Do You Remember The Sludge Test?

The Science Department at Bronxville School has come a long way from the jello molds many of us made at our kitchen tables for Dr. Moyle. The department is breaking new ground in everything from an experimental elementary school garden to new protocols for gathering and analyzing experimental data.

The Bronxville School Foundation has played a prominent role in supporting fantastic new curriculum to keep the Bronxville Schools’ Science Departments competitive and current with the best technology and training available. The most visible demonstration of the BSF’s partnership with the Science Department is the recent purchase and installation of a portable planetarium system called “Digitarium Zeta”.

Sixth grade science teacher Frank Viggiani submitted a grant request to The Bronxville School Foundation to purchase a new portable planetarium system which utilizes a computer based projector in a 16-foot inflatable dome. The new system significantly enhances the learning experience for the students over the more rudimentary previous system which utilized cylinders with pin-holes to project planets and stars. This system projects high resolution images that allow our students to look at exact dates and times of the sky at any place in the world. With the push of a button, the computer projects the usual planets, stars, and moon phases, but because of the power of the computer, it can do much more such as simulate the sky from any point on earth or from other planets, show celestial phenomena such as meteor showers and eclipses, and show the outline, names and artwork of constellations one at a time or all at once. Elementary school students have the chance to learn in the new Planetarium, as second graders study constellations and fourth graders study Greek mythology in English Language Arts.

A designated elementary school faculty with experience specifically teaching science is a rarity in public elementary schools today. Bronxville is extremely fortunate to have Mrs. Susan Monaco, Mr. Tim Curran and Mrs. Karen Green. They have worked with Bronxville’s science faculty at all levels to develop and coordinate a cohesive core curriculum based on the scientific method to take full advantage of having grades K-12 all under one roof. This collaborative approach benefits younger and older students alike. Core strands of the curriculum are aligned and rubrics build on each other so that students can use knowledge first developed in elementary school as they get older. For example, elementary school students begin preparing lab reports in their lab notebooks in second grade, and learn how to ask scientific questions and become critical thinkers at a young age. Older students in middle school and high school are given the opportunity to give presentations and collaborate with younger students, which provides them with the chance to work on their presentation skills and communicate what they have learned in simple terms.

The Elementary School Science Department has changed significantly over time. Since the 1970’s all grades have been taught science by designated science teachers. When first and second grade became full day programs in 1976, the children were broken down into smaller groups in the afternoons and lessons were taught based on the Discovery Lab program. This program was based on social sciences including science, art, music, holidays, etc. and was taught by Paula Newell and Gail Moulton. In 1980, Barbara White was hired as the first full time science teacher for the younger elementary students. In 1983, Barbara and the other classroom teachers rewrote the science program to conform to NYS Science curriculum mandates. The program was again revamped in the 1990’s by Barbara White and Susan Monaco and has been continually tweaked, modified and amended to help best meet the needs and demands of the New York State Curriculum.

The curriculum is very hands-on, with an emphasis on getting Bronxville’s young scientists to become critical scientific thinkers. This Spring, the Elementary School teachers are piloting a “Science Expo,” and are planning to have second grade students present experiments conducted in class. They hope to have high school volunteers mentor the groups. Among their many other science projects, elementary school students are able to observe the complete life cycle of a plant in a very short time, using rapid-cycling “Wisconsin Fast Plants”, which go from seed to seed in 40 days. These plants were developed over 15 years at the University of Wisconsin.

The Middle School Science Program is taught...
by Frank Viggiani, Jennifer Zopp and Jean Windels, who took over the program after the retirements in the past few years of Bronxville stalwarts such as Dennis Davin and Jeff Schwartz.

Earth Science is the focus of the program in sixth grade, with sections on astronomy, weather and geology. One of the highlights of the year is a trip to the Lower Hudson Valley Challenger Center in Suffern, NY, where the students embark on simulated space missions to land on the moon and explore Mars. And, of course the Digital planetarium.

The seventh grade program is Life Sciences, which includes sections on cells, the human body, evolution, genetics and ecology. Consistent with a district wide initiative, the seventh grade curriculum is focusing on critical thinking not memorization. The students are given the opportunity to perform more hands-on experiments, which they often are required to design on their own.

