Stacey Doornbos, class of 2007, remembers stepping into the hospital room in Sao Paulo, Brazil. “We stopped by the hospital to meet some families whose children were having surgery to fix their cleft lips,” she said. “We spent the morning with Clara, who was a beautiful child. It was an eye-opening experience for me to see that there are many ways to help. In the past I had ministered directly to kids in after-school programs. In this situation I was able to serve by helping to raise funds so 67 children throughout the world could receive surgery to restore their smiles.”

Born in Holland, Michigan, Doornbos grew up in a family she describes as amazing. “My parents made sure that the world was our—my brother’s and sister’s—playground,” she said. “They took us on long road trips every summer to show us the beauty of the world and its people. We visited 41 states during those road trips, lived in Israel for six weeks, traveled from London to Rome, stayed at an Eco Lodge in the Virgin Islands and more!”

But to her, more important than all of that is Doornbos’ description of what her parents taught her: “They taught us to live a life full of gratitude for God’s beautiful grace from Harlem to Orlando and beyond!”

Kuyper behind-the-scenes staff are an active part of the campus community

When picturing the institution of a college, most people often think of students and professors. In truth, however, institutions like Kuyper College could not be a reality without the behind-the-scenes efforts of information technology, accounting, facility management and food service professionals, among many others.

And at Kuyper College, behind-the-scenes staff members do more than just work in their field; they are actively involved in student life and passionate about furthering the mission of the College.

Brenda Swanson is a familiar face to students who visit the Business Office. The traditional roles in her position are wide-ranging, from processing payroll to assisting students who are making tuition payment, but Brenda also serves on the Scholarship Committee and the Intercultural Campus Committee, where she contributes to the broader community of Kuyper College.

Brenda says that there are many things that she loves about her job, from worshipping in chapel to meals in the dining hall; however, one of her favorite things about her job is the people she works with and the students she serves. “I have gotten to

Internship

Editor’s Note: Katherine Sytsma and Katelyn Mulder—class of 2011—spent four months in India on their internship at the Ashish Centre, a school for autistic children founded by Kuyper alumna Geeta Mondol. They collaborated in writing this first person account of their time there.

When Geeta Mondol spoke at Kuyper during the fall of 2009, we were very impressed with her work and passion for autistic children. As social work majors

Behind the scenes

Katelyn Mulder and Katherine Sytsma in India

Internship continued on page 6

Behind the scenes continued on page 7

Kuyper College equips students with a biblical, Reformed worldview to serve effectively Christ’s church and His world.
LETT E R F R O M T H E P R E S I D E N T

Extreme sports are fascinating to participate in for some and, for others, more fascinating to watch from a safe distance. Extreme sports gain their audience because of the inherent and constant risk of danger to the participant. These adventures are not safe and the skills required to master them are relatively untested. There is a group now, for example, developing the technology necessary for the sport of “space diving”—take a rocket up to near-Earth orbit and… jump out! What could be more fun? You can check out simulations and tests for space diving on YouTube.

When I read a draft of this issue of The Kuyper College News the thought of extreme sports readily jumped to my mind. Here there are accounts of people who have walked to the edge of their own capabilities, untried and untested, to engage in activities and experiences most of us would rather watch from a safe distance. Their journeys were in the contexts of foreign cultures, inner-city projects and hospital wards. Their safety, health and general welfare were constantly in question and a positive physical outcome was anything but assured.

For these people, engaging in this journey ensued from a choice, a conviction or a circumstance that left little choice. For all, however, motivation for the journey came not from doing something few others could or would do; it came from an awareness that this is what God wanted them to do…and would equip them to do well. The joy for them in their “extreme journeys” came not from what they could master on their own, but from what they discovered the holy presence of God would do through them—the most exciting experience one can have in life!

You and I have the privilege of having been and being more than just spectators in the extreme journeys represented here. Many of you have likewise been in ministries or circumstances where you were at the very edge of what you were capable of…and then you saw and experienced the Spirit of God working in and through you in ways you may have thought extremely impossible. Yours was a leap not into space, but into faith—and it made all the difference in the world as to how you live your life today. Be reminded of your own faith journey as you come alongside those who are newly experiencing the thrill of life in Christ Jesus. I hope you are encouraged by their stories!

Dr. Nicholas V. Kroeze
President

My life’s detour
By Marissa Freyling—Class of 2013

It was just several weeks into my freshman year of high school when something happened that would end up creating what I call my life’s “detour.” I was becoming increasingly tired and went to the doctor to get checked over. After he assured me it wasn’t anything major, he had me get blood work and then sent me on my way. Later that night my parents received a phone call urging them to take me down to the emergency room at the nearest hospital. That night, October 16, 2002, I was diagnosed with acute myelogenous leukemia.

