

COMMUNITY

18 Calendar of Events

20 Christmas lights

21 Motoring

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Child-centred learning:

Teacher Melanie Castro Shibaoka works with Tamiko Kong at Brentwood Nursery School. The teachers at the preschool recently received a Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Early Childhood Education.



Larry Wright/
BURNABY NOW

Preschool wins national recognition

Jennifer Moreau
staff reporter

Walking into Brentwood Nursery School is a bit like walking into the mind of a child.

"As soon as you walk in, you see the children's thinking. The children's work, the children's participation are really visible and evident," says teacher Rachel Rosen.

That's because the nursery uses an inquiry-based, child-centred approach to teaching. Instead of the usual method of teaching kids lessons based on seasonal or holiday themes, the teachers at Brentwood listen to what the children are asking ques-

tions about. They take notes and develop their lesson plans from there.

"We start from things that are interesting to children," Rosen says. "We use those as jumping off points for curriculum exploration."

Take Friendship Place, for example. It's a walled-off space created by the children for the children. Friendship Place came about after children were asking questions on friendship, questions like: What does it mean to be a friend? Can you have more than one friend? Can your family members be friends? How do you become friends with someone?

"They were wondering all these things," Rosen says. The friendship theme

then became part of the learning program, and the kids created a space to be friends. They helped by making a wall and covering it with a mural. They figured out the dimensions needed for Friendship Place by calling all the children into the place, making sure they all fit, and then marking it, Rosen says.

Friendship Place is just one of the children's creations. There is a stage and a playhouse, also built by the kids, Rosen says.

According to Rosen, research shows inquiry-based learning is more engaging. In this case, it is linked to what the children are naturally curious about and builds on what they already know.

"It's not that we're giving them an answer. It's about giving them an opportunity to explore the question together, with us being part of that," Rosen says. "We didn't invent it. We have our own interpretation. It's definitely a move within early childhood (education), and education in general."

The child-centred approach is what landed the team of four teachers a Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Early Childhood Education. The awards are to recognize early childhood educators who excel at fostering children's development and socialization.

Only 10 certificates of excellence were

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Galloway helps launch reading campaign



HERE & NOW
Jennifer Moreau

Burnaby North Secondary hosted a special guest to help kick off the school's annu-

al reading campaign.

Steven Galloway, author of *The Cellist of Sarajevo*, was at Burnaby North Oct. 26 to mark the start of Vikings Read.

Galloway spoke to an estimated 150 students about being a writer, the publishing process and the importance of literacy. He also talked about his book and some of the controversy that surrounded it.

For Vikings Read, the school's library club recommends about a dozen books for other students to read.

Contest

A sustainability action hero, the energy police and a burglar who prefers energy-efficient light bulbs are all characters in a series of videos being created by Byrne Creek

Secondary students. It's for a provincewide B.C. Hydro contest called Invent the Future.

The contest is for youth aged 13 to 24. Participants have to create a video or write an essay with a theme of reducing energy consumption.

The contest runs till Nov. 8. Byrne Creek Grade 11/12 teacher Trina Moulin assigned her class

a project to make videos for the contest. There are cash prizes and tickets for the 2010 Olympics. For more information on the contest, visit www.inventthefuture.ca.

The students' videos will be uploaded to this Saturday. Check for updates on www.inventthefuture.ca to view the video submissions and vote for your favourite.

Art auction

Confederation Park Elementary is hosting a community art exhibition and auction Nov. 14. There will be art available from elementary students and local artists.

The event runs from 6 to 10 p.m. in the school's gym, at 4715 Pandora St. Admission is \$10 for

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Here and Now: Art auction set

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adults – that includes a glass of wine or a soft drink. For tickets or more information, call Cheryl Garcea at 604-299-1430. Money from the event goes towards the school's art program.

Doctors united

The Burnaby NOW's very own health columnist Davidicus Wong and four other physicians have amalgamated their Burnaby and New Westminster practices into PrimeCare Medical, a full-service walk-in and family practice clinic. The clinic is in the Esprit building at 7315 Edmonds St. in Burnaby.

The family physicians are: Wong, who delivers babies and heads the department of family practice at Burnaby Hospital; Dr. Jeff Dresselhuus, president of PrimeCare Medical Clinic, who also delivers babies at Royal Columbian Hospital; Dr. Ron DeMarchi, who is well-known for his community service, including work done on the board of directors at St. Thomas More Collegiate; Dr. Prav Nijjar, also a full-time mom; and Dr. Baldev Sanghera, who was recently awarded a Physician Leadership Award from the Health Ministry.

At the new location, they are part of a bigger team, including: Fraser Health's New Canadian Clinic; Highgate Health, which does physiotherapy, chiropractic and massage therapy; and Edmonds Pharmacy. There was an open house Friday, Oct. 30, after NOW deadlines.

Award: Brentwood Nursery School teachers honoured

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granted across the country for early childhood education. The Brentwood Nursery School team was picked for supporting young children and taking on long-term projects.

"It was really exciting. I think it's a great honour for us, we love what we do," Rosen says.

"We all go to work and feel excited to be there and curious as to what's going to happen that day. ... It was really wonderful to

be honoured for that."

The awards ceremony was Oct. 5 in Ottawa.

Rosen used the opportunity to put in a plug with the NOW for universal child care.

"Although the best award any early childhood educator could get would be a universal child-care program," she says, adding a free and fully accessible child-care program would mean nurseries like Brentwood would be available to everyone and the wages

and working conditions for early childhood educators would be better.

So did she tell that to Stephen Harper?

"I wished I could have. I only shook his hand," she says.

Only Rosen and Melanie Castro Shibaoka were named for the award because the other two teachers work part-time and there were eligibility rules regarding hours.

Cristina Primerano and Marina

Giovinazzo are just as much part of the team, Rosen says.

"Their names aren't on it, but we were nominated as a team. We believe it was an award for all of us," Rosen says.

Brentwood Nursery School Society is a parent-participation preschool and a registered non-profit society.

It has 72 students, all three to five years old.

For more information, visit www.brentwoodpreschool.com.

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