Introduction to Physical Sciences is the focus for the eighth grade program. The eighth grade program incorporates technologies such as digital microscopes and advanced computer based probes to improve the student’s ability to conduct experiments. The year’s high point is the famous “sludge test”, where students are presented with a liquid that they must design various experiments in order to determine its components.

Today’s High School Science Department offers a wealth of choices to students. Gone are the days of students living in abject fear of a full junior year of chemistry, Mickey Saltman-style, with rote memorization of his precious periodic table of elements. Today, students are given a chance to explore chemistry (and physics) for a half year each as freshman. Sophomore year’s studies include Biology and Earth Sciences for a half year of each as well. This program is called the Core and students can then delve further into those subjects later on if they so choose. The high school curriculum continues to build on the knowledge and study methods the students have learned in the younger grades. There are 5 science teachers on staff and there is a wide selection of courses available to the students. Beginning in their sophomore year, students have the opportunity to double up on science courses. Courses offered are AP Physics, AP Biology, AP Chemistry, AP Environmental Science, Bio II, Chem II or Physics II. Physically, the HS classrooms and labs have a new home in the school’s addition, which was completed in 2004. The old classrooms and labs now belong to the Middle School.

Through Elementary, Middle, and High School, students develop rubrics and protocols for reporting on lab experiences by keeping a lab notebook and writing lab reports. From grade to grade they build on past experience and add new dimensions, challenges and facets to their learning. Technology has played a huge role in changing the way students are taught and it has opened the classroom up to the world outside. Today there are new protocols for gathering and analyzing experimental data. Students can use handheld devices that allow them to download data to their own mobile devices. In the near future, there will be no more paper labs. Students will not be restricted to the classroom but can collect and analyze data off-site and share this information via a new software program with other students.

Coursework and scientific education is not limited to labs and lab analysis. In keeping with the district’s goal of examining and fostering creative and critical thinking, our science curriculum is incorporating more analysis, debate and presentations on current scientific topics. Each teacher in each course or grade level has developed and uses at least one “inquiry” lab experiment where students design and carry out an investigation.

Bronxville Schools are privileged to enjoy the unique experience of all three schools under one roof. The schools have worked hard together to build a positive experience for all students. As a department, all schools continue to work together to ensure that Bronxville meets and exceeds State and National frameworks.

The combination of great technology, cutting edge training and an excellent faculty has helped Bronxville maintain a top notch Science Department from Elementary through the Middle School and into the High School.

Farewell to Faculty

Dr. Barry Richelsoph plans to retire as Middle School Principal as of June 30, 2012. He joined the Bronxville faculty in 2004, following a career in Trumbull, Connecticut as a science teacher, assistant principal, and Middle School Principal. At Bronxville he supported many student-centered programs, including advisory, exploratory courses, and extended field trips to Williamsburg and Washington. He shepherded the school through some significant budget pressures and personnel changes, preserving the school’s core programs and services. "Barry is a kind and patient leader,” said Superintendent David Quattrone, "and whether it was a disciplinary matter, advocacy for a particular course, or sponsoring new activities, he always had the students’ best interests in mind. Bronxville is fortunate to have had the benefit of his experience and wise perspective."

In Memoriam: Gifts in memory of an alumna/us, parent, or friend of the Bronxville School have a very special meaning. These thoughtful remembrances contribute to the Foundation’s programs and perpetuate the memory of the individual. The following individuals are remembered:

Elissa Loretta Abruzzi ‘73  David W. Foster ‘78
Jeremiah O’Connor, Jr.  Brad Reetz ‘66
Arthur D. Schelberg ’38

In Honor Of:
Christine Higgins  Dr. Rachel Kelly
Dr. Martin Roth  Georgiana Stewart
Irving Gumb’s 90th Birthday  The Bond, Eply & Warble
Families
Class of '51 Celebrates 60th Reunion (That's Right, 60th) Touring Village; Impressed with Changes by Robert Riggs

Fifteen members of the Bronxville High School Class of 1951 toured their old haunts in the village on Saturday, October 15, 2011. They came from California, Georgia, South Carolina, and closer points for a day of visiting, with spouses and friends. While in town they toured the Bronxville Public Library, the Bronxville School, Village Hall, Pete's Tavern & Restaurant "Est. 1937," and the Bronxville Field Club. Each of the buildings has seen significant change over the past 60 years but none more so than the school. Except for the Pondfield Road exterior, the auditorium, the library, and some of the corridors the school was barely recognizable. All were impressed by the changes that were made and the restoration to the building following the 2007 and August 2011 floods.

