

The Bitney Express

October 2008

Newsletter of Bitney College Prep High School

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Bitney College Prep High School is now located next to Nevada Union High School campus!



From Our Editor

Welcome to the first edition of the Bitney Express! This newsletter is not only for the Bitney family; it is for the Nevada County community to let folks know about Bitney. This month includes musings about Wilderness Week, commentary on why students and parents appreciate and value our school, and college exploration tips from the dean. Be sure to take a look at our Calendar with upcoming Bitney community events like the Wine Tasting Benefit in November. Enjoy!

Shana Lee Parker, editor

Bitney Still A Great Option

Marshall Goldberg, Bitney principal, stands before the Bitney Bistro Mural painted by high school students



John Hart photo, The Union Newspaper

Recently, The Union printed an article about Bitney and its lower than expected enrollment. Even so, Bitney students and parents are thrilled our high school is an option.

The good news for Nevada County parents is Bitney is open for enrollment. It is not uncommon for students and parents to discover at fall or semester break their current high school is not a good fit. Our new and experienced Bitney community members recognize the benefits of this wonderfully unique public college preparatory high school with small class sizes, strong academics, and a culture of respect and belonging. And now it is even more centrally located, next to the Nevada Union High School Campus on Ridge Road, Grass Valley.

A Feast for the Mind

by Shana Parker, Freshman parent

I was grumpy, stressed, and overheated from working at my new job all day. I was selfishly hoping my ninth grade son Nick would bail on the family potluck at his new school because like me, he tends to be a bit shy. My hopes were dashed when I called on the way home. "Don't forget the chips," he carped in a parental tone. I dreaded being in a large group of people trying to cough up something to say. Little did I know what a great sense of community I would feel, and how the family potluck would represent so much that is right at Bitney College Prep High School.

First, our family hesitantly headed into the room with the food. Except for Nick, who casually walked in and started talking to his friends. The Parent Council generously

provided several six-foot subs and beverages. In addition, families brought a variety of hearty fare. Nourishment. Bitney provides rich academic and social nourishment. They provide the necessary sustenance of individualized attention. One of the biggest benefits of a small school is the amount of attention each student receives. No one's child is going to slip through the cracks here.

Next, my husband and I moved to the outside tables with our eleven-year-old son Jason. Soon other parents joined our table and the soft small talk of strangers morphed into lively chatter. I looked over and saw Jason playing wiffle ball with a sophomore he had never met. I looked at another table and saw Nick talking with a bearded senior. This confirmed what long time Bitney parents told me: there is no rigid social stratifying and labeling. No Jocks vs. Geeks. No Seniors vs. Freshmen. Compared to my experience at a large Southern California high school, there seems to be an extraordinary level of peer support.

The last event of the evening was a softball game. Families, staff and students came together to play and had a blast under a dusky late summer sky. Staff, parents, and older kids were showing younger siblings batting techniques. They wanted them to succeed and have fun. Similarly, the passionate teachers are rooting for their students. These dedicated men and women want their students to not just pass, but thrive.

I came to the Bitney potluck with a dour outlook born from fatigue and my own negative high school ordeal. As the evening progressed, I felt my attitude shift and soften. A fresh, cool breeze blew across the baseball field and I smiled as a sense of gratitude filled me up. I felt and feel so grateful for this educational option with such a sturdy net of communal support. If you want a unique and incredibly supportive high school experience for your teenager, give Bitney a call. Maybe I'll see you at the next game.

Questions? Want to Enroll?

Call 477-1235 for info or to set up an appointment. Check us out! Bitney College Prep High School is a tuition-free public charter school and is accepting new students for enrollment.

Wilderness Week



Backpacking Trip

Wilderness Week is an annual tradition at Bitney that starts the school year off with a bang. It is a multi-day off campus field trip that is a chance for students to form and solidify friendships, and an opportunity for teachers and students to connect. This year different groups went rock climbing or biking in Tahoe, kayaking at Lake Englebright, backpacking, and museum hopping in San Francisco. Here are comments from some of the participants:

"The best part about Wilderness Week was being able to interact with other students and teachers in a non-classroom environment. This allows students to see others from a different perspective, and potentially form bonds of respect and even friendship."

--Brent Phillips, senior, Tahoe Biking Trip



Bicycling Trip

"I liked making new friends that I probably wouldn't have otherwise."

