

Dr. Norman Bethune C.I. Newsletter

December 2016

Principal S. Kaskens

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Principal's News

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Beginning in December, Bethune will be launching the grade 9 Mindfulness program (now in its 4th year). We understand that high school is a very stressful period with academic demands, post-secondary pressures, and at times difficult peer and family relationships. Students will learn how to manage their stress and build resiliency by participating in 6 workshops, over a period of a few months. Our program is based on Dr. Patricia Broderick's book: "Learning to Breathe: A Mindfulness Curriculum for Adolescents to Cultivate Emotion Regulation, Attention, and Performance". For more information, please visit www.learning2breathe.org.

All parents are invited to attend our school council potluck on Monday, December 5th at 7pm. Bring a small appetizer and enjoy some conversation. The month of December will be a busy and exciting time at Bethune. We look forward to the "12 Most Wonderful Days of the Year Campaign", our Winter Music Night and Feeder School Winter Concert, as well as our annual SAC Talent Show, plus so much more. Finally, I'd like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a wonderful holiday season.

Ms. Kaskens

Parent Teacher Interviews - December 1

On Friday, November 25th, your child should have received his/her report card. Parent-teacher interviews will take place on December 1st from 5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. We will be on a modified schedule that day. Classes will end at 2:15 p.m. Parents/guardians may sign up for interviews at www.bethuneci.com. Parents are also encouraged to contact teachers directly to discuss the progress of their child if they are unable to attend Parent's Night. We look forward to seeing you on December 1st.

Upcoming Events

- ◆ Parent Teacher Interviews
- ◆ Winter Music Concert
- ◆ SAC Talent Show



No School - PA Day - December 2

This is just a reminder that there will be no classes for students on Friday, December 2nd as it is a PA Day. We look forward to seeing student back at school on Monday, December 5th.

WHAT?!





Volleyball Intramurals

Volleyball Intramurals have started once again with a significantly large number of Bethune's volleyball enthusiasts signing up their teams for tournament-style house league games Tuesdays and Thursdays at lunch. Win? Lose? Doesn't really matter,

it's all about having fun with your friends and practicing your skills. Just be sure to keep an eye out for the teachers' team who seem to be doing a pretty good job this year."

Nicole Kelly - ABC



Knitting Club

The knitting club asked for donations and "The Purple Purl" came through for us! They were so pleased to see so many young people taking up knitting and contributing to the community, they offered us a huge donation. We now have

an assortment of yarn, needles, and patterns. For those of you who need supplies, or want to take a class, "The Purple Purl" is your go-to place! They are located at 1162 Queen Street East. Thank-you Purple Purl!

Movember at Bethune

Movember is an annual charity event that raises awareness and funds for men's health issues. These issues include various forms of cancer as well as mental health and depressions. Several Bethune staff members participated as a team for Movember. They called themselves the "Bethune Grizzly Bears" and they organized various events at Bethune to raise awareness and funds for this cause. These Movember events took place in the Commons at lunch during the last week of November. During this week, a Movember Awareness booth was set up to provide information about health issues and to host

Movember activities. The group gave out Movember buttons to students and staff making a donation. One fun activity for students was the "Design A Mustache" Contest in which students could design the mustache for a staff member to wear or emulate. Our Bethune Grizzly Bears also planned announcements and morning music to accompany the theme of Movember during the month. This year's Bethune's Grizzly Bears team consisted of: Mr. Cullum, Mr. Dyal, Mr. Laufer, Mr. Mueller, Mr. Parmer, Mr. Pegg, Mr. Scriven, and Mr. Sylvester.

Mr. Dyal

Helping Hands Campaign to Welcome Syrian Newcomers

It is the season of giving, and the students of the Grade 12 World Issues class are doing just that. Students in the class have decided to have the 'Helping Hands' Campaign for Syrian Newcomers during the week of Dec. 5th – 9th.

