

MIRROR

THE ALUMNI NEWSLETTER OF ROSEDALE BIBLE COLLEGE

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Akwachink 2011

Akwachink — finishing the race

Engaged • Evangelical • Anabaptist

rosedale.edu



The reluctant Akwachinker And other Akwachink stories

Akwachink is a three-week leadership school in Canada operated by Living Hope Native Ministries in cooperation with RBC. It has a reputation for wilderness adventure, combining two weeks of canoeing in the remote Canadian bush with a week of spiritual formation classes. Many who sign up anticipate paddling the sprawling Canadian lakes and rivers, cooking over campfires and pushing themselves to survive with just the basics. But at least one participant had no idea what he was getting into.

Ben Groeneweg, an RBC alumnus, is an engineer for the city of Fort Wayne, Indiana. He went on the 2003 Akwachink trip. Ben enjoys the outdoors, especially hiking on the Appalachian Trail, but in 2003 he was not yet enthusiastic about either the outdoors or Akwachink.

He laughed when asked how he got into it. “My mother signed me up for it because she thought it would be good for not only spiritual development but also to increase my appreciation for the outdoors. All she knew was that it was going to be a wilderness experience that would be spiritually oriented and she thought it would be a good thing.”

Ben wasn’t thrilled, but he thought he would give it a shot.



He took a look at the list of items to pack, and saw that he needed five days’ worth of clothes. “I figured the longest we would be out in the wilderness was five days. We certainly wouldn’t be out longer than five days because we wouldn’t have a fresh pair of clothes,” he said. His idea was they would stay at a base camp and go out for a few days at a time to canoe, do some rappelling and other outdoor pastimes, returning in time to do laundry.

I figured the longest we would be out in the wilderness was five days. We certainly wouldn’t be out longer than five days because we wouldn’t have a fresh pair of clothes.

In the van on the way up to Canada, Ben gathered from the conversation that they would actually be roughing it out in the wilderness for two weeks. “Shock is the thing that would best describe [my emotions]. I was taking a shower the last night before we went out... and I just remember thinking, I’m not going to take a shower for two weeks. I’ve never gone my entire life without a shower for two weeks...this is going to be really hard.”



Ben and his wife Richele enjoy outdoor time at the Cliffs of Mohr in Ireland

“My main thought was when I’m out there, I don’t want to complain. I just have to bear through this for two weeks and it will all be over and I can go home and forget about this for a very long time.”

One experience still sticks out to him. Like many other people impaired in wilderness appreciation, he failed to enjoy

getting wet wading through water or paddling canoes in the rain. “I remember we were portaging and we were carrying the canoe, and you can’t really see where you’re going because your head is in the canoe. My shoes had stayed dry all day long and I was so proud of that. It was toward the end of the day, and I didn’t see it and I stepped into a beaver hole and sank up to my knees in water. I remember the song going through my head—Linkin Park was really popular back then, and they have this song... ‘I tried so hard and got so far but in the end it didn’t even matter.’”

He didn’t count it all trial, though. He was beginning to appreciate the wilderness, just a very little bit. “I did enjoy being out on the lakes in the evenings, paddling and just being quiet...and you’re tired but it’s a good tired...and the lake is just so peaceful.”

And there was also group camaraderie. “We had a lot of really neat people on the trip; we were singing all these crazy camp songs.”

Still, during the trip he never did have that moment of realization that he was having a fantastic time. It took a while. How long? For the next two to three months, when he did his devotions, he said: “Thank you Jesus that I’m not out in the Canadian woods right now.”

But the wilderness wasn’t done with Ben. Later that year he went hiking on the Appalachian Trail with some fellow students and had a great time. He has since voluntarily spent weeks in the woods, hiking many more miles on the Appalachian Trail. While he was in engineering school, he even organized and led a number of week-long hiking trips with fellow students. He says Akwachink was absolutely worth doing and credits it with his change of attitude.

Maybe he should send his mother a thank-you card.

Other Akwachink memories

Collin Hochstedler, Columbus, Ohio
(2000 Akwachink)

Running rapids was definitely a highlight. I think there were even a few where we portaged our canoes back up to run the rapids again. We only got sunk once. It was one where we had run it once, taking a safe route, and then portaged our

canoe back up and just tried to go through the biggest rollers and about halfway through that one we got sunk. We came up on a roller and dropped into a hole on the other side and just sank straight down.

Dion Gingerich, co-leader/leader 2009 to present
(2003 Akwachink)

As a leader, [I enjoy] seeing the evolution of the students—to see the kids grow into a single unit where they are working together. It’s all about how is everyone doing. As well as very spiritually focused. We are around campfires talking about serious issues and we get kids opening up in ways I don’t think you could in other situations. It goes beyond how God is going to work in their lives individually. How is God going

to use you to further his kingdom? That’s the whole basis of Akwachink. It’s not about this one great leader who leads you each day, it’s about you as a team working together.