The treatment consisted of aggressive chemotherapy and long hospital stays. As I was about to begin the final treatment, I relapsed, meaning the cancer had come back. My only hope for a cure was a bone marrow transplant.

After spending 103 days in the hospital following the bone marrow transplant, I was discharged. The transplant road was not easy. Steroids and other drugs were used to ensure the transplant’s effectiveness and to fight infections. However, they had severe side effects on my hip bones and my kidneys, which began to fail; so I was put on dialysis while I waited for a possible kidney transplant. After being on dialysis for nine months, I finally received a new kidney. As for my hips, I was able to get both of them partially replaced and then fully replaced three years later.

Today, I am a cancer survivor of seven years and am considered cured. My kidney is working like a charm and my new hips allow me just about complete freedom of movement. Through it all there were times of questioning, of sorrow, of enormous amounts of pain and many tears shed. But I will tell you that there were also times of thanksgiving, of joy, of laughter and most of all, times that my faith was strengthened. Those are the times I remember and the times I focus on.

detour
continued on back cover
A great gift

Roger Bouwma
Senior Advancement Representative

I believe one of the greatest gifts given to each of us, equally and without favoritism, is the gift of TIME. I mean this very moment, right now! It is a gift from God, and He allows us to use it as we choose. None of us know how many moments of time we have, but we all have them. And one day we will all have to look back and give an answer for how we used the time we were given.

As a people it seems that we are always looking to the future—planning and setting goals. And while looking to the future is necessary, God also encourages us to look back—to ponder on what we and He have done and what we have left in our wake.

In Ezekiel 47 God gives Ezekiel a vision of a river flowing from the temple. The river gives life to everything it touches, even to things that were apparently dead. Like the river in Ezekiel, I believe we are to use our time to encourage all those who cross our path and point them toward an abundant life which is rich towards God. Examples of how to do this are given to us by Paul in Ephesians 4 when he commands us to honor one another, accept one another, serve one another, admonish one another, bear one another’s burdens, encourage one another, and care for one another.

It is a privilege for me, as a member of both my personal and my Kuyper families, to be a part of this river flowing from the temple at this moment in time. God gives us time to invest in His kingdom, the returns of which, according to Matthew 19:29, can be as much as 100 times. We have the opportunity as staff and faculty to invest in our students’ lives every day. They, in turn, will multiply that investment as they empower others whom God brings to their path. The more God entrusts to us, the more He expects us to pass on to others at every moment—as that river of blessing from the temple continues to impact our world.

It is exciting to be on this journey, at this moment, in this place and at this time. I pray that we all take time to occasionally look back and see how we are using and how we can more effectively use the time He gives to each one of us.

“In My Words” is a feature of The Kuyper College News highlighting first-person stories by Kuyper College faculty and staff.

Remembering our friend, Ken Holtvluwer

Ken Holtvluwer served as a trustee for Kuyper College from 1990 to 1999, and we at Kuyper College are proud to call Ken and his wife, June, our friends. Ken was an embracing kind of individual, tenacious in standing by friends and family through challenges and opportunities.

It wasn’t necessarily easy to get Ken on a board—he was quite selective. In retrospect, it is very clear what his criteria were for coming alongside an organization. This meant that (1) he understood and believed in the mission, (2) he cared for the people the organization served, and (3) he embraced the people who made this service possible.

Ken’s personal values were evident in his decisions of where to serve. He was drawn toward the spirit of the people of the organization, not the organization’s power or prestige. He’d react with teary-eyed wonder over the lives the organization touched, where hope replaced hopelessness. He was especially touched by underprivileged youth. You could hear him say, “Give these kids a chance!”

Ken was also very serious about the biblical concepts regarding personal wealth and the needs of others. In his book of personal reflections—“Just Call Me Applesauce,” he wrote: “I challenge you to experience fantastic joy through giving very generously …. To watch God work this out is spiritually beyond human comprehension. God specializes in doing the impossible.”

The Holtvluwers certainly demonstrated their tangible belief in these words with their generous acts of giving to the College. They established the Holtvluwer Family Endowed Scholarship and gave us the Holt Apartment complex—and there’s a mark of humility: not many people know that “Holt” is the public placeholder for the name “Holtvluwer.”

