

Dr. Norman Bethune C.I. Newsletter

January 2017

Principal S. Kaskens

Vice-Principals N. Dyal, L. Pagnotta



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Principal's News

Our New Year's Resolutions: As we welcome a new year, Bethune has come up with some of our own goals for the upcoming year. The TDSB has three areas of focus: Student Achievement, Equity and Well-Being. Over the last few months, Bethune teachers have discussed these areas and how each area may translate into a particular need for our school community. We have reflected on our next steps with respect to our own professional learning, and in turn, how we can apply our learning to better serve our students. In the area of **Student Achievement**, we are interested in challenging students to be

more actively engaged in their learning. We would like to see students have a stronger voice, ask probing questions, and deepen their learning. With respect to **Equity**, we have made a commitment to learn more about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and to broaden our understanding of Aboriginal issues and how they may be incorporated in different subject areas. Finally, we continue to be committed to supporting student **Well-Being** by teaching students about stress management, and the importance of healthy, active living (emotionally, socially, and physically).

Ms. Kaskens

November Wellness Week

We are in the process of reaching out to the staff, students and our parent community to determine whether there would be an interest in investigating the idea of an earlier start to the school year and a *Wellness Week* in November (school would be closed for the

week). This wouldn't have an impact on next year's calendar, but could be in effect the following year **IF** there is strong support for the idea from staff, students and parents. Stay tuned as we will be looking for your input!

Ms. Kaskens

Upcoming Events

- ◆ Split Exam Day



Self-Defense Starts Soon

Beginning January 9th, our Grade 9 students in Health and Physical Education will be participating in a self-defense program put on by *Safe International*, a team of professional self-defense instructors. Students will learn about discipline, conflict resolution, injury prevention, basic self-defense and martial arts techniques which will be valuable in helping them to become confident and effective problem solvers.

Ms. Aziz

DECA

On Saturday, November 5th Bethune DECA competed at the annual DECA Toronto Regional Competition, this year held at Woburn C.I. With 90 competitors, the team won 34 Top 10 Ribbons and 8 Finalists Medals!

Congratulations to the following medal award winners: 3rd Place: Joyce Cheung - Food Marketing, Jessica Chan - Marketing Communications, Inayah Dharsi -

Principles of Marketing; 2nd Place: Emily Yip - Principles of Business Management; 1st Place: Oriana Wong - Business Services Marketing, Amy Zhao - Restaurant Food Services, Annie Wang and Wenson Gan - Buying and Merchandising.

We are proud of all the students who participated! Good luck to all at Provincials in February!

Ms. Yeung

A Day on Bay

On Wednesday, November 23rd, the Grade 12 Financial Securities class and Business students travelled to the Toronto Stock Exchange. They met with financial industry professionals and participated in a series of financial literacy workshops on budgeting, investing, trading and portfolio

management. It was also announced that the winner of the 2016 Jr. Economics Club Financial Literacy Student Challenge, in first place is Terry Cui, a Bethune graduate 2015-2016! Terry has won a \$5,000 dollar academic scholarship. Congratulations!

Ms. Yeung

Shopping Centre Field Trip

On Tuesday, December 6th, over 150 Bethune Business students traveled to the Toronto Eaton Centre. The Grade 10 Introduction to Business and Grade 11 Marketing classes had the opportunity to listen to management share their insights and strategies about operations, marketing

and promotions at the shopping centre. They also experienced the retail setting and examined the companies' marketing and customer service firsthand while having lots of fun visiting downtown Toronto!

Ms. Yeung

Volleyball Intramurals

During November and December, Bethune's ABC team hosted its annual volleyball intramurals. They took place Tuesdays and Thursdays at lunch and there were 26 teams participating, including the teachers! The winners from each division received a shirt as a prize, along with bragging rights for all their hard work and determination. Great sportsmanship was shown on the court as teams fought hard to win. During the finals, it even came down to the teachers versus the students - a big shout out to the teachers for giving it their all! Thank you to all the teams who signed up. We appreciate your enthusiasm and love of volleyball and we look forward to seeing you on the court next year. Stay tuned for more intramurals in 2017!

