



Besant Hill School Parents' Newsletter

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2

JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2010

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

BHS Winter Concert	2-3
Crisis in Haiti Vintage Recipe	4
"Sustaining Sustainability"- 'Schools Going Green Conference'	6-8
BHS Outdoor Education Program	9
Besant Hill Radio BHS Yard Sale Spanish Tips	10
Second Annual Actors' Festival	11
Seniors' Page	12
College Prep	13
Staff / Faculty Highlights	14-15
Admissions Office News BHS at Martin Luther King Celebration	16
BHS Calendar of Events	17
BHS Sports Scores Sports Calendar	18
Department Wish Lists Contact Information	19

Message from our Head of School

It is difficult to start in the middle. However, that is exactly where many of our families are who have not been here the past four years. As I got to thinking about this it seemed like a good time to look back on the previous four years and summarize how we got here today, our school, our programs, our mission.

To get the total experience I include the original Statement of Purpose from the Happy Valley Foundation Board circa 1946.

"The school is a project of the Happy Valley Foundation, which was established by Dr. Annie Besant in 1927 for educational purposes. Dr. Besant envisioned a school that would be concerned with the advancement of the fellowship of man and the rights and dignity of the individual. She envisioned a non-sectarian, coeducational boarding school offering a full academic program for grades seven through twelve with a variety of cultural courses and activities. In addition to the college-preparatory academic subjects, the curriculum should include drama and speech, music, dance, art and sports."

Over the past sixty plus years the school has undergone several major shifts, including the move to the Upper Valley from Oak Grove in the 1970s to the name change from Happy Valley School to Besant Hill School of Happy Valley in 2007.

Several months before my arrival in July of 2006, the Western Association of Schools and Colleges conducted its accreditation review of the school.

That process included a year long self study by the school and a visit from several school professionals to assess the accreditation standards. The results of that process earned the

school probationary status with a three-year accreditation as opposed to the normal six-year. Key recommendations needed to be addressed during those three years in the several areas, including:

- Creation of a school wide Strategic Plan.
- Strengthen and expand board membership and relationships with the school.
- Recruit to a more diverse international population.
- Increase students of color on campus.
- Create a marketing plan to expand the profile of students to include more well-rounded scholars with diverse interests.
- Increase ancillary and tuition revenues to balance the operating budget of the school and increase financial aid.
- Create systems and protocols to ensure fiscal stability and integrity.

Essentially the findings indicated a school experiencing difficulty. Enrollment had flattened out at 70 students. The school was operating with a significant deficit. Attrition was over 40%. The campus facilities were old, worn down and had an estimated **\$2,000,000** in deferred maintenance. In my first candidate meeting with the Board of Trustees, the message that kept ringing in my ears as I considered the position was, "we are a boat on the ocean. We have no rudder – but we have heart."

When I accepted the position of head of school in 2006 the school was going through a major transition due to a number of variables. At that time I met with or communicated with more than 300 school-wide constituents and asked them a series of essential questions. They included: *How would you describe the school to a prospective family? What are the key opportunities and challenges facing the school? What are the most important characteristics to hold on to in the school? What would you change about the school? What advice can you give me as I begin this position?*

(Continued on page 5)





BHS Winter Concert—Friday, December 11, 2009



Photos by
Marie Samson



BHS Winter
Concert
Friday
December 11
2009





Vintage Recipes

The following story and recipe were submitted by Radha Sloss. Radha's mother, Rosalind Rajagopal, was one of the original founders and longtime Headmistress of Happy Valley School.

CURRIED CABBAGE & GORE

The Story:

This recipe was created by the famous Austrian movie director, Max Reinhardt, who came to America in the thirties. It was passed on to Iris Tree of the Ojai Chekhov players, who passed it on to Rosalind and hence to me.

About 15 years ago Jimmy and I were asked by the UCSB English Department to host a dinner for visiting lecturer, Gore Vidal, since we had a new large enough dining room. I was assured that all food would be provided and, in accord with our custom, would be vegetarian -- all I'd have to do was set the table. At eight AM on the day in question I received a frantic phone call from the "provider" who proclaimed she was ill and there was no one else available to "help out - actually could I please take on the whole thing."

Having made the dinner preparations, I managed to get to Vidal's lecture, just a few moments late - in time to hear, as I crept to my seat, "the only thing I dislike more is a vegetarian meal." The subject of this talk was the importance of a Constitutional Convention but I was too distraught at that point to inquire what his other dislike was.

Later, at the dinner table he commented on the cabbage casserole:

"Absolutely delicious," he said, "Is it chicken?" "No," I said, and left it at that.

BHS Kids Join Hands for Haiti

Tate's brother, Reed Lindsay, is covering the crisis in Haiti for Telesur TV (out of South America). At last Friday's Assembly, the kids were mesmerized by Reed's reports and a more intimate look at the aftermath of the massive earthquake. They have started a collection of moneys among themselves to donate to the Honor and Respect Foundation (www.hrfhaiti.org), a small, registered, non-profit NGO that Reed helped to launch 4 years ago, which is committed to helping empower Haitians, giving them the opportunity to help themselves.

