

# THE CHANNEL

The newsletter of the Bolinas-Stinson Beach School Foundation  
*Providing funds to enrich the education of the children of our community*



## Playing to Learn

Exploration into a wide variety of activities combats boredom, stimulates brain growth and offers children the possibility of discovering an area in which they can excel. Last year a grant from the Bolinas-Stinson Beach School Foundation kick-started the school's After School Program, with the goal of engaging children by offering them the widest variety of options possible.

By combing the variety of talent among our school staff, parents and community, the program provided exactly that.

Thanks to the educational know-how of parent and biologist Sarah Warnock, the After School Program week now looks like this: Mondays finds a dozen or so white lab-coated girls combining soluble and insoluble materials into a fragrant lip balm, across the hall a small but devoted group munch on brie while learning introductory French. Students challenge themselves with advanced math on Tuesdays, and Wednesdays offers a difficult choice between Art in Nature or Odyssey of the Mind. Thursdays, Anny Owens' Music Tribe dominates. This eclectic group of talented kids learned to control

their instruments and their impulses to produce some wonderful music. Then, it's Friday and where would you expect to find 18 or so K-6th graders at the end of a long, hard week at school? Packing the back classroom, intent on chess, under Nate Siedman's professional instruction. As always, on most days, clay-covered kids continue to produce minor masterpieces in Kathy Bustamante's beloved clay class. As the after school program develops in the 2008-2009 year under new coordinator Molly Maguire, new and exciting programs are being imagined and implemented.

*Above: Mickey Murch helps Anna, Mara and Colby learn how organic farming connects animals and vegetables with the cycle of growth. Below from left: drilling holes for a box kite; Leaning Tower of Echium; chess challenge; mixing coconut, cocoa butter and beeswax for lip gloss; Red Berry Circle. Photos: F Crush, S Warnock.*



# bunnies, barbecues & bounty

It was back in April, during the Bolinas-Stinson School's Track and Field event, that I dug my grave. I made the mistake of bringing my 6-month-old puppy to the school's track and field day and let's just say that quite a few people were very unhappy when one of the 7th grade sprint events abruptly ended in a pile of children and puppies. The next thing I knew, I was volunteering to co-chair this year's Harvest Faire (a guilty conscience always wins).

Even though we only had six weeks, my co-chair Kristen Noel and I got things rolling with the help of some hard working parents and donations from local businesses (see below). Ultimately, we were able to create a fabulous day that was filled with lots of smiles and full bellies. I'm always amazed at how great it is to be involved in an event that enfolds the school community with the greater communities we live in.

This year the kids played their hand at catching a prize or two with their fishing poles, bean bags, balloon darts or basketballs under the watchful eye of the current middle-schoolers and recent graduates. There was a preponderance of cakes for the cake-walk (a modified

version of musical chairs, resulting in a grinning kid walking away with a cake in his/her arms). We enjoyed freshly pressed cider spawned from local trees laden with crisp apples. Children with faces painted as tigers and butterflies hugged baby bunnies that were so cute you wanted to take them home. The BBQ was scrumptious, the desserts were demolished (we were down to selling individual animal crackers by the end of the day), and the Harvest Table was bountiful. The music tickled our ears while the splash seat got everyone wet (including, of course, the principal). One beloved aspect of the Harvest Faire is the Scarecrow auction, where parents and townsfolk put on their creativity caps and built fantastic scarecrows to be auctioned off, ultimately living in gardens and driveways, or lounging on fence posts throughout town (check out the tall lady in front of the Stinson school campus).

It was a fabulous event with all the proceeds benefiting the Bolinas-Stinson Beach School Foundation. And even though this year's Harvest Faire has come and gone, you'll have a chance to participate the next time around, so start planning your scarecrow now!

*Belle Wood, parent and Foundation Board Member*

*From left: Butterfly and tiger, pie eating extravaganza, scarecrows, bean bag throwing and the Murches make cider. Photos: Kelly Giest*



*With thanks to the following businesses and individuals for their generous donations to this year's Harvest Faire:*

Bob Dill  
Bolinas People's Store  
Bolinas Fire Department  
Bolinas General Store  
Bordenave's Bakery

The Coast Café  
Don's Liquors  
Don Murch & Sarah Hake  
Highway One Properties  
Jim & Susan Tacherra

Kelly Giest  
Lisa Bell  
Marin Sun Farms  
Mesa Beverage  
Nate Siedman

Safeway, Mill Valley  
The Sand Dollar Restaurant  
Stinson Beach Market  
The West Marin Citizen

*and for the wonderful music of This Old Earthquake and The Mushrooms*

# acting Out

Last year, the Foundation supported the 8th grade class trip to the Ashland Shakespeare Festival with a grant. As the parent in charge of fundraising and the budget, I know we could not have made the trip without this help.

