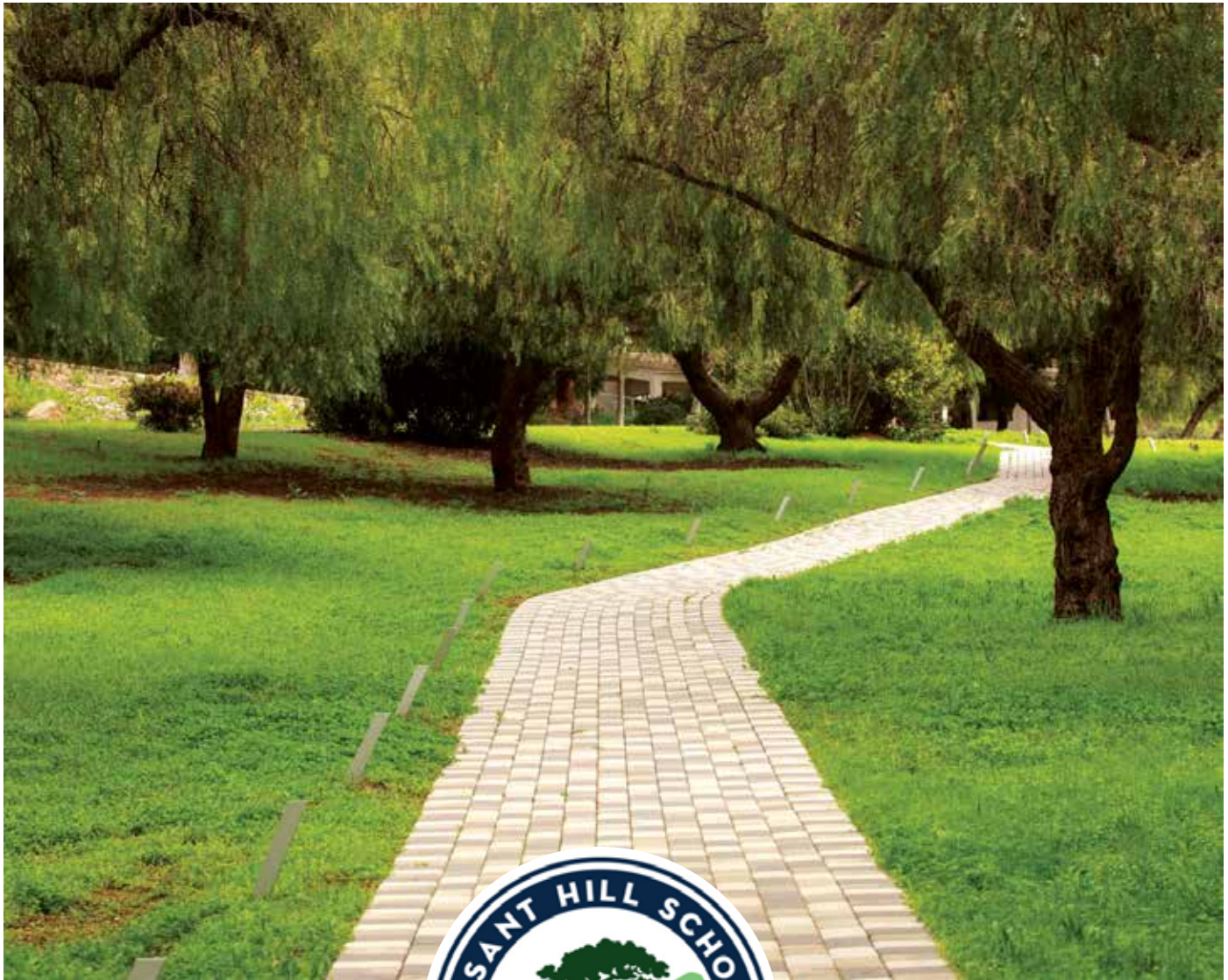


AÚN APRENDO

BESANT HILL SCHOOL OF HAPPY VALLEY





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Message from the Head of School

Besant Hill School of Happy Valley's 73rd school year has come to a close with the graduation of the class of 2019. It was an excellent year full of forward progress and activities that brought the community together. Additionally, it was a year of transition, as we completed the final year of our strategic plan and begin to launch a new plan which will look towards the next six years. It is an honor to know that I will be the Head of School as we move forward and continue to make positive change while keeping our core values intact. I would like to thank everyone for their support and kind wishes.



A group of 10 faculty and administrators have volunteered to be a part of our Strategic Planning Committee, and we have already begun our work by administering a SWOT to our internal and external community. The SWOT has asked all involved stakeholders to give us their feedback on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that we should consider in our coming work. We will work this summer to gather the feedback, find trends, and use this information to formulate the work ahead of us. It is our plan to present the finalized draft of our work in the fall. I would like to thank everyone who volunteered to be a part of this work over the summer and the greater community for their feedback and support.

I am excited to announce that we have two new community members that will be joining us as a part of the faculty next year. Anh-Dao Tran will be joining our Math and Science Department and comes to Besant Hill from Marianapolis Prep where she had been working as a teacher, dorm parent, and coach. She has extensive experience as a basketball player and coach and has her masters degree in public health. We are thrilled to have her join our community and bring her passion for athletics and learning to inspire our student body. Sam Yarabek will be joining our English department next year. He comes to us from Ross School, his alma mater, where he has been working as a literature and philosophy teacher. Sam received his masters from Columbia University's Teachers College and brings to our school his passion for literature, creative writing, and the outdoors.

We are so happy that current faculty member, Brian McColgan, will take on the directorship of the sustainability program full time next year. Brian has been a dedicated member of our school for the past eight years, and he brings enthusiasm and excitement for this important program. He has already hit the ground running and is working directly with the student body to build programs that inspire them to take care of the world and its future.

It is hard to believe that we are already hard at work preparing for the 2019-2020 school year, as it will be here before we know it. I hope you all have an amazing summer and look forward to next year and the learning and adventures that we will have. Thank you everyone for an amazing school year.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Portia".

Portia Johnson
Head of School

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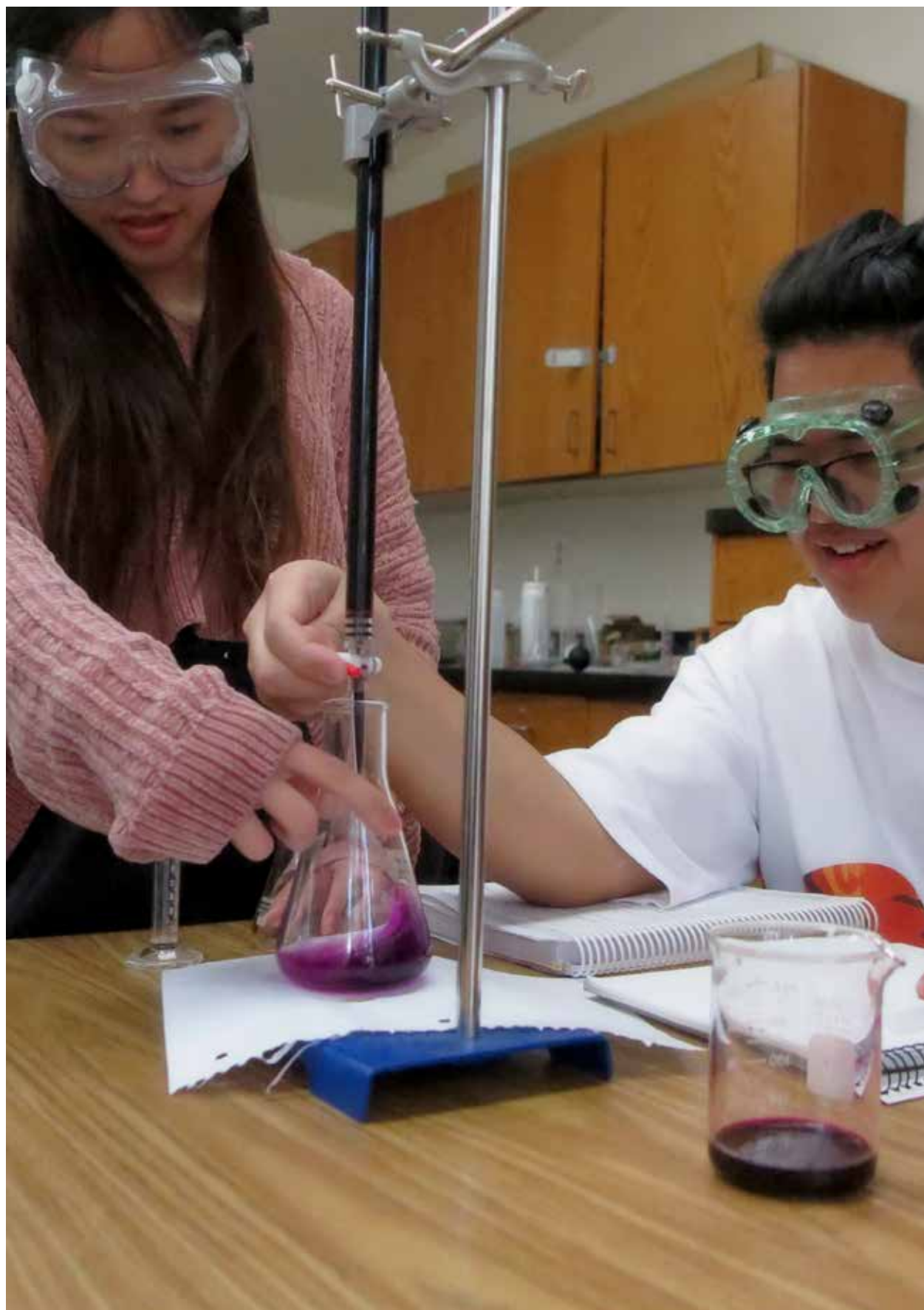
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SELENA N. '19, KUSILI '19 WORKING IN SCIENCE LAB



ELANA D. '19, PAT O. '21, HARKRISHAN K. '20

ACADEMICS

AUTHOR: PORTIA JOHNSON

Overall, we have had a very productive academic year. We have expanded partnerships with outside programs, had more presentations and master class workshops, enhanced our weekend activities offerings with more curricular tie-in, and introduced two all-school field trips. Our faculty are committed to bringing students amazing college preparatory academics in a multidimensional way that prepares them to be lifelong learners and critical thinkers. In examining the “World as our Classroom” initiative, we have decided to rename it our “Aun Aprendo” initiative as it honors our motto and will be unique to Besant Hill School and what our institution truly delivers to our student experience. The Aun Aprendo initiative will highlight many of the unique qualities of Besant Hill School and how we are able to do it better than institutions of larger size. For example, Besant Hill School’s ePortfolio program is an outstanding student experience that

simply can not be accomplished by schools of larger size. In fact, our ePortfolio program is so dynamic that Kelly Henschel and I presented on this topic at The Association of Boarding Schools conference last December. We will be returning to this conference next year to present on our unique classroom observation system and how we have been able to connect our weekend activities to our curriculum in a meaningful way. Our work is being recognized in the industry, and we are proud to be forerunners in the educational field as we develop unique programs that benefit our students in our intentionally small community. Our ePortfolio program, as part of the Aun Aprendo initiative, is a perfect example of why small is better! There is more to come as we expand this initiative in the coming years and continue to share with the larger community the excellent programmatic work that our students engage with on a daily basis.

HUMANITIES

ALL-SCHOOL EXCURSION

CINDERELLA

AUTHOR:
NÉSTOR GERÓNIMO

With the implementation of the “World as Our Classroom” initiative last year, on March 7, 2019, the entire Besant Hill community had the opportunity to attend a field trip that included visiting the historic Olvera Street, the birthplace of the City of Los Angeles (along with its surrounding areas) and the Ahmanson Theater at the LA Music Center, one of the three largest performing arts centers in the United States. The field trip was organized by the Humanities and Arts Departments. In addition to Olvera Street, we visited the following locations: Union Station, the Old Fire Station, the Chinese American Museum, Pico House, Our Lady Queen of Angels Church, the Sepulveda Block Museum, the Italian American Museum, the America Tropical Mural, Avila Adobe, and the Museum of Social Justice. Our goal for the trip was to allow the students to create direct ties between classroom learning and the world around them. Learning is not limited to the classroom alone.

We arrived at Olvera Street just before 9:00 a.m. and quickly fell into our previously assigned tour groups. Each group consisted of two faculty members and nine-to-ten students. Our mission at Olvera Street was to visit ten of the museums situated around the area. Each museum was located within a short walking distance of another. Because the museums cannot accommodate large crowds, student groups were each assigned a different starting point from which they would then follow a prearranged route, allowing them ten-to-fifteen minutes of ample space and viewing time per location. Once the students

ALL-SCHOOL FIELD TRIP, SPRING 2019



had visited all the museums and eaten lunch, they enjoyed exploring the area on their own, which included purchasing souvenirs and even taking well-deserved rests under the shade of the trees surrounding the main plaza.

After enjoying a delicious lunch, resting, and relaxing, it was time to board our vehicles and head to the LA Music Center. After a short drive, we arrived at the Ahmanson Theater, where “Cinderella”, a dance theater production, was being performed. While Cinderella is a classic child’s story, this performance was geared toward an adult audience. This particular “Cinderella” production was an adaptation by Matthew Bourne and performed to the music of the extraordinary Sergey Prokofiev. We watched in awe for two and a half hours as we were transported to a war-torn London through the brilliantly choreographed ballet performances, multiple set and costume changes, special effects and projections, and outstanding sound effects. Most of the Besant Hill community had never had the opportunity to watch a production of this category.

At the end of the performance, we enthusiastically gave the actors, producers, and theater crew a standing ovation. It was a wonderful way to culminate our off-campus learning experience. ♦



CLAY H. '20, EMMETT J. '21



DIEGO G. '19 TRYING ON A SPACE SUIT
WHILE BELLA L. '21 AND AVA B. '21 JOIN IN



COLUMBIA MEMORIAL SPACE TRIP, SPRING 2019

KEONI L. '22 AND TRISTAN G. '22
AT THE COMMAND CENTER

COLUMBIA MEMORIAL ALL-SCHOOL EXCURSION

AUTHOR: DARCY CORSON

Educating our students about space and its exploration is integral to instilling within them a lifetime of curiosity about the great beyond. When our students learn about the unlimited expanse of the universe, it becomes easier for them to put our own fragile planet

into perspective and become citizens who protect—rather than abuse—Earth.

This year, as part of Besant Hill's "The World as Our Classroom" initiative, students and faculty embarked on an all-school field trip to the Columbia Memorial Space Center in



COLUMBIA SPACE CENTER, SPRING 2019

Downey, California. Planned by the school's Math and Science Departments, the trip engaged everyone in an inspiring day of hands-on space education.

For half of the day, we toured interactive exhibits, including an extravehicular activity space suit from NASA's Space Shuttle program, the Apollo Boiler Plate 12 (an unmanned, transonic abort test vehicle), a robotics lab, a drop tower, a gravity well, and a rocket launcher.

For the remainder of the day, the group participated in a simulated space mission hosted by the facility's Challenger Learning Center. As part of this simulation, participants became astronauts and engineers and solved real-world problems as they shared the thrill of discovery on their journey through the solar system.

Students and faculty alike thoroughly enjoyed their trip to the Columbia Memorial Space Center. Selena N. '19 explained, "There is no better way to learn about space and space exploration than actually having a hands-on experience!" ♦

AVA B. '21 AND SVEA A. '20
AT THE COMMAND CENTER

LANGUAGE ACQUISITION TONY KHALIFE

AUTHOR: BETSY STIX

It's been an exciting year for the ESL Department at Besant Hill. We've introduced new techniques for getting our entry-level English language learners up to speed, and the interim test results certainly show improvement.