In September 2016, the World Issues class traveled to the University of Toronto to experience a mock refugee camp. There, they experienced the lack of clean water, health complications, and learned how to suture wounds. In November 2016, they participated in 'The Sidra Project', a 360° Virtual Reality experience where they toured the Zaatari refugee camp in Jordan through the perspective of Sidra; a 12 year-old refugee. After these experiences, they were inspired to provide Syrian Newcomers with a little comfort for the holidays.

This one week campaign will be organized and run by the students. Homeroom visits occurred on Tuesday, November 29th to inform the student body about the challenges faced by Syrian newcomers and the details of the campaign. Collections for

the toy and winter gear drive as well as monetary donations will be accepted during homeroom on Thursday, December 1st. There will also be additional opportunities to donate in the main hallway at lunch from December 5th – 9th.

This campaign will directly help the Syrian newcomers through the Centre for Immigrant & Community Services (CICS). Toys will go to the children and the winter gear received will go toward making Winter Care Packages for the Newcomers. Gently used books are fine, but it is recommended that all items donated are brand new. Toys include items like books, games, puzzles, sporting goods, dolls, learning tools, and stuffed animals. Winter gear includes hats, scarves, socks, gloves, and mitts. For those who are not donating items, monetary donations are accepted. All monetary donations will go toward buying more toys and winter gear for Syrian newcomers.

Let's help spread the holiday spirit by donating to the 'Helping Hands' Campaign this month!

Teresa Wang



REEL Asian Film Festival

On November 14th, 2016, Bethune's Media Studies class and Senior Drama class were able to experience TIFF's annual *REEL Asian Film Festival*, as well as an Animation Workshop. In the morning, we experienced first-hand the procedures of making a stop-motion animation, and made our very own short animation films. We did so while learning how to think carefully about pace, morphing and building character. In the afternoon, we watched *Now You See Me*, a series of short films all made by Asian filmmakers from around the world. *The Reel Asian Film Festival* helps give exposure to Asian culture in media and Asian film makers in the film industry; which is dominated by Hollywood. Below, we share our favourite films from the series of shorts we saw in the festival.

PONYTAIL

The first short film was called *Ponytail*, and followed a female Filipino teenager who was raised in a family of immigrants. The film portrays cultural differences between the immigrant generation and the second generation- her parents would be speaking Tagalog while she would reply in English. The film also explores her experience of being scouted by a modelling agency. After the audition, she later realizes that a model's lifestyle was not sustainable for her. This film caused the audience to reflect on the cultural gap between different generations and the importance of embracing who you are.

DISSONANCE

The short film *Dissonance*, in our opinion, was very meaningful and sent a very hard hitting message. What made this film special was it made such a loud impression about being transgender, without using any words. Since it was a silent film, the film maker used different elements like the changing size of the characters to communicate their mood and other factors like sound, colour and action to help communicate the message. It is a beautiful film. It made me feel all different types of emotions from being afraid to tearing up at the end. I think this short film was a great addition to the film festival because it also touched upon the LGBTQ+ community and the common struggles that transgender people face.

EGGPLANT

The short film by Yangzi She, *Eggplant* shows us that the sky is not always blue, and the grass is not always

green. The film follows the growth of a young boy named Durian and his struggle to fit into society with facial expressions opposite of a regular person. Throughout the film, we get a peek in the peculiar colour schemes and abstract animations created by Yangzi She. Yangzi She expressed her perspective in a visual way that pulls you into the storyline, as we experience the dynamics of the story through the limited amount of talking, the powerful sounds and music and actions throughout the short film. We felt deeply touched through Durian's experiences as he realizes that being different was absolutely fine, and that what society wants you to be does not mean you have to follow their rules, and that there are always new ways to portray life. Having films that not only portray the struggles of growing up, but also knowing the community of people in these creative industries includes our culture and many others is what we learned through this experience.

PARADE DE SATIE

Parade de Satie, the fifth film shown in the series by Koji Yamamura follows the performance of three managers and four performers in an animated recreation of ballet. The animated film is the essence of surrealism with the mix of organic and geometric shapes while humorously combining the quotes and music by Erik Satie. Yamamura manages to confuse and enrapture the audience in its 14 minute ride and seeing content directed by a Japanese animator in the International film industry inspires others whom also want to work in the industry. We found the film both mesmerizing and confusing.