Meredith Campbell, Linville, Virginia, co-leader 2010 to present
(2008 Akwachink)

Seeing the personalities work together, to know that there’s friction and to know that people want to get along has really blessed me. To see people grow in that—just to encourage others even when you’re frustrated. And of course seeing the creativity. You’re

out there and you don’t have the things that most people have to keep themselves occupied when they are at home. To see what they come up with to keep themselves entertained is always really fun—talent shows, or singing in the boat and doing motions—or falling out of the boat!

Tyler Schrock (2008 Akwachink)

One night we were camping beside a Class 4 rapids; we could hear that in the background always going. It was perfectly clear skies and there were a ton of stars because you’re in the middle of nowhere, and it got cold enough that the northern lights were going like crazy. It was pretty incredible.

Hans Shenk (2009 Akwachink)

I think I almost got more out of the classroom time at the end. Which isn’t to say that I didn’t get stuff out of the wilderness part, but I thought that their (Continued on page 5)



"How is God going to use you to further his kingdom? That’s the whole basis of Akwachink. It’s not about this one great leader who leads you each day, it’s about you as a team working together."

Alumni Profile: Nathaniel Peachey



Nathaniel and Sheri with their sons Ryan and Kendall.

Nathaniel Peachey (78) is an engineering manager at RF Micro Devices, a manufacturer of semi-conductor components that are used in cell phones and other digital devices. He oversees a group of engineers that helps design microchips and works to protect the chips from electrostatic damage. He also has a residential contractor's license and builds homes on the side. Nathaniel is chairman of the board for the Rosedale Business Group, which works to promote business as mission under the auspices of Rosedale Mennonite Missions.

*He spoke with the **Mirror** about a life that has taken him from Beachy Amish roots in rural Canada, through Rosedale Bible Institute, and on beyond to a doctorate in physical chemistry and a career in engineering.*

Where did you grow up?

I grew up in Red Lake, Ontario. There were three Mennonite missions up there, and the mission that my parents were with was Believers Fellowship, which was the Beachy Amish mission. My dad was the mission director for Believers Fellowship. The family moved up when I was almost three.

What brought you to RBI (Rosedale Bible Institute, not yet a college at that time)?

I was looking for Bible training school. I wanted to go on to college. My parents were pretty skeptical of that, but they did agree that it was fine for me to go to RBI and so I attended for the school year '77-'78. I would say it was a pretty pivotal time for me personally. That was a time when I did a lot of re-evaluating of my own beliefs, my own faith, and really establishing my own personal foundation. It's not that I wasn't a Christian or a believer before, I certainly was, but I think coming out of RBI my beliefs were much more personal and thought through.

Where did you go after RBI?

I went back to Red Lake because my father had started a Christian school, run by Believers Fellowship. I taught there for two years and it was during that two years that my desire to go on to college became stronger and stronger. I went to Grace College in Winona Lake, Indiana. My major was chemistry and my minors were physics and math. The idea was I was going to go back and continue teaching but even at that point I wasn't sure that teaching would be my life's career.

How did you get from there to engineering?

Sheri [Troyer] and I got married the last year I was an undergraduate. She also had attended Rosedale for a couple of

terms. She was from the Milford, Nebraska area. We moved back to Nebraska to Sheri's home area because their school was looking for a principal administrator, so I took that job for two years. At that point I really was done teaching and felt like this is not what I wanted to do, so I went back to the University of Nebraska in Lincoln and did my graduate degree, a Ph.D. in physical chemistry.



Nathaniel and Sheri soon after they were married, with their oldest daughter Rochelle

I graduated in 1994 and then got a postdoctoral fellowship at the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico, doing research. That was soon after the fall of the Communist Bloc and there was some idea of taking the national labs and

(Continued on next page)

(ALUMNI PROFILE, from previous page)

transitioning them from being so completely dedicated to the military to working more directly with industry. My idea would have been to become heavily involved in that, but it did not pan out. The only real permanent positions I had a decent shot at would have had to do with nuclear stockpile stewardship—in other words, making sure that the nuclear bombs that we have as a country are still viable, and I knew that was not going to be part of my career. [Maintaining nuclear weapons is a major focus at Los Alamos].

So then in '96 we ended up moving to Colorado Springs and I took a job as a process engineer in a semiconductor company. During that time my career had developed from process engineering to much more of the device physics side. A lot of this was self-taught; I got into the actual electronic design so now I was doing more electrical engineering type of work. I ended up taking a job with RF Micro Devices in Greensboro, North Carolina. That's where we're at now.