--Sofia DeGruccio, sophomore, Urban Wilderness (San Francisco)

"It is so fun to teach a new skill (such as rock climbing) to someone, then to see them improve in such a short time. It's very rewarding. I also love to see the way the students from different classes and age groups come together as a team to encourage, support, and take care of one another."

--Laurel Phillips, Spanish Teacher, Tahoe Rock Climbing

More on Wilderness Week

Why Wilderness Week is a Community Builder

By Sophomore Kenny Willer (edited by Mr. Freeman)

The Bitney Wilderness Week brings people together that normally would not spend time together during the Bitney school day. During Wilderness Week people who like the same things such as rock climbing or backpacking form groups to go out on an adventure and learn more about each other during the week. "It's just relaxing to get away from the busy school and meet people you would not necessarily hang out with," said sophomore Jordan Belt.

During Wilderness Week friends went their separate ways to meet new friends and have great times. The different trips were rock climbing with Mrs. Phillips the Spanish teacher, backpacking with Mr. Schneider or Mrs. Noble, bike riding in Tahoe with history teacher Mr. Wood, and sight seeing in San Francisco (aka Urban Wilderness). It didn't matter who you went with, you still had a good time, or as Erinn Ramirez put it, "It was an awesome trip, it's one of the best I have gone on. We went peak hopping and mountain skimming, I can't wait till next year."

So after every one returns from their fun, relaxing yet exhausting week, it is always nice to look back and reflect on the week that you will remember for the rest of your life and think of all the friends that you made and how this week changed your life. As Morgan Cook liked to put it, "Even though I am scared of heights, I still went rock climbing to get out of my element and meet some new people."

Wilderness Week Musings

"What surprised me the most was climbing both mountains didn't feel long at all."

--Noel Mendoza, freshman, Mountaineering

"I decided not to go on the Wilderness Week trips, so I went on the 'alternative.' On the first day, we went to Bridgeport and swam in the river. On the second day, we went to Café Mecca and played Apples to Apples. On day 3, we went to Paulettes. I thought the best part was playing Apples to Apples—we really got to know each other."

--Katelyn Williams, freshman, The 'Alternative'

"What surprised me about myself was that I can go without technology. I knew I could but I never wanted to. But without it doesn't really change much. I'm still myself, I still live the same life, and I still will have the same friends."

--Ashley Harper, freshman, Backpacking with Mrs. Noble

"I am surprised that I was able to push myself so hard. I really like being out on the water."

--Nick Tippner, freshman, Kayaking



kayaking trip



rock climbing trip



urban wilderness trip

Calendar

Nov. 8 Wine Tasting Benefit
(21 years and older)
6pm-8pm Unitarian Universalist
of the Mountains
246 South Church St.

Award-winning wines, delicious appetizers, and a raffle for \$100 Wine Baskets!
Advance Purchase tickets available at Fibers, BriarPatch, or call Shari Phillips at 265-6290

Nov/Dec Holiday Wreath Sales
Cornish Christmas

Dates/times TBD

Feb 7 2009 Third Annual
Brain Buster Challenge
12:30p-4:30p

All Nevada County 7th and 8th graders invited to participate and showcase their skills, knowledge and spirit.

March 2009 Talent Show &
Silent Auction

Date/Location TBD

From the Dean's Desk:

College/University Admission Open Season

The college season has begun, high school students and parents, and I have a secret! It's not just for seniors....and it's not just in regards to admission. October begins a slew of activities and deadlines related to all things college. If you are a senior, it's the time to get in your applications. If you are younger, it is an excellent time to visit schools, take the PSAT and gear up, in general, for your post high-school years. Ask any graduate and they will tell you that the time flies by, so be prepared!

In general, most school websites begin accepting applications online this month with many having a November 1st deadline. Check with each individual school for details. California State Universities (CSU) and Universities of California (UC) both have filing deadlines of November 30 for most campuses. Here are some other upcoming dates related to your college/university preparation:

October 18 – UC Davis Preview Day – open to parents and students

October 25 – CSU Chico Preview Day – open to parents and students

October 29 – Bitney College Prep HS CSU Chico visit

Mr. Freedman and I will be taking a group to CSU Chico for a tour.