Robert Riggs, as a current resident of the village and a member of the class, led a tour of the library and Village Hall that focused on paintings of early Bronxville residents Amie Dusenberry and her mother, Mary Masterton Dusenberry. Three members of the class recalled as children fetching milk produced by the Jersey cow owned by Miss Amie.

The class also paused at the photograph in Village Hall of Ronald Swinford, mayor from 1955 through 1957. His son John, a member of the class who became a veterinarian, caused his father distress by maintaining in his father's basement a retirement site for aged reptiles and other animals turned out by the Bronx Zoo.

At a celebratory dinner Saturday evening, class members recited memories of their childhood and particularly their experiences at the school. Donald Farley, who went on to Cornell as both a student and a faculty member and had a remarkable career as a physicist and astronomer, said that he found his Bronxville School education well prepared him for college and indeed put him ahead of his contemporaries. The tenor of all remarks was that growing up in the village in the 1940s and early 1950s provided a good start for contemporaries. The Bronxville School class of 1951 was "well prepared and ahead of his classmates’ careers."

On to Fogarty's on Kraft Avenue for lunch. A significant event there was the reading of the names of the 19 deceased class members by Scott Borison, who invited comments after each name; this brought a mixture of laughter and tears. "I think there's an increased honesty as you get older," said Karen Simon (Cummington, MA). "You can confront all those tough high school memories, but also be honest with yourself."

The reunion culminated in a big dinner at the Bronxville Field Club. "I was nervous; I wasn't sure about recognizing people--but the name tags helped!" said Wendy Flannery (Fairfield, PA). "I was impressed by what everybody had achieved, versus what we might have expected in high school." "What I loved about it the most," said Kit Donwren (Oxnard, CA), "was how comfortable people were in their own skins. They knew who they were." "I've been to six reunions," said Steve Hurlbut (Fountain Hills, AZ), "and I have a strong sense of bonding with all of my classmates. They're irreplaceable. You can never replace childhood friends." "I've been aware all my grown-up life," said Lee Richmond (Dunbarton, NH), "that we grew up as the most economically privileged kids on earth, but I'm really impressed, looking at this class, at how much we have given back to our communities and our society."

BHS Class of 1976 35th REUNION WEEKEND

The Bronxville Class of 1976 celebrated its 35th reunion on September 24, 2011 with much revelry, catching up, a few moments of puzzlement trying to recall a face from the past, and many laughs. By the end of the weekend, we were right back into the swing of high school!

The event was organized by Maggie Griffin Marrone, Heidi Paul, Allison Shaker Devlin, Rob Shaw, Jeff Cooney, Laurie Stichter, and Lynn Beasley. A Facebook page was created and classmates corresponded through Facebook up to the date of the reunion and are still doing so now, sharing pictures and thoughts from the event. Classmates came from as far away as London, Alaska, California, Colorado, Ohio, and Texas to attend.

The event began with a wonderful "tented" party at the Cooney home on Friday night, which included delicious hors d'oeuvres followed by tacos served from a huge taco truck parked next to the house. After many hours of catching up, a large group (some jet-lagged) headed to an impromptu after party at... of course, Pete's.
On Saturday, the former classmates enjoyed a tour of the school and a Bronco football game, followed by cocktails and dinner at the Field Club. One of the highlights of the weekend was the toast given by Allison Shuker Devlin and as I recall at some point everyone spontaneously broke out into a chorus of "Onward Bronxville ... Onward Bronxville ... On to Victory! ... etc. ... etc....!!" Amazing how those words come back to you! Once again ... in the tradition of Bronxville, there was of course another after-party at Fogarty's that started at about 1am and went on I'm sure into the wee hours!