At this time, we are the ones with the opportunity to bring aid, relief and some hope to a people and a country devastated. Students were moved by the up-close look at our close neighbors.

Barbi Reed, Tate's and Reed's mother, will continue to give weekly updates to the students, bringing them information that is not seen on television.



Curried Cabbage

Ingredients:

- 1 medium red cabbage
- 3 large leeks
- 1 package cream cheese
- 1 cup low fat sour cream
- Curry powder
- Salt (optional)
- Parmesan cheese, grated (Parmigiano Reggiano)

Remove tough outer leaves of cabbage and core. Chop into 1 inch pieces. Steam until barely tender. Drain well. Remove most of green from leeks. Slice to match cabbage. Braise on medium heat in butter or canola oil until soft. Add curry powder to taste 1-2 heaping tablespoons depending on brand and spice tolerance. (Get it right the first time, this can't be adjusted later.) Cook/Stir for two minutes. Don't over brown. Blend in cream cheese and sour cream. Combine with cabbage and transfer to large shallow baking dish. Cover with layer of parmesan. Bake until bubbly and cheese slightly browned in pre-heated 350° oven (about half an hour) just before serving.

(May be prepared and refrigerated in advance or kept in deep freeze.)

Serve with brown basmati rice and fresh peas simmered in mint leaves.



(Continued from page 1)

This approach was not only a vehicle for understanding the school but also for shaping it. This approach allowed for an intentional response system back to the community on what I had learned and for testing their and my emerging feelings, thoughts and actions. Ultimately the outcomes of that exercise led to a core group of alumni, parents, staff and students that worked for a year in the creation of our board adopted strategic plan.

The Strategic Plan created a clearly articulated, shared vision for the school; an agreed on common language and a systematic planning process -- one which informs the head's, board's and budget's annual priorities, and ultimately, forms the foundation for the school's programs, capital needs and accompanying financial long range plan. Our plan also represents a new and also a renewed commitment to a continuous process of institutional and individual reflection and inquiry against the social and cultural climate of the next fifteen years.

The Strategic Plan -- *Bridges: Building Our Future On the Foundation of Our Past*, now in its second full year of operation, is our guide, our map. Everything we do and have put in place has been intentionally designed from the mission of the previous 64 years, along with the outcomes of a strategic planning process articulated in the board-adopted S.P. Brochure (available on our website).



Since the release of the strategic plan two years ago, the following significant events in the life of the school have occurred:

- ◆ In July of 2007, The Happy Valley Foundation Board voted to change the name of the school to Besant Hill School of Happy Valley, honoring visionary founder Annie Besant who purchased the land in 1927.
- ◆ In July of 2006 the school had 54 students enrolled. Since that time the **school's enrollment has increased to 107 students, the maximum enrollment possible.**
- ◆ The Head of School and Business Manager created a Financial Model that focused on an increase in tuition and ancillary revenue streams, resulting in asset allocation, deferred maintenance and facility improvements of more than \$1.7 million dollars to the campus.
- ◆ The school and board completed a capital drive to complete the campaign to renovate and resource the Zalk Theater, build the Beato Atelier Art Studio, built four green, state of the art music practice rooms, renovations to four faculty houses and the securing of funds of **\$300,000** to build a pool.

And new programs and activities in the following areas:

Film Program

Radio Station

Experiential Learning -- out of the classroom learning where kids provide service to and benefit from domestic and international cultures, including programs in Egypt, Italy, Mexico, New Orleans, San Francisco to name several.

Instructional Support Program -- A strategy based academic service program for students with learning differences and /or academic bolstering.

School Wide Sustainability Program -- The creation of a school wide plan for a laboratory of learning on the land to ensure that students learn best practices for sustainability so they know and understand their responsibility to the planet and world around them.

Professional Development for Faculty -- Best practice instruction for our **faculty to provide the tools to meet the needs of today's students.**

Signature athletic program in one sport without compromise to the no cut policy.

The Besant Hill Guest Artist Series

The Locavore Commitment -- buying our food products from local resources or from our four acre farm on campus.

Most of our constituents have heard me say that this place called to me. Thankfully it called to many others before my arrival during this three and a half year period.

Our goal remains to be a school that serves a heterogeneous population of students with diverse learning backgrounds and interests. We follow the lead of our founders and operate a school that melds vigorous college prep academics with programs that advance the fellowship of man. The mission, the programs and the curriculum have been intentionally planned out to teach students what they need to know to be successful at their next stop in college. In addition, and of equal importance, we believe more than ever that right brain (creative) thinking skills often lost in formal schooling, is **essential and integral to the success of tomorrow's leaders.** Creative Expression in the classroom, on the stage, in community and on the playing field is the cornerstone of all that we do.