*Ying Zhang
ABC Exec Member*



Winter Fun

With the winter weather finally arriving, the Girls Grade 12 Fitness class took to the hill outside Bethune for some tobogganing fun. There were crazy carpets and surf sleds and the girls had such a blast they didn't even want to come in for lunch! For some, it was their first time and for others it

was a Bethune tradition close to their heart. There is no better way to spend a cold day than out in the snow and sunshine, giggling and laughing. Next time it will be Cross Country Skiing or Snow Football, so stay tuned!

Ms. Aziz

Music Department News

December was a busy month for the Bethune Music Department. We wrapped up a very successful week of music making at Jackson's point on December 2. On Monday, December 12 and Thursday, December 15 all of our ensembles performed at our Winter Music Night. We had great crowds for both shows. Congratulations to all of our grade 9s for performing so well after only of few months of rehearsing together.

In the New Year both the grade 9 Concert Band and grade 10-12 Wind Ensemble will compete at the Ontario Band Festival (OBF) on Tuesday, February 14. The performances will take place at Le Parc located at Hwy 7 and Leslie in Richmond Hill. Our Jazz Band will compete in the Ontario Jazz Band Festival at Humber

College on Wednesday, February 22. On Monday, March 6 the Bethune Vocal students will compete at the Ontario Vocal Festival at Mayfield Secondary School in Caledon. Our Choir will also be performing at Massey Hall for the 67th Sounds of Toronto Concert on Thursday, April 6. The Bethune Music Department Spring Concert will be at the Flato Markham Theatre on Monday, April 10 beginning at 7:00 p.m.



Mr. Sylvester



Happy Retirement Ms. Tuzi

In early December, Bethune bid a fond farewell to our office administrator, Angela Tuzi. After over 26 years at Bethune, Angela decided to retire. Angela has been with the TDSB for over 31 years, with her first few years at the Board office, then 2 years at Bendale Business and Technical Institute, and the rest of her time at Bethune. She has been an amazing office administrator. She thinks of everything before we do and is organized, professional, kind and generous. She makes sure that everything gets done, even if it means putting in extra hours with the office team, organizing commencement, report cards,

registration or any other special event. She is dedicated to Bethune, and so proud of its students, attending every commencement to see our students graduating. Angela didn't just "work" at Bethune. She was connected to the building, to the people, and to the community in so many ways. Angela and her team: Krishna, Johnson, Daniela, Betty, Mike and Namrata ensure that the office is warm and welcoming, with just the right amount of levity and humour. Thank you for being there for each and every one of us. Congratulations!

Bethune Staff & Students



Traffic on Fundy Bay

Students, staff and parents have continued to express concern over safety on Fundy Bay, particularly during drop off and pick up times. Although we have taken some measures to try to improve the situation, many students are still being dropped off across the street from the school and grid lock is still a problem when cars are stopped on both sides of the street. We've engaged our parent council and our local city counsellor in discussions around city by-laws and changes to road signs. At last month's community council meeting, counsellors voted in favour of changing some of the road signs during school hours. Once this is implemented, we are hoping that it will be much safer for students and motorists. This spring, there will be a "No Stopping" sign on Fundy Bay across the street from the

school. There will also be a "No U-Turn" sign on Fundy Bay, and finally, there will be a "No Left Turn" sign from Bamburgh Circle onto Fundy Bay between 8:00-9:00 a.m. Parents who wish to drop off their son or daughter will be limited to the "school side" of Fundy Bay, and the "school side" of Bamburgh Circle (which means they will need to drive via Warden Ave).

Ms. Kaskens





ESL Speech Competition

ESL students were very busy in November and December with the ESL speech competition. Congratulations to all ESL students for their hard work on their speeches. It's not easy speaking in front of a large audience, especially in a second language. Students competed in their classes and in the school. We had really talented, tough competitors. Special congratulations to our Bethune winners, ESL E student Alice Jiang, with a speech on a feeling of inferiority, ESL C student Emily Chen with a speech on Lady Boys and ESL A student Olivia Shang, with a speech on her little brothers. They represented Bethune in

the East competition, held at our school on December 5th. They all did a fantastic job. We are very proud of all three of you! Olivia and Alice both placed third in their category and earned a spot in the second annual TDSB ESL speech competition. On December 19, they represented Bethune and demonstrated true Bears spirit with their courage, persistence and skills. Huge congratulations to both Olivia and Alice for earning first place in their respective categories. They proved that Bethune is on top! Remember, keep calm and speak on!

