

Banbury Independent News

Thoughts on the 35th Anniversary

From a New Teacher

On May 22nd, Banbury celebrated its 35th anniversary at the Valley Ridge Golf and Country Club. Among the 180 guests were past and present staff, students, alumni, friends and family. It was heart-warming to witness the crowds who gathered to celebrate Banbury and its’ “radical” pedagogy since its very beginning.

Upon entering the venue, guests could view student art-work that was showcased along a short hallway which led into a ballroom where a silent auction and slide show could be viewed. Silent auction items ranged from dinner and spa packages, to gift baskets carefully put together by elementary students and parents. Items included donations from parents and local shops and businesses, demonstrating the community’s support for Banbury.

Throughout the night I quietly followed around my mentor Tara Fry, a woman whose wing I couldn’t wait to get under. As she danced lightly around the room greeting parents, students, and alumni, I caught a first glimpse at the imperative role Banbury teachers played in not just the academic lives of their students, but in their personal lives as well. The appreciation and connection the guests and Tara had with one another made the event feel like a family reunion.

After a quality buffet of fresh salads, vegetables, and roast beef, the school’s founder and director, Diane Swiatek, gave a heart-felt welcome to her guests as we sat down for coffee and dessert. Shortly after, a handful of alumni provided testimonials of their experiences at Banbury, and it is then that that I was truly taken back in time. For the first time, I was able to digest exactly what it meant to be a part of the Banbury community. As alumni expressed their gratitude and very personal experiences, it was evident that students truly grew up academically and personally through Diane’s vision of self-directed learning. What was even more evident were the ways in which they indirectly recalled the sacrifices both big and small that Diane made throughout their time at Banbury to facilitate their growth and learning in ways that suited them all individually. Some of these students are now business owners, Ph.D students, and educators. On Friday, the root of their success was mostly attributed to Banbury’s ability and willingness to allow students to direct their own learning and creativity in ways that eliminated academic and social pressures, and fostered personal and academic growth.

Before a night of dancing began, Diane awarded both long and short term teachers and students, recognizing their dedication to Banbury. The gratitude that was expressed could truly be felt in the air as tears were shed, and gifts with personal touches were presented to Banbury’s support system.

As a new teacher to Banbury, and prior public education employee, this experience warmed my heart and soul in a way that reaffirmed my decision to take on a role at Banbury. I hope this anniversary was not the first and last that I will have the pleasure to attend.

Erica Frischkorn

Important Dates for June:

- Wednesday, June 3rd – Gr. 2-6 Zoo Field trip
- Tuesday, June 9th – Awards Ceremony (1:15 – 3:00)
- Wednesday, June 10th – Elementary Swimming
- Thursday, June 11th – Gr. 2-6 Library, Pre K – 1 Fire Station Field Trip
- Wednesday, June 17th – Gr. 2-6 Hiking (pm)
- Wednesday, June 18th – Gr. 2-6 Show and Tell
- Tuesday, June 23rd – Gr. 2-6 Drumheller Field Trip
- Wednesday, June 24th – Elementary to Sandy Beach (weather dependent)
- Thursday, June 25th – Gr. 1 – 12 Extreme Air Park (pm)
- Friday, June 26th – Elementary for Ice Cream, LAST DAY OF SCHOOL!

Please note that all students are responsible for cleaning out their work spaces and lockers, in preparation for summer cleaning. Anything left over the summer will be thrown out; locks will be cut off lockers if necessary.

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Year-End Awards Ceremony

This year, the annual Awards Ceremony will be taking place on Tuesday, June 9th, from 1:15 to 3:00. Please join us for a presentation of The Alliance: Part 3, recognition of Suhye Kim, this year's graduate, and a celebration of all of the students at Banbury and their accomplishments this year.

Our celebration will take place in the Blue Studio at Evergreen Theatre.

Travel Opportunity for Next Year

In the spring of 2016, grade 9 to 12 students have the opportunity to participate in an 11 day trip to Italy and Germany. This trip will include stops in Rome, Florence, Munich, and Prague. For the full itinerary, check out this link:

<http://www.eftours.ca/eliterature/DBD/13/IGE.pdf>

To enrol in the trip, please use the following link:

<http://www.eftours.ca/tour-website/1710452KZ>

Early enrolment is encouraged, to take advantage of the payment plans offered.

Please note that grade 8 students can request permission to join the trip, provided there are enough chaperones.

Knitting Circle

With a growing interest in knitting among students, knitting circle is being held Thursdays, 12:00 – 12:30. This will be a drop in group – no need to commit to every week. Parents and teachers are encouraged to come, too!

If anyone has any knitting needles, crochet hooks, or yarn they would like to donate, it would be greatly appreciated. Those participating in the knitting circle will be encouraged to use donated yarn to make at least one project to be donated to Inn From the Cold in the fall.

Provincial Testing Schedule

Friday, June 12

- English Part A Diploma

Wednesday, June 17

- Grade 6 ELA PAT
- English Part B Diploma

Thursday, June 18

- Grade 6 Math PAT

Friday, June 19

- Grade 6 Science PAT

Monday, June 22

- Grade 6 Social Studies PAT
- Biology Diploma

Tuesday, June 23

- Grade 9 Science PAT
- Chemistry Diploma

Wednesday, June 24

- Grade 9 Math PAT

Thursday, June 25

- Grade 9 English PAT

Friday, June 26

- Grade 9 Social Studies PAT

Please remember that all exams start at 9:00 am sharp, and that students should be at the school 5-10 minutes prior to that.

Out of respect for those writing tests, please keep noise levels to a minimum during testing times.

Community Education Services

This month, Alberta Health Services and the Alberta Children's Hospital are offering a wide variety of community education opportunities. Information on the sessions can be found here:

<https://fcr.albertahealthservices.ca/ces/newsletter/2015-05-newsletter.pdf>