

Schools

Oxfam Banquet (jump)

ate rice.

Since the end of October, these students have participated in an integrated social studies and literacy unit studying world issues and humanitarian organizations and culminating in a World Awareness research paper. In an effort to impress on the students that one person can make a difference, the Oxfam Hunger Banquet focused on issues of agriculture, trade and hunger.

The banquet directed by student MCs, Mark Velino, Julie Kellndorfer, Casey Foulks, Cassie Jacobs, Morgan Pagliocco and Haley Cannon, included student videos on hunger; original poetry readings and music. At the beginning of the banquet, it was reported that every minute, seventeen people die of hunger, that's 85 people every five minutes. As a reminder of this fact, every five minutes 85 beans were put into a jar. At the end of the two hour banquet, the bean jar represented the 2,000 people who had lost their lives to hunger.

The Middle School raised \$618 to be donated to Oxfam. Over four years the school has donated \$2,836.

Using quotes from student World Awareness research papers :

Samantha Prue:

"UNICEF is a powerful and efficient organization that meets the needs and priorities of children. They have lived up to their mission statement and have made a huge difference in the lives of children by offering educational opportunities, protecting them against violence, and preventing diseases like HIV/AIDS."

Katie Schweizer:

"Every day, millions of fish die or are caught in nets. Eighty percent of life is underwater. Humans are damaging the earth. People

need to help it." (Greenpeace International.)

Cammie Formby-Bavertu:

"Heifer Project International has a very important role and is successful in helping the world abate poverty and hunger by giving people a source of food and asking them to pass on the gift to people who are malnourished. They give support to families around the globe who are in need of a better life."

Artemis Friel:

"UNICEF makes everything right for children. UNICEF isn't just a humanitarian organization that gives children help, effort, time, and support, it is an

organization that gives children HOPE."

Drew Prescott:

"The Peace Corps has worked to educate those in third world countries and increase understanding between the United States and other nations."

Morgan Pagliocco:

SightFirst is Lions Club's most ambitious program by far. When it first began, Lions made a goal of raising \$130 million through SightFirst, but instead, they surpassed that goal and raised \$143 million (World Health/Most Blindness is Preventable). Because of SightFirst's great success, Lions Club created Campaign

SightFirst II. Lions hope to raise at least \$150 million for Campaign SightFirst II. Lions have a lot to live up to with SightFirst II though, following in SightFirst's steps. SightFirst saved seven point three million people from going blind, some of which were helped through one of the 20 million life-saving cataract surgeries performed.

Sage Wesenberg

UNICEF prioritizes the children who are the most unprotected from these forms of violence. It also provides places for women and children to recover. They also advocate through things like the Convention of Children Rights which helps

children to live in a protected environment. UNICEF volunteers teach children life skills, and interest other people in helping to fix the protection problems. They also force governments to take part in seeing that kid's rights are fulfilled."



Together, we can save a life.



Representing high income world-wide (15%), students enjoy a nutritious meal seated at a table.

AMHERST CITIZEN PHOTOS



Seated: Ryan Lynch, Jack Grudzien and Elliot Gordon lunch on beans and rice. Gina Mancini and James Maguire look pleased with their lunch of lasagna.



Souhegan High Film Seminar presents:

Classic Film Series

(All films begin at 7:30pm Admission Free)

January-- Friday, 1/23	Rear Window
February-- Friday, 2/6	The Deer Hunter
March-- Friday, 3/13	The Sound of Music
April-- Friday, 4/10	Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid
May-- Friday, 5/29	Raging Bull

Going Public

“The Chemistry of Vietnam”

To expose students to a larger world view, we rely on colleagues to share their own stories with students. One of our best storytellers is chemistry teacher Viet Pham, who recently returned to his native Vietnam with his wife Amy, and their two young sons. Viet's family fled Vietnam when he was nine years old. Five years ago, he returned, and traveled there again last summer.

“We flew into Hanoi. So many years later, I still thought of this as ‘enemy land.’ During my childhood, we had no contact with relatives in North Vietnam, including my mother's youngest brother, just seven when he was sold by an uncle. My mother searched for him, but assumed he had died. She emigrated from the North to South Vietnam after her marriage. Contact between the North Vietnamese and South Vietnamese was an act of treason. She reconnected with him in Vietnam 1994.

“The catalyst for our trip was to allow my mother to introduce us to family she had met in 1994, a highly emotional experience. She had returned to a village with no electricity, no plumbing, and deaths from starvation after the war ended in 1975. She built them a house and my brother rerouted wires from the town to get electricity.

“My mother initially did not want any of her children to return to Vietnam. She warned us of the poor water quality, dirt floors, the lack of bathrooms, and the prospect of salmonella. But after 30 years, I felt it was time.

“Our sons viewed these trips as exotic vacations to the rainforest. They caught snakes and lizards; they rode water buffalo, with no awareness that these animals had plowed fields all day. Amy and I found it very emotional to see the life my mother had lived. We listened to a lifetime of stories and began to understand the vastness of our cultural differences. My relatives hosted dinners for us that cost them the equivalent of three months of wages, producing mixed feelings in us.

