

“To proclaim the Good News is the first and greatest act of love of neighbor.”

-St. Arnold Janssen SVD

the DWWC World

Fall 2018

Educating Tomorrow's Missionaries



Len Uhal with Pope Francis

Bro. Mike with Pope Francis

Did You Know?

DWC has a new website at www.dwci.edu.

It is beautiful, so much easier to use and has loads of information for prospective students and their families as well as for current students, faculty, staff, and people like you who generously support us.

On Page 5, there is an article about the new website. You can see what it looks like, including its easy-to-use “Donate” button, which you will love.

We sure do!

Three from DWC Attend Worldwide SVD Assembly

Toss in a handshake with Pope Francis and it was quite an experience. Father John Szukalski, SVD, vice president for academic affairs; Brother Mike Decker, SVD, medical coordinator; and Len Uhal, vice president for admissions, attended the 18th General Chapter of the Society of the Divine Word (SVD), held near Rome last summer. Every six years, Divine Word Missionaries from around the world gather for a month to get reports and plot the future of their worldwide missionary order.

“The theme was returning to our spiritual heritage and to more joyfully proclaim the Gospels,” said Fr. John, who for the fourth time served as secretary for the general chapter, a demanding job requiring him to distill the proceedings into a historical report of the work of the SVD and an outline of its goals. “There are so many excellent things that are happening with SVDs, a lot that doesn’t make headlines.” Bro. Mike Decker represented SVD brothers in North and South America—the SVD PANAM

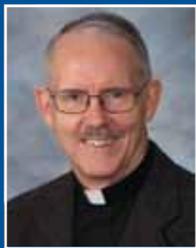
Zone. While the meetings helped raise his awareness of the global SVD, he especially enjoyed meeting with other brothers to discuss their issues. “For instance, in some places, brothers are getting an advanced education, but not everywhere,” he said. “We discussed what can be done to improve the future for our younger brothers.” Four lay people were invited to attend the general chapter as observers. Len was chosen to be the lay representative from the PANAM Zone.



Fr. John with Pope Francis

“One of the highlights for me was seeing how Divine Word Missionaries partner with lay people,” he said. “But the multiculturalism—140 people from 46 different countries coming together—that was just fantastic.” On June 25, the entire group met the Pope, and Len was shocked when he was called to the front of the room. “I was way in the back when I heard, ‘Where’s Len? They want you up here!’” he said. “So I was right there when the Pope came in. Seeing this world leader, knowing the things he stands for and preaches about was awesome!”

A Word from the President:



Fr. Tom Ascheman, SVD

Missionaries like to tell heroic tales of dramatic happenings, massive gatherings and long journeys. But most missionary service is a series of small things.

True, there are some big events at our small missionary college. This past summer three of our administrators were called to participate in the world-wide SVD General Chapter in Rome. But then look at our wonderful Mission Sunday celebration in October. Yes, the church overflowed with guests, the music and food were spectacular, the liturgy was a thing of beauty, but we got to that BIG event by way of many small steps. It meant chopping vegetables, practicing a dance, setting up chairs, and welcoming people to the feast.

If you think about it, Jesus once fed thousands, but it was one young boy who offered the fish and barley loaves; and it was the disciples who served and gathered up the fragments. Truly, Jesus' mission is our mission and it is often realized because of the small things we do along the way.

This issue of *DWC World* tells of everyday missionary moments. Consider noticing the small, ordinary things that God calls us to do.

Fr. Tom

DWC Through the Eyes of a German Reporter

It was one of many “Ah-Ha” moments for Christina Brunner.

The vice-editor of *Stadtgottes* (City of God)—a German Catholic magazine founded by Saint Arnold Janssen—was sitting in a class taught by Fr. Sam Cunningham, SVD, when he said a word that his international students did not understand. Recognizing the confusion, Fr. Sam wrote the word on a white board. Then came the collective “Ah, yes!”



Christina Brunner and Joerg Boethling

“He understood that English is a foreign language for them, and it was striking for me that he really saw their need,” she said. “It was only a moment, but it shows what you are doing here, helping students achieve understanding and then go on. It was a nice experience.”

In September, Brunner and photographer Joerg Boethling traveled to the U.S. to report on the work of the SVD in the Chicago Province. During a stop in Epworth, they witnessed *DWC*'s intercultural community life and its many ways of “educating tomorrow’s missionaries.”

Shadowing senior Marc Declama led them to Fr. Sam’s class, which revealed some interesting discussions. One was about men showing their feelings.

