Welcome to the final issue of the Project Enrichment Newsletter for the 2008-2009 school year! Now that we have sunny weather and summer vacation headed our way we want to keep you informed about the latest happenings here at Bay Trail. It has been a busy spring for us, filled with field trips, explorations and many other engaging and enlightening enrichment opportunities!

As always, please feel free to contact us with your thoughts on the newsletter, suggestions for topics and any questions you may have. Our contact information can be found on the last page of the newsletter.

Independent Project Spotlight on... Jackson Wheeler!

Independent Projects are open to all students at any time during the year. Students may pursue any interest for any length of time on Fridays during HOME base, or in some instances during a class through special arrangements with the teacher. Students this year have pursued their interests in animation, music composition, story writing, fractured fairytales and more.

One House B eighth grader, Jackson Wheeler, has been working on a comic book since 6th grade! He has faithfully come to enrichment every Friday for three years to draw his characters and develop his story. Mrs. Graham plans to feature some of his work on her classroom page when it is ready for “publication.” Stay tuned!
Summer Opportunities

As summer nears, parents and students look for opportunities to enhance their summer days. Each year, the Gifted Education Department compiles a book of enrichment opportunities for families to consider. The latest edition of The Gifted Education Department Summer Enrichment Opportunities book is now available! Again this year the document will be available on the district webpage. From www.penfield.edu click on the “Departments” tab and select “Gifted Education.” On this page you will find a link to the document. Or, you can have your student ask his/her house enrichment teacher for a hard copy.

Grant Update—We’re two for three!

During the 2008-2009 school year, Project Enrichment applied for three grants: a Best Buy Technology grant, a PTSA Lego Robotics grant, and a Target field trip grant. Happily, we were awarded both the PTSA grant and a Target grant.

As a result, we have recently purchased two Lego NXT robotics kits. Eight 6th grade boys are experimenting with these kits through a mini-exploration during these last few weeks of school. We look forward to more widespread use of the kits in the upcoming 2009-2010 school year. To see the robots in action, visit Mrs. Graham’s classroom page to view a brief video clip. Thank you to the PTSA for their generous support.

Thanks to the Target Corporation, we took 40 sixth, seventh and eighth grade girls to Seneca Falls for an all day field trip. See the related news article on page four. To see a slide show of the trip, visit Mrs. Graham’s classroom page.

Critters in the Hallway?

In May and June, all seventh grade students participated in a Seneca Park Zoo Mobile visit within the science classrooms. Students had the opportunity to meet several threatened and endangered species through the zoo’s “Going, Going, Saved!” program. The students discussed why these animals are threatened and endangered as well as steps they could personally take to protect their environment. This presentation served as a jumping off point for the last science unit of the year on ecology. The program was generously funded by the Project Enrichment department at Bay Trail.
Environmental Fair 2009

On April 14th, students participating in the Environmental Exploration shared what they learned. Over sixty students participating in the Environmental Exploration researched various topics about the environment, as well as developing practical everyday steps we can take to be "green." During lunch Bay Trail students has the opportunity to visit five stations:

* Electronics - What can I do with my old cell phone, iPod, computer or TV?
* Around the Home - What can I do in my house to be environmentally friendly?
* Extreme Lunch Makeover - What can I do to make my lunch "green"?
* Around the Community - What can I do to help make businesses more environmentally friendly?
* Pledges - What did I learn or commit to doing to be more earth-friendly?

Lemonade, anyone??

Looking for some great summer reads? We held our lunchtime book event, "Lemonade and Literature." The event, co-sponsored by Project Enrichment and the Bay Trail Librarians, took place on Tuesday, June 9th. The librarians shared news about the summer reading program. Students shared their ideas about vacationing in their favorite book setting. How do you get to Camp Half-Blood?...

Strong National Museum of Play

Project Enrichment took thirty sixth grade students recommended by their ELA teachers to participate in a hands-on Fractured Fairytales workshop at Strong Museum. Students learned about story elements as well as the concepts of satire, irony and parody. They fractured their own fairy tales and performed skits for the entire group. Additionally, they were able to spend an hour touring various parts of the museum after the workshop, including the Bay Trail bicycle exhibit. It was a great experience for all involved, as evidenced by some of the feedback from students:

"I got to show off my mad skills on DDR."
"I wish we could stay and play longer!"

"I learned that Fractured Fairytales are fairytales with a modern twist."
"I learned a lot about different genres."
"I realized I like to act!"
"I learned that there have been many women in our country who've done great things and worked for various reforms."

"I learned that the women that worked for women's rights had to wait over 70 years to actually get their rights."

These are just a few of the comments made by the 40 students who participated in the field trip to Seneca Falls, NY. Students visited the Women's Rights National Historical Park, the Elizabeth Cady Stanton house, and the National Women's Hall of Fame. The field trip was funded by an $800 grant from the Target Corporation.

Project Enrichment was one of 5,000 groups across the country awarded a field trip grant to provide experiential learning for their students. Over 20,000 schools applied. Students who attended the trip to Seneca Falls were chosen on the basis of their application and teacher recommendations.