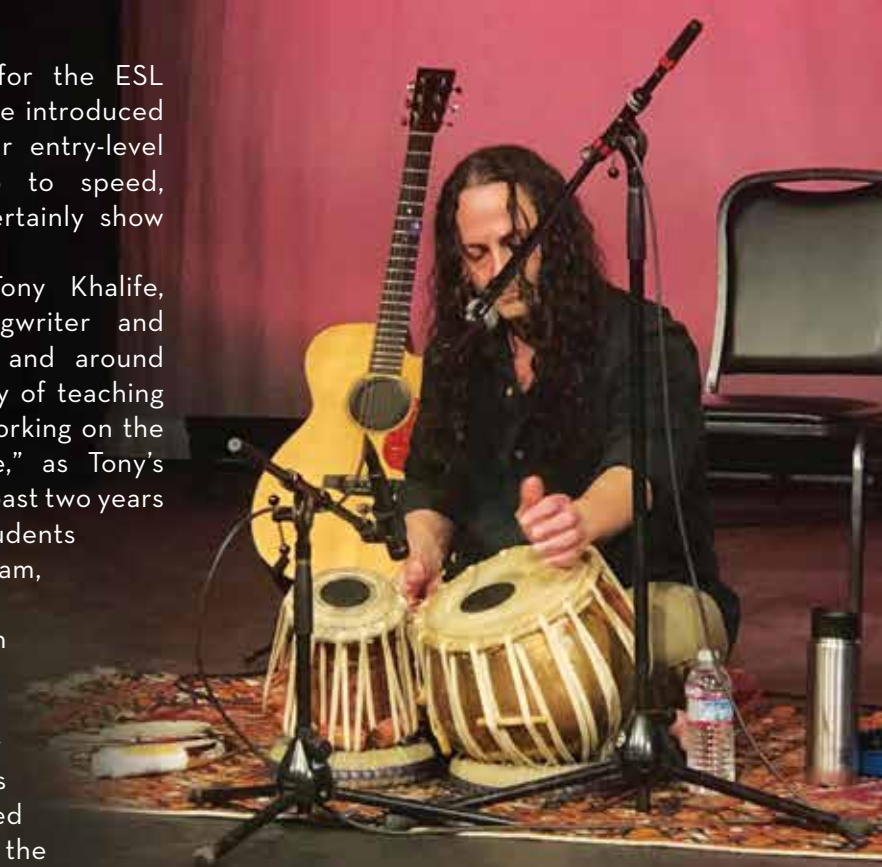
Recently, noted musician Tony Khalife, a highly regarded singer/songwriter and performer in the Ojai Valley and around the world, devised a unique way of teaching pronunciation. Tony has been working on the "Music and Language Initiative," as Tony's methodology is entitled, for the past two years and introduced it this year to students from China, Japan, Vietnam, Martinique, and Thailand.

Tony breaks each word down by syllable and stress, and then students practice pronouncing each word repeatedly, eventually "singing" the words and sentences back to him. After repeated practice, it was evident that the students were embodying the rhythm of the language as well as the meaning of each word and sentence. They sounded much more natural after just one session!

Tony works intimately with the students, getting to know their language challenges and backgrounds as he guides them to produce nonnative sounds. Music as well as breathing exercises and yoga stretches allow the students

to feel free and present in their bodies, losing their inhibitions while gaining confidence in English.

We look forward to implementing and expanding Tony's system in the ESL Department as we support our students in their language acquisition as well as their ability to express themselves clearly, articulately, and powerfully. ♦





TONY J. '20 BEING INTERVIEWED
BY A LOCAL NEWS OUTLET

AP SPANISH TRIP

AUTHOR:
NÉSTOR GERÓNIMO

For the first time in the history of Besant Hill School, AP Spanish students Svea A. '20 and Tony J. '20 came up with the idea of an extension of the AP Spanish class in a Spanish-speaking country where they could put their Spanish skills to the test, live with a host family, and genuinely experience living like locals for a week. Svea and Tony wanted to be completely immersed in all aspects of Hispanic culture, including attending a local high school full time, spending time outside of the school setting with local teens of their same age, doing chores at the host house, and working a minimum-wage job for a day.

In March 2019, accompanied by their Spanish instructor, Néstor Gerónimo, Svea and Tony traveled to their instructor's hometown of Lombardía, Michoacán. Lombardía is an agricultural community few tourists or outsiders visit. While in Lombardía, Svea and

Tony had to adapt to all the structures of life and culture in the town. They woke up at 6:00 a.m. to get ready and had to be at school by 7:00 a.m., when classes started. In Lombardía, there is no public school transportation, so every student must find their own means to get to and from school. Students with some money might pile up in a car or in the back of a pickup truck and tip the driver to take them to school. Because most students cannot afford to pay for transportation or because they prefer to save what little money they have to buy treats later in the day, most prefer to walk both to and from school. Svea and Tony decided to walk to school like most of the students.

At the conclusion of the school day, it is customary that all students go from school straight to the main plaza to hang out for a few hours before heading back home. At the plaza,



SVEA A. '20 WITH NEWFOUND FRIENDS FROM THE LOCAL HIGH SCHOOL



SVEA A. '20, TONY J. '20 AND NÉSTOR TRAVEL TO SEE A TRADITIONAL MEXICAN RODEO

students catch up on all the gossip related to anything and everything that happens in town, past, present, and future. Tony and Svea made sure to appreciate and participate in that well-established tradition. Svea and Tony promptly arrived at the plaza with their newly made friends, spending time with them at the plaza and local ice cream parlor before heading home. This gathering would continue at the host's house for a few hours more as the group continued amicably conversing and learning about each other's countries and customs.

On the weekend, Svea and Tony had the opportunity to put their Spanish skills into practice in a different setting. They each worked a minimum-wage job for an entire day. Svea worked at a taco stand doing everything, from taking orders and remembering them instead of writing them down to serving food and washing dishes by hand. Meanwhile, Tony worked at a car wash. Initially, he worked the front desk, taking orders from customers. Soon, he quickly and eagerly complied as he was asked to help wash all types of vehicles. Minimum-wage workers in Lombardía make the equivalent of US\$4 for a full day's work. Although Svea and Tony were not paid, they were provided food and drinks, learning firsthand how it feels to work so hard for so little compensation.

The Mexico trip provided such an impactful experience on Svea's and Tony's lives that they plan on revisiting the country in the future to continue improving their Spanish skills and learning about local culture and traditions as well as spending time catching up with their mutual friends. ♦



SVEA A. '20 WORKING AT A RESTAURANT TO EXPERIENCE A DAY-IN-A-LIFE



SVEA A. '20 AND TONY J. '20, FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL!

CHINESE NEW YEAR, INTERNATIONAL WEEK

AUTHOR: SHANNON ROWAN



JUDY L. '19, YILAN H. '21, DANIEL K. '21, PARKER L., ALL MAKING FLAGS FOR INTERNATIONAL WEEK





ELANA D. '19 AND CAMPBELL F. '21
MAKING FLAGS

Each year, the Humanities Department works collaboratively with students and the Besant Hill School kitchen to brainstorm and plan events, activities, and menus that celebrate the rich diversity and unique perspectives of our world community. In keeping with this year's theme—honoring individual strengths and resiliency—students were asked to take on fictitious citizenship for a country significantly impacted by the effects of climate change. This representation was designed to raise awareness about threatened communities and culture and build empathy and compassion. Unity, perseverance, and effort were the motivating qualities of the week's games and activities.

Before our competitive global citizenship games ensued, we kicked off International Week with an electric flamenco performance by Wendy Castellanos of LA Flamenco. It was



SAWYER H. '20, TRISTAN G. '22, DOING A TRADITIONAL DANCE







an inspirational and educational performance enjoyed by all!

The annual Chinese New Year parade began our Tuesday morning and honored the beginning of the Lunar New Year. After the lively parade, our first-year English language learners paired up with AP Human Geography to give us insights on traditional Chinese New Year menus and their agricultural origins.

On Tuesday afternoon, ten Model United Nations student representatives presented their position papers and areas of research. We learned that our students would be participating in councils covering the following: the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, UN peace building in Africa, the corruption of the Chinese Communist Party leadership, disarmament and international security, and social, humanitarian, and cultural issues.

One of International Week's popular traditions is the Thursday language class. Our beloved Spanish instructor, Néstor Gerónimo, spent weeks preparing student volunteers to teach lessons on a topic of their choice. This year, these student teachers taught the names of fruits and vegetables in Spanish, French, Swahili, Czech, Arabic, Vietnamese, Portuguese, Japanese, and Mandarin.

International Week culminated with an annual celebration of world music. Twelve students from Mexico, Korea, the Czech Republic, Japan, China, and Vietnam shared and performed national anthems, traditional songs, K-pop, and Vietnamese rap. It was an absolute musical delight!

All in all, the week was a great success and a wonderful demonstration of "aun aprendo"! ♦



MILO H.-M. '20 WORKING ON
A MOUNTAIN LANDSCAPE

STUDIO ART

AUTHOR: CLAIRE LOWNDES

This has been an exciting semester for the Besant Hill art students. They continue to embrace new techniques and challenge the concepts within their work. The students are inspired, growing in independence, and motivated by personal goals to develop their talent. The students are on a path of self-discovery within their independent pieces and focused on their preparation for the Spring Arts Exhibition.

SHU L. '19 ON
THE WHEEL AT THE
BEATRICE WOOD
CENTER FOR THE
ARTS



HYUNSEO O. '21 PRACTICING
ON THE WHEEL



Ceramics

The ceramics students have embraced the second semester with energy, enthusiasm, and determination. They have been developing their wheel-throwing techniques with Richard and Nanci at the Beatrice Wood Center for the Arts. They have been exploring concepts of letting go, having fun, and learning from their mistakes, allowing them to unlock and explore higher potential.

Studio Art

The aim for this semester has been to develop their critical thinking within the Hybrid Project and to achieve creative success. Within the techniques workshops, the students have embraced new learning to develop unique qualities and complex concepts within their work. In addition, the students explored their competitive side to encourage meaningful visual communication. ♦

ANNA Z. '19 AND HER
3-DIMENSIONAL ART
PROJECT



JAIME C. '19
AND HER
BEAUTIFUL
ARTISTIC BOX
PIECE





ROXY F.

PHOTOGRAPHY

AUTHOR: SIENA M. '21 AND LILY F. '21

Photography students Siena M. and Lily F. just finished their sophomore year at Besant Hill. They worked on service-learning projects all year—such as a dog calendar and school portraits—that developed their photography skills while serving the school. They enjoyed interacting with all members of the community through these projects.

The photography classes decided to make a dog calendar to feature dog life on campus. Dogs are critical to our community as they are part of our everyday life at Besant Hill. Our goal was to capture the personalities of the dogs and the landscape of Besant Hill as well as improve our photography skills.

A highlight of this project was spending time with the dogs and capturing their true personalities. We get to know the dogs throughout the year, but this project brought us even closer to them. Spending time outside the classroom and exploring the campus was very fun as well. I (Siena) was so happy just

being among nature and photographing dogs in this breathtaking place we call our school/home.

A challenge was getting the dogs to sit and stay in the correct position as well as getting the right shot. The dogs tended to get quite excited when I took them outside, so they usually got up and sniffed around instead of staying in place. Although I wanted the dogs to act like themselves, I needed a photo that was in focus and correctly composed. Dogs can also be moody, so sometimes they just didn't feel like having their photos taken or refused to smile. I had to do several shoots to make sure that the dogs looked their best.

I used several techniques I had learned in class to get the best shot composition. I followed the rule of thirds by dividing the frame into thirds and putting the dog in one third and the background in the other two thirds, with the eyes of the dog on the top third line. I made sure to fill the subject within



COOKIE C.



KADU S. '19, KSUSHA G. '20, HARKRISHAN K. '20
GETTING THE PERFECT ANGLE

the frame and paid attention to the horizon and vertical lines, making sure they were straight. I looked for leading lines and included them in the shot. It was also important that the lighting was even and diffused, with no hot spots and with the dogs brighter than the background. Finally, I made sure to take the dogs out when there were few people around so there would be no distractions in the shot.

I experimented with various shot sizes and angles, and while eye level is usually what is correct for people and dogs, I learned that the low-angle shot was particularly important for my shoots. While taking the photos of Fletch and Cookie, I had to lie down



KEONI L. '22

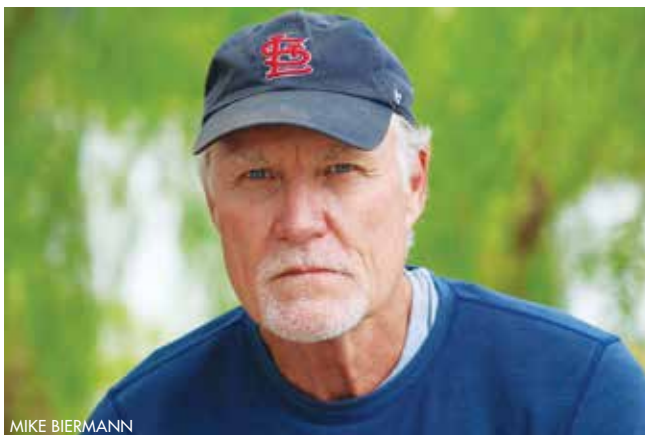
on my stomach to take photos that show the whole body of the dog, with the campus or buildings in the background. Getting pictures of some dogs from a low angle is important because you can make the dog look big and powerful—if that's their personality. A low angle also helps to get the right amount of sky and landscape in the background. For the various shoots I had gone on, I repeated the low-angle method. The pictures turned out great—they comprised interesting shots that showed off each dog's personality as well as the landscapes and buildings.

Along with dog portraits, another assignment was to focus on human portraits by including a more formal section in the yearbook. Portrait photography or portraiture is posed photography of a person, animal, or group that captures the personality and mood of the subjects by using effective lighting, backdrops, and shot composition. Portraiture should capture emotions, personality, and expressions.

The portraits projects we had done all year gave the photography students the opportunity to connect with everyone and helped build community. In our fall portraits project, we were required to capture various people, not just our friends, in various locations, also making them pose. Portraiture captures how someone is feeling in a moment as well as the essence of a moment. I (Lily) truly love people. I like to capture subjects who are alive and breathing because every single person is different and can never look the same. Taking a photo of someone allows them to have a permanent place in your life, no matter what happens. It is a record of their life and existence. Additionally, I was new to Besant Hill in the fall and got to know more people through this project.

In the spring, we focused on studio portraits. When we began





MIKE BIERMANN

talking about the yearbook portraits, I stepped up and helped find backdrops that we would use for the portraits. I found the site as well as the color and material. A week before the shoot, we set up the room. I helped iron and hang the backdrops, stretching them to reduce wrinkles. We set up a three-point studio light kit to provide the ideal lighting conditions. The key light was the main light on the subject's face. The fill light filled in the shadows made by the key light. The backlight lit up the backdrop, which created a bit of a three-dimensional feel. We took several photos, so there were a lot to choose from.

Many challenges come with taking portraits. People tend to judge, criticize, and pick out every flaw of themselves. That happens a lot when I take photos. Someone may not like the way they look or dislike their position. People dislike so many things about their portraits that it's difficult to get the perfect photo. Even if the photo is amazing, with perfect composition and lighting, the person may criticize themselves and sometimes your work. That can be really challenging.

I truly love portraits. I find so much joy in capturing people and their lives. I think every single person has so much to offer the world. In one photo, you can learn so much about a person. You could look at a photo a hundred times and always notice something new. Portraits keep a record. Portraits can allow you as well as others to relive a moment in life.

These were incredibly fun projects, and we had a great time shooting the dogs and people, learning new camera skills, and getting out of the classroom. Thanks to these projects, we now have skills in animal and people photography. I hope we continue the dog calendar and formal yearbook portraits for years to come. ♦



DIEGO G. '19



TERRY K. '20



KYLIE B. '19



FILM

AUTHOR: TONY J. '20

Ever since I was little, I've always had a fascination with visual media, particularly film. While I was growing up, these moving pictures have been of some of the greatest influences on how I think. As I've gotten older, I've shifted my take on film from just an interest to the most significant focus of my life. Film brings visuals to life and puts ideas into motion, but the most rewarding part of the filmmaking process is having the chance to use each visual to help convey a powerful message that evokes an even greater emotion from the viewer and can subsequently result in change. Given our current political climate with all the civil injustices and environmental abuses that are orchestrated by big businesses and even the government, film is more important than ever to show the unfairness of these situations and encourage viewers to take a stance against them.

Besant Hill has been a great platform for me to develop my creative abilities in a range of areas but particularly in filmmaking. Since I started attending Besant Hill in the fall of 2017, I've taken media production and film as well as other visual media classes such as digital art/photography and yearbook photography. These courses have been successful in further teaching me about some of the necessary techniques needed to make a truly brilliant piece. They have also helped me focus and develop my personal styles through film-editing lectures, peer screenings and critiques, one-on-one feedback sessions with the instructor, and studying techniques by watching others' films, both big studio films and small independent films.

After we completed half a dozen films in film class during this past school year, our instructor encouraged the class to submit our works to local festivals, including the Ojai

Valley Youth Film Festival. After expressing my desire to apply to more festivals, my instructor provided me with a list of festivals to submit to and also recommended a series of programs to apply to for the summer. Since then, I've applied to thirteen festivals nationwide and an additional nine internationally and have continued work on two feature-length documentaries that I have been developing this last year.

In the first half of 2019, I have worked on various projects and taken on a series of jobs as a freelance director. Some of the most important opportunities I've received include directing music videos for some California-based recording artists and shooting two concert series for local acts. The most significant passion projects in development right now include my feature-length documentary about the 1960s fashion industry, influenced by the civil rights movement, as well as an environmentally driven YouTube channel premiering music videos by independent musicians, with all proceeds going to charities supporting anti-global-warming efforts.

Through the help of film, I've been able to apply myself to projects in a way that allows for both creative expression and a potential impact on something bigger than myself. Digital media is a tool that should be utilized to tell honest accounts and stories in a beautiful, engaging way, and that is why I make films and plan to continue to do so for the rest of my life. ♦



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Student Work

AUTHOR: CLAIRE LOWNDES

Collaboration

This semester, the students have come to value the importance of collaboration and making meaningful connections with others to enrich student learning beyond the classroom. These amazing experiences have been made possible thanks to the Carolyn Glasoe Bailey Foundation and the Beatrice Wood Center for the Arts.