“It was really interesting, because every student, from every culture, it’s not allowed for boys and men to cry,” Brunner noted. “I never thought about it, but it seems to be so all over the world.”

Another dealt with relationships. Religious sisters will not always be dealing with women and SVDs will not always be dealing with men. Fr. Sam pointed out that missionary life is about working with others and understanding views related to men and women in other cultures.

“I sat there and said, ‘OK, this is also a place where students can learn about things they may not discuss back home,’” Brunner said.

On a ministry trip to Dubuque, they watched students serve meals to the less fortunate with a smile and genuine compassion. At *DWC*, they saw students from different countries sharing meals together with SVDs. They saw students washing dishes, mopping floors, preparing food and doing a host of other jobs. All these experiences add depth to a missionary education.

“Here it’s much more than just learning from books. It’s learning life,” she said. “That is really fine, so it will be a good story, I’m sure.”

Accelerating ESL



Dr. Seo Hyun Park

The Intensive English Language Institute (IELI) is putting new emphasis on the “Intensive” part of its title. The IELI coordinates the English as a Second Language (ESL) program at DWC. With a revamped class schedule and greater focus on listening and speaking skills, the plan is for students to become proficient in English in a shorter period.

“In the past structure, beginning students had to spend 2 ½ years to finish ESL,” said Dr. Seo Hyun Park, IELI director. “In this system, students can possibly finish within 2 years.”

Originally, students had to pass five levels, one per semester, and summers offered a chance to practice. The new plan, which has eight levels, splits each semester into two terms and includes a summer term. Students can take the first four levels their first year, the fifth level in the summer and the last three levels their second year. If all goes well, they finish midway through the last semester with one term to spare.

“But if students have to repeat a level, they could still finish within two years because of the extra term.” Dr. Park said. “Otherwise, we have developed some opportunities to improve their skills during that last term, such as auditing courses or volunteering at area non-profits.”

The changes have put pressure on members of the ESL faculty. They are teaching more classes and working with new textbooks, all of which means more prep time. The college has also hired more ESL teachers to carry out the new program.

“Everyone is so busy we don’t have much time to chat, it’s even hard to meet at lunchtime,” Dr. Park said. “But feedback is positive so far.”

Meanwhile, the tutor program Dr. Park began more than a year ago continues to grow. Area volunteers tutor by being conversation partners and helping with homework. Young men and women at Emmaus Bible College, who are studying to be ESL instructors, do the same while getting valuable teaching experience.

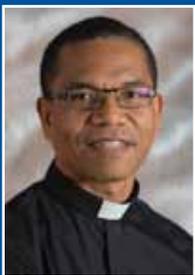


Tutor Orientation at the beginning of the new school year. ESL students and instructors met with 26 tutors from surrounding communities and Emmaus Bible College to review guidelines and answer questions.

The working relationship with Emmaus is developing beyond tutoring. One of the opportunities for DWC students who complete their ESL program is to audit classes at Emmaus. It exposes them to new voices and accents and offers an opportunity to improve their listening and speaking skills before they begin their college degree program at DWC. It is all a part of helping DWC students establish a solid foundation in English.

“I hope the new system helps our students learn better and be more proficient in English,” Dr. Park said. “It will take a while until we actually see the fruits, but I think we have a good start.”

Teacher Wants to Learn



Fr. Anthony Waget, SVD

Fr. Anthony Waget, SVD, arrived this fall as an ESL student—not to learn English, but to become a better English teacher.

Born in Indonesia and a priest for 20 years, Fr. Waget learned English while on mission in Africa. In 2006, he returned to his home where he has taught ESL to 12-15 year olds. Now he has come to DWC to learn how to be a better teacher so he can return to his country to help other ESL teachers improve.

“I would be a teacher’s mentor,” he said. “I would like to help my friends in the seminary or go from place to place to see how the teachers are doing and then help them.”

Currently taking ESL classes at DWC, it is hoped that Fr. Waget can benefit from the collaborative relationship with Emmaus Bible College, which has a program for training ESL teachers.

DWC Smashes Record for Refugee Fundraiser



Tomerot Lambert

It started with a conversation and led to a call to action that would strike a chord with members of the Divine Word College community. In the end, they would smash records for a local effort to ease the plight of the world's refugees.

In early September during his weekly ministry service in Dubuque, junior Tomerot Lambert was helping an immigrant with his English when he mentioned the local events surrounding the United Nation's International Day of Peace. One was the Hike to Help Refugees on September 22. People were to raise pledge money for the entry fee of \$10 to \$20 and walk a two-mile route from Loras College, past the University of Dubuque to Clarke University. All funds go to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR).

