

October 13, 2015

NOBEL PRIZE WINNER A VISITING TEACHER AT BURNABY SOUTH

"How do you get rid of nematode worms from California strawberry fields before the pests damage the plants?" That was the question that Dr. Andrew Fire, Stanford University School of Medicine Professor and Nobel prize winner presented to a captive audience of 60 science students and 15 science teachers at Burnaby South. As the opening speaker for the District's *Science Trailblazers Speaker Series*, Dr. Fire shared the 2006 Nobel Prize for the discovery of a mechanism in cells that shuts down expression genes. It provides an early hope that one day a gene for disease in humans, animals and plants can be silenced. Through interactive questioning, he drew his audience into "critical thinking-mode" to work through this real problem. The students were fascinated, and Dr. Fire was equally impressed with the calibre of students with whom he could share his passion.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ROUND UP

- Gilmore Community School celebrated 100 years of learning. The grandson of Gilmore's first principal, Stanley Griffiths, presented the school with the original school handbell.
- Morley Elementary celebrated 60 years of learning, complete with a dunk tank manned by Principal Wall.
- Students at Westridge Elementary are ready to learn through play now that their new playground has been officially opened for business. A dedicated PAC raised a large portion of the funds to make the new playground a reality.
- At Second Street Community School's Welcome Back BBQ, Board of Education Vice-Chair Harman Pander recognized the Kailley family for their donation of a picnic table in loving memory of their mother, grandmother and great grandmother.

EVERY CHILD MATTERS

Orange Shirt Day first began in 2013 and is recognized on September 30. The day provides an opportunity for First Nations, local governments, schools and communities to come together in the spirit of reconciliation and hope for generations of children to come. This year many District schools recognized Orange Shirt Day. Clinton Elementary held a special assembly to share its significance which included a student poem, dance, a story and video. Students and staff were adorned in either orange shirts or equally bright shirts to spread the message that every child matters.

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STUDENT FILMS DOMINATE CITY FILM FORUM

The City of Burnaby hosted its second annual Burnaby Film Forum on September 25 at the Shadbolt Centre for the Arts. Burnaby schools were well represented. Byrne Creek entered a film called *One Day*. (by Sopethan Rajeswarn). Burnaby South was represented by 4 films: *Summer in BC* (by Nils Kimmel & Winston Bohl); *Burnaby South Dances A-Z* (by Ivan Bello & Victoria Bohl); *Mile Past Everston* (by Nils Kimmel, Winston Bohl, Eric MacDonald, Kellen Ray & Zachary Loewen); and *Social Justice* (by Sean Mathieson). *Mile Past Everston* received The Best Creative Achievement Award and Trophy. Congratulations to Nils Kimmel, Winston Bohl, Eric MacDonald, Kellen Ray & Zachary Loewen. This film was also a winner at the 2014 Zoomfest.

THIRTY ONE DAYS OF READING

Minister of Education Mike Bernier has proclaimed October 2015 as Library Month in BC. The following are some recent Burnaby Schools highlights.

Digital Citizenship grade 8 students at Burnaby South recently learned about digital literacy in their library. For one of the activities, students tested how cyber-savvy they were using an interactive quiz from Media Smarts.

Fraser Park secondary program teacher-librarian Dale Clark hosted PD Workman, favourite author of youth. It was Workman's first author visit and she was terrific. One student commented, "I love authors!" while another student enthused, "I read my first book!"

LESSONS IN DEMOCRACY

At two Burnaby secondary schools, Alpha and Moscrop, students have not just been learning about federal election issues, they sought out the positions of their local candidates by hosting all candidates meetings.

This week, students in all secondary schools will be heading to the polls as part of Student Votes, a parallel election for students under the voting age, that allows them the opportunity to experience the voting process first-hand and build the habits of informed and engaged citizenship. Since 2003, 26 Student Vote programs have been conducted across Canada. In the last federal election, 563,000 students cast ballots from 3,750 schools.

On October 19, many of the "newly eligible to vote" students that Alpha has registered will officially head to the polls, well informed of candidate platforms on the issues that will affect their future. Be sure to join them.