In addition, students have become peer mentors for one another. This has been an inspiring experience, allowing students to think critically and use feedback effectively.

Museum Visit with Kevin Wallace

The students visited the Ojai Museum to view the “From the Earth” exhibition with Kevin Wallace. In preparation for the Student Spring Arts Exhibition, he discussed exhibition planning and presentation ideas for the students to gain further understanding of the process.

Yassi Mazandi at CBGF

The students were very excited by Yassi Mazandi’s exhibition. She will be working with our students next year.



BELLA L. '21 AND HARKRISHAN K. '20
WORKING WITH ALLISON NEWSOME

Workshops with Allison Newsome

Allison is an accomplished sculptor and shared this knowledge with Besant Hill School students over two three-hour workshops while at the Beatrice Wood Center for the Arts for her residency. The students worked outdoors and experienced Allison in her element as she inspired them to find theirs and enjoy what they did.

Gallery Visits with Freddy

Frederick Janka has inspired our students through gallery and class visits. He has offered opportunities for our students to exhibit their work in the gallery. In addition, he has been a mentor to Jamie and Shay for their capstone. He has inspired the students to share their art and taught them the importance of networking as well as how to prepare for the next steps of their creative journey. ♦



SPRING ARTS STUDENT ART SHOW

AUTHOR: CLAIRE LOWNDES

The focus for the exhibition this year was “growth.” Each student was celebrated for creating art with meaning, encouraging them to focus on visual communication. The students were challenged to think of not only what their work means to them personally but the bigger picture. The outcomes consolidated all their learning throughout the year and were personal, thoughtful, and truly unique to the individual. ♦



SHU L. '19, JAMIE C. '19, CLAIRE LOWNDES,
ANNA Z. '19, SHAY B. '19



EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION, LAKE CASITAS 2019

RAINBOW TROUT IN THE CLASSROOM

EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION

AUTHOR: LELAND FULTON

For the second year, Besant Hill School biology students participated in the nationally recognized “Trout in the Classroom” project. This project, directed by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, enables students across the region to raise and release native salmonids to better understand fish anatomy as well as locally relevant topics in freshwater conservation biology. The specific salmonid species being emphasized was the Southern California steelhead trout. This endangered fish is an iconic species in rivers

and streams across the region.

In addition to conducting water-quality tests in the classroom, Besant Hill students were also given the opportunity to visit a few local sites in which native steelhead are known to inhabit. Lake Casitas and the Matilija Reservoir are two water bodies in the Ojai area that hold significant importance to both human and fish populations. Built to, respectively, preserve drinking water and control flash floods, these water bodies have been included in several local discussions centered around the health of our watersheds.

Besant Hill participation in the “Trout in the Classroom” program enables our students to bridge the gap between topics in life science and modern issues within the community at large. This program builds upon itself as each new class of biology students adds to the growing catalogue of data and observations relating steelhead anatomy to the health of our watersheds. ♦



MODEL UN

AUTHOR: LELAND FULTON





TONY J. '20 ENJOYING DC DURING THE MODEL UNITED NATIONS TRIP, SPRING 2019



BESANT HILL MUN DELEGATES VISIT GLOBAL WITNESS OFFICE

This January, in what has become an annual tradition, Besant Hill sent a delegation of students to participate in a Model United Nations conference. Each year, a small group of students, typically juniors and seniors, are selected to represent our community at an international Model UN conference. The goal of this conference is to bring students from around the world together to discuss global topics and seek solutions to global and regional problems through debate, negotiation, and collaboration. This year, Besant Hill School students represented the countries of Kuwait, Costa Rica, and Serbia in the North American Invitational Model United Nations conference, hosted by Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.

Student delegates spent months preparing for their individual committee assignments by conducting extensive research on their country and the modern topics to be addressed by their committee. Speech and debate skills were emphasized during this time as students prepared position papers for the conference. In conference, the Besant Hill delegates were engaged in coalition building and diplomacy to prepare and pass resolutions to various topics.



MODEL UN TRIP, SPRING 2019

Outside of the conference, the Besant Hill delegates were able to tour several museums and monuments housed in our nation's capital. One particular highlight was a lunch meeting between the Besant Hill delegates and top members of Global Witness, a nongovernmental organization committed

to exposing the economic networks behind conflict, corruption, and environmental abuse around the world.

Returning Besant Hill delegates from this year's conference will surely continue this great tradition in the years to come. ♦



RANCHO GRANDE TRIP

AUTHOR: LELAND FULTON

This winter, a handful of Besant Hill students were given the wonderful opportunity to visit the animal farm at Rancho Grande in the heart of Rose Valley. Established with the aim of providing educational and outdoor opportunities to local youth, Rancho Grande is one of the most picturesque homesteads in our region.







While on their visit, Besant Hill students helped feed the many goats, sheep, cattle, horses, pigs, alpacas, and chickens that call the ranch home. In addition to the rich diversity in farm animals, students also observed numerous wild animals that called the lakes, streams, and chaparral of the ranch home. The location of this ranch acts as a refuge to several shy and beautiful animals in the mountains above Ojai.

Rancho Grande has generously offered to work with Besant Hill students in the future as we look toward establishing senior capstone projects and volunteer retreats that will connect our students with the land and animals. We expect to make many more wonderful memories at Rancho Grande in the years to come! ♦



TSUNAKI I. '19, SEAN H. '19, KADU S. '19, ALEJANDRO N.-A. '20,
CALKI G. '22, IVAN W. '20, PARKER L. '20, DIEGO G. '19

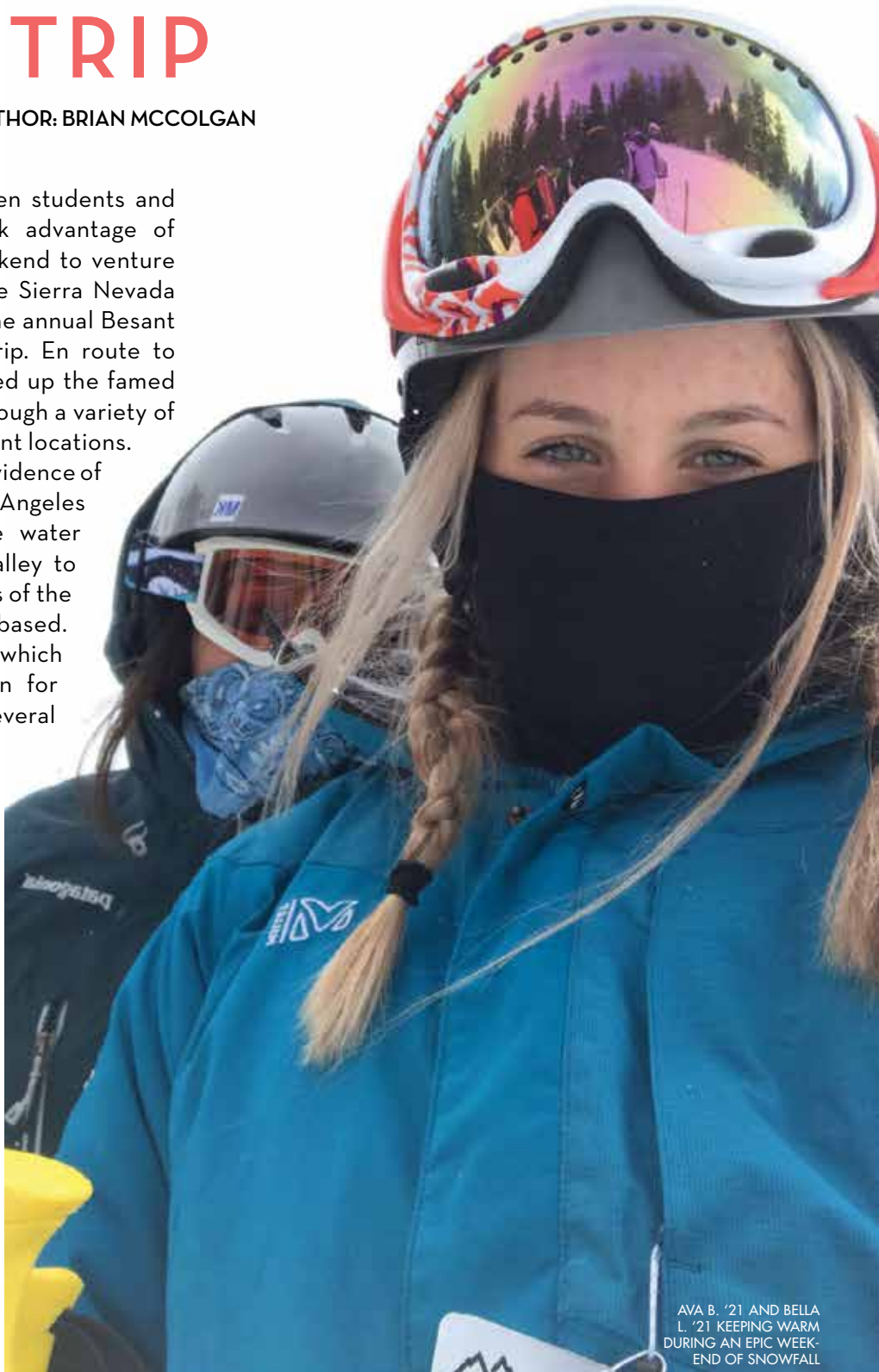
MAMMOTH TRIP

AUTHOR: BRIAN MCCOLGAN

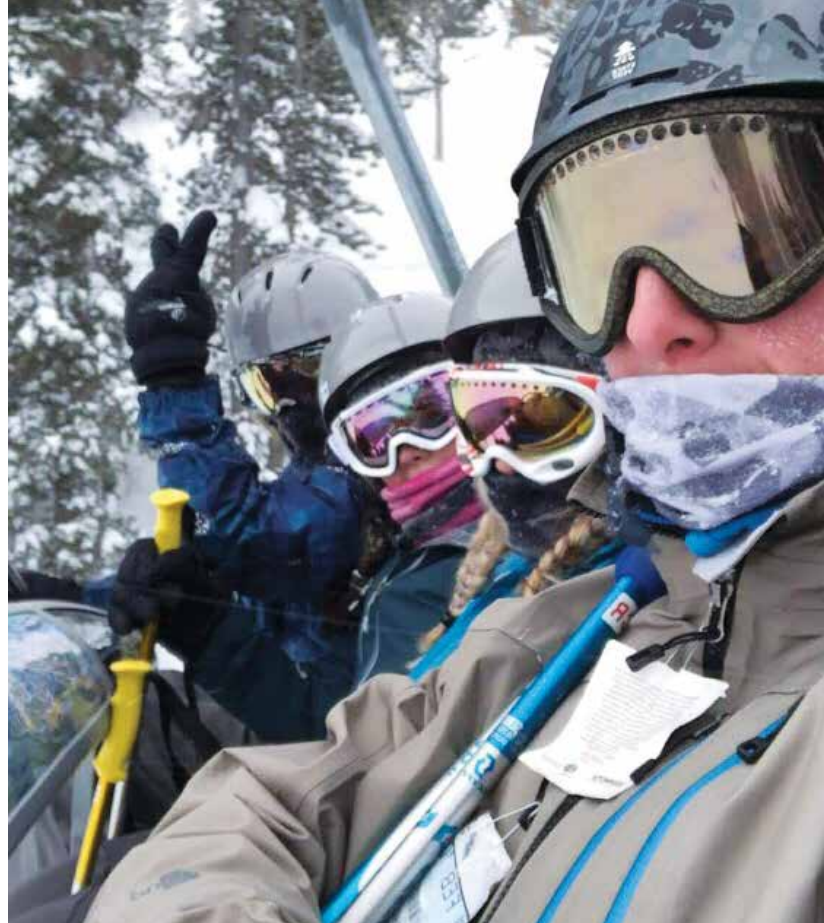
In early February, seventeen students and three faculty members took advantage of the long Head's Holiday weekend to venture to Mammoth Mountain in the Sierra Nevada Mountains of California for the annual Besant Hill ski and snowboarding trip. En route to the ski area, students travelled up the famed Highway 395, which winds through a variety of natural and culturally significant locations. They saw ancient lava flows, evidence of the turn-of-the-century Los Angeles water grab that moved the water from farms in the Owens Valley to Los Angeles, on which aspects of the 1974 movie Chinatown were based. They saw the Alabama Hills, which have been a filming location for more than 150 movies and several television shows.

The students also got a glimpse of the tallest mountain in the contiguous forty-eight states: the 14,505-foot (4,421 meters) Mount Whitney. It is a mere 85 miles (137 kilometers) from the lowest and hottest place in the entire United States: Badwater, Death Valley, with an elevation of 282 feet (86 meters) below sea level and having established a U.S. record high temperature of 134 degrees Fahrenheit (56.6 degrees Celsius) in 1912.

A truly moving stop on the journey was a visit



AVA B. '21 AND BELLA L. '21 KEEPING WARM DURING AN EPIC WEEK-END OF SNOWFALL



to Manzanar, one of a network of Japanese internment camps established during World War II. It incarcerated over one hundred thousand Japanese individuals solely based on their ethnicity, 60 percent of whom were U.S. citizens! Manzanar was in operation from 1942 to 1945. It has been partially restored as a museum that pays tribute to those who were incarcerated there.

The Mammoth ski area is based around an 11,000-foot (3,352-meter) mountain that most skiers and snowboarders have on their bucket list because of its extensive variety of runs, its beauty, its incredibly long ski season, and the fact that it receives a tremendous amount of snow in a relatively short period. The ski group arrived in Mammoth under blue skies, only to give way to a two-day snowstorm that dumped over four feet of fresh powdery snow on top of the ten-foot base from previous storms.

Given the extraordinarily beautiful conditions, students skied on everything—from meticulously groomed runs to knee-deep powder—from morning until the late afternoon all weekend long! At night, in our spacious, warm, and cozy cabins, we enjoyed one another's company, played guitar, watched the snow fall, and dined on food prepared at Chez Darcy and Tony and from local Thai and Japanese restaurants. All in all, it was a weekend of good vibes and lifelong memories. ♦





KITCHEN STAFF WITH SUNNY H. '19

BEET AND TANGERINE SALAD

AUTHOR: JUANA JUAREZ

Prep

3 beets, cooked, peeled, and cubed
3 seedless tangerines, peeled and sectioned
1/2 cup feta cheese, crumbled

Dressing

1/3 cup olive oil
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
1 teaspoon fresh mint, minced

If using fresh beets, scrub well, but do not peel. Cut off stems within one inch of beet and immerse in water. Cover and bring to a boil, then reduce heat to medium. Depending on the size of the beets, cooking will take about

30 minutes or longer. The beets are cooked when they feel tender when a fork is pushed through the center. Drain and cool; remove skin and stem by rubbing off with your fingers under running water. Cut beets into 1/2 inch bite-size pieces. Peel tangerines and separate wedges. Remove any white membrane, and either leave wedges whole or cut in half.

For the dressing, stir ingredients until combined. Place 1/2 cup of finished dressing in a salad bowl. Add beets and tangerines and toss.

Sprinkle with feta cheese. (serves 4)

*If not us, then who?
If not now, then when?*
-John E. Lewis



CALKI G. '22, SVEA A. '20, SEAN H. '19

GREEN CUP CHALLENGE

AUTHOR: BRIAN MCCOLGAN

Continuing with tradition, our return from winter break signaled the beginning of the annual Green Cup Energy Challenge or GCC, which challenges schools to measure the amount of electricity their campuses can reduce over a four-week period. The overarching goal of the GCC is to increase personal and community awareness about energy consumption. Besant Hill School has

participated in this national sustainability competition for eleven years and has reduced electricity consumption during this time frame by over 24 percent simply by paying attention to the way we use energy. The GCC is administered by the Green Schools Alliance (GSA), an international consortium of schools and businesses in which Besant Hill School is a member. The alliance connects more than



thirteen thousand sustainability champions across over nine thousand schools, districts, and organizations from forty-eight states and ninety-one countries.

