



Sant Bani School Notes

Celebrating 36 years

January 2010

www.santbani.org

Calendar of Events

- 1/4 School back in session
- 1/9 SBS Board Meeting
- 1/15 End of first semester
- 1/18 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day -- **No school**
- 1/20 General Parent Meeting for all parents 7 p.m.
- 1/20 Grades 7-12 projects proposals due
- 1/27 Grades 3-6 projects proposals due
- 1/28 Parent Conferences 4:30-7:30 p.m. -- **School out at noon**
- 1/30 Open House 2 p.m.
- 2/1 Grades K-2 projects proposals due

Editor Jyoti Demian

Sant Bani School Notes is published monthly during the school year to share news of the school community. We are grateful for contributions from staff, friends and the Parent Committee.

Seniors Present on the Theme of "Home"

On December 7 the class of 2010 presented the culmination of a month-long project integrating literature and history with research and presentation. The focus was around the word *home* and each student took the word in a different direction. Choices were as diverse and interesting as the class itself.

Students were given much breadth to pursue topics of interest. They also determined the extent of their time and energy to be focused on this project. They drew up proposals describing their intent and chose their evaluators. Content of project, excellence of presentation and creativity of the concept were all taken into consideration.

Mira Carey-Hatch presented on the topic "Without a Home." Liana Hanrahan's research was entitled "Liana, Phone Home." Lys Kalmus, a student from Estonia, chose the topic "Fighting to Free my Homeland." Her presentation included singing a patriotic song in her native language. Liana Hardcastle presented "Culture Shock: Making a Home Away from Home." Emily Braconier researched "Heading Out: How Leaving Home has Changed Over Time." Jacquie Bartz presented "You Want me to Eat What?!" Tajian de Mello Folsom explained that at home you feel comfortable and showed how

comfortable he was with his class and school by showing a Bollywood-type dance his class had performed for the school as juniors. He also showed filmed interviews of his research into the topic "House, Home, Abode." Chapin Evans's presentation, "Home is Where the Heart is: Establishing a Home through Adversity," detailed the strength a family found when it underwent the challenge of children with cancer. She wrote and illustrated a children's story on this topic. Quan Tran, a student from Vietnam, presented "Fighting Far Away from Home vs. Fighting to Unify Home," which showed the different meanings of *home* to U.S. and Vietnamese soldiers during the war in Vietnam. Quan wore a Vietnamese military uniform and beautifully sang the Vietnamese national anthem. Nick Lockwood presented "Generational Differences in Perception of Home." Justine Borceux, a student from Belgium, presented "Where Am I and Who Are You?" on the topic of aging and leaving home to enter a nursing home. She also used her own illustrations in her presentation.

The evening was informative, thought provoking and entertaining for the audience of senior families, friends and staff.

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Staff and Students Read Together in Morning Session

Research on reading aloud to children from infancy through adolescence has shown that there are many benefits. Teachers at Sant Bani regularly read to students, from beautifully illustrated picture books in the elementary grades to poetry and short stories in the middle and upper grades.

Sant Bani's Morning Session, part of the school day since the school's inception in 1973, is unique and benefits students and staff by fostering community, reading stories aloud to students of all ages and promoting interaction between many grade levels. In addition to reading stories aloud, other Morning

Session activities have included presentations and slideshows by staff and guest presenters on myriad topics.

For the past few weeks in Morning Session, staff and students together have participated in reading Susan Cooper's novel *The Dark Is Rising*.

Mary Ann Sanborn, school librarian and English teacher, has organized a performance-like reading of the fantasy novel based in England, in which good battles evil.

Each day before Morning Session, high schoolers and many staff members are handed a "script," photocopied pages of the day's reading, with underlined

dialogue spoken by the character they will read that day. Students generally read parts of characters around their age in the story, and staff read the parts of the older characters.

Junior Doran Timm has read the part of protagonist, Will Stanton, while other high schoolers have read for his many siblings. Jonathan Powell has read the part of Merriman, one of the old ones who helps Will. Other staff readers have included Megan Farkas, Jon Engle, Karen Bicknell, Chris Demian, Scott Clark and others. Brenda Diederich has joined Megan on vocals when Christmas carols are sung in the story.

Oh, the Places We Go! Field Trips at Sant Bani School

An important part of the curriculum at Sant Bani is taking field trips that build on lessons taught in the classroom. Below are just some of the field trips students have taken recently that enhance their education here.