Highlights of the trip included viewing the film "Dreams of Equality" featuring Elizabeth Cady Stanton, whom students had the opportunity to "meet" in person at Bay Trail the week before (see article on page 5), as well as touring her house. Students couldn't wait to peer up the steep back stairwell, remembering Mrs. Stanton's description of how treacherous the climb could be, wearing long, wide skirts, carrying an infant in one arm and a candle in the other, while having a toddler pulling on the back of her dress.

Students also enjoyed the park ranger's talk at the Stanton house where he told stories about her adventuresome children and what it was like to keep house without the modern conveniences of today.

The National Women's Hall of Fame also made quite an impression on the students as they completed a scavenger hunt to learn about some of the most famous inductees. In addition to reading about accomplished actresses, singers, athletes, and scientists, students also enjoyed learning about Amelia Bloomer and her notion that women should be able to wear pants of a sort, which would restrict movement far less than a long dress. Alas, the fashion never took off!

Students capped off the day playing a Women's Rights version of Scattergories and reflecting on their experiences.
A Visit by Elizabeth Cady Stanton

"Oh, how I wish you were a boy" was a phrase Elizabeth Cady Stanton told a captive audience she had heard several times from her father as she was growing up in Johnston, NY. Mrs. Stanton eventually became a key player in the Women's Rights Movement started in 1848 in nearby Seneca Falls.

The captive audience was a group of 40 sixth, seventh and eighth graders who would be traveling to Seneca Falls on a field trip with Project Enrichment, thanks to an $800 grant from Target. The presentation featured Patricia Lewis Browne, the actress who portrays Elizabeth Cady Stanton in the film, "Dreams of Equality," shown at the Women's Rights National Historical Park.

In period costume, Ms. Browne, as Elizabeth Cady Stanton, described her life growing up, getting married, and raising a family. She explained her discontent with her life as a housewife and her inferior role as a woman - and her decision to try to change the course of history.

After the 40 minute presentation by "Mrs. Stanton," Ms. Browne stepped out of her historical role and answered questions for the students about her character, preparing for her role, and her life as an actress.

Following the presentation, students participated in a choice of hands-on activities using laptops to learn more about other famous women who have made major contributions to the world.

HOME Base News

HOME Base has been hopping as the school year winds down. We continue to have lively discussions as well as plenty of fun. Many students are taking time to debate current events topics such as - Should schools have longer days? Should iPods be allowed in classrooms? Should all schools have a dress code?

Another tantalizing topic has been psychology. Some students have been able to take informal personality questionnaires to help them learn more about their communication styles, creativity and how they work best in groups.

Independent Projects are still going strong. We have many students who dedicate their own HOME Base time to learn more about a particular topic of interest.
6th Grade Math Corner

6th graders recently had the opportunity to check out the TI calculators in math classes. Ask your math student if she or he knows what a graph for \( y = x^2 \) looks like. Or if they can tell you what the 4 means in the equation \( y = 2x + 4 \). If they can’t quite remember yet, that’s okay! We’ll bet they remember the basics of looking at and adjusting the window settings, table settings and how to put in an equation and graph it. It was a quick exploration using the calculators, but next year they will get to use them even more. By 8th grade, it’ll be “old hat”!

Remember, if you have questions about math at Bay Trail, there are several ways to get information:

Start by looking at the math enrichment informational Powerpoint from the Bay Trail Virtual Open House. Visit the Penfield Central School District website (www.penfield.edu), click on “schools” then “Bay Trail” then “Virtual Open House.” Look for the “Math Enrichment Presentation.” Talk to your child’s math teacher or enrichment teacher via phone or email.

Contact our math facilitator(s): Liz Rank and Tammy Carter

Staying informed and in touch helps reduce stress and keeps students, parents and teachers focused on achieving success for all. We look forward to continuing success with your child!

PACE Meeting Focuses on Science

On March 30th, parents had a chance to listen to a presentation on science at Bay Trail and discuss options for possible future programming. Mr. Buddington posed the important question, “Why accelerate?” which prompted many thought-provoking questions, comments and ideas. Mrs. Graham and Ms. Young presented current Bay Trail possibilities for enrichment in science, including compacting, independent projects and more. As always, your child’s program starts with you, your child, and the classroom teacher. If you have any questions about science, or any other subject, related to enrichment opportunities, please don’t hesitate to call us. Stay tuned in the fall for our annual “Opportunities for Enrichment” night for parents!
Outbreak! U of R Life Sciences Lab Field Trip

Project Enrichment took forty-one 7th and 8th grade students recommended by their science teachers to participate in a hands-on lab at the University of Rochester Life Sciences Lab titled “Outbreak.” Students learned about infectious diseases and how they spread. They took on the role of epidemiologists to track down the mysterious source of a mock epidemic. Students investigated disease diagnosis, treatment and prevention. They also performed a hands-on experiment to learn about antibiotic resistance. It was a great experience for all involved, as evidenced by some of the feedback from students:

“I had a lot of fun and doing labs in the college was amazing.”
“I enjoyed getting to experience what it’s like being a real scientist.”
“It was really exciting and interesting. Even though our hypothesis was incorrect, when we tried it again we got it right.”
“WASH YOUR HANDS!”

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Happy Summer to our 6th and 7th graders—we are looking forward to seeing your smiling faces back in the fall. We wish our 8th graders best of luck at the high school and beyond!