November 5 – SAT regular registration deadline for the **December 6th test** (the last test date for the fall, 2009 admission cycle)

If you have any questions about any of this, please contact Dave Peterson, Bitney College Prep's Dean of Academic Affairs at dpeterson@bitneyprep.net or (530) 477-1235



desolation wilderness trip

From Our Parent Council Chair, Shari Phillips

Hello Bitney Parents & Community Members:

A sincere and heartfelt "THANK YOU" to all of the parents who have been attending Parent Council meetings, working hard on newly formed committees, volunteering in the Lunch Program, creating our newsletter... Our list of recent accomplishments is lengthy, and the energy and excitement exhibited by our parent body is both heartwarming and inspiring!

Over the past few weeks, through our combined efforts, we have overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles. Bitney will continue be an option for students now and in the future because of your generous support! Parent Council has recently formed Student Recruitment, Marketing and Publicity Committees. Parents are developing plans to increase fundraising, enhance student outreach, and spread the word about Bitney, "THE BEST KEPT SECRET IN NEVADA COUNTY". If you have a special talent or skill that could benefit any of these committees, please contact the appropriate chairperson as soon as possible. Your efforts make a difference, and your contributions are greatly appreciated! (See a list of committees and chair contact information below.)

Parents, please do not forget how very important your continued participation is to the success of Bitney! Reaching our first funding milestone is certainly cause for celebration, but our work is not yet finished. Any amount of time you can volunteer furthers our goal.

Thank you for your efforts, your generosity and your commitment to Bitney!

Most Sincerely,
Shari Phillips :-)
Parent Council Chair

A couple of quick reminders:

***Buy Tickets** for Parent Council's **First Annual**

Wine Tasting Benefit -they are now on sale in the office, at BriarPatch and Fibers in Downtown Grass Valley.

***Online Auction donations** - Contact Lora Willis @ lora@atthey.com or 477-7881

***Brain Buster Challenge** - February 7, 2009 Contact Lora Willis @ lora@atthey.com or 477-7881 if you are interested in seeking donations for this event

Upcoming PC Events:

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| November | T-Shirt Sales ? |
| November 8 | Wine Tasting Benefit |
| December | Wreath Sales—Cornish Christmas |
| December 18 | Staff Appreciation Gifts |
| | Parent Education Nite ? |
| February 7 | Brain Buster Challenge |
| March | Talent Show |
| March 9 | Staff Appreciation Lunch |
| March 19-20 | Community Building Activities |
| May 5-8 | STAR Testing Breakfast |
| May | Roadside Cleanup |
| June 5 | Graduation |
| July 4 | Nevada City CoC July 4 Parade |
| July | Roadside Cleanup |



Student Spotlight: Q&A with Senior Brent Phillips

What do you appreciate most about Bitney?

What I like most about Bitney is the ability of its students to get to know one another due to its small size. Going through high school and teenage life is a lot less stressful when there are people around you who you can talk to, laugh with, and share concerns and experiences with.

What observation or experience surprised and/or delighted you?

As a freshman in 2005, what first struck me as unique was how supportive the environment was. I was hard pressed to find the breed of mean, insecure students that harassed or alienated me throughout most of my prior school life. Instead I found good friends that supported me and helped me regain the confidence I had lost over the previous eight years of intolerance.

The teachers were great as well; rather than shun individuality and inquisitiveness, they encouraged these qualities, further rebuilding my confidence and helping my comprehensive thinking skills flourish.

What would you most like people to know about Bitney?

Bitney isn't just your average high school in a smaller package; it's a once in a lifetime experience that its students will benefit from for the rest of their lives. Bitney offers a comprehensive program that not only teaches its students academics and social skills necessary for life in college and beyond, but it creates an environment in which said students can learn said lessons confidently and securely in the company of supportive individuals who care about your well-being; a program in which students are known, respected, and educated.

Kudos to BriarPatch, & to Our Bitney Volunteers

Many thanks to BriarPatch Co-op. During their Community Week, October 11-17, students and parents from Bitney took time to share what Bitney College Prep High School is all about at a table at BriarPatch. Thanks to Shana Parker, Nick Tippner, Susan Rogers, Derek Schultz, Anson Maloney, Ashley Harper, Becca Noe, and Dominique Parducci. Special thanks to Shari Phillips for her fabulous work in two graphic displays of students and school life, and faculty. Many thanks also to Susan Rogers for creating flyers and lending display supplies.