First envisioned on World Environment Day in 2006, the GSA was created in response to New York City Mayor Bloomberg's challenge to the city's municipal agencies to reduce their carbon footprint by 30 percent by 2030. The following year, forty-six schools convened to formulate, ask, and to answer the question "What is climate change, and what can schools do about it?" Well, you may be wondering, what can we do about it? As it turns out, the most significant contributor to climate change is the overabundance of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Greenhouse gases trap heat in the atmosphere, and in turn, the

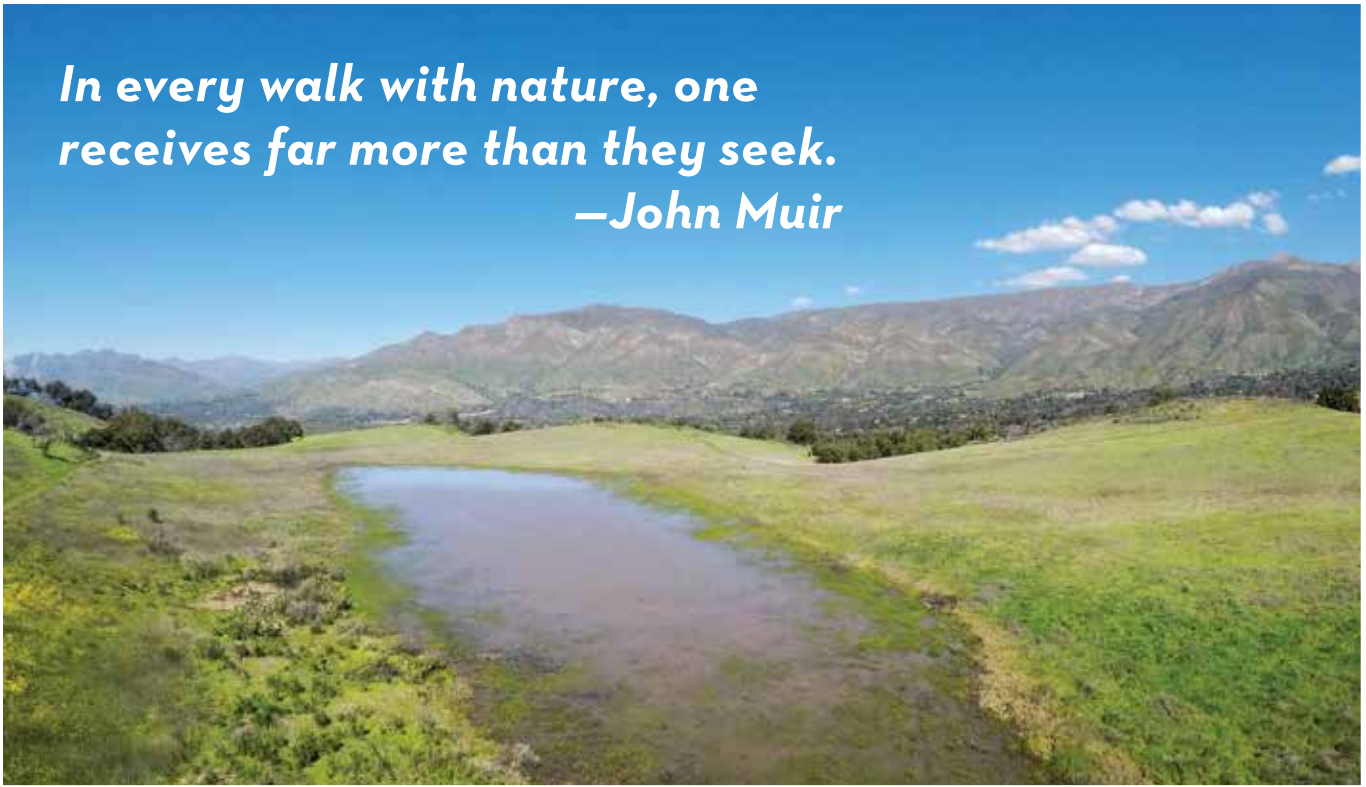


OJAI VALLEY GREEN COALITION, SPRING 2019

temperature rises, which changes the earth's climate. All of this overwhelms the natural processes and has a detrimental effect on all of the earth's life forms. The most significant culprit in terms of greenhouse gases is carbon dioxide (CO₂). As it turns out, most of the CO₂ that humans put into the atmosphere is produced by burning fossil fuels to generate electricity and heat. Therefore, one of the most significant—as well as easiest—things we can do collectively is to reduce our use of electricity. Luckily for us, it's not that difficult! All it really requires is for us to be mindful of how we consume electricity and to turn off lights and electrical appliances when we are not using them.

On campus, during the GCC, we monitor seven of the school's electric meters. It is a student-centered project, and weekly meter readings and usage computations are done by the Math IV class. This year, a special acknowledgment is in order for the winners of the Besant Hill GCC. Congratulations to Juana Juarez and her staff in the dining commons for their exemplary effort during the GCC. As a result, the electric energy consumption in the Dining Commons was down by 18 percent. Way to go! Thank you to all who participated. We'll do it again next year! ♦

*In every walk with nature, one
receives far more than they seek.*
—John Muir



VERNAL POOL

AUTHOR: BRIAN MCCOLGAN

As students and staff returned to Besant Hill from their well-earned spring break, Ojai, as well as most of California, had started to warm up from a cool and tremendous rainy season that left us with rain totals well above average. In late March, rain measurements at the Besant Hill weather station recorded 23.49 inches of rain, a nearly 300 percent increase over last year and 131 percent above our annual average. One of the sweetest rewards of substantial rainfall on our five-hundred-plus acres of land is the return of the of the Happy Valley Vernal Pool.

Vernal pools are unique and naturally occurring biological oddities. They are seasonal pools that, with sufficient rain, fill in the winter and, through evaporation, dry up completely over the summer and fall. Often the pools can remain dry for several years. Vernal pools are home to several species of interconnected flora and fauna that have







JAMIE C. '19, SUNNY H. '19 GETTING
DEEP INTO THEIR RESEARCH



evolved to thrive in these extreme conditions.

Vernal is defined as of, relating to, or occurring in the spring. In basic terms, vernal pools are slight depressions in the land with underlying hardpans or layers of soil with high silt and/or clay content, which drastically limits the ability of water to percolate deep into the ground. Another defining factor is that there is no inlet that brings water to fill the pool; it is filled exclusively by winter and spring rain running off the surrounding hillsides.

Vernal pools were once fairly common in the chaparral biome of Southern California. Today less than 10 percent of the natural vernal pool habitats remain. The vernal pool on our campus is a little over an acre in size, about the same size of our soccer field, making it relatively large, and one of only two of its size remaining in Southern California. ♦



CALKI G. '22 AND PAT O. '21 SINGING
"NEW YORK, NEW YORK" IN STYLE

FALL VARIETY SHOW

AUTHOR: DAVE COSBY

Singing, dancing, theatrical skits, instrumental numbers, and even the creation of a painting on stage were all showcased as part of the fall variety show held on Friday, November 30, 2018. Students, both new to the stage and veteran performers, along with some faculty and staff, were all excited participants in the displays of musical talent and creative passions. The show was hosted by Emmett J. '21, who was fabulously dressed

and in character as Liza Minnelli. Emmett was a wonderful host who seemed to actually bring Liza herself to the stage of the Zalk Theater.

Getting the show started were Pat O. '21 and Calki G. '22, who brought back the glamor and glory of the 1950s Rat Pack with a swinging version of "New York, New York." Their performance was very much in the spirit of Frank Sinatra and Dean Martin with their attire, stage demeanor, and vocal stylings. Pat

and Calki's performance showed both their flair for the stage and their abundant vocal talent as they belted out this prized American standard that celebrates one of the world's greatest cities, New York City.

Brian, our beloved Director of Sustainability, was up next, singing and playing his guitar, with me on bass. For this performance, Brian chose Guy Clarks's "Stuff That Works." It is always a pleasure to have Brian participate in a heartfelt delivery of Americana songs. Carissa A. '22 sang a Rodgers and Hammerstein classic from South Pacific: "A Cockeyed Optimist," accompanied by Arts Chair Dan Call on piano. Ava B. '21 was our next performer, singing her interpretation of the Amy Winehouse hit "Valerie." With just me on acoustic guitar backing her up, it was a touching homage to the brilliant Amy Winehouse, yet Ava brought her own special touch to this very familiar song.

Leina'ala R. '20 read an original poem called "Lost." It was enjoyable to hear her linguistic creativity displayed in her original work. Akari I. '21 shared her delicate touch and budding improvisational skills on a beautiful Brazilian classic by Luis Bonfá called "Manha de Carnival." With it being her first time playing an improvised solo in front of an audience, it was such a treat to see her push herself and get out of her comfort zone. Going from classic to cutting edge, next up was Richard Ellwood and Robert W. '20 performing a genre-defying performance of acoustic bass and theremin. It was both a visually and musically exciting act.

No variety show at Besant Hill School can take place without a theatrical skit or two, and this time, it was Luisa B. '21 and Elana D. '19 doing a really funny skit. Tindi M. '21 was the next act, performing another classic song: "Tomorrow" from Annie. It was great to hear Tindi sing this beautiful song, with Dan accompanying her on piano. Emmy H. '19 followed Tindi, also singing a familiar song. For her performance, Emmy picked a challenging all-time favorite from the

songbook of Stevie Wonder: "Knocks Me Off My Feet." Despite the challenges of this song, Emmy displayed great musical control and maturity as she gave a stunning performance of this soul-pop classic.

Faculty members Leland and Betsy took us back to the high school days of Betsy with a short skit/performance. Leland and Betsy performed an incredibly acrobatic dance gesture called "The Move." Words fail to describe the awesomeness of "The Move," and it was one of those times when you just had to be there. To close the show, we had an original skit written by Emmy and Ava set in a fictional store called Rainbow Fridge that closely resembled an actual store in Ojai. The skit was full of drama and laughs as

Rainbow Fridge customer Richard Ellwood struggled with store employees Emmy and Ava at the checkout counter because he had forgotten his reusable shopping bag. The act had the entire audience laughing at their significant comedic talents. To bring all activities to a close, Jamie C. '19 and Anna Z. '19 presented to the audience the painting they had been working on throughout the entire show. It was a wonderful portrait of Megan's dog, Maxxine.

As always, the Besant Hill School variety show was truly an event where students, staff, faculty, family members, and friends of the school came and experienced the creativity of several members of the Besant Hill School community. The kind support of the audience for each performer and the courage that each performer showed in presenting their work on stage before a live audience is a testament to the strong and compassionate community we have here at Besant Hill School. Whether students, faculty members, or visitors, all could feel the wonderful sense of community that makes Besant Hill School so very magical. It was a great night of fun, and everyone left the theater that night smiling, laughing, and appreciating the great show they had just experienced. ♦

CHAMBER ON THE MOUNTAIN

AUTHOR:
KEVIN WALLACE

Cellist Zlatomir Fung and pianist Janice Carissa shared their amazing musical talents with the students and staff of Besant Hill School during Assembly on March 4, 2019. Their musical abilities were incredible and left our community speechless each of their classical music performances. Having them on campus was a treat for our ears and musical minds.

Zlatomir Fung recently captured First Prize at the 2018 Schoenfeld International String Competition, as well as the competition's sole performance engagement prize for a concert with Poland's Poznan Philharmonic Orchestra. Other performances as soloist with orchestra this season include the Dvorak Concerto with the Juilliard Orchestra conducted by Itzhak Perlman and the Bloch Schelomo with Orchestra Iowa.

Janice Carissa, from Surabaya, Indonesia, entered the Curtis Institute of Music in 2013 and studies piano with Gary Graffman and Robert McDonald. A recipient of numerous awards and honors, Ms. Carissa was recently awarded the 2018 Career Grant Winner of Charlotte White's Salon De Virtuosi. She was a Young Scholar of Lang Lang's International Music Foundation; the runner-up in the 2014 piano competition at the American Academy of Conducting at Aspen Music Festival and School; Star Performance Award Winner of the 2012 American Protégé International Music Talent Competition in New York; the runner-up in Indonesia Pusaka International Piano Competition in 2011; and the Top Prize Winner of the IBLA Foundation's 2006 International Piano Competition. ♦





BESANT HILL UNDEFEATED SOCCER
TEAM IN ACTION

SOCCER

AUTHOR: DARCY CORSON

Besant Hill School's soccer team enjoyed remarkable success for the 2018-2019 season, undefeated and earning a tidy 5-0 record for games played. Throughout the season, all of our players consistently worked hard and displayed good sportsmanship. The team's attack was led by Sean H. '19 and Diego G. '19, who each averaged more than two goals per game. Terry K. '20, Bu P. '21, and Keoni L. '22 were also strong contributors on offense. The team's defense was anchored by Tsunaki I. '19, Kadu S. '19, and Hyunseo O. '20. Stalwart goalkeeper Sawyer H. '20 was invaluable in the net. Congratulations to the team on a victorious season! ♦



YLLAN H. '21 PERFECTING HIS SHOT

BOYS BASKETBALL

AUTHOR: KEVIN HENSCHER

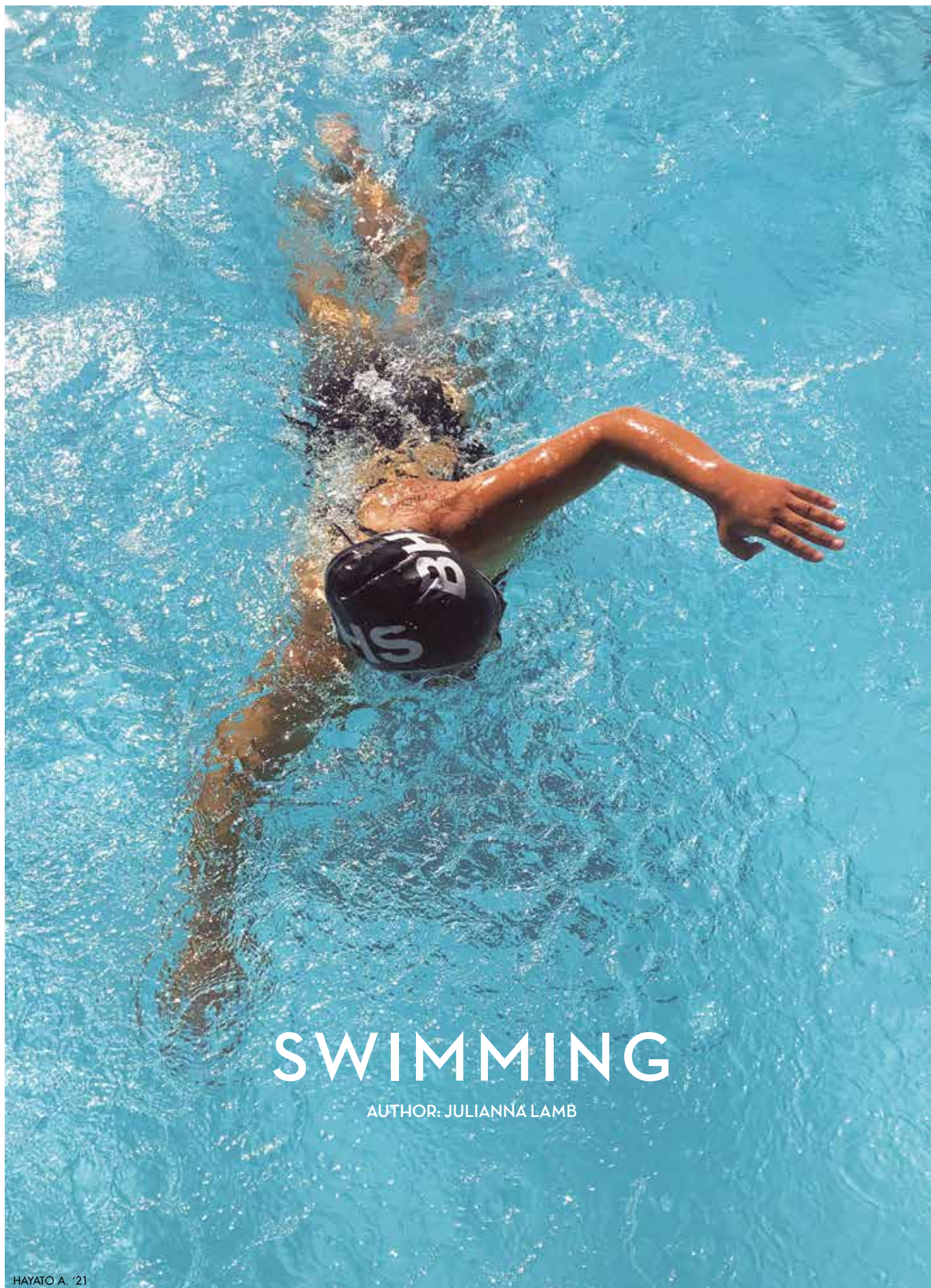
Besant Hill's boys basketball team also had a memorable season, with an overall record of 6-5. For such a young team that had a lot of room to grow, it was a daily process of hard work and dedication. It was so satisfying to watch the more experienced athletes mentor the younger players. One of the most special parts of the season was that the boys and girls teams really supported each other, and a real bond grew throughout the program. It was such a joy to coach these amazing young men and women! ♦



GIRLS BASKETBALL

AUTHOR: KEVIN HENSCHER

Besant Hill School's girls basketball team had an incredible season of growth and achievement. Our basketball program is in its eighth year, and it was the most successful campaign to date. The team's overall record was 2-6, with dramatic wins against Thacher (JV) and Dunn School. The season reflected a total team effort dedicated to hard work and the desire to improve. A focus on developing the team's defensive and fundamental skills led to their success. Despite some inexperience, each player participated in games at different times during the season. As they each improved, their roles developed and evolved to best suit their playing style. ♦



SWIMMING

AUTHOR: JULIANNA LAMB

HAYATO A. '21



SVEA A. '19, SHU L. '19, FLEXING SOME MUSCLE AND COYOTE PRIDE

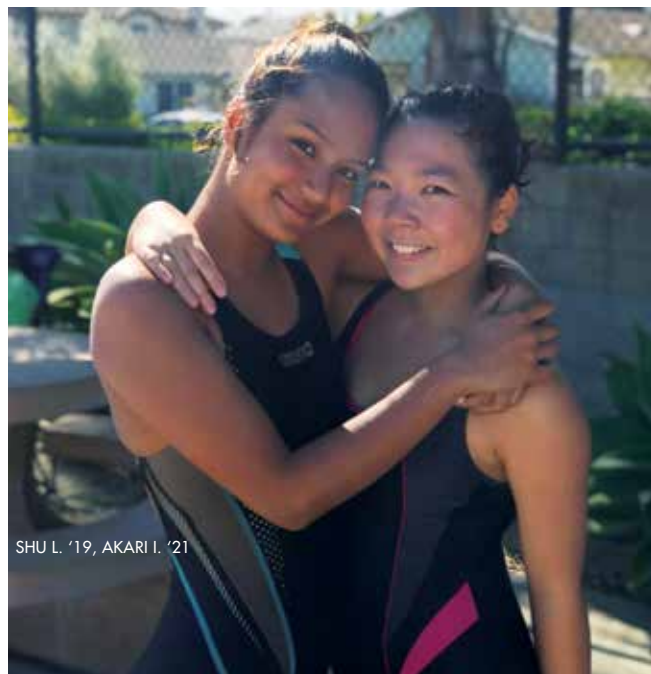
California has seen an amazing winter/spring of rain and cold weather. While most of the state is rejoicing from this turn in the weather pattern, swimmers across Southern California are hesitating before they jump into the pool for practice. There has been no hesitation, however, with the swimmers of the Besant Hill School swim team, who have shown their dedication by braving the chilly temperatures to improve their times. The swimmers in this 2018-2019 season have seen drops in all of their times and made great improvement in stroke technique. The team had several successful meets with local Ventura County high schools.