Ken certainly was into building. He built buildings, mission organizations, a school and a college. But, most of all, he built friendships. Today, these friendships give evidence of lives he has enriched and which are now the happy repositories for cherished memories of Ken Holtvluwer—memories that I will carry forward for the rest of my life.

Excerpts from Nick Kroetz’s reflections offered at Ken Holtvluwer’s Memorial Service on December 28, 2010.
world, of humility for the Creator's love, and of service, and to give back to Him for all the things that have been given to us. As a child I never wondered about God's love or if He cared about me. Instead, I grew up in a world that was filled with love, faith and joy. It is that world that I continue to live in.”

Doornbos transferred to Kuyper after her freshman year at another college. “At Kuyper I found what I did not at my previous school,” she said. “I could talk to my advisors about what I was interested in, and they did their best to work it into what classes I needed to graduate. It was great to feel like I had a voice in my education.” Doornbos says she also found Kuyper’s focus of “Bringing God's grace into today's culture” as an ever-interesting point of study. She explained: “It was at Kuyper that I developed my worldview that focuses on really trying to love the people around me, taking care of the earth that we were given, and being grateful for all the things that were given to me by the Creator and by the people in my life—in the end I have gained a respect and a reverence for our Creator that I didn’t have before.”

And when it came time for Doornbos to complete her internship, she described a process that helped her reach her short-term career goals. “Professor Telzerow sat down with me and we talked about what would give me the kind of experience I was looking for,” she said. “After thinking it through with him, he was very supportive of me doing two different internships where I was able to work with children and teenagers of low-income families.” Doornbos credits the internship process at Kuyper for the direction of her life after graduation. “It was because of these two internships that I became a coordinator for a non religious, after—elementary-school program in the Isaac Holmes Projects in New York City’s Harlem,” she said.

Growing up in Holland and then going from Kuyper to her first full-time job in the projects in Harlem was an eye-opening experience for Doornbos. “The week before I started, a man was shot in the middle of the afternoon right outside our center,” she said. “The kids I was supposed to serve lived in a culture that I had never experienced before, so I grew up extremely fast as I listened to these children’s stories and started to see what filled their everyday lives.” Doornbos said it was her goal from the beginning to listen to the children and their parents and to be a person whom they could trust. “I wanted them to feel that they could come in just to talk, to laugh, or to find a way of getting something they needed for their families,” she said. What she calls her biggest accomplishment during her two years at the Isaac Holmes Center was writing a proposal that brought family cooking classes and fresh fruit deliveries twice a week to the center. “Before that,” she said, “the kids only had candy for after-school snacks.”

As she looks back on her two years in Harlem, Doornbos says there were many days that she was not prepared for seeing foster kids come and go, dealing with parents who were late because they had been “jumped” on the street, and parents asking for advice from a 22-year-old. “I tried to love the families and bring God’s grace to many situations that I had a hard time bringing grace into,” she said. “It was not easy. But in the end I know that I put all my heart into it. Yet, it’s impossible to know when we do make a difference. But I know that this time made a difference in my life. It helped me understand a culture I had not been in before, and taught me that my ability to love was a lot greater than what I had thought it was.”

Then, in the summer of 2009, while standing in the middle of Harlem, Doornbos took a call from her mother that set in motion a series of events that would radically change her life and send her into new and uncharted territories. Her mother said that while watching The Today Show that morning she learned about a contest that Orlando, Florida, was running to have two people experience everything that Orlando has to offer. Doornbos immediately called her childhood and best friend, Kyle Post, who had recently closed out a run as an actor on a Broadway show. “The same day my mom called, Kyle and I started to put our application video and short essay together to become ‘Orlando Smile Ambassadors,’” she said.

Two months later Orlando called and informed Doornbos and Post that they had been chosen for what was billed as “the best social media job of 2009.” A few weeks later Doornbos was in Orlando to assume her job as one of two smile ambassadors. “For the next 67 days—67 days is how long it takes
“I believe that everything I do and every part of me is all about loving God, my neighbor and bringing His grace into today’s culture.”

Stacey Doornbos—Class of 2007

to do everything in Orlando,” she said, “Kyle and I experienced Orlando, from swimming with dolphins to jumping out of airplanes, and even flying a WWII vintage plane.” And the best part of all, according to her, was that after they experienced and publicized everything there is to do in Orlando, the promoters hired them to tour the world for six months. “During that time we gave away 67 trips to the smile capital of the world and raised money for Smile Train, a non profit which provides free surgeries to third-world country children with cleft lips,” said Doornbos. Their travels and adventures were covered by The New York Times, AOL, USA Today and other news outlets. “At the end of the tour we flew everyone to Orlando to break the world record for the largest smiley face and to celebrate the raising of enough funds for Smile Train so that 67 children could have cleft lip surgeries,” she said.