Kudos to All Our Roadside Clean-up Volunteers

Thanks to everyone who participated in the Roadside Cleanup! It was a HUGE success! Many students and parents were on hand to help. *Students, get your community service hours!*

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Why Bitney?

"When we have questions or problems, it's easy to get answers and find solutions."
--Susan Rogers, senior parent

"I treasure that we can know everyone involved in the school on a first-name basis, and it is so friendly, active, and engaging for the students, they love to be at Bitney! It is a great option for young people because it is unique in being able to guide them closely so they can achieve their educational goals. It is a real community of dedicated staff, parents, and students, and fosters self-knowledge, and mutual respect, so important for today."

--Dominique Parducci, freshman parent

"What I love the most about Bitney is the teachers! They are caring, devoted and amazing teachers. Nate, for the first time, really likes school. He WANTS to go to school each day."

--Carolyn Jones-Rogers, freshman parent

"Because of the small class sizes, teachers are able to get to know and assist the individual needs of the students."

--Richard DeGruccio, sophomore parent

Pledges, Painless Fundraising

Bitney Financial Update
By Lisa Hooper,
Parent Council Treasurer

Parents have come forward in amazing ways in this last month in support of Bitney College Prep. You have pledged almost \$44,000. At the end of September, Parent Council had received \$21,656.93 in pledges, alumni have donated \$2,300 and our Free\$4Bitney Program has received \$385.41.

A huge thanks to all who have pledged. Linda Waring, Pledge Coordinator, and I will be verifying pledges in the next 2 weeks in order to present an accurate financial picture to Charter Council. **So it is very important that parents continue to give their monthly pledged amount.**

Another easy way to contribute to the school is through the **Free\$4Bitney Program**. We are pleased to add SaveMart to our list of Free\$\$!. **Simply turn your SaveMart receipts into the school.** We can exchange them for goods. **Using your Briar Patch and SPD coupons, and signing up with Raleys and Safeway, allow us to receive funds at no cost to you.** Also when shopping on-line, **sign up with SchoolPop through www.onecause.com/schoolpop**, choose the merchant, and then shop as usual. **Your efforts will make a difference!**



Bitney Parent Honored Oct. 12

Congratulations to Susan Rogers, mother of senior student Eric Robins, for being honored recently as a Woman of Achievement by Business & Professional Women of Nevada County. The annual award goes to a member of the organization whose career and volunteer activities have supported the goals of the organization, which includes equal rights for women, pay equity, business and government policies that support working women and their families, and more. It was presented as part of National Business Women's Week at an event at the Grass Valley Elks Lodge where local congressional candidate Charlie Brown was the keynote speaker.



Bitney College Prep
High School

Wine Tasting Benefit

Saturday, November 8
6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Indulge in delicious appetizers while sampling a dozen award-winning California Wines presented by local wine expert David Luce

Join us at the
Unitarian Universalist Community of the Steamtown
246 South Church Street in Downtown Grass Valley

Tickets are \$25 and available through advance purchase only at BriarPatch, Fibers, or by contacting event coordinator Shari Phillips at 265-6290

Also raffling spectacular wine baskets valued at \$100 each!

Please join us in support of Bitney College Prep!

Wines offered at discounted prices (cash or check only please)
Participants MUST be at least 21 years of age

Presented by
BCPPHS
Parent
Council

Enjoy a variety of delicious appetizers while learning about and sampling a dozen award-winning California wines presented by local wine expert Dave Luce. Tickets are \$25 and available through advance purchase only in the Bitney office, Briar Patch or by contacting Shari Phillips at 265-6290. (Participants **must** be 21 years of age.) These gold medal-winning wines will be offered for purchase at the event below retail price (check and cash only, please).

We are asking each family to purchase or sell two tickets, so please tell your friends, family, and neighbors about this exciting opportunity to fundraise for Bitney!

If you can't attend, why not **purchase raffle tickets** to win one of our great Wine Baskets valued at over \$100!

Basket 1 – Crate & Barrel 50"x60" Samba Striped Picnic Blanket, matching table cloth w/4 matching napkins, two acrylic wine glasses, and two bottles of wine. Perfect for sunset watching or wine sipping at the river!