Several new members joined our team. Each one of these swimmers saw great success. Jessica P. '22 learned side breathing and placed in the 50 freestyle, all in her first season on a team. Soley D. '22 placed first in her breaststroke event. Many of our returning members continued to show Coyote strength with great results. Svea A. '20, Akari I. '21, and Jamyan M. '20 all saw drops in their times and competed in new events.

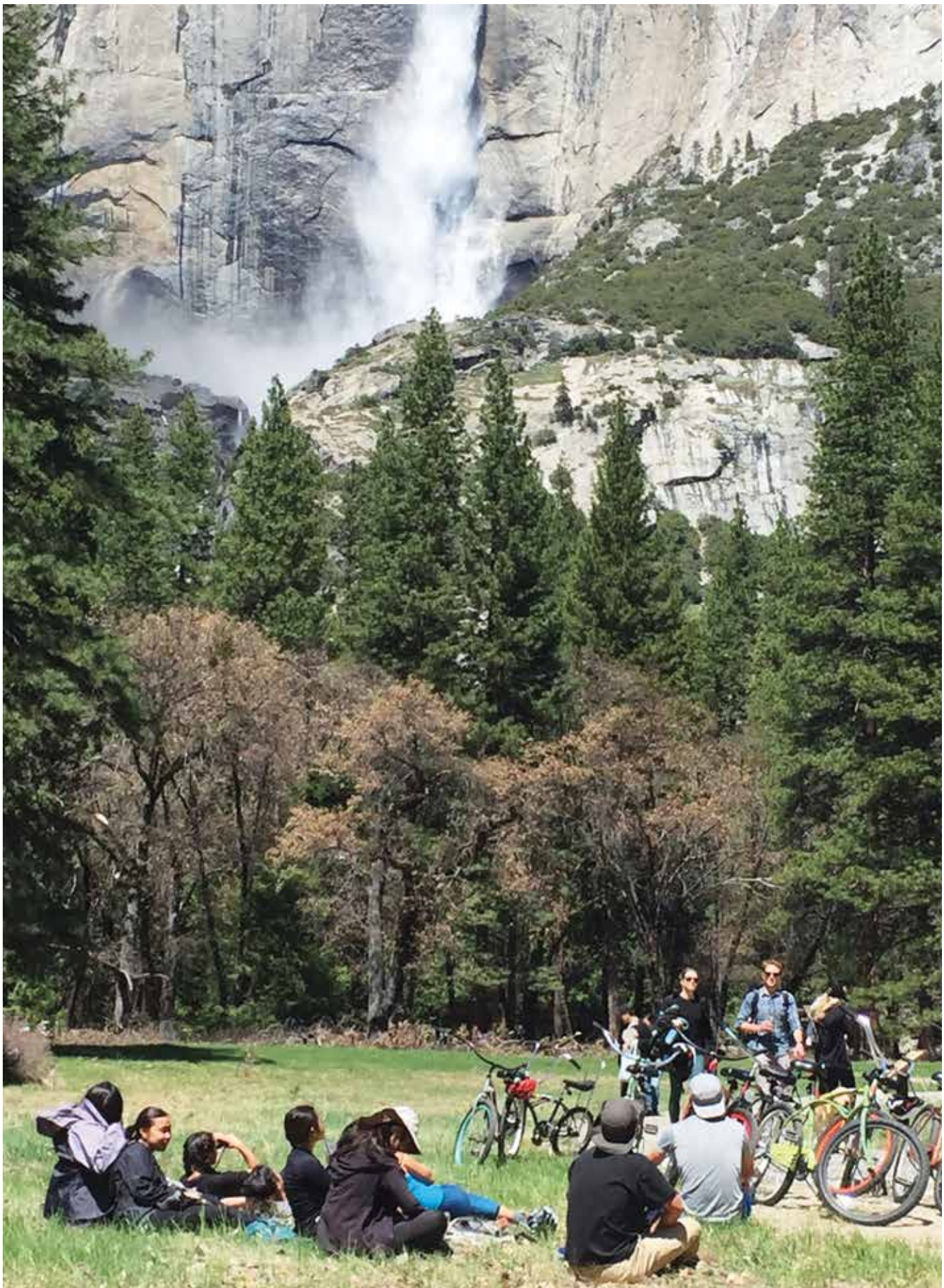
With the close of another wonderful season with our Coyotes, we wish our graduating senior, Shu L. '19, the best of luck next year at San Diego State University. Her leadership and sharpie marker will be missed. Go, Coyotes! ♦



SVEA A. '20, HAYATO A. '21



SHU L. '19, AKARI I. '21



BIKING IN YOSEMITE, EXPERIENTIAL ED, SPRING 2019



OUTDOOR EDUCATION KERN RIVER RAFTING TRIP, SPRING 2019

OUTDOOR EDUCATION

AUTHOR: LELAND FULTON

The end of the spring semester marked the conclusion of an exciting second year for the outdoor education program. Throughout the term, students participating in the program learned valuable outdoor skills, strengthened their bodies and minds, and explored some of the most spectacular wild places in the state of California. After an exciting first year of adventures, the juniors who have completed this spring program will have the opportunity to act as leaders of outdoor program trips in the upcoming school year.

The introductory trip this season was a two-day backpacking trip in the Sespe Wilderness. This trip was designed to help





students practice backcountry camping and cooking skills. The secondary objective—and the highlight for many—was to summit Topa Topa Bluff, the spectacular 6,700-foot peak that towers over Upper Ojai.

The culminating trip for the outdoor program took students to Yosemite National Park. The iconic granite walls and massive waterfalls provided the backdrop for the outdoor program's long-day hikes during this trip. Few places on earth can rival the beauty of Yosemite Valley, and students came away with a newfound appreciation for the rich natural wonders of California.

The spring outdoor program concluded with a special training opportunity in the Southern Sierra Mountains of California. Junior members of the program helped facilitate and lead a trip up to the Kern River east of Bakersfield. Sophomores and juniors interested in participating in the outdoor education program in 2019–2020 attended this incredible trip. A night of camping preceded a thrilling day of white-water rafting on the Upper Kern River. Several miles of exciting white water and beautiful scenery provided the perfect conclusion to an exciting year in the outdoor program. ♦



KYLIE B. '19, CLAY H. '20, GETTING READY
FOR OPENING NIGHT OF THE WIZ

SPRING MUSICAL: THE WIZ

AUTHOR: DAN CALL

The Performing Arts Department of Besant Hill School presented two performances of *The Wiz*, with music and lyrics by Charlie Smalls and book by William F. Brown, on April 26-27 in the Zalk Theater during the annual Spring Arts Weekend. Both nights saw large crowds, and the shows were very well received by the audiences (standing ovation!) and school community.

There was an unusual occurrence during the Friday evening performance when the power went out just after the opening number of the second act. However, the audience stepped in as the light source by using their cell phones to light the stage, and the show went on! The power was restored a bit later, but it was a true testament to the old theater adage of

"The show must go on!" as well as supporting this year's Portrait of the Graduate theme of resilience!

The Wiz was directed by arts chair Dan Call, with choreography by dance faculty member Leah Sellers. Costume design was by faculty member Mary Spence.

The Wiz, an updated and upbeat version of *The Wizard of Oz*, was a winner of seven Tony Awards, including Best Musical, as well as the Drama Desk Award for Best Musical. The show made its Broadway debut in 1975 and ran for over 1,600 performances. The familiar story, along with all the iconic characters, are here but with a bit of a twist. The rock/pop/gospel score included such hit songs as "Ease On Down the Road," "No Bad News," "Everybody



CALKI G. '22



ALEJANDRO N.-A. '20, EMMY H. '19, CALKI G. '22



AVA B. '21, KARINA K. '22, LAUREN S. '19, MARIA M. '21, TEREZA J. '20

Rejoice,” “If You Believe,” and “Home.”

Of particular note were the performances by faculty members Megan Walton and Francois Tchoyi '11. This was the first time since the Laramie Project that faculty members were included in the cast.

“It was great fun to perform alongside the students. It truly made me step out of my comfort zone,” said Megan. “The energy and enthusiasm of the cast and crew was contagious, and I really enjoyed playing the villain!”

Francois commented, “It was scary at first because I had so much to learn and two songs to sing, but once I felt secure in my role, I really enjoyed being on stage!”

Yllan H. '21 said, “This was a new and exciting experience. Even though we didn't all know each other at first and were from different grades, we were really able to gel as a cast, and I had a lot of fun!”

Campbell F. '21 added, “I really enjoyed the different perspective of the story. It was great working with such a diverse and talented cast.”

The cast included Emmy H. '19, portraying the role of Dorothy. The other roles were performed by the following—Alejandro A. '20 as the Scarecrow, Calki G. '22 as the Tinman, Kylie B. '19 as the Lion, Ava B. '21 as Aunt Em/Glinda, and Yllan H. '21 as Uncle Henry. Assistant head of school Megan Walton portrayed Evillene (the Wicked Witch of the West), and alum and current faculty member Francois Tchoyi portrayed the Wiz.

The remaining members of the ensemble cast and crew included the following: Jana A. '20, Montse M. '20, Elana D. '19, Lily F. '21, Stella G. '22, Milo M. '20, Tina H. '20, Tony J. '20, Tereza J. '20, Linh K. '19, Karina K. '22, Cameron L. '21, Mishel L. '21, Judy Li '19, Tindi M. '21, Bibiana M. '21, Maria M. '21, Dan N., '21, and Lauren S. '19.

Kylie B. '19 served as stage manager, along with assistant Tristan G. '22. Robert W. '20 played acoustic bass, along with faculty member Dave Cosby on guitar. Shay B. '19 and Clay H. '20 created special makeup designs.

The Wiz performances were a wonderful theatrical and musical experience! It truly was a great time for all who attended! ♦



ALEJANDRO N.-A. '20, EMMY H. '19, KYLIE B. '19, CALKI G. '22



EMMY H. '19, ALEJANDRO N.-A. '20, KYLIE B. '19, CALKI G. '22



EMMY H. '19,
CALKI G. '22

SPRING CONCERT

AUTHOR:
DAVE COSBY



ALEJANDRO N.-A. '20,
EMMY H. '19, IVAN W. '20



SAWYER H. '20, SVEA A.
'20, STELLA G. '22



Spring Arts Weekend was already in full swing when the annual Spring Concert took place in the Zalk Theater at 3:00 p.m. on April 27. For those arriving, it may have looked a little chaotic as the stage was already full of instruments and musicians. However, it was soon clear that this was a part of the grand plan for the afternoon. After a few words of welcome from Besant Hill's new head of school, Portia Johnson, Dan Call, the Arts Chair, came to the stage to introduce his portion of the concert, which featured vocalists at Besant Hill School.

The first vocalist to perform was Yllan H. '21, singing "O Cessacte" by A. Scarlatti. Yllan was followed by Montse C. '20, singing "Seben Crudele" by A. Caldara. Following the lovely solo performance, Dan introduced a trio of singers—Emmy H. '19, Mishel L. '21, and Tereza J. '21—for the next three songs. The trio performed "The Water is Wide," a traditional folk song, "Where Do I Go from Here" by Ray Hannisian, and "Stabat Mater" by Pergolesi. Featuring a lovely three-part harmony and exquisite vocal blend, the three singers put on a wonderful performance that was an excellent platform to display all their hard work with Dan in vocal studies this semester.

Following the vocal portion of the concert, the instrumental music students began their portion. The

HARKRISHAN K. '20, CLAY H. '20



first group was the BHS Mixed Instrumental Ensemble, made up of students from Music Ensemble I (Seventh Period), Music Ensemble II, and Music Ensemble III. The ensemble performed a classic of concert band literature: *Fire Dance* by David Shaffer. Featuring shifts in time signature, key signature, and mood, it was an excellent showcase for the students of wide-ranging experience levels, from people who started just this year to students who have been playing their instruments for four years or more. The students of Music Ensemble I (Fifth Period), Music Ensemble II, and Music Ensemble III next performed Carl Maria Von Weber's best-known compositions in the *Hunters' Chorus*.

Following these performances of classic band and classical music literature, it was time for the Besant Hill music students to show the audience that they can rock out a little as well. Music Ensemble I (Fifth Period), Music Ensemble I (Seventh Period), and the Guitar Ensemble performed the iconic hard rock anthem "*Smoke On the Water*" by Deep Purple. Having shown their rock chops, it was time for the Besant Hill School Guitar Ensemble to perform the Baroque era Minuet in G Major by J. S. Bach. Instrumental students at Besant Hill School study a wide variety of music genres of

music. So for our next performance, the Music Ensemble II class performed a jazz classic: "*Work Song*" by Nat Adderley. The last group to perform was the Instrumental Music Ensemble III class, which teaches the highest level of instrumental music offered at Besant Hill School. For their part of the concert, they performed one of my original compositions that I had written as an undergraduate student for my senior recital, entitled "*Asha*", which is an Indian name that comes from the Sanskrit word for "hope."

For the final song of the concert, I arranged an old classic rock song, "*Magic Carpet Ride*," but gave it a twist by adding some Earth, Wind & Fire-inspired horn lines. So the arrangement turned out to be an eclectic smashup of Steppenwolf and the band Chicago. Featuring the soulful and mature-beyond-her-years singing of senior Emmy H. '19, it was a fun and uplifting way to end a concert that represented the culmination of a year of hard work and the growth of these student musicians.