Talk about how and why you got connected with the Rosedale Business Group.

The idea of business as mission was a passion of mine. Being a missionary kid, more and more I wrestled with the whole idea of what it looks like to build the kingdom of God in a setting that's other than your own. My question eventually became, how can a system which is not indigenous create or establish churches that are?

Traditionally, when missionaries have gone into areas, they set up a structure that the missionary is familiar with and comfortable with, and then it's done through financing from people [at home] sending money overseas. Then when you try to build a church that is compatible with the local culture, it is almost impossible. Usually those churches go through a lot of growing pains, because the church has been set up and structured in a way that probably doesn't make sense with the indigenous culture, social structures, marketplace and so on.

So if we're going to impact a society, we've got to become part of that private marketplace. Becoming part of the marketplace forces you to become part of the local culture and structure, or else you're not going to survive. You are going to work with the people, you are rubbing shoulders with them.

Out of some discussions with RMM and at Boost [a CMC business retreat] we found a group that started to look at what this would look like, and we called it the Rosedale Business Group. The RMM board gave the green light and I was asked to be the chairman for the group, where I have served ever since.

I would like to see the kind of things that RBG does become much more mainstream [in missions] and to continue to grow in our impact, especially in developing countries. 🍁

RBC web guru Phil Weber, who serves as academic dean on the side, notes that the new look brings our website out of the Dark Ages (a time period that ended, in internet terms, around 2010).

(AKWACHINK, from page 3)

approach to some of the spiritual formation classes was really excellent and gave me a lot of perspective. I think especially classes about God's calling and pursuing God. It influenced a lot of how I think about my life now and how I think about what I should be doing as a Christian. I just enjoyed being out in the wilderness doing crazy hardcore things and the spiritual experiences that were a part of that. It's the sort of thing that so few people get the opportunity to do.

Melanie Graber (2010 Akwachink)



It was so secluded from all the other distractions that I had, especially right before starting school. Being out there really gave me a lot of time to re-focus and determine what my purpose was, why I was starting Rosedale and where I wanted to head after that. It's physically exhausting, but spiritually so refreshing...making my faith my own and understanding and being motivated to fulfill the purpose that the Lord has. (The author, Andrew Sharp, participated in Akwachink in 2002 and says his year was the best.) 🍁

Cross-cultural term in Spain: chocolate y churros (¡y camellos!)



Cassie Elliott and friend on RBC's second Spanish cross-cultural term in 2010.

Ten students are signed up for RBC's third cross-cultural term in Spain this winter. Participants spend almost six weeks from early January to mid-February based near the city of Málaga on the southern coast of Spain. While there, they stay with families from a church near the city, Comunidad Cristiana Evangélica Parque Victoria.

They take two classes: Engaging Contemporary Culture, which examines challenges to Christian witness in the modern secular West, and Language and Culture of Spain, which features intensive language study taught by a native speaker, and trips to significant cultural locations. Students will visit

historical sites like the Alhambra in Granada, cathedrals, and the Rock of Gibraltar, and may even get the chance to take in a soccer game in the famous "Liga Española." They also work on service projects for the church.

Spain is a good location to study both Western secularism and Islam. Phil Barr, the professor who leads the term, noted that secularism is more pronounced there than in the United States. Spain is also on the edge of the Muslim world, so students are able to see Islamic influences in the culture of Southern Spain and even travel across the Mediterranean for a brief visit to Morocco (and possible camel ride!). 🌿



The Gideon Project – can you help us find students?

We at RBC believe the Bible is so powerful that studying it makes a huge difference in how we live our lives – how we work at our work, play at our play, worship our God, and interact with others both inside and outside the church. Imagine the strength of our churches if we would ramp up the seriousness of studying God's Word with others who have the same desire.

Here is the plan. Gideon of old had his 300 men. We are seeking to identify our 300 young men and women (aged 16 and older) whom God might be calling to study at Rosedale. Here is how you can help in a very simple way!

Who are the young people you know who have yet to meet us? If you think they would be a good match for RBC, could you refer them to us?

Please take a few minutes to **contact Darnell Brenneman, our new enroll-**

ment services coordinator, at admissions@rosedale.edu. We would like contact information (mailing and email address, cell number) along with any information that might help us get to know them. We'll do the rest!

Our hope is to build a relationship with these young adults, and discern with them whether RBC is the right place for them to learn and grow. We appreciate any help you can give us.

Thank you in advance!