The reality is that educators today are asked and expected to do more. Independent Education is a choice -- families choose us and we choose the type of students that we believe will take advantage of our programs and are responsible to the greater community. What we do each day is to honor **Annie Besant's vision and honor the individual and create opportunities** where students can be themselves and celebrated and give them opportunities to explore their passions and interests and FEEL proud of their accomplishments.

In spite of all that we have done in 64 years, we are still a school in **evolution.** **If you imagine the school as the alphabet, we are at letter N...** we have a long way to go. We hope for your partnership and support.

We deeply appreciate that you entrust your young person to us each day. We are grateful for your ideas and suggestions and look forward to our future together in service to young people.

Peace,

Paul



“Sustaining Sustainability”

SECOND REGIONAL SCHOOLS GOING GREEN CONFERENCE

The Second Regional Schools Going Green conference, hosted by Besant Hill School on Saturday, January 23rd was a success and had the support from nearly all of our participating schools. As we expected, we had a full house, and then some.



The fundamental intention behind this regional conference was to provide a framework for our environmentally aware and active students and faculty to gather together to share and appreciate our diverse sustainability programs and approaches, to enhance the spirit of collaborative effort, and to offer an opportunity for our attendees to hear and meet some of the resources from the greater community that are actively working to inspire and generate sustainable solutions.

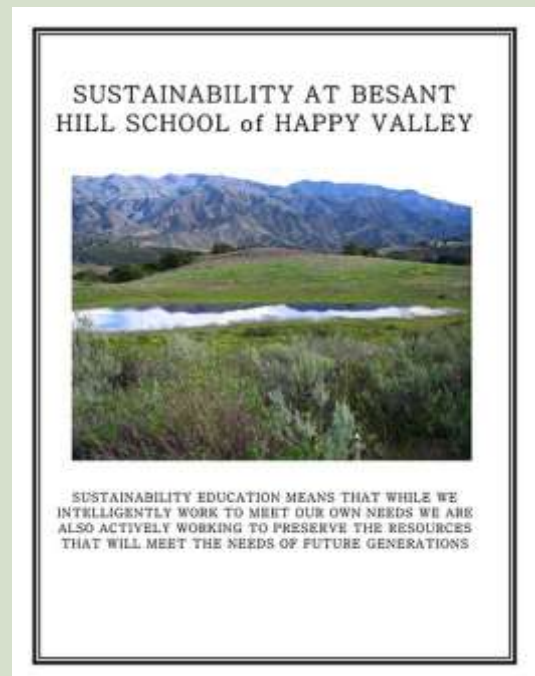
As the conference host, we proposed the theme of “Sustaining Sustainability” for this conference. We invited member schools to use this as an opportunity to celebrate our successes, as well as reflect on the areas of sustainability programming that have been challenging for us.

The conference began at 9 a.m. and, after a full day of Keynote Presentations and Breakout Sessions wrapped up around 4 p.m. For more details on the schedule for the day please refer to the Presenter and Presentation Details on the following pages.

APPLYING SUSTAINABLE TECHNOLOGY AT BHS: NEW INNOVATIONS AND THE FEBRUARY GREEN CUP CHALLENGE

Our school had every reason to celebrate the integration of two new innovations into our facilities designed to conserve energy and reduce our impact on water resources.

- **BHS restrooms now sport some of the latest technology in the form of “waterless urinals.”** Each of these devices has been shown to reduce water consumption by 40,000 gallons. The six that we have installed at Besant Hill School will conserve our fresh water for more appropriate uses by 240,000 gallons each year.
- In the next week we expect the installation of a 1.4-kilowatt solar array on the Zalk Theater. This system is designed to meet the additional needs of our new music studios, but will also supplement the energy needs of our theater when our music studios are not being used. The system also includes an online service that will allow students to monitor the effectiveness of the solar array in “real time.”
- **THE GREEN CUP CHALLENGE** is a yearly sustainability competition event in February sponsored by the Green Schools Alliance. As a charter member of the Green Schools Alliance, this will be the second year that we have joined other members of the Alliance in the challenge to quantifiably reduce our energy consumption as a school throughout the month of February: The school that demonstrates the highest rate of reduction receives the coveted Green Cup for the 2010 year. With very little effort last year we measured a 5% reduction of energy in February, and we are hoping to double that this year. Energy savings translates into less money spent to meet the electrical needs of the school. Alex, in the Business Office, has agreed to apply any savings from the Green Cup Challenge effort to the Student Body Fund.



“Sustaining Sustainability”

SECOND REGIONAL SCHOOLS GOING GREEN CONFERENCE

Presenters and Presentations

Morning Keynote Presentations:

9 a.m. - 11 a.m.

Julie Tumamait is well known in this region as a Chumash Elder and as a keeper and teacher of traditional Chumash wisdom and culture. We asked Julie to share some of the fundamental principles of sustainability and relationships that are embedded in her culture.



Karen Brown, the Creative Director for the Center for Ecoliteracy, gave us a glimpse of the Center’s most recent publication, *Smart by Nature*. The Center for Ecoliteracy, co-founded by Frijof Capra, Zenobia Barlow, and Peter Buckley, is a resource dedicated to the support of education for sustainable living. *Smart by Nature* is a well-organized case study exploration of the emerging culture of sustainability education in a number of different schools... programs that in many cases are driven by students and involved community members.



