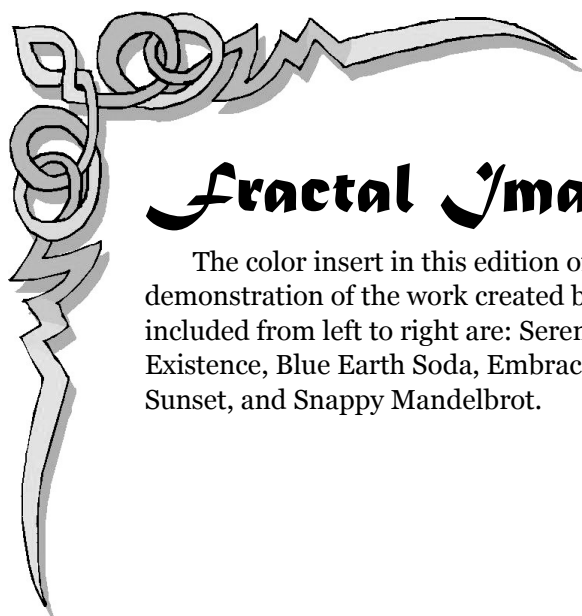
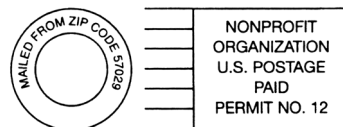




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Fractal Images Insert

The color insert in this edition of the Focus gives a demonstration of the work created by Kevin Gross. Images included from left to right are: Serendipitous, Genesis, Electrified Existence, Blue Earth Soda, Embraced by the Vines of Life, Summer Sunset, and Snappy Mandelbrot.

Coming Events

- Yuletide Banquet**
December 16, 17—6:30 p.m.
- Alumni Fun & Fellowship in Sterling Hall**
December 27—7:00 p.m.
- SSS— Tony Brown from Hesston College**
January 30—3:00 p.m.
- Schmeckfest**
March 25, 26 April 1, 2
- Graduation**
May 21
- Alumni Banquet**
August 6

FOCUS ON FREEMAN ACADEMY

Spirit Fire Images



Kevin Gross
FA '79

By Vernetta Waltner

For our readers who were students or staff at FJC/FA from 1975-80, they might recall a vision of Kevin Gross scurrying around campus with a camera attempting to catch the action at an athletic event or other campus happening. Kevin was a photographer for the *Pioneer* and the *Star* and even learned to develop his own photographs in the school darkroom. Science classes with Myron Harms and Sam Gingerich impressed him with the opportunities for experimentation and conclusions. The school's first computer intrigued him and Ed C. Epp, instructor, actually built his own computer! Who could have predicted how those early activities would

prepare him for beginning his new business, "Spirit Fire Images."

After graduating from FA in 1979 and completing one year at FJC ('79-'80), Kevin transferred to Goshen College in Indiana where he majored in chemistry and physics, with a minor in computer science. Even though he considered graduate school, he felt the need for a break from studying. Goshen College had recently received a federal grant to significantly upgrade its computing facilities and offered him a job on the technical staff. When the grant ended, he was hired on as permanent staff and continued in that position until 2009 when his job was suddenly eliminated.

Continued on page 2

November 2010



*Where Faith & the Arts
Bring Learning to Life*

▶ Our Mission...

Freeman Academy, as part of Christ's church, integrates Christian principles into all learning while maintaining a standard of excellence in academics, creative arts and athletics. Freeman Academy is Mennonite in origin and doctrine, but seeks to serve students of all Christian faiths. A safe, caring and nurturing atmosphere prepares students to accept God's call to live a life of compassionate service and discipleship to Christ.

Spirit Fire Images



Kevin Gross with one of his fractal images.

Continued from page 1

Following his dreams was the last thing on his mind at that point, but God had been preparing him for the future. During his time on Goshen College staff, he had the opportunity to take some photography courses from the art department in which he learned a lot about design and composing images. In the late 80's he discovered fractals, computer generated art containing complex, repetitive, mathematically based shapes and patterns that resemble those found in nature. For the next 15 years, he created fractal images, did a few small shows and usually got frustrated with the limitations of the software tools available. In 2004, Ultra Fractal software became available, and it provided him with a multitude of new capabilities. He started producing fractal calendars in 2005, and that was his main vehicle for art distribution until 2010.

When asked how he was led into this new occupation, he replied, "kicking and screaming!" Even though he was not very happy in his computer job anymore, it was comfortable – he had friends, good pay and security. There was not a lot of personal enthusiasm to look for a different job. But now, he had an opportunity to make a radical shift in careers. What did

he really want to do? The idea of starting a business to market his artwork came to mind but was quickly stifled. Nobody could make a living off their art.