BHS Class of 1991 20th REUNION WEEKEND

The Bronxville School Class of 1991 celebrated its 20th reunion the weekend of November 26-27, 2011. It started off with a tour of Bronxville School on Saturday morning and that evening dinner and drinks at Bronxville Field Club. The group that did the tour was amazed with the changes and reminisced about old times. A few checked out their old lockers, the courtyard and commented on how different the "senior lounge" is now. It was a good turnout of about 30 classmates and we had people come from as far away as California. It was great to see old faces and meet new ones as well! We took many photos and Matt Ward created a Facebook Group BHS 1991-1995, their 40th reunion. The location is moved each year -- in San Diego. The class decided they have too much fun to wait every five years to get together!

~ And the Reunion Award Goes To ~

The Class of 1955! They have held a reunion every year since 1995, their 40th reunion. The location is moved each year -- in 2011 it was in Rockport, MA and in 2012, they were together in San Diego. The class decided they have too much fun to wait every five years to get together!

Additional Reunion Fall 2011: Class of 1971 - 40th Reunion

Special Invitation from the Class of ’82 ~ Saturday, October 6th

The Class of ‘82 invites its brothers, sisters and fellow alums to help celebrate its 30th reunion at Siwanoy County Club. They will host legendary bar band, NRBQ. There will be a modest $20/person cover charge to help defray the cost of the band, which kicks off the first of two sets at 9:00 pm on Saturday, October 6th. If you are in the area and would like to reconnect with familiar faces from the ’70s and ’80s, come on by!

Class of ’82 Reunion - October 6-7, 2012
Class of ’62 & Class of ’87 Reunions - October 12-14, 2012
Class of ’67 Reunion - July 2012 in Stowe, VT
BHS 2012 Homecoming Weekend - October 19-20, 2012

Alumni in the News

The world has become an extremely complicated place, however, translating complicated ideas into simplified concepts is not foreign to 1986 Bronxville Alum, Perry Brittis, MD, PhD. In addition to his medical training, Dr. Brittis has had a long distinguished career in scientific research and is an expert on protein synthesis. Dr. Brittis has first-hand witnessed and concluded the critical importance of proper nutritional balance in enhancing and accelerating the healing process after rigorous exercise, injury, surgery or illness. Today, Dr. Brittis is on the verge of launching his new Bronxville-based business, SliceLabs, a nutrient replenishment company, and introducing its first products, SliceJel Nutritious Gelatin and the SliceCream Frozen Nutrition Bar.

Dr. Brittis believes that proper nutrition is one of the most important aspects of healthcare for all ages. He has spent years studying and working with neuronal genes and proteins at some of the world’s most prestigious institutions and while only in his early 20s, he had already been featured in the New York Times. He then decided it was time to give back to the public and follow his passion of making a difference in the lives of children and adults through preventative care and by developing nutritious and delicious products.

Dr. Brittis attended the Bronxville Schools from kindergarten through his senior year and graduated in 1986. When he reflects on his time in Bronxville, one formative event stands out in shaping who he is today. Dr. Brittis was one of the original co-founders of the Bronxville High School’s first lacrosse team. At the time, few people in Bronxville had heard of lacrosse and Dr. Brittis likens this group of students to a “band of Gypsies” on a mission to bring public awareness to the sport of lacrosse. Team members had to buy their own equipment and some even made their own pads and equipment. He believes that they lost their first organized game 23-1 and the one goal was scored by the opposing team. The group hired a coach, Bronxville resident Coach Bob Kramer, who was a man with a reputation for athleticism, discipline and hard work. “Coach Kramer volunteered his own time because he believed in us and helped us fight hard both on and off the field for the sport to become part of the school athletic program. He was a true mentor and motivator.” Coach Kramer taught important character principles such as respecting others, patience, how to persevere during times of adversity and the importance of being part of a unified team with unwavering team camaraderie. Through much
adversity, the original Bronxville lacrosse team succeeded based on these principles and their sheer will and spirit during a time when the community and school spotlight was on them and “failure was not an option.” Over 20 years have passed since Dr. Brittis and his Bronxville classmates co-founded the team and today the Bronxville School lacrosse team is now one of the most respected high school lacrosse programs in the country. This profound Bronxville High School experience taught Dr. Brittis the important principle that you can do anything in life even when everyone else says it is not possible. At Bronxville School he learned that when students put their mind and efforts behind something, work together with other highly motivated friends, are unified by a common goal and codified with outstanding leadership it is truly possible to succeed. This has been the way Dr. Brittis has approached all of his endeavors since that experience.