Midland School received one of this year’s **Governors Awards for Environmental and Economic Leadership**. In the spirit of appreciation for the fine work being done by schools in our own region we invited Head of School, Will Graham and Director of Environmental Programs, Lise Goddard to share Midland’s journey toward cultivating a culture of sustainability at their school.



(Continued on page 8)



Green Tips

By
Todd Cossairt



In 2004 consumers spent around 40 billion dollars to purchase 28 billion plastic bottles of water worldwide. Seventeen million gallons of oil was used to produce these plastic bottles, enough oil to fuel 100,000 cars for one year, and enough oil to release 2.5 million tons of carbon dioxide into our atmosphere. Unfortunately most of these plastic bottles, approximately 86% of them, ended up in our garbage: statistically 1,500 plastic bottles went into the landfills every second in 2004.

Source: Earth Policy Institute
Earth911.com

See next page for more
Presenters and Presentations →

(Continued from page 7)

After Lunch Keynote Presentation: 1:30 p.m. - 2:15 p.m.

Paul Jenkin is the Environmental Director of the Ventura Chapter of the Surfrider Foundation. Paul has been active in watershed education, conservation, and restoration with a particular emphasis on the Ventura River Watershed. Paul is co-producer of a new watershed awareness documentary, *Watershed Revolution*. We had the opportunity to view Paul's documentary and discuss the importance of understanding our watersheds.

Breakout Sessions: 11:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Morning and afternoon breakouts were repeated to offer us the opportunity to participate in at least two of the breakout sessions.

Tom Bostrum is a landscape architect, arborist, and president of Ojai Trees, an organization dedicated to cultivating sustainability through the cultivation of community forests. We invited Tom to speak in the morning session about the relationship between the cultivation of healthy community and the cultivation of community forests in urban planning.

The Green Cup Challenge Kickoff was a special breakout in the afternoon session. This is the second year that West Coast independent schools joined East Coast independent schools in the competition to determine how much we can quantifiably reduce our energy consumption in the month of February. The school that can demonstrate the greatest percent of reduction will hold the coveted Green Cup for 2010. This is competitive sustainability at its best, and a lot of fun for participating schools!

Marleen Luckman & Lori Hamor are active in the green schools movement as a part of the local organization, Food for Thought. Food for Thought has successfully collaborated with their public school district to introduce waste reduction policies, local food resources, school gardens, and green procurement policies. We invited Marleen and Lori to share the practical resources and strategies they have used to cultivate green practices in the Ojai Unified School District.

Sean Jacobson is an active advocate for sustainability education in schools. Most recently employed by REC Solar (the solar company that installed Athenian School's energy system), we invited Sean to speak on practical renewable energy options for schools and the way energy systems can be integrated into our educational frameworks.

Van Vermeesch is a part of Aqua-Flo Supply's new Environmental Solutions division. Van is active in working with schools toward the integration of efficient water conservation and management systems. We invited Van to demonstrate the new generation of systems designed to catch and store rainwater for irrigation use, as well as to share new applications for efficient water use.

Peter Wilsrup is a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farmer cultivating food crops on the Besant Hill School land. Peter has been organic farming using the CSA model for many years and provides produce for our school as well as for the larger community. Peter was available for discussion and tours of the CSA farm at Besant Hill School.

Self-Guided Exhibits

A few exhibits were available on campus for participants to visit at their convenience:

Mobile Solar Roller:

A small off-grid trailer that can be used as a mobile power source and educational tool.

Composting Dining Waste:

A self-guided tour of Besant Hill School's food composting operation.

Rainwater Collection Systems:

An exhibit from the Australian company that makes specialized rainwater storage tanks and rainwater collection accessories.



BHS Outdoor Education Program Upcoming Spring Trips

February 26-28

Ski and Snowboard Trip to Mt. Baldy

March 5-7

Rock Climbing Trip to Joshua Tree

April 23-25

Rock Climbing Trip to Joshua Tree

More Information On These Trips To Follow!!!



Besant Hill School Outdoor Education Program Partners with Real Cheap Sports

NEW THIS YEAR!!! The Outdoor Education Program at Besant Hill School has partnered with *Real Cheap Sports*, a local outdoor gear store in Ventura, to make it convenient and affordable for students and families to ensure that they are buying quality gear for Fall Trips. *Real Cheap Sports* is offering all Besant Hill School students and families a 10% discount on all items in the store and on their website. *Real Cheap Sports* will donate an additional 10% of all Besant Hill School sales to the Outdoor Education Program, which will be used for student scholarships for our Weekend Trips Program. We are so excited about this opportunity to work with *Real Cheap Sports* and are so grateful for their support of the Outdoor Education Program at Besant Hill School.

For more information, checkout:

www.realcheapsports.com

This Fall
REAL CHEAP SPORTS
donated over \$2,000
to the BHS

Outdoor Education Program.