All in all, this was a very good year in the Music Department of Besant Hill School, and the annual Spring Concert at Besant Hill School serves as a mode through which our students can share with the community their great work ethic and their artistic passions. ♦



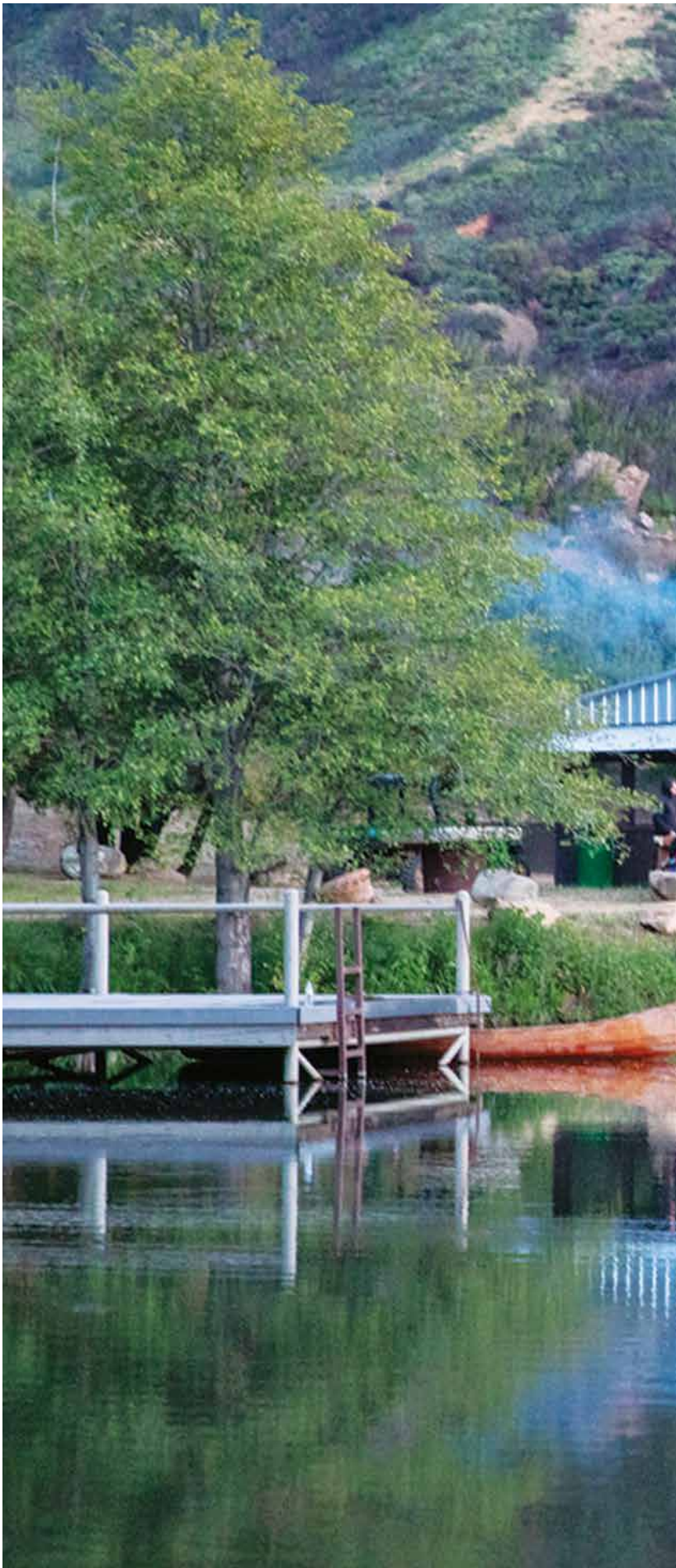
MONTSE C.-M. '20



DINING TOGETHER, JUNIOR RETREAT



HARKRISHAN K. '20 GETTING THE PERFECT SHOT



JUNIOR RETREAT

AUTHOR: MEGAN WALTON





HARKRISHAN K. '20 ON THE WATER AT RANCHO GRANDE



The annual junior retreat—chaperoned by Portia, Leland, and Megan—took place this year at Rancho Grande in the beautiful Rose Valley of the Los Padres National Forest. The ranch offered everyone an opportunity to connect with one another, get up close with the plethora of animals who make this spot their home, and enjoy a brief disconnect from the world of technology and social media.



Drawing upon the creative energy of the students in this class, we spent our time talking about their role in the school, the importance of their voice within the student body, and, most importantly, their class legacy at Besant Hill School. We know that this amazing group experience will guide the Class of 2020 toward a personal appreciation for their accomplishments as individuals while strengthening their bond as next year's senior class. ♦







SENIOR RETREAT 2019



JAMIE C. '19

SENIORS RETREAT TO PINE MOUNTAIN

AUTHOR: DOUG JESSUP

Led by Experiential Learning Coordinator Leland Fulton, Renaissance Man extraordinaire Néstor Geronimo and Advancement and Alumni Relations ace Kevin Henschel '93, Besant Hill's Class of 2019 enjoyed a restorative and reflective four-day Senior Retreat the week before their graduation, camping, hiking and communing with nature and one another way up on Pine Mountain set high above the Sespe Wilderness in the pristine Southern Los Padres National Forest.

On Day One the group caravanned to an elevation of 6,650 feet to establish camp and enjoy the stunning views of the valley below and the Channel Islands in the far distance. Tents were pitched and firewood was



DIEGO G. '19

gathered as numerous mini-excursions were ventured up along the ridges on either side of our campgrounds. After a sumptuous dinner highlighted by Néstor's picadillo and chorizo tostadas, a Council gathering ensued where everyone in the round shared their thoughts and feelings regarding their past experiences and reminiscences as members of the Coyote community.

After a frigid first evening, with temperatures dropping down into the mid-30's, more temperate climes prevailed on Day Two and some of the many layers being worn by all were eventually able to be shed. Corn hole, Frisbee golf, and card and board games enlivened the group, as did a trek enjoyed by several to a nearby summit. Another exercise requiring the seniors' attention was the drafting of their graduation speeches, and Portia joined the students for nearly two days to assist them in this enterprise. Supper our second evening was a delicious hit as Néstor again worked his magic preparing carne asada and al pastor tacos with all of the fixings,



SENIOR RETREAT 2019



SENIOR RETREAT 2019



followed by banana boats and s'mores and Council proceedings that invited everyone to focus on our present states of being and our collective mindfulness of the here and now.

A more comfortable evening for sleeping followed and daylight brought even warmer temperatures and rays of sun streaming through the canopy of Jeffrey and Sugar Pine and White Fir. Shannon joined the group for the final two days, provisioning visits to the camp were paid by Stan and Brian, and Mike and Doug rounded out the full-time corps of faculty adventurers. Speech writing and revision continued, a bouldering expedition led by Leland set off, and Kevin took over the honors of leading in the preparation of our final evening's feast highlighted by his secret recipes for Santa Maria style tri-tip and bacon-wrapped shrimp. Our final evening's Council meeting was subsequently dedicated around the campfire and everyone contemplated and shared their respective hopes, dreams and aspirations for the future.

An altogether memorable Senior Retreat was culminated by a hearty breakfast, the breaking of camp and a brisk five-mile hike down the mountain led by Leland and Shannon, where awaiting vehicles returned everyone back to town for one final midday Mexican meal at a local Ojai eatery before returning to campus in time for graduation rehearsal and the festivities of Commencement Weekend. ♦



JAIME C. '19 ROCK CLIMBING DURING SENIOR RETREAT

STUDENT GOVERNMENT

AUTHOR: MEGAN WALTON



Co-Presidents

Milo H.-M. '20 and Sawyer H. '20

It is with great pleasure and hearty congratulations that we introduce the members of the Besant Hill School student government for the 2019–2020 school year:

Senior Class Representative

Ivan W. '20

Representative

Anthony J. '20

Junior Class Representative

Dan N. '21

Representative at Large

Svea A. '20

Sophomore Class Representative

Keoni L. '22

Dorm Representatives

Ziyu “Emma” Z. '20

Thanh “Tina” H. '20

Akari I. '21

Harkrishan K. '20

Steven Z. '21

Jiwoong “Terry” K. '20

Yllan H. '21

Alejandro N.-A. '20

Day Student Representative

Ava B. '21

Business Manager

Karina K. '21



SUNNY H. '19, JUDY L. '19,
LINH K. '19, MIANG P. '21,
DAN N. '21, TINA H. '20,
ANNA Z. '19, JANA A. '20,
CALIKI G. '22

PROM

AUTHOR: MEGAN WALTON

Set against the backdrop of the Pacific Ocean, students boarded the majestic Scarlett Belle for a cruise through the Ventura Harbor. The setting provided a perfect complement for the Besant Hill School prom 2019 theme: "Ocean of Love!" The student body and their faculty chaperones enjoyed a delightful selection of hors d'oeuvres followed by a delicious buffet dinner and dessert, all while enjoying a spectacular view of the sunset over the sea.

Highlights of the evening included what has easily become the most festive dance party of the year, games of chance, candid photo ops, a candy "bar," the annual door prize raffle, a photo booth to commemorate the evening, and plenty of great fun for all in attendance. Having danced the night away, all safely returned to campus, happy for the opportunity to enjoy this tradition together as one community. ♦







JEWELRY BY ANNA Z. '19, CAPSTONE, 2019



SUNNY H. '19, CAPSTONE, 2019

CAPSTONE PROJECTS

AUTHOR: MIKE BIERMANN

The senior class began the process of developing their capstone projects in September. We first reviewed the basics of the program expectations, and they were instructed to think of a project that would be viable for them. They were asked to develop an independent experiential learning opportunity that culminates into a three-week project in May with the help of their parents, advisors, and teachers.

This year featured a wide variety of passions and interests. The projects ranged from artificial intelligence to jewelry making. There were projects that pertained to culinary arts, education, research in mathematical intuition, music production, business, and local art exhibition development. This year's projects took place in venues such as Beijing (China), Utah, Los Angeles, Ventura, and Ojai.

The seniors presented their capstone

projects in the Zalk Theater to their classmates, teachers, and staff members. The passion for their projects was evident in their presentations. The students challenged themselves and met the various challenges their projects presented. Some seniors were even offered summer employment opportunities because of their hard work and commitment to their project. Some realized that their experience was not something they would pursue in the future, yet they came away with an appreciation for the opportunity to develop that realization.

The Class of 2019 should be proud of their hard work for successfully completing their capstone projects. They should be proud of stepping outside the classroom into the real world and facing the challenges presented to them. Well done, seniors! ♦



KADU S. '19, CAPSTONE, 2019

COMMENDATIONS TORCH CEREMONY

AUTHOR:
MEGAN WALTON

The day before commencement is a day filled with tradition, some mundane, such as the year-end pack-out and all-dorm crew jobs, others poignant and memorable, as are the senior ISP ceremony and our year-end council. The emotion of the day culminates with one of the school's most treasured traditions: the commendations dinner and ceremony, including the passing of the torch.

Students and faculty gathered in community for one final dinner, affording all an opportunity to reminisce about the happenings of this year and give voice to their hopes for the next. The Commons was transformed into a grand dining hall, resplendent with fine linens and beautiful centerpieces created by Claire

ISP GRADUATION CEREMONY SHAY B. '19, KELLY HENSCHEL AND SUNNY H. '19



TORCH CEREMONY,
KUSILI '19, JIN L. '19,
EMMY H. '19,
SELENA N. '19 AND
PORTIA JOHNSON





DIEGO G. '19, ANNA Z. '19

and a few of her brilliant art students! A warm and well-deserved round of applause was directed to the dining staff in thanks for their amazing work throughout the year. Dinner was a sumptuous buffet, featuring some of the year's most popular and delicious dishes, lovingly presented by Chef Juana and the entire Besant Hill School dining staff.

Immediately following dinner, parents, family, and friends joined students and faculty in the Zalk Theater for the awarding of second-semester academic commendations. After opening remarks by Portia and Kelly, Kelly announced individual awards, with Portia, personally delivering them to each recipient. Next, Megan awarded Student Life awards to the outgoing co-presidents of student government, Ziqi Z. '19 and Selena N. '19, and to emerging leaders Yllan H. '21 and

Svea A. '20. Portia concluded the ceremony with the awarding of the Coyote Award. This award is given to honor a student who has shown leadership, outstanding participation, and enthusiasm in all areas of the school's co-curricular program. One student per semester is honored with the award at the conclusion of the commendations ceremony. The award is given through nomination from the faculty. This semester's Coyote Award winner was Jamie C., a four-year senior!

At the conclusion of the commendations ceremony, the rising senior class led all in attendance to the top of Senior Hill in anticipation of the passing of the torch. This ceremonial passing of the leadership of the school features the senior class, each member processing up the hill, carrying a lit candle, flanked by all members of the extended



YLLAN H. '21 RECEIVING THE LEADERSHIP IN
RESIDENTIAL LIFE AWARD

community. Once gathered at the top of the hill, Dave and senior Emmy H. '19 performed a lovely rendition of John Lennon's "Imagine." Portia reminded all of the significance of this tradition, and then surrounded by the senior tiles created by the outgoing class and those of classes before them, the outgoing senior class encircled the rising senior class and passed on their individual lights, representative of their wisdom and leadership of the school, to the class of 2020. Bringing the ceremony to a close, Portia invited all to share in our traditional moment of silence while appreciating the beauty of our land and the peace of a loving community. Imagine. ♦



HARKRISHAN K. '20



COMMENCEMENT

AUTHOR: MEGAN WALTON





KYLIE B. '19 GIVING HER GRADUATION SPEECH

Under the backdrop of an exceptionally cloudy and cool day, Besant Hill School's annual commencement exercise took place on Saturday, June 1, 2019. It was as if the Ojai Valley knew how bittersweet the day was as we bade farewell to twenty-two remarkably talented and kind members of the Besant Hill community.

Following a procession of faculty and graduates, Portia officially opened the 2019 graduation ceremony by introducing the graduating class, commending them for acceptance to over one hundred colleges and universities and as the recipients of more than more \$2 million in merit scholarship offers. She then invited the class to recognize their parents and faculty for all they have offered in support of their education. Next, through insight and information she has gleaned from

her well-documented obsession with podcasts, Portia addressed the graduates. She reminded them that they join her "as part of a privileged group of alumni of this incredible school," noting that, having immersed themselves in their academic and creative passions, they are each "truly, in your own way, the Besant Hill School Portrait of a Graduate."

Following her address, Portia presented the Wendy Morgando Teaching Award to this year's recipient, Betsy Stix. This recognition, determined by a vote of her peers, commends Betsy for excellence in all areas of school life for her enthusiasm, leadership, and dedication to the students at the Besant Hill School of Happy Valley. Noting a comment shared by a fellow faculty member, Portia summed up the feelings of all of Betsy's colleagues with these sentiments:

"She is a true blessing to our community. We are so lucky to have such positive and joyful spirit on campus." Congratulations, Betsy!

Next, in her introduction of this year's commencement speaker, David Anderson, Portia recognized David's important role in the history of the school, having served as a long-time faculty member and administrator as well as Interim Head of School of Besant Hill School for two years. Moreover, Portia fondly shared that David was also her former English teacher and mentor who, over the course of his tenure at the school, helped ignite a love of literature, writing, critical thinking, and analysis to innumerable students.

David's message to the seniors was inspirational and clever, likening their future opportunities to a beautiful buffet filled with choices and possibility. He cautioned them to select each option judiciously, sampling a bit of this and a bit of that, resisting any urgency to devour only those they believed were the most appealing. David ended his address with a touching poem wherein a mother recalls both the joy and pain of watching her child realize and rejoice in her freedom and independence. Many could identify with the sentiment of the reading and its significance on this special day.

The day was indeed made more special as Portia introduced the Besant Hill School tradition of presenting individual graduate remarks. Families, friends, faculty, peers, and alumni enjoyed the opportunity to hear from each member of the class as they took the podium to share their reflections of their time at Besant Hill and express their gratitude. Their eloquence and heartfelt words were appreciated by all. In response, Portia then thanked collectively the class of 2019 "for all that you have given, the many ways that you have responded to challenge, and for the intelligence and creativity that you brought to school each day."

After a brief closing reading by Kelly and a traditional moment of silence, Portia ended the 2019 commencement ceremony, sending twenty-two writers, artists, scientists, dreamers, and makers out into "a world that so desperately needs you." ♦

EMMY H. '19



ELANA D. '19





BESANT HILL SENIORS 2019

KYLIE B. '19



SHAY B. '19



JAMIE C. '19



ELANA D. '19



DIEGO G. '19



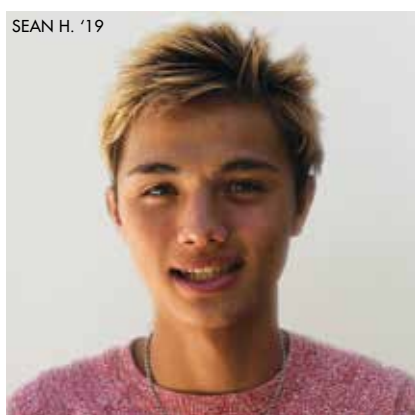
EMMY H. '19



LILLIAN H. '19



SEAN H. '19



SUNNY H. '19



TSUNAKI I. '19





KUSILI '19



LINH K. '19



JIN L. '19



JUDY L. '19



SHU L. '19



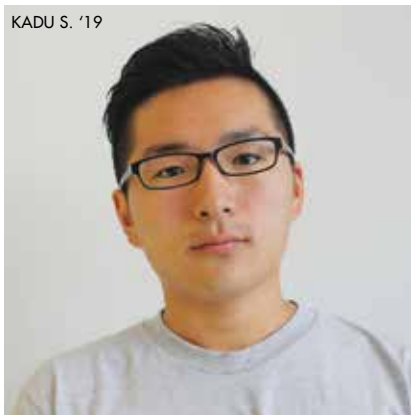
SELENA N. '19



LAUREN S. '19



KADU S. '19



MATTHAUS T. '19



ANNA Z. '19



CHARLIE Z. '19



ZIQI Z. '19



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

March

Jana
Tsunaki
Em
Emmett
Cameron
Bella L.
Adit
Tindi
"Kry"

April

Kylie
Ava
Peter
Sóley
Akari
Tereza
Nate
Siena
"Miang"
Bella W.
"Steven"

May

Terry
Mishel
Ben
"Bu"
Louis
"Darin"
Ziqi

June

Svea
Campbell
"Lillian"
Linh
Jessica
Robert
"Anna"



EVIE S. '22, TEREZA J. '20, BELLA W. '21

JANUARY OPEN HOUSE

AUTHOR: KRISTEN KASCHUB

The admission open house on January 21 was a huge success. We had a record number on campus, with over forty people traveling from Ojai and even as far as Saudi Arabia. Families had a chance to speak with administrators and tour the campus, students visited classes, and many stayed to enjoy lunch on the lawn with our school community. The day was beautiful, the campus looked pristine, and a special assembly allowed our visitors to experience why Besant Hill School is such a special place. ♦



EMMY H. '19

COLLEGE ACCEPTANCES

AUTHOR: DOUG JESSUP

Besant Hill's esteemed senior class, both individually and collectively, amassed impressive college returns during this past 2018-2019 admissions cycle, earning offers of admission from undergraduate institutions in twenty-two states across the country as well as universities in Korea and Japan. They will matriculate at schools in eight different states, the District of Columbia, and two foreign countries.

