Free Church of Canada and was Superintendent of the EFC Prairie District. After his wife Esther (Johnson, BC’45) passed away in 2003, Tony continued ministering to others during his eight years in the Golden Hills Lodge and later in the Sherwood Park Care Centre near Edmonton. He entered his Saviour’s presence on December 11, 2015.

**Heppner**, Gertrude (BC’53) went to Haiti in 1954 to work in a children’s home, print shop and book store and then moved to Paramaribo, SA. In 1989 she returned to Quebec and went on short-term missions with Wycliffe Bible Translators. She passed away in Rosthern, SK, on February 15, 2016.

**Koert**, Kathryn (Rinear, BC’76) died on February 26, 2016. She used her musical talents in the church and was active in evangelical ministry in both Kansas and Pennsylvania. Her husband David resides in Wichita, KS.

**Krueger**, Helen (BC’42) was a pioneer missionary to the Ivory Coast. In 1952 she moved to a Muslim area where she remained until retirement in 1997.
Helen was honored with the Knighthood of National Order and was named Prairie’s Distinguished Alum in 1999. She passed away in Kamloops, BC, on November 21, 2015.

Linton, Margaret (Cundy, BC’48) of Eastern Passage, NS, died at the age of 91 on December 1, 2015. She served the Lord with her husband, Rev. Ernest Linton, in Saskatchewan, Ontario, Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia.

McMindes, Dale (BC’62) served with GMU in the Bahamas, Trans World Radio on Bonaire, Netherlands Antilles, and Toccoa Falls College, GA. Dale was a member of the Civil Air Patrol, Foreign Service Officer with Voice of America and Chief Engineer of WLBF in Alabama. He passed away on October 19, 2015, in Sebring, FL, where his wife Betty resides.

Mitchell, Connie (staff, BC u’89) passed away in Beaverton, OR, on Christmas Day, 2015, after suffering from terminal brain cancer. A trained nurse, Connie served on Prairie staff with her husband Scott (BC’77), Prairie’s former Dean of Men, who predeceased her in 2004. They are survived by their three children and two grandchildren.

Nebel, Lila (Carlson, HS’46, BC’50) became a nurse after graduating from Prairie and worked in hospitals in Missouri. She and her husband Paul were active members of their church and raised a son and daughter. Lila was living in Overland Park, KS, at the time of her passing on February 15, 2016.

Pauls, Adolph (staff, BC’50) passed away on April 6, 2016. He was a school teacher and enjoyed music and the outdoors. He and Hilda, his wife of sixty-two years, adopted five children and served on Prairie staff from 1961 to 1992.

Petrie, Kenneth (BC’63) of Kirkland, WA, died on August 28, 2015. He served in the US Navy and worked for thirty years with Seattle Parks and Recreation. Ken was also a member of Gideon’s International. He leaves his wife Dianne, two sons and a daughter.

Pike, Wentworth (staff) taught at Prairie from 1958 to 1988. He and Delores later joined Action International and Wentworth authored several books, including “Principles of Effective Prayer.” On January 17, 2016, he passed away at Westview Care Community in Linden, AB, where Delores also resides.

Scholz, Helen (Bingham, HS’53, BC’58) and her husband Lyle served under Wycliffe in Papua New Guinea. Helen was living in Waxahachie, TX, at the time of her death on January 30, 2016. She is survived by two sons and a daughter.

Tensen, Peter (BC’66) joined Operation Mobilization, serving in Belgium and India, and then became a crewman on the M.V.Logos, where he met his wife Betty. Upon their return to Canada, Peter became the school janitor in the town of Ryley, AB, where he died on March 9, 2016.

VanEnns, Ann (Walton, BC’81) passed away on January 12, 2016, after battling cancer. She had taught education and drama and was adjunct Education Instructor at Key-Way-Tin Bible Institute. Ann and her husband Arlyn (BC’81) have been missionaries in Fort Chipewyan with NCEM.