This money will help fund scholarships for students to go on trips to the Channel Islands and Joshua Tree!

Thank you
REAL CHEAP SPORTS!!!

Happy Birthday To....

Theresia Gottwald
January 7

Tim Park
January 9

Aaron Bennett
January 13

Shelly Bai
January 15

Jonas Lee
January 18

Tate Reed-Mc. Dorman
January 20

Jennifer Hu
January 25

Jackson Diehl
January 27

Lingjie Huang
February 3

Matthew Cornwell
February 6

Mika Hua
February 24

François Tchoyi
February 24

Yifan Wang
February 26



Besant Hill Radio

We're pleased to announce Besant Hill Radio, a new student-run Internet radio station that will broadcast music, talk, interviews, classroom activities, sports, and special events. We are just now starting to build our programming, so there are still a lot of unscheduled times, in which we will just play random music from our (growing) music library. Soon, we hope to also add an FM broadcast for the Ojai area. To tune in, visit <http://radio.besanthill.org> — There you will find listening instructions and the schedule. You can also tune in using your Smartphone so you do not have to be tethered to your computer.

BHS Family Yard Sale

As we mentioned in our December issue, we are considering having a multi-family yard sale this spring. Since this is our first one, we would like to know how many families are interested in contributing items to this fundraising sale. Please email Donita (dcoburn@besanthill.org) or Luisa (lineher@bak.rr.com) and tell us what items (and how many) you are thinking of donating.

We are looking for:

- furniture
- household items
- clothes and accessories
- sports equipment / bicycles
- toys / baby items
- stereo/video/computer equipment
- artwork and decorative items
- other (tell us what)

Look for more information in our next issue.

SPANISH TIPS

Learning Spanish?

You can learn over 3,000 words instantly when you learn how to recognize Spanish words that have the same Latin roots as their English cousins. Once you are familiar with the patterns, you will be able to distinguish them in a flash.

Most English words that end with IC can be made into Spanish by changing IC to ICO.
Example: plastic-plástico, traffic-tráfico, tropic-tropical, romantic-romántico

Most English words that end with TION can be made into Spanish by changing TION to CIÓN.
Example: nation-nación, reservation-reservación, celebration-celebración

Most English words that end with ATE can be made into Spanish by changing ATE to AR.
Example: tolerate-tolerar, create-crear, separate-separar, decorate-decorar

Almost all English words that end with AL will stay the same in Spanish.
Example: universal-universal, natural-natural, local-local, animal-animal

Almost all English words that end with LY can be made into Spanish by changing LY to MENTE.
Example: naturally-naturalmente, personally-personalmente, rapidly-rápidamente

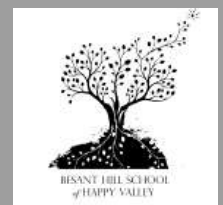
Almost all English words that end with TY can be made into Spanish by changing TY to DAD.
Example: reality-realidad, vanity-vanidad, variety-variedad, reality-realidad

Almost all English words that end with IST can be made into Spanish by changing IST to ISTA.
Example: dentist-dentista, optimist-optimista, pessimist-pesimista

Enjoy Your Learning!!!
Néstor Gerónimo

*Spanish Instructor
Head of Language Department*

Aun Aprendo - I am still learning





**Don't miss
The Second Annual Actors' Festival
Zalk Theater at Besant Hill School
January 30th, 2010**

Register at: <http://theactorsfestival.com/>

With the wonderful success of last year's festival, we've been able to expand our program to include even more for the theater students of Ventura County. This year, students will have the opportunity to perform for one another and professionals in the industry in a variety of formats. Also, several seminars have been added to the program, including talk-backs with casting directors, professional actors, photographers, college reps and others that will allow your students an opportunity to gain first hand knowledge on pursuing higher education or a career in the entertainment industry.

Participation is limited to 200 students so please have your students register early.

For more details visit our website at <http://theactorsfestival.com/>.



The mission of the Actors' Festival is to celebrate the talents of high school theatre students throughout Ventura County and provide them with educational and inspirational support in a one day festival. The festival is dedicated to providing this opportunity to all students, regardless of race, ethnicity or socioeconomic backgrounds. We are intent on bringing this opportunity to students with less access through scholarships. No one will be denied an opportunity to register due to lack of funds.

*The festival provides students access to representatives from colleges, universities, professional theaters, and industry professionals, from which they can gain knowledge in determining their next step in education and professional training. **The Actors' Festival also gives students professional feedback on audition and interviewing skills needed for advancement in higher education and professional work. Most importantly, we encourage all participants to work together to develop social and educational ties that will strengthen their relationships within their community and beyond.** <http://theactorsfestival.com/>*



SENIORS

SENIOR CAPSTONE PROGRAM

As the Capstone Program gears up this spring, we are actively looking for community partners. Ideally, our seniors will have an opportunity to work closely with/ shadow/learn from individuals who are experienced in their fields. For two weeks in May, students will be matched with someone who can help them develop their passions and interests. To this end, I would like to ask the community for support and suggestions. Below is a list of interests currently being explored in the capstone projects. If anyone is interested in this project or sees a possible match, he/she can contact me, Peter Mantius, at:

pmantius@besanthill.org.