Wanting to take part, Tomerot brainstormed with Fr. Sam Cunningham, SVD, and Sr. Carol Welp, SSps, of the DWC Peace and Justice Committee, and came up with a fundraising competition. They would enlist people to walk and then collect donations for each one. By Monday, September 17, ten walkers were signed up and listed on a graph to gauge their support. Sitting at a table in the dining room at lunch, Tomerot, Fr. Sam and Sr. Carol started to collect donations.

"That Monday we hit \$179, so then we set a goal of raising \$50 for each walker," Tomerot said. "By Wednesday, we got that. By Friday, we had over \$800 and the contributions still came in."

In the seven years Dubuque activists organized the Hike to Help Refugees, they typically raise \$200 from a dozen walkers. This year's tally was \$1260. DWC contributed \$1066 and 17 of the 30 walkers.

"I felt very proud of the students and faculty who came for the walk and that they were supported by practically everyone at the school," said event organizer Art Roche, a graduate of DWC and long-time member of the college board of trustees. "Many at the college, either themselves or people they know, were refugees or otherwise displaced from their homes."

Tomerot said the response from the college community was about walking the talk as followers of Jesus.

"It says that not only do we speak of doing things, but we do them," he said. "This school does a great job of helping us find ways to help others."



Outside Christ the King Chapel at Loras College, organizer Art Roche (center left) addresses the approximately 30 walkers before they began their two-mile Hike to Help Refugees.

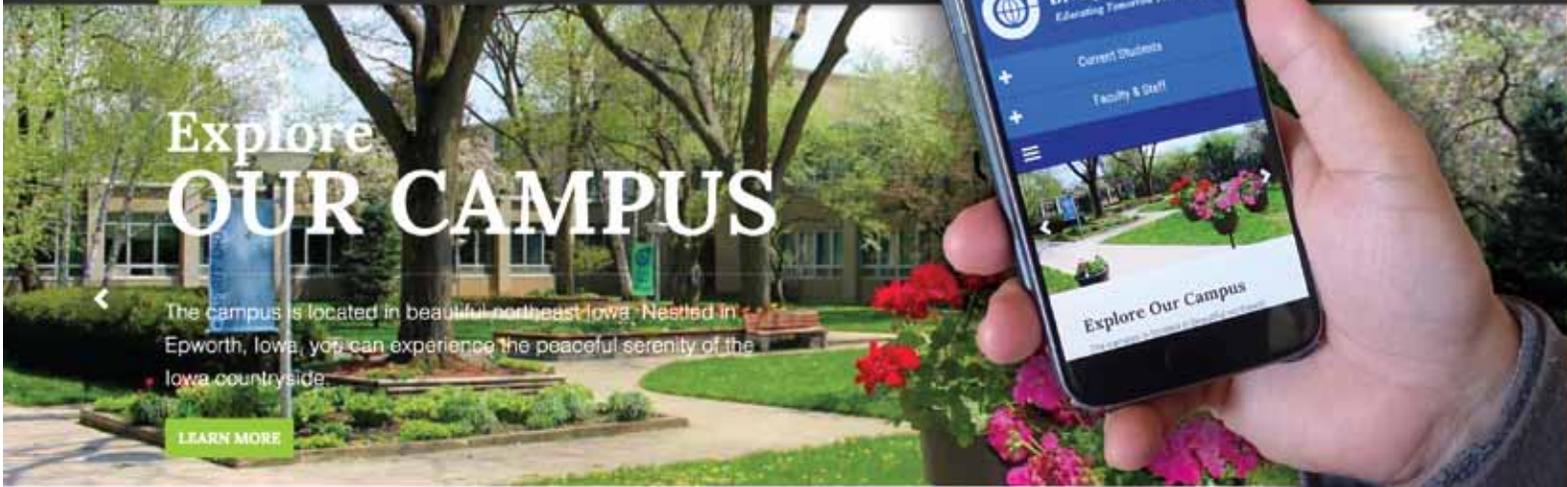
DWC Folk Group Album Showing up Rare on eBay



An album by DWC's own, 1960s era folk group, The Hemlock Singers, has been selling on eBay for \$100 and sometimes more. Fr. Ken Anich, SVD—who led the group for much of its time in Epworth—got the news about their second album, "We're On the Move Again," last summer.

"Someone in the United Kingdom was selling it for \$105 or \$109 under Rare Albums," he said. "A friend recently sent me two copies he bought off of eBay. I think he paid \$10 for them."

