

Bethel Education Foundation

Supporting Innovation, Creativity and Excellence in Learning

Newsletter
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Beer Tasting A Barrel of Fun for a Great Cause



Guests enjoy BEF's Beer Tasting event, from left: Dana DiGrandi, Caryn Clayton, Tara Sheridan, Steve Famularo, Bill Craig, Joe Chrzescijanek, Vince DiGrandi, Amy Gusitsch and Dave Gusitsch

Nearly 70 guests sampled beer and appetizers and enjoyed great company all for a worthy cause on Monday, January 31st at Greenwoods Grille & Ale House. The first annual Bethel Education Foundation Beer Tasting raised \$1,000 which will fund innovative grants in the Bethel schools and the community. "We had a great

turnout with members of the community, the school staff and administration and town government coming out for the event," said Janice



Bethel First Selectman Matt Knickerbocker with Kristen Lacey, Board of Education, and Jill DeRosa, Vice Chairman, Board of Education

Chrzescijanek, Event Chair and BEF Co-Vice Chair. "Everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves." Musical entertainment was provided by Richard Baumer, a jazz musician and

BMS music teacher. For the price of admission, guests received three flights of beer or a glass of wine, perfect for those looking to sample the extensive drink selection at Greenwoods. Many thanks to those who attended as well as to Mr. Baumer and Greenwoods Grille & Ale House.



Bethel Public Schools staff and administration including from left Susan Pare, Maureen DeBlois, Dan DeBlois, and Dr. Pat Cosentino

Teachers, Students Putting Grants to Work at Berry School



Among the constant activity and learning going on daily at F.A. Berry School, teachers and students alike have been taking advantage of new equipment and learning tools acquired



through two recent BEF grants. If you visit the gym on Berry's lower level, you can't miss the colorful new state-of-the-art climbing wall, partially funded by the BEF. "Climbing activities



are an integral part of the physical education program in Bethel," said Mike Cohen, physical education teacher at Berry School. "This piece of

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What is the Bethel Education Foundation?

The Bethel Education Foundation (BEF) was founded in 2004 by a group of parents and educators who share a common priority—public and private education in the town of Bethel.

Our mission is to promote innovation, creativity and excellence in learning for our children and community

through grants to educators or community members.

The Foundation supports innovative teachers, creative opportunities for students and excellence in the community.

Since Spring 2008, the Foundation has provided funding for dozens of very special projects which support initiatives for pre-

school children, the Bethel Public School District and St. Mary School.

Totaling tens of thousands of dollars, our contributions to education, both public and private, have affected our children directly.

The Bethel Education Foundation, Inc. is a non-profit corporation, recognized by the Internal

Revenue Service as a tax-exempt, 501(c)(3) organization. Donations are tax-deductible by contributors to the extent allowable by law.



www.betheledfoundation.org
bethelctedfoundation@yahoo.com

Spotlight on Winter 2011 Grants

Piloting iPads as Tools in Digital English



Students enrolled in Bethel High School's popular Academy of Digital Arts & Sciences will soon be part of a pilot program to test the effectiveness and educational potential of iPads for a portable, digital classroom. Thanks to a partial grant from the BEF, Digital English teacher Vanessa Eisenman will test the ability to personalize content for individual students. In addition, Eisenman will determine whether this technology can replace textbooks, offer paperless note taking and annotations of text, and sharing of those annotations instantly and digitally. Using Apple's Pages software, Ms. Eisenman will also create lessons, imbed media and create assessments that can be uploaded to each student's iPad. With this technology, Ms. Eisenman can provide a more engaging, project-based classroom that is truly digital and totally portable, adaptable and accessible.

Grant submitted by Vanessa Eisenman and Gary Lawlor, Bethel High School

BMS Jumping Onboard in Testing iPads as Technology Learning Tools



In an effort to embrace the use of rapidly changing technology, the BEF has approved a grant to pilot iPads at Bethel Middle School. Used in conjunction with existing projectors and digital cameras, this pilot program will test the mobility, touch screen interface and never-ending iPad applications that will connect to the existing curriculum. Once the iPads have been piloted, the technology teachers can determine and recommend how this technology fits into the curriculum at BMS on a larger scale.