Music creation and production

Visual arts

Drama, direction and production

Film, writing and directing

Animation

Community development

Non-profit development

Fashion

Costume design

Graphic design

Small business development

Finance

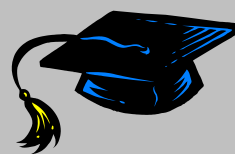
Environmental issues

Writing

Cooking

Peter Mantius

Director of Capstone



CONGRATULATIONS!!!

To the Following Seniors for their College Acceptances

Yannick Atanga
Santa Clara University

Kason Chen
Pitzer College

Griffin Davis
San Francisco Art Institute

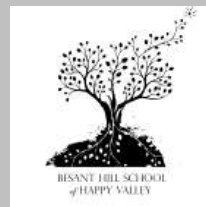
Rick Meredith
University of Northern Colorado
Fort Lewis College

Georgia Metz
Savannah College of Art and Design

Tate Reed
University of Northern Colorado

Ariane Merkel
Johnson State College

We are so proud of all of you!
We will keep our list going as more and more of you
receive your acceptances!



COLLEGE PREP

SAT and ACT TEST PREPARATION

BHS will be partnering with Revolution Test Prep company for two exciting opportunities. Parents and students should expect an email and a letter home. On February 13 and February 20, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., BHS will host Revolution, offering Mock Exams with a Mock SAT on the first Saturday, and a Mock ACT on the second Saturday. Each test will be scored as if it were the actual exam so students will have an opportunity to realistically compare both exams and determine whether one is a better match for their unique test taking abilities. The Mock Exams are a fundraiser for BHS Student Government and the cost is \$10 per student per test.

Additionally, BHS will host Revolution's Group SAT Test Prep Course. This group class will run for six consecutive Saturdays and Sundays from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and will begin Saturday March 6, and will resume when we return from break. The classes culminate with students taking the actual SAT Exam offered on Saturday, May 1. This group course costs \$500 per student and Revolution Test Prep does offer financial assistance to those who need it.

Additional information and registration will follow soon from Revolution Test Prep.

SAT and ACT Test Dates and Registration Deadlines Through June 2010

Test	Registration Deadline	Late Registration Deadline	Test Date
SAT	Passed	Passed	January 23
SAT	February 4	February 18	March 13
ACT	March 5	March 19	April 10
SAT	March 25	April 8	May 1
SAT	April 29	May 13	June 5
ACT	May 7	May 21	June 12

To register for tests go to: <http://collegeboard.com/> (SAT)
<http://actstudent.org> (ACT)

Congratulations to

Ana Ming Bostwick-Singer

Ana was accepted to the Middlebury-Monterey Language Academy in Vermont for the summer of 2010. She will be spending four weeks in their highly competitive Chinese Language Immersion Program.



Staff / Faculty Highlights



Alexis Spina

***Physics and Chemistry Teacher,
EOS Dorm Parent and Weight Training Instructor***

Where were you born?
New York, NY.

Where were you before coming to BHS?

I was at the University of Delaware finishing my Master's in Secondary Science Education.

Where did you go to school? What was your major in college?

I went to the University of Delaware and received my BA in physics education. I decided to stay at UD to receive my master's which I finished in May 2009.

How/when did you first hear about Besant Hill School?

Last February I attended a conference in Chicago in hopes of finding a job. While I was there, I received a call from Kim Reichenbach, who asked me to interview with BHS. I did, and I was invited to come see the school last April. I was blown away by everything and everyone and the rest is history.

Alexis's advice to BHS students:
"Imagination is more important than knowledge"
Albert Einstein

How long have you been working at BHS?

This is my first year at BHS.

Tell us the ONE thing you like best about BHS.

As much as the students can be themselves and pursue their strengths and interests, so can the teachers. I am encouraged to express and implement everything I have learned in graduate school and all the things I hold a passion for.

What do you want to accomplish at BHS? What is your mission?

I want every student to realize that he or she has the capability to do well in science and math. You don't need to be a genius to succeed, you just need to open your mind and know when to ask for help. I also want students to realize the importance and relevance of science and math in their everyday lives. If after my class my students forget how to calculate centripetal acceleration or what a mole is, I won't be disappointed. My mission is to teach them how to think like scientists and apply this critical thinking to whatever problems they may encounter in their lives.

Who is someone you admire? Why?

I admire every female who decided to pursue a career in science or math even when they were told that odds were they couldn't make it. Oh, and Albert Einstein of course.

What would you like to see the school accomplish in the future, short term or long term?

I would like to see the science department play a more active role, while the school still holds true to its basic principles and philosophies. There is always room to learn more and focus on different areas; you just have to be open minded.

Is there anything else you would like to mention?

I'm a big Star Wars nerd and I just got engaged.