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In the past few weeks Robert has taken his fifth, sixth and ninth grade science classes to the McAuliffe-Shepard Discovery Center in Concord (formerly the Christa McAuliffe Planetarium). Students filled the theater to view the film "Black Holes." They learned what black holes are, where they come from and explored the most recent research on black holes.

They did interactive learning through the special exhibit "Black

Holes: Space Warps and Time Twists" brought to the Center by the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics.

The exhibit was designed like a space mission and allowed students to experience the unusual properties of black holes, see how they behave and how they influence the universe. Students loved the personal I.D. cards they used to collect observations, discoveries and conclusions and even satellite photos they took.

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In early December Sam took the third grade to the Montshire Museum of Science in Norwich, Vermont. Students enjoyed the

permanent collection and were fascinated by the travelling dinosaur exhibit. They learned about prehistoric animals through interactive computer programs. After hearing a one-hour presentation from a museum speaker, all third graders came home with a "fossil" they made out of seashells and plaster.

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In early December Brenda took her seventh grade World History class to the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. Students marveled at the real mummy head, the other mummies, and exhibits in the permanent collection. Brenda commented on how engaged and well-behaved her students were.

Buy Coffee and Support Sant Bani

Purchase New Hampshire Roasted Peruvian coffee and \$3.00 from every bag sold will go directly to the Sant Bani Financial Aid Fund. This wonderful coffee comes from Cafe Monte Alto in Plymouth. Check out their web site, www.montعالto.com, to read about their efforts to support the coffee community in Peru.

Regular Roast: \$9.00/16 oz. bag

Dark Roast (REALLY high test!): \$9.00/14 oz. bag

Decaf: \$10.00/16 oz. bag

Orders/payments go to Roxanne in the front office.

Specify whole beans or ground. Orders go to Cafe Monte Alto at the beginning of each month and coffee is delivered to the school for pickup soon after.

If you have questions, contact Sherry: sherry.bogacz@dsbnh.com.

College Acceptances

College acceptance letters are already rolling in for the Class of 2010!

Mira Carey-Hatch has been accepted at Bates College.

Chapin Evans has been accepted at the University of Michigan.

Liana Hardcastle has been accepted at the University of Vermont.

Congratulations Mira, Chapin and Liana!

Thank You for Sending in Toys for Local Children

A large box of unopened toys for children from infant to teenager was collected at school by donations from the Sant Bani community.

The toys were picked up December 16 by the organizers of the Tilton/Northfield/Sanbornton Christmas Fund to be distributed to children in time for Christmas. Thank you for donating the many wonderful toys that brightened the holidays for local children.

Alumni Express Love and Gratitude

Those who attend Sant Bani graduations hear every year from seniors about what the school means to them. Often they say how grateful they are to have been able to attend Sant Bani. Many alumni feel this gratitude daily and some write to the school to express it.

In a recent note to the school, Beverly (Swan) Stycos, a member of Sant Bani School's original group of six students, shared her appreciation of her alma mater: "[...]Through my work with children, I am reminded daily what a good education can do for a child--and I appreciate all the dedication and hard work from all the teachers and staff--and most

Knitting Supplies Needed!

The Hot Heads Knitting Project Art Block during the second fall set of Art Blocks was so successful and productive that it will be offered again, and many more students have signed up. If you have knitting needles, crochet hooks or yarn you could donate it would help keep hands busy.

Knitters and crocheters in the Art Block, and many other students and teachers who have made it a habit to knit during Morning Session, produced over 250 hats to keep newborn babies warm in Rwanda.

of all, the much-needed financial help my family was given over the years."

Alumna Lindsay Kendrick of the class of 2002 also shared the following about Sant Bani after hearing from Megan Farkas in Development about Kent's travels to Bhutan: "It is simple notes like this that serve to remind me what a beautifully unique and valuable education I received at Sant Bani. The importance of the values that SBS emphasizes becomes more clear with each year I spend out in the world. It is simply incredible. I hope that I continue to carry with me those values as I ... move into my career in veterinary medicine."

Don't get left out of the loop--sign up for Sant Bani listserv!

To receive informative emails with late-breaking Sant Bani news, sign up for the Sant Bani listserv. You will be added to an email address list of members of the Sant Bani School community. To be added to this list, send an email to SantBaniSchool-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

Upcoming Events

Introduction to Nonviolent Communication Workshop January 22-23

In the evening of Friday, January 22 and all day Saturday, January 23, Sant Bani School will host the workshop "Introduction to Nonviolent Communication" with Peggy Smith, Certified Trainer with the Center for Nonviolent Communication.