Dr. Brittis graduated from Colgate University with a major in neuroscience and a minor in molecular biology. He received his PhD in neurobiology from Harvard Medical School, and his medical degree from Brown University School of Medicine. He conducted post-doctoral research at Harvard Medical School’s Dana Farber Cancer Institute and further pursued medical residency training at The Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center of the Harvard Medical School and, as an instructor, a member of the faculty at Harvard Medical School. He helped discover the important developmental steps of eye formation and some of the earliest basic molecules that form many of the major brain and spinal cord pathways. While working in hospitals as a medical resident, he worked with numerous post-operative patients and soon realized they had difficulty getting the right nutrients and calories. These patients suffered from a loss of appetite, the inability to eat solid foods and to tolerate the taste of meal replacements. Most hospital meal replacement shakes can be made from poor quality protein and inferior ingredients that are high in sugar and fat. Most importantly for the patients, they were boring and unappetizing. Thus, Dr. Brittis, set out on a quest to make a better product. This quest has led him from growing nerve cells to making healthy food supplements that taste good and are not high in fillers, fats and calories. As a fitness enthusiast he saw that this product would also benefit the athlete as well as the health conscious consumer of all ages. Relying on the lessons learned from his Bronxville lacrosse experience he tuned out the noise of the naysayers and started his own company. His multi-year quest, while still fulfilling his scientific and medical responsibilities, resulted in the conversion of his home kitchen into a nutritional research and testing lab. The end result is the SliceCream Frozen Nutrition Bar and SliceJel Nutritious Gelatin. Nike heard about SliceCream from Dr. Brittis’ professor, a testing lab. The end result is the SliceCream Frozen Nutrition Bar and SliceJel Nutritious Gelatin. Nike heard about SliceCream from Dr. Brittis’ professor, a NASA in-house professor who has given him valuable advice on starting up and running a company. Because of the integrity and background credentials of SliceLabs and the potential demand for its products, SliceLabs has attracted the attention of numerous medical doctors, nutrition and fitness experts and corporations such as Whole Foods. After much strategic planning, SliceLabs hopes to launch SliceJel in June. SliceLabs’ products are manufactured using the highest quality forms of highly digestible “bioavailable protein”. The products are fat free, low calorie and rich-tasting. SliceCream, which is currently only available to a small group of patients with special medical needs, is fortified with vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and Baobab, the novel African fruit with numerous traditional medicinal properties. Dr. Brittis’ plan is to first build its brand with SliceJel which has a long shelf life at room temperature and is easier to transport and then launch the Slice Cream Frozen Nutrition Bar.

In addition to his medical and scientific background, Dr. Brittis is an avid jazz and rock guitarist, artist, computer coder and enjoys antiques. His father, Dr. Anthony Brittis, is a retired army colonel and a prominent neurosurgeon and his mother, Marianna, is an artist. His parents and his sister Sara Jane (Bronxville class of ’83) are Dr. Brittis’ biggest advocates. One could say that his creativity and his love of the sciences are innate and he strongly feels that early childhood exposure to musical and visual arts is fundamental to building the novel brain connections that can later significantly help with their future academic endeavors and career choices. For Dr. Brittis, today’s scientific education in the pre-college classroom must start early and be based on the fundamental creative aspects of science and educators and schools must invest in modern tools and equipment. He strongly believes that teaching students how to properly develop questions and design and analyze experiments will ultimately lead to a crop of students who, at a young age, will become excited about exploring the unknown and will realize that their creativity can truly change the world. Throughout his career, Dr. Brittis has been dedicated to educating the public about the importance of preventative medical care. Dr. Brittis’ fundamental goals and passions include helping people of all ages stay healthy and live balanced lifestyles as well as helping to empowering today’s youth to become a smarter, healthier future generation. To learn more about SliceLabs, visit slicelabs.com.
1991
Marcia Lee, Chairman, holds 1st meeting of the Bronxville School Foundation.

1994
BSF lays first brick in “Alumni Walk.”

1996
Our first Alumni Newsletter goes to print.

1997
BSF reaches the $1 million mark in funds raised.

1999
With the Junior League & PTA, BSF sponsors “Family University.”

2001
BSF makes single grant of $464,000 to outfit all Computer Labs.

2006
BSF and the community raise $1.7 million for the Turf Project.

2007
1st annual Katie Welling Memorial Run inspires entire community.