Staff / Faculty Highlights

Kelly Henschel

***Director of Instructional Support,
Residential Life and Boy's Soccer Coach***

Where were you born?
San Carlos, CA.

Where were you before coming to BHS?
Before moving to Ojai, I taught 7th grade English, and was the AVID Coordinator for the school.

Where did you go to school? What was your major in college?
I went to a private high school in San Francisco, St. Ignatius. After graduating, I attend UC Davis, and received a Bachelor of Sciences in Human Development, and a minor in History. After Davis, I continued my education at San Francisco State, and earned a Teaching Credential in English.

How/when did you first hear about Besant Hill School?
I first heard about BHS when I met my now husband Kevin Henschel.

How long have you been teaching / working at BHS?
This is my first year on full time staff, but my second year working at BHS.

Tell me the ONE thing you like best about BHS.
The best part of BHS is the students. I love coming to work every day, being greeted by smiles and hellos, and working with such unique and individual students who accept people for who they are.

What do you want to accomplish at BHS? What is your mission?
My hope is to be a positive influence in the lives of the students.

Who is someone you admire? Why?
My mom is the most amazing woman I know. She is a special education teacher in the Bay Area, continues to play sports into her 50s, and has taught me more in life than any other person.



If there was one piece of advice Kelly would give students at BHS, it would be:

“Take advantage of the opportunities available to you. BHS offers more to students than I could have imagined possible. Take advantage of what the school offers you, the trips, the friendships, and the teaching staff.”



From the Admissions Office

BHS Admissions Open House

The Besant Hill School Open House was a huge success despite the weather! We had 19 families attending, totaling 50 people! Prospective students visiting came from Ojai, Ventura, Carpinteria, Altadena, Irvine, Beverly Hills, Los Angeles, San Luis Obispo, Auburn, Sebastopol, Oakland, Berkeley, Las Vegas & Korea. The families enjoyed a roundtable discussion with the administration, our all school morning assembly in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr., visits to some of our classes in session and a (wet) campus tour.

If you know anyone interested in attending BHS, please direct them to our office. We are available for tours anytime. The deadline to apply for the 2010 - 2011 school year is February 19, 2010.

RE-ENROLLMENT DEADLINE

Re-enrollment contracts for current students will be sent out by the end of January. The deadline to secure your space for next year is Friday, February 19th, 2010.

Welcome New BHS Students

10th Grade

Ailing Du
Zi Lin
Yang Long
Jordan Wrench
Wenchun Xiong
Kun Yang

11th Grade

Melvin Achalle
Ye Li
Elias Mordecai
Yingfu Zheng



Dan Grosbach, Zelda Grove, and Music Instructor Lee Rollag represented BHS at the

*9th annual Ojai
Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Community Celebration*
at Libby Park on January 19, 2010

They were joined by Ojai-based singer
Julie Christensen



BHS Calendar of Events

January / February 2010

JANUARY 2010

Friday, January 1
Happy New Year!

Monday, January 11
By 5:30 pm
Dorm Students Return

Tuesday, January 12
Classes Resume
Second Semester begins

Monday, January 18
9:00am—3:00 pm
Admissions Open House
BHS Campus

Saturday, January 23
8:00am—4:00 pm
Green Schools Alliance Conference
BHS Campus
(See pages 6-8 for details)

Saturday, January 30
The Actors' Festival
7:30am—9:00 pm
Zalk Theatre
(See page 11 for details.)

**MARK YOUR
CALENDAR!**

FEBRUARY 2010

Friday, February 5-
Monday, February 8
Mid-year Break
NO CLASSES

Friday, February 12
Asian Day Celebration
BHS Campus

Saturday, February 20
Sophomore Class Activity
1:00pm—7:00 pm

Sunday, February 21
100 Nights—Senior Class Only
Evening

Friday, February 24
Trip to the Getty Museum
Los Angeles, CA

Friday, February 26
Saturday, February 27
Sunday, February 28
Outdoor Education Trip to the
Sierras
7:30am—9:00 pm
Sierra Mountains
(Winter Hiking, Skiing or Snowboarding)

Our Annual
Spring Arts Festival
& Alumni Reunion
will be on
Saturday, April 17,
2010