Ms. Soni

Healthy Schools "Students vs Staff" Beep Test

On Friday, December 16th, students and staff of Bethune participated in the annual Healthy Schools student vs staff beep test. This event helps promote healthy living and an active lifestyle. It was a successful turnout with over 80 people that came out to support this event. The crowd cheered on their favourite teachers and students while they were running the beep test.

We raised over \$85 for a charity that will provide Indigenous youth with healthy meals. All the participants put in their best effort to beat their personal scores. A shout-out goes towards Ms. Collura with an amazing score of 10.1, Mr. Oortwyn with an outstanding score of 10.3, and Mr. Scriven with the highest teacher's score of 11.2. As for the students, Simon finished with a score of

10.11, Vazhin with 12.1 and Matthew Cheung with the top student score of 13.2.

Thank you to all the staff and students who came out to support a great cause! A special thank you to Ms. Daniels, Ms. Villamin-Arenas and Healthy Schools members for helping with organizing this event. We look forward to next year! Have a wonderful and safe holiday!

Healthy Students Exec Members



Matilda

On December 20th, grade 9 drama students ventured downtown to the Ed Mirvish Theatre to watch the critically acclaimed musical *Matilda*. Matilda is story of a wonderful little girl, who happens to be a genius, and her inspirational teacher. This feel-good

show gave students an opportunity to see a professional, theatrical performance and experience a live musical with lights, sounds and special effects. Who knows, maybe someday the talent of Bethune students will grace the stage!

Ms. Soni & Ms. Rzezniczek

Parent Council Meeting

Please note that there is no Parent Council meeting scheduled for January. Our next meeting is on Monday, February 6, at 7:00 p.m. All parents are welcome to attend.

Ms. Kaskens



*For last year's words
belong to last year's
language, and next
year's words await
another voice.*

~T.S. Eliot



The Sidra Project - A Response to Clouds Over Sidra

In late November, Ms. Rzezniczek's Media class and Ms. Lac's World Issues class had the opportunity to experience a Virtual Reality Workshop and also have access to a powerful Documentary called 'Clouds Over Sidra' that shed light on the difficult living conditions of Syrian refugees in refugee camps. During the month of December the Media class along with the World Issues class decided to collaborate and do something impactful as a response to the learning. Their ideas of campaigning, fundraising and raising awareness of the conditions in the refugee camps in Syria came into full swing for the holiday season.

The Media class documented the process as a way to respond to the Virtual Reality Documentary. They are currently editing the footage and will screen the Documentary during a school event in February. They will also submit their documentary to ARTSCAPE, the non-profit organization behind the Virtual Reality Sidra Project touring schools in the TDSB.

The Virtual Reality documentary that the students watched followed the perspective of a twelve year old girl named Sidra, a Syrian refugee living through the difficult conditions within the camp every day. The film described

their harsh lifestyle and their restricted freedom in the camps. Since the refugees are escaping the terrors of war in their home country, they are forced to live in these camps with lacking resources and limited living space.

Touched and inspired by her story, the Media class decided to write personal letters to encourage children like Sidra. Letters were handwritten and sent to children in the refugee camps where Sidra lives to this day. Students at Bethune were interviewed to talk about their feelings and conveyed their thoughts after experiencing the Virtual Reality Film, and how people around the world can make an effort to help the Syrian refugees in the camps. The realisation of how refugees are suffering in misery has drastically changed student's views on the world, hence it is important for all of us to contribute to displaced communities and refugees in order to make a difference. They hope this documentary will create an impact and raise awareness towards the horrific conditions Syrian refugees face, and the challenges they are facing in Canada as newcomers.

*Johanna Hua, Charis Kwan,
Meliza Yao Li, Miranda Ly & Tiffany Wu
Grade 11 Media Studies Students*

A Success - The 'Helping Hands' Campaign

The 'Helping Hands' Campaign organized by Ms. Lac's Grade 12 World Issues class ran from December 6th to December 9th. This campaign was aimed towards aiding Syrian newcomers by providing them with winter gear as well as spreading holiday spirit through the toy drive. They also collaborated with Ms. Rzezniczek's grade 11 Media Studies class, who collected personal hygiene products. Students and staff were encouraged to bring in items to donate or support the campaign through a monetary donation.