The group of nine to ten seminarians started at the former SVD novitiate at Conesus, New York—located on Lake Hemlock, hence the group's name—in 1964. It moved to Epworth the following year and for the next four years, it became a popular local performance group and, in 1966 and 1967, recorded two, limited-run albums of 500 copies each.



DWC Launches New-Look, Responsive Website

From any place in the world, typing www.dwci.edu into your browser brings you to Divine Word College. It is our front entrance, opening the way to everything you want to know about DWC, and it just went through a total renovation.

“Our new website is more visually appealing, takes advantage of current website-design trends and makes it much easier to find what you are looking for,” said Sandy Wilgenbush, director of public relations, who oversees the college website. “The biggest improvement? It is now responsive, so no matter what device you use, the website reconfigures to fit your screen.” That part is very important today. When our previous website launched a decade ago, most people viewed it on the bigger screens of laptop and desktop computers. Today, the majority of people—especially potential students—look at it on the small screens of mobile phones. The old website made it really tough to search the website on those small screens, because it appeared as a tiny version of the old website. Our new website is “responsive,” which means it adjusts its images and information to make them much easier to read and navigate.



We've removed the hassle of supporting Divine Word College with new website button

took you to another page, and so on. Frustrating. The new website has drop down menus, so you can quickly get to what you are searching for.

“You can find out about faculty members, contact staff, there is academic and formation information for students, you can even read the DWC Strategic Plan,” Sandy said. “There are FAQs about the college, histories about DWC and the SVD as well as the latest news, even a digital version of DWC newsletter.” The new website also makes it much easier to support Divine Word College. There is a “Donate” button on the website that quickly takes you to a simple form where you can choose anything from requesting a Mass to supporting the work of DWC through a financial gift. “Like the rest of the new website, this shows that Divine Word College is responding to people’s needs,” Sandy said. “When people around the world are interested in your programs, you have to have a good-looking website that welcomes them to find out what you have to offer.”

Check out www.dwci.edu.

“A primary purpose of the college website is to support our vocation efforts,” Sandy said. “Young men these days—who use mobile phones more than larger computers 10-to-1—won’t have any patience for a website that doesn’t fit on their phones.” Navigating the site is also much better. On our former site, to find the information you wanted, you had to click on an item on the first page, which took you to another page where you may have had to click on another item that



DWC Photo Gallery

Fr. Tom Ascheman, SVD, runs his idea of an ESL class—“ESL” meaning “Essential Scrabble Laughter”—drawing more than a few giggles and grins from these English as a Second Language students in the dining room on June 12. The challenges of learning a new language can be tough at times, so every chance we have to inject a little fun, we will T-A-K-E I-T... yes that’s one word but a double word score, 20 points, right?



Fr. Bang Tran, dean of students, raises his chalice as he co-presides at Mass with Fr. Brandon Nguyen and Fr. Pio Estepa (l) and Fr. Hien Pham (r) on September 8. The four not only celebrated Family Feast, which honors the founding day of the Society of the Divine Word, but also each man’s jubilee milestones as members of the SVD. Frs. Bang, Brandon and Hien celebrated 25 years in religious vows and Fr. Pio marked his 40th year of priesthood.

6 Leo and Zinnia Lim (l), led a group of chemistry and chemical-engineering professionals from the U.S. and Canada—graduates of the SVD’s University of San Carlos in Cebu City, the Philippines—for Mass and brunch on Sunday, August 19. After coming to the U.S., Leo and Zinnia were married in Epworth in 1968 and had their reception at DWC. The late Fr. Edgar Oehler, SVD, co-presided with former DWC president, Fr. Harold Rigney, SVD, at their wedding.



Sr. Thanh Nguyen, LHC, edges out a lengthy block in a teetering, giant Jenga game at the Friends Across Nations (FAN) Club picnic on August 26. More than a dozen FAN Club families and their DWC “children” spent the afternoon eating, playing games and having fun. For more than 20 years, the FAN Club has connected DWC international students with area families for cultural exchange and a sense of family life for our students who are far from home.



Mommy! The kits are up a tree again! Two small raccoons turned the college courtyard into their own personal playground last summer when Ma Raccoon wasn’t looking. The miniature masked bandits were seen for several weeks, exploring the campus, nosing around dumpsters, hiding in the garage and generally acting like little...well...kits.



Thank You 6000 Times!



Mark Singsank,
Associate Development
Director

Six-thousand people just like you—benefactors from across the country—hit a near-record level of giving to Divine Word College. When we closed the books for the last fiscal year on June 30, the total for appeals, donations, bequests, fundraisers and other sources came in at \$2,205,681.