All told, our twenty-two seniors earned over one hundred favorable responses from seventy-eight different institutions of higher learning, ranging from national research universities to premier liberal arts and sciences colleges, professional art schools, culinary institutes, and music conservatories. While five seniors applied and were admitted exclusively to their top-choice college, the remaining seventeen seniors averaged a whopping five-and-a-half offers of admission per student. All the more impressive, our twenty-two seniors were

cumulatively awarded over two million dollars (\$2,070,000, to be exact) in merit scholarship funding, earning grants of up to \$50,000 per year, all of which are annually renewable.

Needless to say, these promising circumstances made for an even busier springtime as many of our seniors ventured to attend open houses for newly admitted students and participated in overnight stays on campuses across the nation as they undertook comparative analyses of the many variables that factor into determining the best all-around college fit. By May 1, 2019 (the National Reply Date), all of our seniors had secured places at their desired undergraduate destinations.

On behalf of the entire Besant Hill faculty and staff, I'd like to say how immensely proud all of us are of this year's extraordinary senior class. We wish them the very best in their future scholastic and personal endeavors. Heartfelt congratulations and Aún Aprendo! ♦

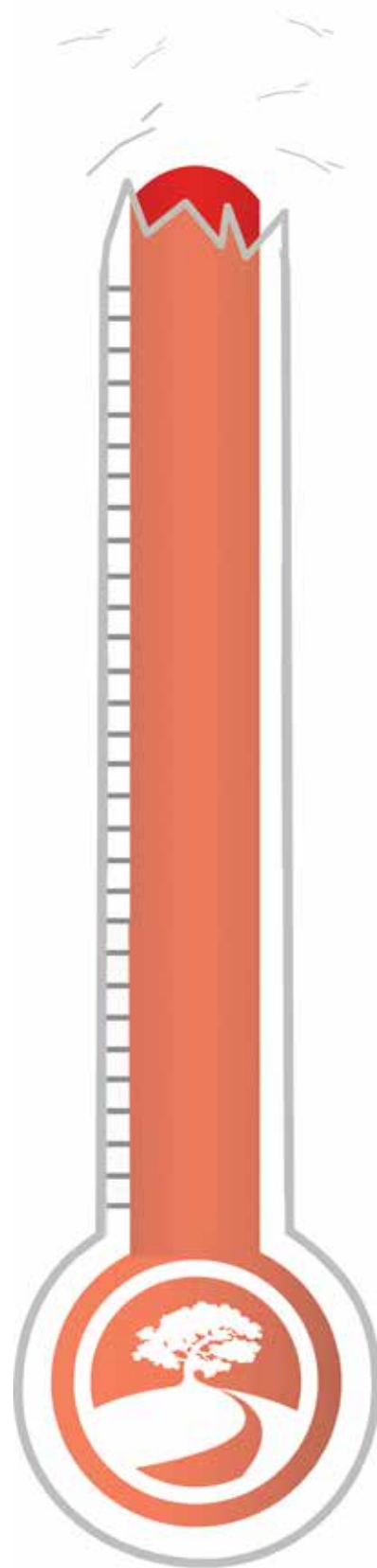
ANNUAL FUND UPDATE

"THE REWARD OF A THING WELL DONE
IS HAVING DONE IT."

-RALPH WALDO EMERSON

WE'VE DONE IT AGAIN! Our community rose to the challenge in this exciting transition year and exceeded the goal for our annual fund campaign, "Rising from the Ashes." We give special thanks to our faculty, staff, and administration, who 100 percent gave at 100%. Our alumni, led by the generosity of alumnus John S. Brown Jr. '67, current parents, Happy Valley Foundation trustees, and friends of the school all contributed to making our year so successful. We are ever grateful.

Gifts to the annual fund fill in the gap between what tuition and fees cover and what it actually costs to provide the exceptional educational experience at Besant Hill School *in the year the funds are raised*. Extra supplies for art, science, and music classes, special projects, activities, and clubs all come from these contributions. Exciting things are already in the works for next year. Please stay tuned!





FACULTY SPOTLIGHT:

THOMAS KEEN

AUTHOR: STANTON SMITH

On August 17, 2018, Besant Hill School welcomed Thomas Keen as Senior Associate Director of Admission. During the school year he worked as an admissions representative, an administrator on duty, helped out with the soccer team, and supported the school's marketing efforts, especially on social media. In his short time as a Besant Hill School staff member, he has already become a valuable member of the school's community.

Thomas was born at a boarding school outside of London, and then moved to another one outside of Boston before he was a year old. His father, a math teacher and now head of a middle school, and his mother, a school nurse and massage therapist, moved Thomas and his little sister to a Swiss school when he was entering 10th grade. After graduating high school, Thomas attended Royal Holloway, University of London, where he majored in Zoology (his favorite species is the mantis shrimp).

After Thomas received his degree, he spent six months volunteering in Ecuador at a small private zoo and a university rescue center. At the conclusion of his time in Ecuador, Thomas returned to the United States and

later embarked on a classic American road trip. Today, he has visited 34 states (including Alaska and Hawaii). Prior to joining Besant Hill School's admissions team, Thomas worked for Carlsbad International School in the Czech Republic as Admissions Director. He has also worked in Vietnam at a wildlife conservation NGO and in Bali as a tour guide.

Today Thomas is deeply interested in rooting himself into the Ojai Valley community. He frequently attends social mixers as part of the Ojai Valley Chamber of Commerce, local music events, and yoga classes. He enjoys traveling, following his favorite soccer team (Middlesbrough), and reading. He is developing a consistent yoga practice, and has been a vegetarian for a year and a half.

The Besant Hill School community is ecstatic to have Thomas' fresh ideas and happy personality on campus. Beyond speaking four languages (English, Spanish, French, Czech), Thomas is eloquent in his communication with prospective families about why Besant Hill School is such a remarkable place to call home. We look forward to many great years with Thomas as a faculty member. ♦



HOWL/ALUMNI

Authors: KATHY ZOTNOWSKI & KEVIN HENSCHER '93





TSUNAKI I. '19, DIEGO G. '19, KADU S. '19

100 NIGHTS

AUTHORS: KEVIN HENSCHER '93 & DANA DWIRE

Each year, one hundred nights before graduation, we gather with the seniors for a special evening. The meaning of this special dinner is to start the process of preparing our seniors to transition out of our community and to their next adventure. Key faculty and special guests join the dinner in a show of support to mark this unique occasion. There is always a past alumna or alumnus as the keynote speaker to share their experience of their last one hundred days at the school. The speaker offers advice to what the students can expect in the next steps of their lives while also relaying what the school has meant to them. Another aspect of the evening is asking the students to reflect on their own experience over the years and to create a reflection statement of advice for students



JAMIE C. '19



LILLIAN H. '19, KUSILI '19



RILEY WESTLING '13, PORTIA JOHNSON

in the future. These reflections are added to our legacy book and serve as a living history of amazing experiences and wisdom gained over the years.

As the students arrived, dressed in formal dining attire, they were seated and had casual conversation, most wondering what the evening would bring. The evening began with an introduction from our master of ceremonies, current Interim Head of School Portia Johnson. Students enjoyed a wonderful meal in the intimate setting of Ca' Marco. Hors d'oeuvres were followed by an entrée of each student's choosing (steak, chicken, or fish).

After the meal, we invited Riley Westling '13 to address the students. His message of following one's heart and being true to one's passions and to one's self was received by all with humor, inspiration, and contemplative thought. He shared his final days at the school with insights that can only come from a place of experience. He captivated his audience, and we are so thankful he was able to take the time from his busy life as an actor in LA to spend the evening with us.

After Riley, Kevin Henschel '93 led the students through a reflection exercise, where he asked the students to write on a card how they want to be remembered and advice for future students on how to best build their own legacy. They could decorate their card however they wanted. They could write a quote or a story. We encouraged them to make it their own. It was amazing to see them be such willing precipitants.

The evening concluded with the song, "I'll Be There" by Michael Jackson, performed by current senior Emmy H. It was a magical moment filled with sentiment that invoked a feeling of connectedness in all. Time is going to fly for these seniors, and we are so proud of the young women and men they are becoming. ♦

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

DINA LASKY '77

AUTHOR: MARION WEIL '60, ALUMNI LIAISON

Dina was born the 4th of 5 children to a family in Detroit, Michigan. Dad, Byron Lasky, was a self made phenomenon--a lawyer, owner of radio and TV stations, and a real estate developer who collaborated in California with Kaufman & Broad Real Estate building First Village in Westlake, California. In Dina's early years, the family moved to Malibu, California.

Like many spirited children, Dina acted out to get attention. Happy Valley School was her third private school, but first and only boarding school. Dina thinks that her parents perceived HVS, then under Director John Gorsuch, as "strict" but when Dina arrived in 1976 for her 9th grade she discovered otherwise. The upper valley dorm was co-ed, pet animals were allowed—including her pet rats "Cling and Clang"—and culturally the 1970's were an open time for exploration. Freedom from her family was supported by her being given parental permission to spend weekends at the home of a local Ojai friend.

Horses have been a big part Dina's life since she can remember, and are still today.

But probably the pivotal experience of her early teen life was the trip Dad created for the family the summer of '77, at the conclusion of Dina's HVS freshman year. For 6 weeks, their home base was a rented villa in Valbonne, the hills near Cannes. Dina recalls her folks supporting her adventurous freedom (at age 15) by letting her ride a "motobecane" (small motorcycle) alone from their hilltop home down to Cannes. That summer the family



visited Nice and Cannes, traveled in France, Italy, Switzerland, Morocco, and Spain! Her taste for traveling was undoubtedly first sparked by this experience.

Wanting independence at 16, with parental help, she moved out of the home to live with girlfriends; her first job was at Malibu Shoe Store. Never loving school, Dina's goal was to be a D.J. so she attended Columbia School of Broadcasting in Hollywood for several years. However, except for a brief stint at a radio station on the Pepperdine University campus, she never used it. Instead in 1983 at age 22, she joined her oldest brother Matt in Westways Travel, a travel agency then located in Westwood, now in Malibu, and her traveling and travel agency years ignited. She became a part owner and was associated with it for 24 years until 2010 when she leapt to Frosch Travel, a major travel agency with 46 offices. To this day, her travel agent career remains very active and strong. You can see her current career profile [here](#).

Dina's first home in Pacific Palisades was purchased in 1994, since then she has sold and bought 4 homes. For the 15 years before buying her home in Ojai this year (2019), Dina lived in Malibu Lake, Agoura Hills. "Ojai," says Dina, "really feels like home." She is grateful to have the freedom to work from home with a steady base of high-end clients, the time to ride her two horses, get back into a real



yoga practice, and reconnect with HVS/BHS, which gave her deep friendships, a strong connection to nature and community, and her first taste of international culture (the student across the dorm hall was from Japan, and her roommate was from Ecuador). She says: "I would do my Happy Valley days again in a heartbeat!"

Besides her active Travel Agent career, Dina has had a steady stream of second/side businesses and careers, including her most

recent one as organizer and travel agent for saxophone player Warren Hill's Jazz Festivals in Cabo San Lucas, Cancun Mexico and Puntacana Dominican Republic. To hear Dina talk about these "side" careers, it's clear to me that she definitely has some of her father's entrepreneurial spirit!

Dina has had a 3 year and a 10 year marriage and no children. We at HVS/BHS are happy to welcome her sophisticated, delightful, and energetic spirit back home, to Ojai. ♦

DISTINGUISHED SPEAKER SERIES

Our distinguished speaker series welcomed Prof. Padmanabhan Krishna—Executive Director of the Krishnamurti Study Center at the Rajghat Education Center of the Krishnamurti Foundation India in Varanasi, India—for our most recent April event. Professor Krishna is an expert on both Krishnamurti and Dr. Annie Besant and was asked to enlighten our students about the school's namesake.

Dr. Krishna was born in Chennai (South India) but grew up in Indore (Central India), where his parents were educators. After completing his BSc from Holkar College, Indore, he joined Delhi University for his MSc in Physics. In 1957–1958, he first met and heard Krishnamurti. In 1959, he joined the Banaras Hindu University (BHU) for his PhD and continued to listen to Krishnamurti during his visits to the foundation center at Rajghat, Varanasi. After completing his PhD, he was appointed as a faculty member in the Physics Department of BHU.

He has published two books and over seventy papers based on his research work in science. He has held visiting scientist positions at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, the Cambridge Research Labs in Boston, the University of Bristol, England, and the Max Planck Institute in Stuttgart, Germany, at different times. He was a physics professor at the university when, in 1985, Krishnamurti asked him to take charge of the Rajghat Education Center as its rector and



the Rajghat Besant School as its principal. He worked in this capacity until 2003 and has since been in charge of the Krishnamurti Study Center at Rajghat. He has lectured all over the world on Krishnamurti's teachings, education, science, and society.

Professor Krishna spoke with passion about Annie Besant, helping the students better understand the woman who is most responsible for our school being here today. He left all of us with a sense of how brave and inspirational she was. Professor Krishna explained emotionally at times that Annie's commitment to her causes came at great personal sacrifice. Professor Krishna brought a teacher's quality to the conversation, and we are so thankful for the time and energy he gave to our entire community. ♦

ALUMNI VISITS



LINDA AND JOHN HARDHAM '67



RUDY NEISSER '52



MICHAEL ANEKWE '18, DAVE COSBY, SHANICE KALIMA '17, TOBY ZENG '18

Michael Anekwe '18
 Eric "Lorenzo" Chambliss '59
 Peter Chambliss '61
 John Hardham '67 and wife Linda Hardham
 Arthur Hughes '55-'60 and wife Lainie Hughes
 Shanice Kalima '17
 William Kaplan '63
 Dina Lasky '77
 Sirr Less '92
 Claire Noyes Lewis '60
 Marion Miller Martin '57
 Rudy Neisser '52

Mary Keith Osborn '59
 Lisa Marie Presley '83-'84 and children
 Ken Tennen '66
 Anne Friend Thacher '60
 Jan Caldwell-Thorpe '60
 with husband Larry Thorpe and
 son and daughter-in-law Gabrielle
 and Trevor Thorpe
 Bruce Walker '60 and wife Delores Walker
 Nina Ward '52
 Marion "Ruth" Weil '60
 Toby Zeng '18

If you visited the campus and you're not listed here, it means we missed your visit! Please let us know by emailing Alumni Relations Officer, Kevin Henschel '93, at khenschel@besanthill.org. To ensure that you're included in future editions, please check in with the Main Office and get your visitor lanyard.

ALUMNI UPDATES

A Centennial Celebration for Founder Louis Zalk's Daughter Helene Zalk Pollock

Helene Zalk Pollock, one hundred years young, was celebrated by family and friends at her home in Montecito, California, this past January. Surrounded by her children—including HVS alumnus Tom Pollock '60 and daughter Margo Sinclair as well as her husband, Daniel (in from New York City)—four grandchildren and their spouses, and six great-great-grandchildren plus many, many friends from over the years, Helene enjoyed a day filled with love, laughter, and heartfelt reminiscences.

Director of Development and Alumni Relations Kathy Zotnowski represented the Happy Valley School/Besant Hill School



portion of Helene's life at the celebration. Helene continues to carry on the vision of her father, founder Louis Zalk, through her generosity as she and her late husband, Dr. Joseph Pollock, had done since the 1940s. We can only hope to live a fraction of the extraordinary life of this inspirational woman and benefactress to our school!



John S. Brown Jr. '67 Celebrates 70!

John S. Brown Jr. '67 looked every bit the king of the castle as friends, including Director of Development and Alumni Relations Kathy Zotnowski, gathered at the Capital Canyon Club in Prescott, Arizona, to celebrate his seventieth birthday in January. Balloons and memorabilia from the year of John's birth, 1949, filled the room, with candy that premiered in that year (Smarties, Junior Mints, Jolly Rancher, Whoppers, originally known as Giants) strewn on the tables as a treat for all. Great food, lively libations, and a scrumptious carrot cake (John's favorite) were lovingly enjoyed, along with warm conversations about John's memorable life. John is a gift to HVS-BHS, and we are honored to be among the beneficiaries of his huge heart.

SPRING ARTS WEEKEND: 60TH-ISH REUNION

The classes of 1958 and 1959 celebrated their 60th class reunion at this year's Spring Arts Festival/Family Weekend. Alumni from both classes were joined by former fellow classmates from 1957 to 1977! In addition to attending the many art and music events throughout the weekend, the alumni were treated to a special Sunday brunch at the exceptional home of alumni liaison, Marion "Ruth" Weil '60 in beautiful downtown Ojai. New Head of School, Portia Johnson participated in an informative Q&A, allowing the alumni to get to know her and answering their questions about the current life of the school. A spectacular time was had by all! ♦



ALUMNI BRUNCH FEATURING Q&A WITH NEW HEAD OF SCHOOL PORTIA JOHNSON



MARION MILLER MARTIN '57 AND MARION "RUTH" WEIL '60 (THE MARIONS OF THE "LEAVE YOUR HOME TO HAPPY VALLEY CAMPAIGN!") AT THE ALUMNI BRUNCH FOR THIS YEAR'S 60TH-ISH REUNION AT MARION WEIL'S OJAI HOME.