The Nonviolent Communication model that will be presented at the workshop was developed by Marshall Rosenberg, whose teaching reflects his understanding that violence begins in the language we use and that peace is rooted in the way we communicate with each other. Rosenberg teaches that all of our actions are in the service of our needs and that the way we interact with others is the best possible way they know to get those needs met.

Nonviolent Communication teaches simple skills that help people connect with their own needs and the needs of others in a way that inspires compassionate response and the possibility for peace interpersonally and in the community as a whole.

Participants will practice expressing themselves authentically. They will explore ways to listen with empathy by observing facts without evaluation, interpretation or judgment; identifying and expressing feelings; expressing the needs behind those feelings; and formulating clear and concrete requests for actions.

Empathy for ourselves and others in the family, at work and in conflict is the focus of the workshop.

People interested in finding ways to bring more peace and harmony into their lives and the world as a whole are encouraged to sign up. It is recommended especially for parents, professionals in the fields of education, mental health, medicine, community and environmental sustainability, law enforcement, restorative justice; and for businesses that work with the public.

The fee request for both sessions is \$85.00 and includes a vegetarian lunch on Saturday. Prior registration is strongly recommended, as registration is limited to thirty participants. Registration forms are available at school. Send in the registration form and a \$20.00 deposit to school (attention Karen Gregg) to secure your place.

Workshop organizers value participation by all who wish to attend and will try to create a space regardless of ability to pay.

Contact Karen Gregg for information. Workshop dates and times are January 22 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. and January 23 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Snow dates are January 29 and 30.

Come Cheer on SBS Basketball!

If you are looking for an exciting way to spend a warm winter Saturday afternoon or evening during the week, come sit in the Sant Bani section of the bleachers at one of the many games our basketball teams have. Schedules are available on the school web site.

Sant Bani has three basketball teams: the 7-12 boys team, the middle school girls team and the high school girls team.

The boys team is in its second year, and according to boys coach and Athletic Director Chris Demian, the boys are picking up right where they left off last season. Led by a strong pack of juniors, the team will build on skills learned last season.

All teams could be seen at recess throughout the fall practicing layups and shooting on the new outside basketball court. In fact, up until the day before the first big snowfall high school girls and boys practiced there together.

Both the middle school and high school girls teams have been in existence for a number of years. The high school team has a depth of experienced players, from its three seniors to incoming freshmen who have played throughout middle school.

The middle school girls team, though small, has experience and determination, from its new sixth graders to eighth grade veterans.

Come experience the fun and excitement at an upcoming game!

Fifth Grade Donates Food to 94.1 FM Cash-N-Cans Drive

Throughout the end of November and into the first weeks of December fifth grade pairs of students took turns making what became a familiar announcement:

"Hey Brennan!" or, "Hey Ivy! Have you heard about the fifth grade food drive for cans and other vegetarian nonperishable food?"

"No."

"Well, bring in some food to put in one of the donation boxes all over school to help support food pantries this holiday season."

And the announcements worked; the fifth grade's decorated donation boxes filled up and on December 15 local radio celebrity, Fred Caruso of 94.1 FM, came to Sant Bani to pick up the boxes of food and meet students.

The fifth grade has done this service for many years now and each year students learn what it feels like to work to help others less fortunate in their own community.

The 94.1 FM radio station puts on the Cash-N-Cans drive every year. Canned goods and cash donated are distributed by this program to the Twin Rivers Interfaith Food Pantry, the Tilton/Northfield/Sanbornton Christmas Fund, the Santa Fund, Bread & Roses Soup Kitchen, Franklin and Belmont Police Toys for Tots programs and the Community Action Program.

The fifth grade thanks Sant Bani families for their many donations. Five large boxes of food were collected.

Ski and Snowboard Club Reminders

DATES: January 8, 15, 22, 29; February 5

TIME: Friday afternoons
leaving school at 12:00;
finished at Gunstock at 4:30

Each ticket each week will be valid from open to close on the day it is issued.

TRANSPORTATION: Grades K and 1: parent(s)
Grade 2: teacher's car or parent
Grades 3-12: school bus

Questions? Call Anne Dancewicz Helmers

A Teacher Learning

Sant Bani teachers continue to develop their practice by learning in and out of the classroom. This impacts their teaching and children's learning at Sant Bani School.