Windrum, Eleanor (HS’56) of Lethbridge, AB, went to be with the Lord on March 18, 2016. She is survived by a son and daughter and one granddaughter.
Fresh out of high school, Micah Adamson entered technical college to earn his Microsoft Certification and was soon putting his skills to use teaching computers at an SIM school for MKs in Bolivia. Four years later, when the time came to move on, mentors who sensed his potential urged the young missionary to continue in ministry while getting as much Bible training as he could. Little did he realize how that suggestion would impact his life.

It was 2006 when Micah applied to the Distance Education program at Prairie, intending to pursue a Bible degree by correspondence. He was just 24 years old and had been married less than a year, but his wife Johanna was supportive. The flexibility of off-campus study allowed them to spend a year working at a church camp in Washington State, followed by two years teaching at an SIM school in Ecuador. Back home, Micah accepted the position of Associate Pastor at his church in Kent, WA.

The next seven years were filled with study, ministry and forty-hour work weeks. It was tempting to envy friends who were attending a Christian college full-time and could focus on their studies, but Micah learned that couldn’t compare to the genuinely integrated education he was receiving.

“I was able to investigate real questions that came up in my ministry,” he recalls, “and to apply theoretical ideas...
to actual ministry situations as soon as I learned them. I’ve also been in a workplace with lots of opportunities for evangelistic conversations with non-Christians instead of having to wait until I got out of college to make non-Christian friends. God gave me a wife who shared my goals and provided the jobs that helped me pay for my education.”

For the bulk of the last decade or so Micah has held down a part-time ministry job and a full-time secular job in addition to his studies at Prairie and being a husband to Johanna and a father to their three children. But he soon discovered that this hectic schedule of working to support a family while pursuing a college degree was actually common, even among his non-Christian co-workers. “I have a lot more sympathy for the average corporate, cubicle-dwelling guy who is trying to get ahead,” he says. “Hopefully this will translate into a more understanding ministry to the people in my church who have to live this way.”

In March of 2016 Micah became the Senior Pastor at New Heights Christian Church and in April he travelled to Prairie campus with his wife and father to participate in graduation exercises. After nine and a half years and thirty-two classes under seventeen professors, Micah had reached his goal, earning a Bachelor of Arts in Ministry with a Pastoral emphasis. It was time to celebrate!

Micah Adamson receives his hard-earned degree from President Maxwell.

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Born and raised in Singapore, Dr. Ray Yeo studied Computer Science at the University of Singapore, but instead of entering the IT industry, he chose to pursue his passion in the area of Christian discipleship and missions. That led to two years on the staff of a Christian campus ministry and then to Biola University in the US. This was followed by a Master of Theology at the University of Edinburgh (Scotland) and a doctoral program at King’s College London (UK) where Ray focused on developing a theological psychology of transforming grace and investigated the contribution of the emotions to Christian character.

In January of 2016, Dr. Yeo joined Prairie’s Theology department where he brings his own unique brand of enthusiasm to campus, fostering initiatives like the new Theology Club that meets bi-weekly during the school year.

“I am immensely appreciative,” he says, “of the way in which the college has sought to place Christian formation and biblical theology at the heart of its educational philosophy. My own Christian walk has been deeply encouraged by Prairie’s incredible heritage of preparing faithful men and women for the work of the gospel around the world.”

“Ray is a published scholar,” says Glenn Loewen, Prairie’s Dean of Education, “and a passionate teacher with a real love for God. He has a heart for the church and the skills to assist students in doing theology in a way that will benefit the Body of Christ. His non-western background also contributes greatly to diversity in our learning community.”

Dr. Yeo will be bringing his wife Anna from Singapore to Three Hills in July, along with their little daughter Elena and her new baby sister. “My family and I are eager to begin our new life at Prairie College,” says Ray. “We look forward to being a part of what God is doing in and through the Prairie community.”

“Most Christians would agree that their faith is foundational to everything they do in life. However, it is often difficult to perceive and experience the connection our Christian faith has to our work, our leisure and sports, our careers and the transformation of the world. The study of theology at Prairie is aimed at helping students integrate the profound wisdom of the Christian faith with every aspect of their lives. More than that, it aims at the transformation of the world that God set in place in Jesus Christ and is currently unfolding through our participation in him. The study of theology can not only change your life but the world as well.”—Dr. Ray Yeo.
Missions has been on my heart since I became a believer in 1989,” says Shannon Weiss, Director of Student Development, “and in my sixteen years on staff I have watched many of our students go overseas in ministry. It never seemed like my time, but God didn’t forget the desire of my heart. In 2010 I travelled with our nursing team to Mozambique and fell in love with SAM Ministries and the community there.