“CELEBRATION OF EXTRAORDINARY LIVES” LEAVES LASTING MEMORIES

Alumni, faculty, students, parents, staff and friends gathered on Saturday, April 27 in the Zalk Theater to celebrate the lives of departed alumni Michael Hathaway '59, Olivia Barclay Jones '58, Lana Caffey '58 and Aleta Friend London '63. The afternoon began with remarks from our new Head of School, Portia Johnson '00, followed by an exquisite rendition of Sarah McLachlan's *I Will Remember You* by senior Emilia "Emmy" Hilgers '19 and Music Department Chair Dave Cosby on guitar. Remarks followed from HVF Trustee Jan Caldwell Thorpe '60 and former HVF Trustee Anne Friend Thacher '60. Both delivered poignant stories, some that had us tearful and others that put a smile on our faces and made us laugh. Kathy Zotnowski, Director of Development & Alumni Relations read a moving tribute by Linda Zalk Levitt '59 for "Livi" Barclay Jones and introduced a memorial video presentation of all the deceased. Kevin Henschel '93, Officer of Development & Alumni Relations, unveiled the "Deceased Student Memorial" - a glorious sculptural fire pit of a phoenix rising, inscribed with "Aun Aprendo" to be placed on top of Senior Hill. The memorial will include the engraved names of deceased alumni, beginning with the afternoon's honorees among others. The celebration concluded with our traditional music, reading, and moment of silence. Guests then enjoyed a delectable dinner prepared by the school's culinary staff where they could continue to reminisce and share memories of our dearly departed. ♦

IN MEMORIAM

Michael Hathaway '59
1941-2019

Author: Richard Parker



We can only wish all the beautiful moments we shared remembering Michael could fill the empty space in our hearts. Of course, only Michael's brand of love can fill that now forever empty space. Below, you will find the details of his life and death written by his dear friend Richard Parker. Simply put, he loved his high school all of his life and stayed committed to it all of his days. We miss him dearly.

*For the sweetest, wisest soul of all my days
and lands—and this for his dear sake,
Lilac and star and bird twined with the chant
of my soul,
There in the fragrant pines and the cedars
dusk and dim.*

—Walt Whitman,
“When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd”

Michael Hathaway was both a seeker and a vagabond. Born on the eve of World War II, he grew up on a majestic Richard Neutra-designed estate in Ojai and then lived from the age of seventeen until his death last week at seventy-seven mostly in Santa Barbara—but also, for variety's sake, in San Francisco, Palo Alto, Cambridge, Berlin, Hydra, Prague, and Kathmandu. After spending decades working as an environmental, antiwar, and gay rights activist, he focused during his final years on publishing several books, the last in 2018, a kaleidoscopic memoir he hoped “distilled,” he said, “the possible happiness of life.”

The almost gravitational pull of Michael's loving spirit, deep intelligence, and unstinting idealism—which so memorably, so often quickly enveloped so many of the people he met—had its taproots in his mystical German immigrant mother, his loving and erudite American diplomat grandparents, and his supremely unusual early schooling.

His mother and stepfather chose to send Michael to Ojai's Happy Valley School, an extraordinary experiment (certainly by 1950s standards) in “alternative education,” built around the teaching of Annie Besant, a founder of Theosophy, as well as Krishnamurti, Aldous Huxley, and potter Beato Wood, all prominent figures at the school.

Happy Valley (now the Besant Hill School)

in those Eisenhower years eclectically wed a rigorous curriculum to a thirsty Eastern-spiritualist-inspired search for joyful encounters with the divine. The singularity of Michael's early education served him well though. Admitted to Stanford, he excelled at Russian language, culture, politics, and history (while also part of the rowing varsity crew), went on to Harvard for graduate work, and then won prestigious fellowships to study at the Free University of Berlin as well as then Communist Prague's ancient Charles University.

By his early twenties, Michael was a master of seven languages and their cultures, an achievement that seemed to predict a life of teaching and writing—until the Vietnam War in 1967 led him away from Harvard to the peace movement and soon afterward on to the national staff of Eugene McCarthy's 1968 upstart presidential bid. Then in quick succession, McCarthy's defeat, Michael's painful wounding during the police riots at Chicago's Democratic Convention, and Richard Nixon's election pushed him in more new directions.

For a time, he morphed, he later recalled, into “a longhaired, VW-van-living hippie” until, running out of money, he moved to Santa Barbara. There, through friends, he found work at the old Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, Robert Maynard Hutchins's legendary liberal think tank, where he found himself mixing with Nobel laureates, heads of state, poets, anarchists, philanthropists, titans, and Hollywood legends.

His sojourn at what later was dubbed a “proto Davos on the beach” ended with his vacation visit to the magically beautiful Greek island of Hydra, where young Michael realized that the

\$2,000 he'd by then saved could buy the ruins of a handsome four-hundred-year-old house on Hydra's rocky hillside. For the next two years, he painstakingly restored the ruin with the help of his friend Yorgo and a pair of donkeys that quite grudgingly portered building supplies up the steep path from the port below. With the restoration complete, Yorgo suddenly prompted a new adventure by announcing that he was moving to Kathmandu. Michael, caught off balance but primed by Happy Valley and his mother's mystical enthusiasms, quickly agreed to follow—with life-challenging results.

"Besides wondrous experiences and shedding many illusions," he later wrote, "I came down with a hugely debilitating year long bout with hepatitis. I lost 60 pounds."

The illness meant returning to Santa Barbara to recover, where, after several difficult months, he turned again in a new direction. Inspired by his friend Ralph Nader and by the thousands of then emerging social, political, and spiritual activists, he wrote and published a gorgeous hand-illustrated and intensely iconoclastic *Calendar of Contemporary Saints*, a book fully expressive of the eclectic early 1970s, which won him high praise from the likes of Marshall McLuhan, Buckminster Fuller, Jerry Brown, and several brave members of Congress—and ended up on the *Today Show*, touted by an enthusiastic (but not quite comprehending) Gene Shalit.

As the calendar's sales took off, Michael, always restless, turned to the work of helping reshape Santa Barbara's then much more conservative political landscape. Most memorably, he co-founded the *Santa Barbara News & Review*, the *Independent's* feisty predecessor, where he wrote, edited, designed, pasted up, and delivered the paper.

By the late 1970s though, the vagabond spirit had caught up with him again, this time tugging him north to San Francisco and into two decades as an environmental activist. Working first with his beloved friend David Brower at Friends of the Earth, he soon joined Brower in co-founding Earth Island Institute, which, wildly successful today, sponsors nearly eighty different projects all over the world, supported by more than a hundred staffers and multimillion-dollar budgets.

In the mid-1980s, vagabond Michael moved once again, this time to the Russian River, an hour north of San Francisco, where he spent a

rich decade writing, working in the renowned Occidental Gardens, hiking, making music and art, gardening, and hunting wild mushrooms. His love of cooking, he would later proudly tell friends, "reached entirely new levels thanks to West Sonoma's farms and gardens—some of America's most wondrous."

In the early 1990s, he returned for a final time to Santa Barbara to help care for his mother. With her death at ninety-six as the century ended, he committed himself to crafting a connected series of memoirs whose central purpose was, in his words, "to show the possible happiness and satisfaction of life."

Entering middle age, he admitted recently, he sometimes briefly felt a measure of despair "as Cheney and Bush revealed themselves—as ever more astonishingly dangerous, destructive, and dishonest, more and more threatening to democracy, the world order, the environment, social justice, and more." The Obama years restored a (qualified) measure of hope, which allowed him to rebalance his activism with more time for writing.

Last year, after a decade of writing and rewriting, he completed and published his nearly six-hundred-page *The Possible Happiness of Life*, a majestic tour d'horizon not just of his kaleidoscopic life but also the world in which he'd lived it, cross-cut by encounters with Aldous Huxley and Alan Watts, the mind-altering possibilities of both meditation and lovemaking, the centrality above all of the beauty and kindness and courage he unwaveringly believed exists in all of us.

Shortly before Christmas last month, Michael flew to Seattle and then ferried over to Vashon Island to spend the holiday with friends. Heading back a week later to California, he went down to the island's ferry dock—where, suddenly, his chest constricted in pain. He called his friends to ask if he could come back for the night. Ten minutes later, they were driving him back to their home, where he said he was feeling better. They settled him in a big chair in front of their fireplace and fixed him a cup of tea. He took a sip, again said he was feeling better, and then put the cup down—and as his eyes closed softly, his head rested forward.

He was pronounced dead by paramedics shortly thereafter. ♦

IN MEMORIAM



Aleta Friend London '63

Former HVF trustee Anne Friend Thacher '60 shared with us loving reminiscence of her sister and fellow HVS alumna, Aleta Friend London. Though Anne had us laughing, we all feel the weight of loss from Aleta's passing.

As fellow classmate Manuel Reyes-Otalora recalled,

Aleta was one of my cherished classmates at the Happy Valley School from the fall of 1960 until we graduated in the spring of 1963. She was gentle and sweet and had a great sense of humor. She was also shy, as was I, and our English and drama teacher, Mickey Solomon, cast us in the lead roles of *Hello Out There*, by William Saroyan. We did two performances in the main building's theatre/folk dance room/assembly/recital hall. She was a brilliant Katie. Mickey somehow pulled talent out of us we never knew we had. That is a special experience Aleta and I shared and one for which I have always remembered Aleta. We were congratulated by David Persoff's uncle, actor Nehemiah Persoff, who was in the audience and made it a point to spend some time with us after the performance, showering us, Sam Anderson, and Mickey Solomon with nurturing comments. Unforgettable . . . "Hello Out There!"

(Published in Ventura County Star on November 16, 2018)

Aleta Friend London was born to Elmer and Florence Friend on the first day of spring in 1945 and passed on November 7 from sudden onset respiratory failure. She leaves behind her family in Ojai, including son Robert Kittredge (Charlotte), sister Anne Thacher (Tony), nephew George Thacher (Marcia), and niece Emily Ayala (Tony). She was an outstanding great-aunt to Matthew, Andrew, Mariana, Oliver, and Celeste. In Bishop, she leaves stepson Craig London (Carmen) and her friends from the Rock Creek Pack Station. She fiercely loved her family and friends, always remarking how lucky we are to have one another.

Aleta's early years were spent in Ojai, where her father was a prominent citrus rancher. Growing up, Aleta worked for the family ranch, running the irrigation, packing tangerines, and wanting to have a horse instead of a tractor. She had fond memories of being schooled by Monica Ros through the fifth grade, when she discovered her love for reading and writing and made lifelong friends. Aleta attended San Antonio School and graduated from Happy Valley (now Besant Hill) School in 1963 and then attended UC Davis.

Aleta married Bob Kittredge in 1965 and moved to Florida, where her son Robert was born. When her marriage to Bob ended, Aleta returned to Davis

to finish her degree in English and subsequently returned to Ojai to work for the family business and raise her son.

In the late seventies, while vacationing in the Eastern Sierras, she met the love of her life, Herbert London, who owned and ran Rock Creek Pack Station. Herb and Aleta were married in 1984 and, for many years, split their time between Ojai and Bishop, hauling furred and feathered friends between their two homes. Known as Allie to those in Bishop, she, along with Herb, enjoyed many adventures: pack trips, day rides, an extensive trip to Australia, and picnics in the Eastern High Sierra and beyond.

Aleta would always state, "I don't work for Rock Creek," yet for decades, Aleta was always there for Herb and Rock Creek Pack Station. She was a great hand—taking day rides, helping with spot trips, driving guests, and organizing the food service. Aleta touched many lives at the pack station, and all are richer for having known her.

Aleta had many horses and mules during her life and was especially proud of her mule Joe, who was trained to be a world-champion green-cow-working mule. Aleta loved animals and would characterize people by how they treated both wild and domestic creatures around them. Some of Aleta's happiest times were with her horses, riding in the mountains or desert or simply taking her dogs on walks.

After Herb passed in 2011, Aleta moved full time to Bishop. When not helping the pack station, she enjoyed volunteer work, helping kids learn to read, working on projects with the hospital auxiliary, assisting master gardeners' activities, and helping

with Mule Days activities for the youth.

Aleta was authentic, hard-working, kind, and selfless. Her great smile, a zest for life, and a desire to help others characterized her life. Wherever Aleta was, she provided leadership and made things work. She was the star in the background, making sure the organizations she worked with succeeded, never seeking the limelight for all she did.

Everywhere she lived, Aleta's door was open; if you stopped in, she would offer a beverage, the conversation would flow, and a meal would be prepared. She could really cook. Aleta made amazing meals from findings from her garden, a nice cut of meat and parcels from her freezer or fridge. Nothing was wasted; she would keep the water from boiling potatoes to make soup stock as well as scraps for the chickens and dogs, and everything was recycled. She always kept chickens and couldn't understand why any sensible person would not have a coop. Sitting down at her kitchen table for a chat over a cup of coffee, cocktails, or a meal was a treat. If you had never had a glass of freshly squeezed OJ from Ojai, she would make sure you did. What she had was to be shared, from food to books, conversation, or a fierce game of Scrabble.

Aleta would not want anyone to bemoan her sudden passing. Her wishes would surely be for folks to get outside and enjoy a beautiful place, a picnic somewhere pretty, or a quiet moment with a pet. In lieu of flowers, she would prefer that you plant something, scatter some wildflower seeds, or work in your garden. ♦



SAVE THE DATES

SAVE THE DATE: June 18-21, 2020

**SIXTIETH-ISH REUNION FOR THE CLASS OF 1960
AND FIFTIETH-ISH REUNION FOR THE CLASS OF 1970
AND ALL THOSE CLASSES ON EITHER SIDE ...**

Come reconnect with your former classmates, stay in the dorms, attend interesting and entertaining "classes," eat in the dining commons, enjoy morning assembly in the Zalk, and many more fun activities!



HVS-BHS CONNECT

Our alumni interactive database site – where you can search for your classmates and get information about reunions, local gatherings, current campus happenings, mentoring opportunities, and job possibilities continues to grow.

Watch your email for HVS-BHS newsletters and encourage your classmates to join!

PLEASE CONTACT KEVIN HENSCHEL
WITH QUESTIONS AT
KHENSCHEL@BESANTHILL.ORG
OR (805) 646-4343 EXT. 344

DEVELOPMENT & ALUMNI RELATIONS UPDATES

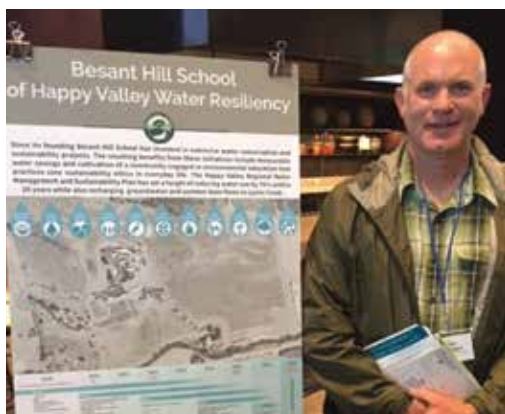
Graduway Gives More for Alumni Networking Platform HVS-BHS Connect

Alumnus and Development and Alumni Relations Officer Kevin Henschel '93 and Director of Development Kathy Zotnowski headed to UCLA in March to learn about all the exciting upgrades to our alumni networking platform HVS-BHS Connect. Hosted by the platform's developer, Graduway, Kevin and Kathy attended a number of sessions geared toward enhancing the alumni experience when using the site.

If you haven't signed up, you're missing out on all things HVS-BHS, including photo albums, reunion announcements, and job opportunities. To register, go to hvs-bhsconnect.com/.



Localizing Water Conference Wets Our Appetite for Conservation



This past April, Development and Alumni Relations Officer and alumnus Kevin Henschel '93, Director of Sustainability Brian McColgan, and Director of Development and Alumni Relations Kathy Zotnowski attended the first Tri-County Regional Water Summit in Ojai, California, held at the newly constructed "farmhouse" at Ojai Valley Inn and Spa. The Localizing California Waters Summit was aimed at giving space for the exchange of ideas and successful strategies to benefit water security, fire/flood management, and instream flows (to name a few) as well as the opportunity to create a larger framework for voluntary agreements

and collaborative approaches among stakeholders.

The conference explored the many geographical similarities and vulnerabilities of coastal San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura Counties. Focuses included water security, the diminishing of instream summer base flows, water equity, and heightened fire and flooding risks. Several organizations in Ventura County have successfully worked on streamlining efforts to reach a shared water vision, such as the Ventura River Watershed Council, Central Coast Water Conservancy, and local IRWMs. The two days provided a wealth of opportunity to learn about sustainability, water and land management, grant opportunities, and the network of grant makers. Brian, Kathy, and Kevin look forward to working with the many agencies and their personnel to bring financial resources to campus to enable us to sustain our natural resources! ♦