The trip to Ashland was the culmination of the students' English and Literature studies, as well as an opportunity for an intimate farewell to the group who had been together since kindergarten. It was a five day trip, with three days immersed in the atmosphere of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

In those three days, the students attended a backstage tour for a comprehensive look at what goes into creating the final productions that they would see and an acting workshop at Oregon State University. They also attended two prologues to scheduled plays which helped students to understand the historical context of the plays, along with the dramatic themes of the production. As a parent, I was impressed with the quality of these educational workshops and the kid's level of interest and participation.

Alongside daily discussions of the plays and written exercises with their teacher, the students saw three plays and a few even opted for a fourth - *A Midsummer's Night's Dream*, *A Comedy of Errors*, *Fences* (a contemporary play by August Wilson, with King Lear overtones), and *Othello*. It was a fantastic experience for the class and the accompanying parents - a way to make Shakespeare and theatre in general come alive. It must have made an impression as the class has been inspired to visit the Berkeley Repertory Theater this winter.



*from left: Natalia Vergara, Malia Bisson, Clay Griebel-Thorpe, Lena Geupel, Georgia Mowry. Middle row: Sophia Rose, Sam Blake, Savahna Rippe, Justice Kelley. Top: Cloe McCollum, Jacob White, Kayanti Kootz, Jesse Butler, Clayton Ferrari, and West Bowler.*

The journey ended with the traditional river rafting trip before heading home to graduation. It was an experience I really believe that they will all remember fondly. Thank you to the Foundation for your help in funding such a great trip!

Christine Frazita

## Techno learning

The School's Learning Center students and staff are grateful to have been the recipients of a Foundation Grant for the purchase of two Acer PC laptops as well as dedicated specialized educational software. The laptops make specialized software portable and available to the greatest number of students in their classrooms, the Learning Center and any other academic settings around the campus. The Edmark program is a research based, sequential, interactive reading program that uses a multimodality approach to teach and reinforce reading decoding and comprehension skills. The SOLO software is recommended by the Marin Technology Resource Center countywide to support students in written language across all curricular content areas. The other software assists students with vocabulary development, typing and the Dragon software improves student written production using voice recognition technology. This specialized software requires the latest PC technology. The Acer laptops provide Bolinas Stinson students with the latest, research based, educational technology.

Mechelle Cattell

*Below, from left: Acting workshop at the University of Southern Oregon; preparing to put in the Rogue River. Photos: C Frazita*



November 2008

Dear Friends, Neighbors and Parents,

As the first rains usher in the holiday season, we take a moment to reflect on the dynamic communities in which we raise our children. Our students and educators have all been enriched by the incredible generosity and financial support of the families, friends and neighbors who have responded to the call from the Bolinas-Stinson Beach School Foundation to invest in our children.

For over ten years the Foundation has provided financial assistance to enhance multi-disciplinary programs in our school. To each and every one of you who have previously supported the Bolinas-Stinson Beach School Foundation, we are deeply grateful for your commitment. We are especially thankful to community members who may not have a child in our school, but who clearly see the importance of providing exciting and challenging learning opportunities for our children.

Today, we are writing to ask for your financial support to the Bolinas-Stinson Beach School Foundation. Your donation will be put to work right away to provide inspirational learning opportunities that go above and beyond the traditional school day and yet require a financial boost to manifest. Last year the Foundation provided over \$10,000 towards the funding of unique and exciting programs such as a geology and paleontology field trip to the desert, a parenting education series, a technological upgrade for enhanced reading development in our Learning Center, and a field trip to the renowned Oregon Shakespeare Festival. Since 1997, the Foundation has offered over \$152,000 in special program funding to enrich our children's education!

As we move forward into 2009, we will continue to aid and enhance our children's education by providing the financial cornerstone that these unique programs require. And we simply cannot do it without you! Please join us in helping to create a dynamic future for our children and our community. We hope that you will consider making a tax-deductible donation to the Bolinas-Stinson Beach School Foundation today!

With gratitude and hope for the future,

Claire Simeone, Board President  
Molly Brown, Treasurer  
Lauren Pollak, Co-secretary  
Bonnie Zaleski, Member

Sarah Atherton, Vice-President  
Belle Wood, Co-secretary  
Felicity Crush, Member  
Elisabeth Setten, Member

## About the Foundation

The Bolinas-Stinson Beach School Foundation was created by parents and community members in 1997 to help raise money for special programs and projects. Our purpose is to provide funding for curriculum enrichment to the school in the areas of art, drama, literature, math, music, physical education, science, and technology.

## Do you have a great idea for the school that needs funding?

Grants are available to help fund projects that enhance the curriculum and programs of the Bolinas-Stinson Union School District. Proposals may be fully or partially funded at the discretion of the Foundation and must be approved by the Board of Trustees. If you have any questions, or would like to apply for a grant, please call Sarah Atherton on 868-1127.

*Newsletter: Felicity Crush & Belle Wood*