In November Karen Gregg attended the Learning and the Brain Conference "Enhancing Memory and Performance in This Distracting Digital Age."

She attended fifteen lectures by well-known neuroscientists and educators during the three-day period and came away with a huge amount of information on many varied topics.

Some of these included sleep studies and the importance of sleep for learning; memory formation and how to enhance working memory; digital brains and memory; poverty and adversity effects on early brain development; the evolving reading brain; developing executive functioning skills; epi-genetics; and dealing with an overbooked, overstretched, distracted life.

Some of her favorite presenters

included Maryann Wolf, the developer of the RAVO reading program; Charles Nelson of Harvard and Martha Farah of Penn State.

"There is certainly some interesting new research going on that has many classroom implications," Karen explains. "One theme that seemed to keep coming up was the need both physiologically and emotionally for quiet time and contemplation in all of our lives. Another theme was the need for interpersonal interactions and social and emotional learning—two areas in which Sant Bani really gives a strong foundation. It was incredibly interesting."

Karen came away with many articles for further study and will share information with the rest of the staff during weekly staff meetings.

Sant Bani Then and Now: Art Blocks

Reflections on Sant Bani School a Generation Later

by Jyoti Demian

Every day as a teacher at my alma mater, Sant Bani School, which I attended from kindergarten through grade twelve, my own memories of being a student here inevitably come up. This column is devoted to examining aspects of the Sant Bani School day as it was when I attended, from 1980 until 1993, and how it is now, as I teach here and my children attend.

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Art Blocks: a phrase in my lexicon as long as I can remember, although to those new to the school the term sometimes needs to be clarified.

My earliest memory of Art Blocks is Bees and Seeds with Robert (then known as Bob) in second grade. I remember standing in a crowd of students around four bee hives as Robert pumped smoke around us and bees swarmed. No one was stung and we always finished the day with a slab of mouth-watering fresh honeycomb. I still remember the wildflower names I learned, especially aster, since the Art Block took place in the early fall.

I remember well ceramics, stained glass, block printing and embroidery Art Blocks. I especially enjoyed weaving Art Blocks in middle and high school, as did many students in my class. We all headed to the Bicknell's living or dining room, then sometimes used as classroom space.

Karen usually played classical music as we warped and wove complex plaid wool scarves and luxurious chenille scarves. I first heard the "Pachabel Canon" as I

wove alongside other seventh and eighth graders sitting beside a fire.

One of my favorite Art Blocks was another offered in middle school by Karen Bicknell, Fabric-Covered Boxes. We met in the large, open room in the Upper Building library, now part of the third grade classroom.

This is the same Art Block I decided to run first as a teacher at Sant Bani. My mother still has the padded calico boxes I made as a student here, so I looked them over, remembered the process and gathered materials for the first day.

Students ranged from third to tenth grade, but the younger ones were quite dextrous and the older ones were always willing to help them when they needed a knot made or batting pieces cut.

The process was a long one for many, with most students only finishing two boxes. First they had to measure twelve squares of matboard using centimeters, mark the cutting marks precisely and then cut out the pieces. Students chose fabric for the outside and inside of the box and then they cut thick pieces of batting to pad the outside of the box and the inside top and bottom. They got very messy in the gluing stage

of the project, and many learned from experience with the first box not to use too much glue because sewing through fabric covered in dried glue is difficult and can be dangerous without a thimble!

The final stage honed everyone's overlap stitch since students had to sew four sides of the box, the bottom and one side of the lid. There were tangled threads and struggles threading needles, but lots of lessons were learned that helped children avoid making the same mistakes on the second box.

It was great to see students making new and independent design decisions on their second and third boxes. Josie fabricated a triangle-shaped box. Kirpal created a round box. Sohani went small and shallow with her second box, while Samira and Emma went big to get the size sewing box they wanted. Samira taught Ivy and others how to replicate the intricate beadwork she sewed on the top of her first box, as well as how to make tiny and elaborate multi-looped bows as decoration.

I learned that Art Blocks now are very similar to how they were when I was a student at Sant Bani; students of a wide age range work side by side with the same or similar project goals. And my favorite part of Art Blocks remains the same; as students of many ages work they converse on all sorts of topics, from music to politics to religion. It was a privilege to have a new role in this Sant Bani tradition.