To kick-start the campaign, the students conducted homeroom visits on November 29th and December 1st to inform their peers of the Syrian Refugee Crisis as well as to promote the cause of their campaign. During these visits, the student body showed enthusiasm to help by donating their spare change.

During the campaign week, students set up a booth in the main hallway at lunch where donations were being collected.

They collected gloves, hats, scarves, socks, toys, and much more!

Due to the immense support from the Bethune community, they were able to raise a total of \$315.15 by the end of the campaign. They were also able to collect 205 personal hygiene products, 59 toys, and 62 articles of winter gear. All proceeds collected will directly help Syrian newcomers. Everything was dropped off on Tuesday, December 13th to the Centre for Immigrant & Community Services (CICS) to be distributed to the Syrian newcomers this holiday season.

We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to the Bethune community. Without your support, this campaign would have not been possible. Your efforts will be greatly appreciated by the Syrian families. Happy Holidays!

*Natasha Chandra, Maheen Dayani
& Teresa Wang
Grade 12 World Issues Students*



Sears Drama Festival Workshop

On November 28th four Grade Twelve Drama students attended a Sears Drama Festival Workshop held at Senator O'Connor Collegiate in preparation for the upcoming competition in February. This year's Drama students will be participating in the festival for the first time, so naturally, we had a lot of questions. The workshop was a chance for a small number of Drama students from High Schools all over Toronto to come together, share ideas and speak to Autumn, one of the festival's regional adjudicators. Right away after arriving we did some drama warm ups and proceeded to make groups with new people. In our groups we got to know other students from other schools and we learned tips and tricks, and some of

the dos and don'ts of the festival. We also brainstormed questions to ask Autumn. When it came time to finally speak to her, everyone was so excited. She is a larger-than-life personality and it was a pleasure to hear her speak. She gave us some good pointers, like avoiding the overuse of blackouts, and the words "no blackouts!" are now permanently engraved in our minds. Overall, she answered all of our questions and made us feel at ease. It was a wonderful experience, and we learned a lot. We are very grateful to have had the opportunity to attend the workshop, and Bethune Drama students feel excited to participate in the Sears Drama Festival.

*Anthia Barboutsis
Grade 12 Drama Student*

TIFF - Reel Injun

On Tuesday, November 29th, the Media Studies class went on a trip downtown to TIFF Bell Lightbox to see the documentary *Reel Injun* directed by Neil Diamond, Catherine Bainbridge, and Jeremiah Hayes. *Reel Injun* sheds light on the various highs and lows of the portrayal of Native American people in films throughout Hollywood history. The documentary was organized by various tropes and stereotypes of Native Americans from their early appearances in film, to today. It was an eye-opener for some students who weren't aware that Native Americans had been stereotyped in film, and it doubled as an interesting history lesson for others. The documentary also touched on Native American issues of the eras featured. For example, one contemporary problem is the representation of Indigenous people as 'noble savages'. The filmmaker travels to a summer camp for boys in the United States, which is meant to cultivate and celebrate Native American culture. One scene depicts the boys decorating themselves with paint and chanting war cries. Clearly, this continues to perpetuate the 'savage' stereotype.

After the film, producer and film critic Jesse Wentz spoke to the class. He talked about various Native American issues, like Canadian Residential Schools being a horrific experience for the kids who were forced to attend. Attending a

residential school had been traumatizing for his grandmother, and it was difficult for him to talk about it, as it was also difficult for her to talk about her own experience. Some of our students felt that they were almost at fault, because even after having learned about Aboriginal issues in school, they never really thought about the people behind history. They felt that they hadn't been empathetic enough, so listening to Jesse Wentz talk was a very thought-provoking experience.

The class headed to Graffiti Alley after the film. Graffiti Alley encompasses about a kilometre of wall space, all covered in colourful text and images up and down the walls. Students said it was a beautiful expression of art, bringing Toronto together, and a brilliant way for young artists to express themselves without being paid. They said it brought many emotions together on one canvas, and really shows what Toronto is: a vibrant city that celebrates art. Visiting the Alley and taking pictures of it was a good chance for the class to embrace a little urban culture and explore downtown Toronto.

*Jackson Chow & Pei Wen Lin
Grade 11 Media Studies Students*

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