Through the *REEL Asian International Film Festival* as the audience, we were exposed to media content that is not normally portrayed in our community. Living in northern Toronto, it is rare to watch Asian Canadians portray such passion for the film and entertainment industry, but in this event there were many. Events like these reveal how there is a place in the entertainment industry for Asians living in Canada. It was truly inspiring to watch Gerald Fantone, the director of *Ponytail* stand up on stage and speak about his journey as an Asian in the film industry. It encourages individuals, like many of us to follow a career path like his. It is also nice to see Asian actors on the big screen!

Grade 11/12 Drama Classes



THE SIDRA PROJECT



The Sidra Project

Picture your house. Appreciate all of its structure and its architectural beauty. Now, imagine that your house doesn't have a door. That would be concerning. Imagine that the window panes are gone. Remove the roof, and now the ceilings. Maybe a chunk of wall is missing. Its former strength has become something frailer, weaker, and it can no longer provide what it used to: safety, warmth, security. Can you still call that house your home? And is a home a fully built structure, or is it the people whom you're surrounded by, the people you come 'home' to?

83,000 refugees of the Syrian Civil War walked almost 500 km, physically homeless with nowhere to go in search of shelter. They made a camp with no utilities and no structure a home. What we go through and complain about living in a first world country is nothing compared to what they have been through. They define strength with everything they have experienced over the course of three years.

Our class was fortunate enough to be given an opportunity to participate in the **Sidra Project**, a "unique collaboration between the United Nations and Artscape" (The Sidra Project). With virtual reality headsets, we listened to and were immersed in a virtual tour of the Zaatari refugee camp in Jordan. The video, *Clouds Over Sidra*, shows the camp from 12-year old Sidra's eyes and with the narration, it tells her story.

The experience was very emotional for many people. Students reported feeling sympathetic and empathetic. They were sad because of the environment and difficulties faced by the refugees like lack of plumbing. One student even said

that the place looked like a prison compound. Still, there was happiness conveyed in the sense of community that the film gave. The vast number of tents was shocking and jaw-dropping; it really put into perspective the number of people stuck in limbo, between war and waiting for a new home. Bethune Media Studies students felt great admiration for the emotional and physical strength of the refugees, whose determination in the face of their situation was and continues to be impressive. The video offered valuable insight into the Syrian refugee crisis and the lives of the refugees in Zaatari, and provided a powerful emotional experience for the class.

As a class we have decided to respond to the documentary by writing letters to Sidra directly, and by documenting our own response to the film in the form of an awareness campaign and fundraising effort to help our local Syrian Refugees. We will collaborate with Ms Lac's World Issues class to create awareness at Bethune about the Syrian Refugee crisis. We will be collecting donations of household necessities such as hygiene products, which are often expensive but necessary when setting up a new home. We will also collect monetary donations which we will use to create care packages for Syrian Refugees new to Canada. Please send donations of money on December 1 and donations of household products (a list will be provided to students) during the week of December 5-9. Thank you for helping us with our initiative to make a positive contribution to the plight of our new neighbours who have suffered so much just to get to a safe country.

Gr. 11 Media Studies Class

Winter Music Concert

The students and staff of the Bethune Music Department invite all parents to attend our annual Winter Music Concert on Monday, December 12, 2016 beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the Bethune Commons. Performing ensembles include the: Concert Band, Wind Ensemble, Jazz Choir, Junior Choir, Festival Singers and Jazz Band. Tickets are \$5.00 each and are available at the

door or from any music student.

A reminder to our grade nine parents, the music uniform is black dress shirt/blouse, black dress pants/skirt, black dress shoes, & **black** socks.

After our week at Jackson's Point the ensembles are sounding better than ever. We look forward to seeing you.

Mr. Sylvester