Grant submitted by Dr. Kevin Smith, Bethel Middle School

Hi-Tech History Lesson at St. Mary School

Eighth-grade students at St. Mary School will come face to face with Bethel's history then document and preserve it for future generations. A new desktop documentary project called "Bethel: Barnum and Beyond" will have students research and discuss local historic events with members of the community who experienced them. Students will then organize and compile their research along with images and sounds to create a digital movie. The BEF will be helping out with a grant for a digital video camera, microphone, video editing software and accessories necessary to complete this project. A copy of the documentary will be donated to the Bethel Historical Society for their archives, capturing history for the present and beyond.



Grant submitted by Cathleen Manfredi, St. Mary School

Digital Cameras Add Visual Impact to Science Curriculum at Johnson School



Thanks to a grant from the BEF, photography skills will be added to the science curriculum at Johnson School. To help create future scientists, new Canon digital cameras will allow students to record science lab information and observations digitally as well as in writing then compile their information in a visual lab report. As a collaborative effort which links the science curriculum and technology lessons, students will discover the ins and outs of the cameras during their computer lab time.

Grant submitted by Jen Torpey, Johnson School

Honor a Teacher

We would like to recognize the following people for their outstanding contributions to our community and the lives of our children. For their efforts, we thank them and ask that they continue to influence our children to be the best they can be.

- Ms. Sara D'Amico, BMS**
- Mr. Brian Stroh, Berry School**
- Mrs. Maryann Kellogg, Berry School**
- Mrs. Roseanne Licari, Berry School**
- Mrs. Kate McDonald, St Mary School**

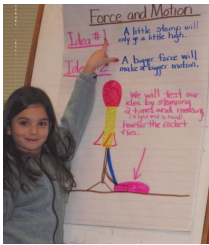


- Honored by Nathan Walker**
- Honored by Tyler Vitolo**
- Honored by Michael Schmidt**
- Honored by Livia Oprea**
- Honored by her 5th grade class**

Berry School, continued from page 1

equipment is vital to helping children build muscular strength, improve balance and endurance as well as develop team-building and trust building skills, creative problem solving and positive risk-taking." A visit to the gym will show you the new 8' x 24' wall, complete with kids burning all that energy they store up when stuck inside. That's some good news for Moms trying to make it through the last few snowy weeks of winter.

In Mrs. Buchholz's first grade classroom, students this fall completed a unit on Force and Motion. And thanks to a grant from the BEF, students had a new "toy" to demonstrate those concepts. "Young children learn by doing," said teacher Lisa Buchholz. "Learning about Force and Motion is fun when presented with hands-on activities using tools that children are familiar with and are enthusiastic to try."



In experiments conducted on the Berry School playground, Stomp Rockets were used as children investigated the amount of force it takes to move an object. "The children were able to test their hypothesis first-hand," said Mrs. Buchholz. All first grade classrooms at Berry School will have access to this science tool, giving each young scientist the opportunity to ask questions, hypothesize, write predictions, experiment with tools, discuss, analyze and draw conclusions.



Coming to the 5th Annual Barnum Ball...

Bethel High School's Chamber Singers and Show Choir, "Last Refrain", are warming up to perform at the 5th Annual Barnum Ball, *A Night at the Museum*. Using new sound equipment acquired through a grant from the BEF, students will perform during the Ball's cocktail hour.

Don't miss out on this special musical performance. Purchase your Barnum Ball tickets today using the order form on page 4 of this newsletter.



The Bethel Education Foundation would like to thank The Wood Bin of Brookfield for the generous donation of unfinished wood items and TrueValue of Bethel for the generous donation of paint and supplies. These items will be used to create custom-made artwork (pictured above) with students in K-3 which will be auctioned at the upcoming Barnum Ball. Please help us show our appreciation by patronizing these businesses.

Donations of artwork and photography, services, tickets, gift certificates and gift baskets are currently being accepted for the 2011 Barnum Ball.

If you would like to make a donation, please contact us at bethelctedfoundation@yahoo.com for more information.

All donations—corporate and private—are tax deductible.