After the idea kept coming to the forefront of his mind above other ideas, he took a serious look at what would need to be done. He took a course for entrepreneurs starting a business and learned about marketing and finances. The more he learned, the more excited he became about this idea. Thus came the birth of "Spirit Fire Images."

Looking back to his time at FA and FJC, Kevin feels that he was nurtured both spiritually and intellectually by the small, personal environment. While he was challenged in math and science, James Engle and Tom Friesen, Bible instructors, encouraged him to explore religion and the Bible. Attending high school on the campus of a junior college presented many challenging opportunities for growth and mature thinking. Some of the "seeds" sprouted during his years as a student, but some are just starting to mature now. Some of Kevin's works are featured on the insert page of this Focus issue. Others may be viewed at his website: www.SpiritFireImages.com.

Alumni Holiday Fun and Fellowship

Monday, December 27 at 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. Come to enjoy fellowship with other alumni who are home for the holidays or with those of us who live in the community and LOVE to see who is home! Basketball games are the usual entertainment for the evening, and we hope to have both women's and men's games played – women first at 7:00 p.m. and men at 8:00 p.m. Encourage your friends and classmates to attend. Light refreshments will be provided.

Fall Alumni Visit Report

Many thanks to all the alumni who took the time to attend the recent alumni gatherings held in Goshen, IN and at Fall Fest on the Bethel College Campus in N. Newton, KS! It was so rewarding on many levels – renewing friendships, building relationships and communicating about activities at Freeman Academy.

A special thanks to Jan Graber Johnson, who hosted the Goshen event, and to Fred Goehring, Director of Advancement at Bethel College, who invited us to participate during Fall Fest!



Recognizing Amy Hofer Vetch

This past summer at the Honors Choir Concert in Brookings, Amy Hofer Vetch received the Encore Award. This award is voted on by music education peers and goes to an outstanding teacher in his/her field for more than five years. Amy has been teaching at Freeman Academy for eight years and taken numerous students to honors, state, regional and national choirs. We are fortunate to have Amy on our team at Freeman Academy. Congratulations to Amy!

Amy Hofer Vetch
FA Creative Arts Director and Vocal Music Instructor

Corporation Meeting Highlights

The annual Freeman Academy Corporation Meeting was held on Monday, September 27 at 7:30 p.m. in the Dining Hall. Dennis Schrock, Bible and social science instructor, presented devotions. Many constituents blessed the school with their gifts and enabled President Pam Tieszen to report a positive balance at the end of the fiscal year on June 30, 2010.

Written reports were available from the various auxiliary organizations, and time was given for questions by those in attendance. These same reports are available for viewing on our website at www.freemanacademy.org on the home page. Anyone who would like to receive copies of the reports in the mail should contact the office at 605-925-4237. Refreshments were served at the conclusion of the meeting.

Why Freeman Academy?

Last spring, after noting that my second child was about to graduate from Freeman Academy, the mother of a young child began asking questions about why my husband and I enroll our children there. She was gathering information for the time when she would have to make a decision about her child's education. What was the advantage to having my children attend Freeman Academy? Happily, I was at no loss for words.

I started with the obvious, extolling Freeman Academy's primary mission of integrating Anabaptist Christian principles into the curriculum, the small class sizes and individual attention each student enjoys, the creative arts emphasis and the choice of elective courses not available at other schools, and the excellent academic program that prepared my children for college level course work in the humanities and natural sciences.

But as we conversed, I came to realize that what I really love about this school are the intangible things: the culture of the school and the nurturing, not just by the faculty and staff but also by students who encourage and look out for each other. It's okay - it's safe - to excel academically, be creative and to think critically. Even being quirky is tolerated, if not fully embraced.

I was grateful for the opportunity to talk about how this school has been a blessing to our family. I don't know if I recruited a new student, but during my time on the Enrollment Steering Committee, I've learned that God works through the personal relationships we have with others when it comes to bringing new students to this school.

Freeman Academy is a treasure. Pray for those of us involved in strategic planning as we map out the course of the school for the coming years.

Eloise Schrag, Board Member

Studio Subscription Series 2010-2011

The Freeman Academy Studio Subscription Series for 2010-2011 is going to be exciting and fresh! Our performers come from various parts of the country: California, Kansas, Ohio, Missouri and South Dakota. The season will once again feature five performances throughout the school calendar year.

Tony Brown, based out of Hesston College in Kansas, will share with us Sunday, January 30 at 3:00 p.m. Mr. Brown is an international promoter of peace and a citizen of the world. He uses music as a tool to bring people together across the many divides that separate us.

A season ticket for an adult is **\$48**; a single concert entrance fee is **\$12**. A non-FA student season ticket (K-12) is **\$18**; a single concert student fee is **\$6**. As in the past, Freeman Academy students receive free admission.

Tony Brown