Basket 2 – Crate & Barrel 50"x60" Samba Striped Picnic Blanket, two matching napkins, latching basket that contains two wine glasses and two bottles of wine. Great for a journey to your favorite picnic spot!

Tickets are \$2 each or 6 for \$10 and are available presale in the office, by contacting Shari Phillips or at the event. The raffle drawing will take place at the wine tasting, but you need not be present to win (however, you do need to be 21 years of age or older to purchase tickets).

See you there! Questions? Contact Shari Phillips @265-6290 or email: shari-phillips@sbcglobal.net.

Bitney Carpool List - September 2008

Area	Parents	Student	Phone
1 - off NC Hwy behind Fowler Ctr 1	Susan & Win Rogers T. Dominique Parducci	Eric Robins Daniel Freehling	271-1311 271-0722
2 - Lake Wildwood	Rick & Jeannie DeGruccio	Sofia DeGruccio	432-2494
2 - Lake Wildwood - North Gate	Vallerie Moore-Belt	Jordan Belt	432-0804
2 - Monday & Wednesday	Ken Willer	Kenny Willer	632-1656
1 - Tuesday, Thursday, Friday			
2 - Lake Wildwood	Beverly K. Erkson	Michael Erkson	432-9581
2 - Downtown GV or area of McCourtney/LimeKiln Roads	Carol Fulkerson	Katelyn Clark	268-2742
2	Lance Smith	Ashley Smith	639-2523
2 -McCourtney Rd by the transfer station	Pam Davinson	Ashley Harper	
2/3	Carol Sanders	Myra Sanders	274-2073
3 - Rough & Ready 3	Shana & Josh Stratton-Hancock Carol Williams	Derek Schultz Damon Williams	432-7953 205-8003
4 - Downtown Nevada City (I do not drive)	Michele J. Foasberg	Geoffrey Borchers	265-6603
4	Eileen Rouhani	Gavin MacDierny	265-4157
4	Alice Martin	Charlie Martin	478-1474
4- Cement Hill	Eric Rickel	Justin Rickel	470-0135
4	Jada Faye	Athena Knowles	265-8016
5/6 - Willow Valley Road	Ann & Doug Hobbs	Colton Hobbs	265-5736
6	Sharon Ramirez	Erinn Ramirez	265-5266
6	Hope & Hosea Bostic	Jacob Bostic	265-4467
6	Shari Phillips	Brent Phillips	265-6290
6	Luke Manis	Noel Manis	274-7122
8	Renata Earles	Korban Earles	273-6248
8	Jim Rogers	Nate Rogers	272-3827
7	Ray Ruggerio	Russell Highland	273-8477
7,9 Rattlesnake Road	Cati Lacorazzi	Anson Maloney	559-1762
9	Heather Noe	Becca Noe	263-6867
9 - South of Alta Sierra	Shana Parker & Gary Tippner	Nick Tippner	271-0480
9 - off East Limekiln	Rick Robins	Eric Robins	273-8881

AREAS

- 1 - Area around Bitney College Prep
- 2 - Hwy 20 South
- 3 - Grass Valley east out toward Rough & Ready
- 4 - Nevada City out Hwy 49 North
- 5 - Hwy 20 North
- 6 - Banner Ridge Lava Cap Area
- 7 - Hwy 174 and Brunswick Road
- 8 - Cedar Ridge and further
- 9 - Hwy 49 South around Alta Sierra

Parent Council Committee Contact Information:

Student Recruitment Committee

Chair - Charley Hooper - 272-1182 or Hooper@ObjectiveInsights.com

Charlie Ramirez - 265-5266 or ramz62-4@sbcglobal.net

Shana Stratton - 432-7953 or sstratton@forestcharter.com

Cati Lacorazza - 274-9729 or DMPTL@comcast.net

Publicity Committee

Co-chairs:

Ann Hobbs - 265-5736 or abcdhobb@nccn.net

Shana Parker - 271-0480 or sparker@foothill.net

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Chair - Greg Pellerin - 478-0358 or apex_development@comcast.net

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Grant Writing Committee

Shana Stratton - 271-0480 or sstratton@forestcharter.com

Kathy Davidson - 846-6465 or KDPOM@hughes.net

Please consider giving your time and talent to one or more of these committees...