“When Directors Dwight and Lynn Lagore met with me at Global Connections Conference this past March, it was clear that the time was now and I am very excited to have been officially accepted as a full-time missionary with SAM Ministries. I hope to leave for Brazil in January for language study and then on to Mozambique where I will mainly be teaching counselling.

“God has used my time at Prairie, both as a student and a staff member, to prepare me for the work he has ahead of me. Ephesians 2:10 has been my constant encouragement: For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we could walk in them.”

Theology Student Honored

Prairie College student Sawyer Staal was among those chosen to present a paper at the ABHE Student Scholars Forum in Florida this past February. Held in conjunction with the annual conference of Prairie’s accrediting body, the event seeks to encourage the development of biblical scholars among its member institutions.

Originally choosing Prairie for its missions program, Sawyer discovered a passion for “the mystery and depth of God” and switched to Theology. On the verge of his senior year, he has a more pastoral focus. “If there is only knowledge and no application to life,” says Sawyer, “then all of that knowledge is meaningless. I want to share what I’m learning in the hope of being able to help those around me fall deeper in love with God.”
Alumni Reunion

Date | Sept 23-25, 2016
Who | 25, 40 & 50 Year Graduates
Place | Prairie College

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403-443-3017, ext. 3689
A highlight of a young Prairie kid’s life was something called Boys’ Brigade. Our company leader, Chuck Howell, was about as nervous a man as I ever popped a paper bag behind. He lived for Brigade and wouldn’t countenance kids who didn’t. “The Boys’ Brigade,” he reminded us often, “was founded to develop Christian character through discipline and order. You are out of order. Sit down. Stop talking or I will—” and by then his voice was too high for us to understand what he would do.

Boys’ Brigade was the first and last time I ever wore a neck scarf. We learned how to build a log cabin fire, send distress signals, tie an Alpine Butterfly Knot, and wrap potatoes, carrots and hamburger in tinfoil and pop it in our log cabin, hoping to rescue it before it turned to charcoal.

One weekend our entire troop went camping on Baldy Mountain. When Chuck asked for questions during devotions, Steve Porr asked if there was value to what we were learning. “How will smoke signals help if one of us is injured? You have your station wagon. Can’t we just go to the hospital in that?”

Not to be left out, I asked Mr. Howell if Baldy Mountain was named after him.

Chuck’s voice started high and never recovered. We were a disgrace, he told us. There would be no more camping trips. We were the sorriest excuse for Brigaders he had ever encountered. “I have met some fine young men,” he hollered. “You are not them. Go to bed.”

In the tent, Ray Keller told Newfie jokes until we hyper-ventilated, and by morning our leader’s station wagon was gone. He had rolled up his sleeping bag and headed back to civilization. Mr. Wittman, who ran the whole show, lined us up. “I know your parents well,” he said. We were quieter after that.

Camp inspection came each morning after breakfast. We hid our dirty dishes in the woods and thus won the prize for cleanest campsite. On a hike up Baldy, some of us reached the top first and conspired to pry boulders from their resting places. As surely as I believe the sun shines, I believe in guardian angels.

Chuck Howell never returned to Boys’ Brigade or Mount Baldy, but instead served God in Africa. He also raised three fantastic children. As for me, I learned that Mr. Howell was right about some things. From an Alpine Butterfly Knot you can make a chair to lift up a child. And the North Star can be found by lining up the two stars off the end of the Big Dipper. Next time I am lost, I will know that.

I learned something else that year too. Something about grace. When Mr. Wittman saw my parents, all he said was, “The boys in your son’s tent won the prize for cleanest campsite.”
TO DO JUSTICE
LOVE KINDNESS
& WALK HUMBLY
WITH OUR GOD

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- Human Trafficking Intervention
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