2009
BSF produces “Just Sing” with K-12 performing Joe Raposo songs.

2011
BSF celebrates 20 years of community commitment to public education.

Celebrating 20 Years of Giving
20 Years of Outstanding Leadership

We are extraordinarily proud of our BSF heritage, having just celebrated our 20th anniversary year. Since 1991, the Foundation has evolved into one of the most successful public school foundations in the country, awarding 508 grants totaling $5.2 million. None of that would have been possible without the tireless efforts of the BSF founders. At a time of increasing difficulty in funding public education, they saw a critical need for an organization that would help ensure Bronxville’s tradition of educational excellence. And they acted on it!

In 1990, the Board of Education appointed a committee of citizens, chaired by Drew Quale, a school board member, to evaluate whether the formation of a foundation could ensure Bronxville’s tradition of educational excellence. By the end of the school year, the School Board approved the creation of the Foundation and Marcia Lee, former mayor of Bronxville, was asked to serve as its first chair. Others instrumental in the formation of the Foundation were Ellen Seabring, Jim Mestl, Paul Brenner, Don Gogel, Wright Elliott, Phyllis Smith, and Pat Oden.

Since that time, the Foundation has operated successfully under the leadership of 15 chairpersons who have given tremendous amounts of their time and expertise to our organization. We commend them for all their efforts and will never forget their contributions:

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<td>Marcia Lee</td>
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Last year we reported on the Performing Arts at Bronxville in our newsletter: http://bronxvilleschoolfoundation.org/PDF/BSFAAlumniNewsletter2011.pdf.

This year we wrote about our Science Programs. If all goes well by the summer of 2013, construction will begin to renovate and bring up to date both the High School Auditorium and the Middle School Science labs.

Those of you who have recently attended reunion tours know these spaces have not been touched for many years. The Middle School science program is located in the former High School science rooms, which still look the same as when Davan, Moyle, Saltman or Babcock were teaching.

A walk into the auditorium is like walking into a time warp. The facility does not comply with current safety or building codes, its lighting and stage rigging are outdated, and the place is in total disrepair. Our students eloquently explain why we need this facility updated in the following video: http://www.awptv.com/clients/Bronxville-Auditorium/bnxvl_aud_4.17.12_FINAL.mov.

In 2011 the Board of Education approved a capital plan encompassing renovations of science labs, the auditorium, and certain infrastructure elements totaling $10 million. The Board later commissioned its architects to develop the schematic designs for these improvements. To fund the projects, the BOE is pursuing a public/private partnership.

The Board has set aside a capital reserve fund of $2 million and has approved a $5 million bond referendum to be voted on in the fall. With $7 million expected from the district, the private fund raising goal is $3 million. To that end, the Foundation granted $850,000, its single largest grant ever, and the PTA has committed $875,000 to the project: $400,00 from reserves and $475,000 from its successful “Staging the Future” Benefit held in April.

The Final Act of this partnership between the PTA, Foundation & school community is to raise the remaining $1.3 million of private funds and ensure that our school auditorium and science labs receive the quality renovations that our school deserves.

These long overdue capital improvements represent an historic opportunity for the school and the entire Village of Bronxville. Please consider a donation to The Final Act http://finalactbxv.blogspot.com.

The Alumni Walk, created in 1994, has been enthusiastically built by donations from graduates of all ages, entire classes, as well as families and friends wishing to honor former students. More than 1500 bricks grace the path at the entrance to the Bronxville School. Add your brick today by completing the enclosed card or calling the Foundation Office at 914-395-0515.

The Alumni Newsletter was compiled with articles by: Beth Taylor Aherne ‘80, Sue Kelty Law ’78, Christopher Palermo, Laura Flannery Pettee ’87, Steven Thomas ’82, Brennan Warble ’86, Peggy Williams ’75.
The Saturday of Thanksgiving weekend 2011 was the Fifth Annual Katie Welling Memorial Run/Walk. A wonderful community event that honors Katie Welling, a 2002 Bronxville High School graduate, who died six years ago in a fire after her 21st birthday. The Run/Walk is organized by Katie’s classmates from 2002.