Thank you 6000 times for supporting the mission of Divine Word College and our students! The annual budget for Divine Word College is approximately \$8 million. Of that, our students received more than \$1.2 million in scholarship assistance. That is critical funding because the majority of our students do not have the financial means to pay for their education. Without your help, we would not be able to provide these young men and women with the education and training they need to share The Word of God and help the least of His children as Catholic missionaries.

Your gifts not only help our students with their education but also help keep the lights on. Funds to pay the bills come from several sources such as annual appeals, free-will donations and the kindness of those who remember us in their will. These bequests—totaling \$525,188 in the last fiscal year—can become the gifts that keep on giving. Unless designated for a specific purpose, a portion of bequests go into the Divine Word College Endowment Fund, which generates dollars to help with day-to-day costs.

Meanwhile, an alumnus has established two new student scholarship funds of \$100,000 apiece. The interest will pay the annual scholarship awards for years to come.

The new fiscal year is underway and we are off to a good start. Just look at two successful fundraisers last summer.

Our 4th annual benefit golf outing July 27 set the bar higher for next year's event. We saw a record number of golfers—74—help raise record proceeds—\$8,100—for student scholarship assistance. Many thanks to everyone who participated and to our many event sponsors. Mark your calendars for next year's Divine Word College Benefit Golf Outing on **Friday, July 26, 2019**.

You also came to the rescue this summer to help replace 20-year-old mattresses and pillows in our student dorm rooms. The cost of 136 new mattresses and pillows came to \$20,000. Members of the Divine Word College Board of Trustees and others answered the call with \$37,000! All those old mattresses and pillows did not go to waste, thanks to the housekeeping staff for taking care of them over the years. The Dubuque Rescue Mission picked up 60 of them for the needy. The Free Store in West Des Moines picked up

another 65 mattresses, many of which will provide a place to sleep for battered women trying to start a new home.

Please consider supporting the Mission of Divine Word College with your prayers and through these opportunities to give.

- *Donations to our appeals*
- *Become a member of our Monthly Donor Club*
- *A gift of a portion of your IRA's required minimum distribution*
- *Gifts of grain*
- *Remembering Divine Word with a gift in your will*

If you would like more information about any of these opportunities, please contact Mark Singsank at 563-876-0097 or singsank@dwci.edu.

Thank you very much for your financial support and prayers throughout the year. ***You make our mission possible!***



You never know what you'll face at the DWC Benefit Golf Outing. In the best-shot tournament, Fr. Thang Hoang, SVD, rector of DWC, shows his best bowling form in this "putt" to the hole.



Two days after the old dorm-room mattresses were sent on their way, student workers bring in new ones to replace them, thanks to the generous support of benefactors.



For more information about Divine Word College, call 563-876-3353, email info@dwci.edu, or visit: www.dwci.edu



“Everything We Have is a Gift from God”

Jim Theisen loves thoughtful phrases. There's his company motto, “People Buy from People, Not from Businesses,” and there's his answer when asked why he and his wife Marita are so generous to others. “Everything we have is a gift from God,” he said. “Divine Word spreads God's Word throughout the world and we are blessed to be able to help.”

For their timely and generous support, Divine Word College presented the Dubuque couple, owners of Theisen's Home-Farm-Auto, with its Donaghey Award for Outstanding Service during a Mass and banquet on September 23.

“Jim and Marita have been generous benefactors of Divine Word College for more than 25 years,” said Mark Singsank, associate director of development, who nominated them for the award. “They continue to be strong believers in the mission of Divine Word College and in our students.” Established in 1999, the award honors the late Fr. John Donaghey, SVD, who dedicated much of his life to the college.

Jim and Marita were married in 1956 after he returned from the service, the same year he joined the family business started by his parents, Leo and Kathryn, in 1927. Using

his experience in the U.S. Army Quartermaster Corps, he helped grow the Dubuque business. Today, Theisen's Home-Farm-Auto has 24 stores and 1200 employees.



Jim and Marita Theisen

An extension of his company motto—which speaks to a personal connection to people—is the connection to those in need. Sometimes those needs strike close to home. Marita is stricken with Alzheimer's disease, a struggle that Jim has taken on at home, as a board member of the Iowa Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association and by supporting efforts to help families facing the same struggle.

Looking back, he credits his parents for setting an example of compassion. “Mom and dad were always looking for where they could help,” Jim said. “You've got to give back. Give something away sometime and see how you feel.”