Doornbos said that it was great to touch people’s lives in a positive way while being in a job that wasn’t directly service-focused. “It opened up a whole new world of possibilities for me,” she said. “When I was at Kuyper I thought that my giving back to the world would have to be in a service job, like working as a youth minister, teacher or after-school coordinator. But while I was working for Orlando I learned that service and love do not have limits. Giving people hope that their children could have a surgery to change their lives or just making someone smile by giving them a free trip to Orlando is also a great way to give. I can’t tell you how many smiles I’ve seen and how many ‘thank you’s’ I heard as I’ve traveled the world. One thing I do know is the importance of being in ‘today’s culture.’”

For Doornbos this has meant being in the projects in Harlem, 67 days in Orlando, six months of traveling around the world and visiting children in hospitals. “I have no idea where I am going to be in the future,” she said. “But I know that for me it will be in the middle of today’s culture. In it I will strive to be true to who I am and what I believe—that everything I do and every part of me is all about loving God, my neighbor and bringing His grace into today’s culture.”
Internship continued from cover

we thought that perhaps we could do our internship under her direction. Professor Meerman set up an interview for us, and in August of 2010 we headed out for New Delhi. Little did we know how much we would learn about God and ourselves as we became completely immersed in a different culture in an unimaginable world.

At the Centre, in New Delhi, we served as the school social workers. We did a lot of home visits for the children, some in slums and some in very affluent areas. The children came from very diverse backgrounds—from rich and poor homes and from different social castes and religions. Although in Indian society mixing of economic, religious and social castes is extremely rare, autism seemed to level the so-called playing field. And although the Centre itself is Christian, most of our co-workers and students were Hindu or Muslim. This put a lot of pressure on us to be spotless witnesses of the Gospel. Not only were we the only Americans they had ever met, but also two of the few Christians as well. Early on we determined that we needed to be very culturally sensitive in order to uphold the name of Christ. For example, many people in India have a false view of American girls. Their only knowledge of what we are like comes from TV shows such as Sex and the City or The Bold and the Beautiful. We worked very hard trying to change this impression.

As social workers we put our education to good use helping to create an annual review process, newsletters and various social work forms, such as home visit evaluations. We also conducted case studies on some of the children and created a siblings' support group. And while we also taught English classes to the staff and teachers at the Centre, they were able to teach us some Hindi. During our last month in India, we were able to work in a slum community at the Sneh Sadan, which means “House of Love.” We helped teach classes and do whatever the other teachers needed us to do, including walking through the narrow dirt streets with raw sewage running through them to pick up the children in the morning and take them to school. One day we met a pastor who was living in these slums. He used to live in a modern, middle-class home. But he left everything and, with his wife and daughter, moved into a house the size of a dressing room to live among the broken people of New Delhi. We had never seen such selfless love or the love of Christ modeled so dramatically for us.

In the slums, people’s bathrooms are the streets in front of their shacks. There is no privacy or sanitation. Yet, this man chose to live there when he did not have to so he could bring the love of Christ to the unloved. This was a very humbling experience for us.

Even though we were able to learn and do amazing things, India was a very challenging place to live, especially as women. In many ways India is still a land of oppression towards women, and we never felt a target of this so strongly in our lives. In addition, it was difficult to see the poverty and the in-your-face rawness of life. Nothing is hidden. The cruelties of life are vivid, but so are the celebrations and joyful occasions which we were also able to experience.

India was probably the greatest challenge of our lives, yet we really miss it. We miss the adventure of waking up every day and not really knowing what was going to happen. We miss the people and how life is so joined with the relationships that we made. Yet God was there with us all the time teaching us to become more dependent on Him. We had no other choice—perhaps that is why he brought us there—so we could remember to depend on Him and Him only.

The Abraham Kuyper Translation Project

The Acton Institute and Kuyper College are partnering to bring for the first time to English-language audiences a foundational text from the pen of Abraham Kuyper. Kuyper's three-volume work, Common Grace (De gemeene gratie), appeared from 1901-1905 during his tenure as prime minister of the Netherlands. These works are based on a series of newspaper editorials intended to equip common citizens and laypersons with the tools they needed to effectively enter public life.

“If the believer’s God is at work in this world,” says Kuyper, “then in this world the believer's hand must take hold of the plow, and the name of the Lord must be glorified in that activity as well.”