Student Center update

The building committee is pressing forward with plans for the new building and working out details. We hope to start the permit process this winter and, in the meantime, continue to raise funds to complete the capital campaign. We have a little less than \$400,000 yet to raise. If you'd like to help us with in-kind donations of materials/labor, please call Dan Ziegler or Alfred Yoder at 740.857.1311. If you prefer, you can email them at dziegler@rosedale.edu or ayoder@rosedale.edu.

From the Rosedale Bible College archives

Do you know the people in this picture? We'd like to hear from you: Who is it? What year was this taken? What were they thinking?

Send us your answers or, even better, photos and stories from your time at Rosedale! Email your contributions to info@rosedale.edu, or mail to: Rosedale Bible College, 2270 Rosedale Road, Irwin, OH 43029.



Alumni News

Shaina Stutzman (06) and **Anthony Helmuth** were married on November 12, 2011 in Goshen, IN. They now live in Kalona, IA.



Shaina and Anthony Helmuth

Hans (96) and **Carla (Miller) Byler (95-98)** of Broadway, VA rejoiced in the arrival of Maraya Janae Byler on March 23, 2012. Maraya was welcomed home by three brothers and three sisters.



Maraya Janae Byler

Kerwin (04) and **Maria (Stoltzfus) King (02, 04-05S)** of Cochranville, PA, welcomed Tucker Graham King on May 23, 2012.



Chloe, Blake, and Tucker King



Michael Sharp

Andrew (02-04) and **Stephanie (Harnish) Sharp (06-08, S 09)** of London, OH, welcomed Michael Andrew Sharp on May 31, 2012.

Brighton Noel Sonifrank was born to **Dave (97, 99)** and **Parla (Cline) Sonifrank (05)** of Red Lake, Ontario, on December 29, 2011.



Brighton Noel Sonifrank

RBC alum **(88-90) Anthony Weber's** book *Learning to Jump Again: A Memoir of Grief and Hope*, made Greg West's list of "Top 100 Apologetics Resources." West runs the apologetics website *The Poached Egg*, where you can listen to a podcast with Greg and Anthony about the book. (Visit learningtojumpagain.com for more information.)



Find the Rosedale Bible College page on Facebook! We'd love to see you there.

MIRROR

THE ALUMNI NEWSLETTER OF ROSEDALE BIBLE COLLEGE

The *MIRROR* is a newsletter of Rosedale Bible College published several times a year.

The mission of Rosedale Bible College is to provide an evangelical junior Bible college education in the Anabaptist/Mennonite tradition, equipping students to grow spiritually and academically and to serve effectively in the church and society.

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Andrew Sharp: Assistant Editor

Alumni News Form

Send us your news! The birth of a future alumnus, a career change, marriage, notable accomplishments or service assignments – we want to know about it.

Name: _____

Year(s) attended RBC: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

New Address? (If so, please list old address here): _____

News: _____

I am enclosing a gift to RBC in the amount of \$_____

Whitewater rapids, soup kitchens, and other classrooms



By Matt Showalter, Dean of Students

I turned 18 while I was on Akwachink. Looking back, I realize how young, naïve and inexperienced I was, but at the time I felt like an adult. I came across a picture not long ago of my youthful, smiling face as I stood next to the rapids that we were running on that particular day. Oh, to be back on Akwachink. It was the beginning of

my journey at Rosedale Bible College.

Two decades later, RBC still sends groups of young people to Canada to take part in the leadership training program led by Living Hope Native Ministries (see our feature story on page 2). On their canoe trek through the Canadian bush, students learn valuable lessons in survival and leadership. I haven't spent much time in the bush since then, but given the opportunity, I could still navigate my way through the woods with a map and compass. Plus I have a general knowledge of what I should or shouldn't eat along the way!

At RBC we understand that education doesn't only happen

through class lectures. That is why we encourage and in some cases require our students to take part in "experiential" educational programs, like Akwachink. Another such program is "Xposure," which offers various ministry opportunities for students throughout the school year.

The philosophy of Xposure is simple. We want students to be exposed to as many opportunities for service as possible. As they connect with various ministries, they have the chance for more meaningful involvement with those ministries that fit their gifts. We have student-led groups participating in youth and children's ministry, volunteering at soup kitchens, helping at a local thrift store, and more. We believe that as students are exposed to various forms of ministry, they will have a chance to gain vision and perspective about the areas of service that the Lord may be leading them into.

While I'm grateful for the classroom that continues to anchor the educational track at RBC, I have also personally experienced and am excited about the hands-on learning opportunities that deepen and strengthen the education here. 🍁

Parents—if this is addressed to a son or daughter who has established a different address, please give us the new address. Call 740.857.1311 or e-mail info@rosedale.edu. Thanks!

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