I weave my experiences into my discussions with my students. I serve as a connection to another society, one not rooted in the 21st century. For example, villagers still rely on a Shaman, a medicine man, to provide herbal medicines. My mother brought many basic drugs with her, but my relatives were reluctant to accept them.

Anything not used for human consumption is given to the animals; consequently, there is minimal deadly methane gas that is so deadly to our ozone. Methane comes from rotting and fermenting foods in landfills. Vietnamese use every resource to its fullest potential. On the other hand, Vietnam has no regulations about transporting chemicals or gas tanks, a potential nightmare.

It was dramatic to witness how small changes make a substantial difference. My brother and I arranged for a well to be built in the village and helped a nephew to open an Internet café with eight computers in a nearby town, a true luxury. My mother has provided college tuitions for five relatives.

As a teacher, I carry with me the real life applications to another culture's approach to chemistry and the sciences. As a human, I saw first hand the cost of politics, war and religion on the fabric of a family and a nation. As a father and as a son, I understand the strong association to a village and to priceless values of respect and honesty.

My sons definitely identify with their Vietnamese roots. They will return. Perhaps my stories will spark an interest in my students to not only explore new place but also to appreciate what they have and how the differences in cultures can bring all people closer.

Peggy Silva is the writing coordinator and literacy coach at Souhegan High School

Winter Parent-Child Program Starting

The Children's Garden, Pine Hill Waldorf School's parent and child program, is now enrolling for Winter 2009. The program serves children ages birth to three years. Groups meet once a week on Tuesday or Wednesday afternoon from 12:30 to 2:30 pm at the school. Also, there is a new, drop-in option on Friday mornings from 8:30 to 10:30 am. Pine Hill Waldorf School is located on Abbot Hill Road in Wilton. Call Evie at 654-6003 for details.

A New Year with Connection

The new year brings endless possibilities for change. Parents often ask how to improve their relationship with their children, to be the parent they truly want to be....Healthy boundaries are key, rather than shaping a permissive, disrespectful relationship. Never saying “no,” always giving in, compromising one's own needs may insure our child is happy. Alternatively, “no” may really mean “I might change my mind later,” or “I'm not sure, “establishing a confusing pattern that is disrespectful to both parent and child. We expect our child to ask for things, typically not things he really needs but believes he does. He may whine to get what he wants. If we react to whining by giving in, ignoring, or punishing, the outcome will be similar. The message is we don't want to understand his feelings, we simply want to put an immediate end to them.

We may feel like a bad parent saying “no,” recalling childhood feelings when we were discounted. Giving in doesn't mean we truly listened and understood. Nor does just saying “no” translate to healthy boundaries. It creates an emotional climate of disconnection: “Your feelings aren't important. I don't want to hear your opinion, or work with you to connect and understand.”

Several examples:

- 1) Sam resisted bedtime by whining, stalling, fending off the inevitable. He learned by doing so, mom gave in. Mornings were filled with struggles and irritability, with Sam overtired and cranky. Mom didn't know how to set the bedtime limit, because when she tried, Sam became too upset. She was increasingly resentful, with reaction rather than connection in their dynamic.
- 2) Sarah resisted getting up in the morning, missing the school bus. Consequently, mom was late for work and angry with driving Sarah to school. It worked for Sarah, but not for mom.

Each of these moms felt completely ineffective as parents.

BY JUDITH H. ORME, MSW, LICSW
KIDS AND FAMILIES FIRST



When Sam's mom listened to his feelings, a change occurred. Validating Sam's need to spend more time with her, she also set limits to care for her own needs. “I know it's hard to say goodnight when you want more time to play together. You wish the day wasn't over.” Sam agrees. “Let's think of something special we can do together tomorrow.” She allowed Sam to have his disappointment without judging, berating or letting him stay up.

The following night, mom says she'll stay in his room 10 more minutes. Sam protests. Mom: “It's fun being together. We miss each other during the day. Would you like a back rub or another story for the 10 minutes we still have?” Sam: “A story.” After, Mom: “Time for hugs & goodnight. Would you like the nightlight on or off?” Sam: “ON!” After hugs, mom leaves the room. Although Sam whimpers, he's learned that mom understands his feelings while still maintaining limits.

Sarah's mom realizes being proactive the night before, helps to reach agreement on the morning routine. Next morning, mom calls: “It's 7 o'clock.” Sarah: “No way. I'm staying in bed.” Mom: “I understand it's warm and cozy under those covers. We agreed last night on 7 o'clock. Are you riding the bus or walking to school?” Sarah comes downstairs within a few minutes, begrudgingly honoring their agreement. Mom validates her struggle, while taking care of her needs to be on time for work.

We connect with our child when we truly hear his feelings, address how to make things work better, and maintain healthy boundaries....

Judith Orme has a private practice in Amherst, KIDS & FAMILIES FIRST, with 26 years experience working with children, couples, and families. A psychotherapist, parent educator, child development specialist, and coach/consultant, she facilitates educational and support groups. Judith can be reached at 672-0179.

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