“Placing social engagement, particularly within the context of business activity, in the broader framework of sound theology is a large part of what led Kuyper College to partner with the Acton Institute in this translation project,” said Nick Kroeze, Kuyper's president. “Abraham Kuyper’s Common Grace helps provide a reliable and engaging theological basis for the College's new business leadership program.”

The translation and publication project will cover a two-year period. Volume one of Common Grace is scheduled to appear in the fall of 2012.
John Bills, a computer support engineer, described his work at Kuyper College as a place that shows God's love the way Kuyper College staff, faculty, and students do. “I really enjoy watching the students each year as they prepare and train to be the new leaders of Christian ministry,” said Huizinga. “It is fun to watch them mature in their spiritual growth and development during their years here at the College.”

Behind the scenes—continued from cover—know so many people with different talents and interests, who all make it a priority to serve the Lord in whatever they do. My fellow staff members are very hardworking, knowledgeable, caring, wonderful Christian examples, and...they also like to have fun! I am excited to meet students, to learn more about them, and to see the ways they grow and mature—even in the course of just one year,” concluded Swanson.

Tim Chupp—a Kuyper alumnus—agrees with Swanson, noting that one of the highlights of his 25 years of working for the College was as director of maintenance. “I've been able to teach and be taught by them. It is a privilege to have had a part in their lives and spiritual growth,” he said.

John Bills, a computer support engineer for the information technology department, is not only a staff member at Kuyper; he's also been a student. Because of this unique perspective, Bills can appreciate the College from both a student and a staff perspective. And sometimes, as Bills notes, that distinction is unimportant: “We are like family in that we are always looking out for each other. I have never worked in a place that shows God's love the way Kuyper College staff, faculty and students do.”

Joel Huizinga is also a past student of the College, a 1988 graduate who is part of the facilities maintenance staff. Huizinga also appreciates seeing students learn and grow during their time at the College. “I really enjoy watching the students each year as they prepare and train to be the new leaders of Christian ministry,” said Huizinga. “It is fun to watch them mature in their spiritual growth and development during their years here at the College.”

Huizinga still regularly interacts with students, not only while performing his daily tasks, but also by taking classes alongside students, most recently 20th Century British Literature. He remembers his days as a student and the kindness of the staff during those years. “All I am doing is giving as it was given to me,” he said.

Swanson, Chupp, Bills and Huizenga, as representatives of the Kuyper staff, model on a daily basis the words of Paul in 1 Corinthians 12. They live as part of one body made up of many parts, each doing whether it be processing financial forms, maintaining the campus, or making sure the computer systems work—all while being a visible symbol of grace and servanthood to all at Kuyper College.

Bills summed up the staff's sentiments when he said: “A lot of wonderful things happen behind the scenes—that's probably why I like it so much.”
I am currently taking a Wisdom Literature class at Kuyper. We are going through the four wisdom books in the Bible—Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon. Job wrestles with some of the most difficult questions we grapple with. It attempts to deal with theodicy, or the way we try to justify God’s ways in the world.

During the entire book, Job questions God. God doesn’t speak, but rather waits. He waits and waits and waits until the time is right to speak. When He does, God doesn’t answer Job’s questions, but rather God lets Job know of His power. There will be times when each of us will suffer and face trials in one way or another. Some may be minor annoyances and some will deal with a struggle much larger, but there will be a time for everyone. Yet, I believe Abraham Kuyper says it well, “There is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is Sovereign over all, does not cry: ‘Mine!’” God is in control over all. In God’s hands power is not always forceful, but it’s creative. As we see God working through the story of Job, He knew everything that was going on. So when we are in the midst of our own struggles, I hope you feel free in knowing God has everything under His control and that you are in good hands.

I am so thankful for my seven-year life detour. I am so thankful for the tears and the joys, the setbacks and the goals made, for the doors that were shut, and the doors that were opened. My eyes have seen the sovereignty of God and His control over everything. I learned lessons some people may never learn in their lifetime. I want to challenge you to be thankful in every situation. In good times and in bad I challenge you to be thankful. Every night before you go to bed I want you to find at least one blessing to be thankful for. Our God is good, He is powerful, and He is creative. He is sovereign, and He is all-knowing. We go through struggles to be strengthened and to be taught to fully rely on God—to be able to be free in knowing that He has everything under control.

There are many special events that take place at Kuyper College. There is also an e-Newsletter. If you would like to receive event information and the e-Newsletter online please send your e-mail address to: advancement@kuyper.edu.