BHS SPORTS SCORES**Dec 1, 2009—Jan 16, 2010**

BASKETBALL				
				Scores
Date	DAY	VS	BHS	Other
12/2	Wednesday	BHS vs New Roads (Santa Monica) BD Tournament	57	37
12/3	Thursday	BHS vs North Country Christian (Atascadero) BD Tourn.	62	27
12/4	Friday	BHS vs Bishop Diego (Santa Barbara) BD Tournament	60	46
12/5	Saturday	BHS vs Filmore (Filmore) BD Tournament	62	39
12/8	Tuesday	BHS vs Melbourne (Australia) Oak Park Tournament	75	69
12/9	Wednesday	BHS vs Oxnard (Oxnard) Oak Park Eagles Tournament	61	66
12/11	Friday	BHS vs Arshag Dickranian Armenian (LA) Oak Park Tourn.	77	61
12/12	Saturday	BHS vs Villanova School (Ojai) Oak Park Tournament	64	41
1/8	Friday	BHS vs Laguna Blanca School (Santa Barbara)	60	31
1/9	Saturday	BHS vs Midland School (Los Olivos)	75	38
1/13	Wednesday	BHS vs Dunn School (Los Olivos)	67	29
1/16	Saturday	BHS vs Midland School (Los Olivos)	79	52
GIRLS' SOCCER				
1/16	Saturday	BHS vs Ojai Valley School (Ojai)	1	5
BOYS' SOCCER				
12/5	Saturday	BHS vs Dunn School	2	2
12/9	Wednesday	BHS vs Anacapa School	3	2
1/13	Wednesday	BHS vs Midland School	2	1
1/16	Saturday	BHS vs Oak Grove School	3	2

BHS SPORTS SCHEDULE**JAN 20—FEB 13, 2010**

BASKETBALL				
Date	DAY	VS	Place	Time
1/20	Wednesday	Thacher School	Thacher	3:00PM
1/22	Friday	Cate School	Cate	4:30PM
1/23	Saturday	War on the Floor Tournament	TBA	TBA
1/30	Saturday	Laguna Blanca School	Bishop	7:00PM
2/3	Wednesday	Thacher School	Thacher	6:00PM
2/5	Friday	Ojai Valley School	Thacher	2:00PM
2/6	Saturday	Cate School	Thacher	7:00PM
2/10	Wednesday	Ojai Valley School (OVS Hosting)	Thacher	7:00PM
2/12	Friday	Bishop Diego School	Bishop	7:00PM
GIRLS' SOCCER				
Date	DAY	VS	Place	Time
1/20	Wednesday	Cate School	BHS	3:00PM
1/23	Saturday	Thacher School	BHS	2:00PM
1/27	Wednesday	Midland School	Midland	2:00PM
1/30	Saturday	Laguna Blanca School	LBS	2:00PM
2/3	Wednesday	Oak Grove School	OGS	3:00PM
2/10	Wednesday	Ojai Valley School	BHS	2:00PM
2/13	Saturday	Thacher School	Thacher	1:00PM
BOYS' SOCCER				
Date	DAY	VS	Place	Time
1/20	Wednesday	Thacher School	Thacher	3:00PM
1/23	Saturday	Ojai Valley School	BHS	3:30PM
1/27	Wednesday	Oak Grove School	OGS	3:00PM
1/30	Saturday	Laguna Blanca School	BHS	2:00PM
2/3	Wednesday	Midland School	BHS	3:00PM
2/6	Saturday	Ojai Valley School	OVS	3:30PM
2/10	Wednesday	Thacher School	BHS	3:30PM

Parent Liaison Committee

Luisa Neher (Alex '10)
lneher@bak.rr.com
 Barbi Reed (Tate '10)
barbi@annereedgallery.com
 Kim Maxwell (Lily Brown '11)
kim@kimmaxwellstudio.com
 Jennifer Jacobs (Megan '11)
jenniferjacobs01@msn.com
 Carolyn Olsen (Eric '12)
crolsen@sbcglobal.net
 Eugenia Bostwick-Singer (Ana '12)
ebsinger@mac.com
 Heide Boyden (Tanner '13)
ojaiboyden@earthlink.net

Newsletter Committee

Luisa Neher
lneher@bak.rr.com
 Brian Walton
bwalton@besanthill.org
 Donita Coburn-Amadio
dcoburn@besanthill.org

Look for the next issue of our BHS Parents Newsletter in late February

Besant Hill School
 8585 Ojai Santa Paula Road
 P.O. Box 850
 Ojai, CA 93023
 Tel: (805) 643 4343
 Fax: (805) 646 4371



BHS DEPARTMENT WISH LISTS

In this and future issues you will find Department Wish Lists. If you have any of the items listed, or know someone who does and would like to donate them, please contact the school; or, if you have similar items that you think the school could benefit from, please let them know.



ART DEPARTMENT WISH LIST

- Etching Press
- Artists' flat files



Music Department Wish List

The Music Department could use any instruments, for example:

- Guitars
- Keyboards
- Trumpets
- Violins
- Saxophones
- Flutes
- Instrument cables
- Microphones
- Old speakers
- PA equipment

Outdoor Education Department Wish List

We could use any outdoor gear (Kayaks, packs, sleeping bags, etc). And big on our wish list is if any families would be interested in donating money for a rock climbing wall!!!



Theatre Department Wish List

- ETC Express 48/96 Light Console
- ETC Source 4 Pars, Parnels or Ellipsoidals
- 2 12-Set Dimmer Packs
- Color Scrollers
- Pivoting Lights
- Lapel Microphones for Musicals
- High Quality Vocal Microphones for Concert
- High Quality Ambient Microphone for Concert Recording
- Bank of DMX Controlled Black Lights
- Surround Sound system
- Macintosh G-4 or greater for DMX/Video Control

