

Annual Garden Faire is a Celebration of Sustainability and Community

By Makenna Dixon-Essien '16, Social Justice Club Coordinator

On Saturday, October 10, San Domenico hosted the annual Garden Faire in the Garden of Hope. Many members of the community gathered to celebrate the hard work of San Domenico's student body through the San Domenico Farmers Market. For the first time in Garden Faire history, more than 100 members of the community volunteered in staffing a variety of booths ranging from selling homemade baked goods and hot sauce to sewing together lavender sachets. Anyone who attended could proudly say the Faire was a



Freshmen Gareth McGuiness, Tyler Johnson, Mikayla Lynch, and Sofia Sani at the Garden Faire.

success due to the abundance of activities that brought people of all ages together to celebrate one another and the environment. Biology teacher Hilary Staples noted how much her third grade

son enjoys the event. "He has just as much fun at garden day as he does at school carnivals".

Not only is the Garden Faire a fun-filled event for adults and children alike, it fosters a sense of pride for the environment in which we inhabit. Many who visited the Garden Faire were exposed to the concept of living off of produce that the soil surrounding

us provides. One demonstration of this ideal was done by the local vegan chef Miyoko Schinner, mother of a Cami Schinner '14, who demonstrated all that could be done by utilizing the fruits and vegetables grown locally or in home gardens.

Shelly Flint, Director of Sustainability and primary coordinator of the event reflected on the impact of the gathering; "Even though it's a one day event, it's so much bigger," she explained. "It's an investment".

As Flint mentioned, the Garden Faire is just the beginning of a lifelong conscience effort to be aware of the precious soil that is capable of supporting many sustainable lifestyles. In short, no one is ever too old for a little fun in the sun, because it will always bring about community and a deeper appreciation for the earth.



Biology teacher Hilary Staples selling items made in San Domenico's Garden of Hope as a fundraiser at the Garden Faire.

Blake Thompson “Makes A Splash” With Local Swim Lessons

By Gabrielle Huffman '19

Even in Marin County, one of the wealthiest areas in the nation, many children have never had the opportunity to learn to swim. Many parents can't afford to send their children to expensive lessons and they don't have the time themselves to teach their children.

This is an issue that senior Blake Thompson chose to address through her service-learning project, teaching kids in San Rafael basic swimming skills. Thompson was inspired to choose this topic because she was in a boat accident a few years ago and if she hadn't known how to swim, she might have drowned. While she was deciding what to do for her ROSE service project, she immediately remembered this incident. Thompson knew she wanted to teach young kids how to swim so that if anything like her experience occurred in their lives, they would be able to save themselves. The reality is, many children today do not ever learn to swim. More



Senior Blake Thompson and one of her “Make a Splash” students .

deaths per year occur from drownings than car accidents, a trend that demonstrates the need for swimming programs that are affordable and accessible to all classes.

For two hours, every afternoon over the summer, Thompson taught swimming lessons to kids at the San Rafael High pool. She taught these swim lessons through an organization called, "Make a Splash" created by a high school student. Overall, Thompson describes the

experience as challenging but also very rewarding. “Seeing the kids faces light up when they finally swam without my help was amazing,” she said. “I felt so proud!”

Thompson's personal connection to the value of swimming, specifically her boat accident, made the project even more meaningful. Blake is still very interested and invested in teaching underprivileged children to swim and is hoping to continue with this program next summer.

Juliana Johnson Travels to Thailand to Help Local Initiatives

By Rikako Kubota '17

Last summer, senior Juliana Johnson travelled to Thailand for three weeks for her ROSE project with a volunteer group called Rustic Pathways. While she was in the Thai city of Udon Thani, she volunteered in several different service projects, including a nutrition outreach program and a swim lesson program.

Almost everywhere Johnson visited in Thailand, the locals were smiling, no matter what their circumstances were. Their optimism was inspiring to Johnson.

Seeing those made her think about all the things she has to be grateful for. “Throughout my time serving in Thailand I was constantly reminded of how fortunate I am to be living the life I am living,” Johnson said.

Johnson’s goal for this project was to serve people who do not always have the opportunity to be involved in their community or the people who could not always provide for themselves.

For Johnson, who saw Varsity Swimming MVP last year, teaching swimming lessons in Thailand will forever be an experience that is dear to her.

“These lessons were among my favorite service projects,” Johnson said. “Not only because I love swimming, but also because it made me happy knowing that we were making even a tiny impact on the extremely high drowning rates in Southeast Asia.”



Senior Juliana Johnson and her students in Udon Thani.

Seniors Help Bring ‘Operation Smile’ to Rural China

By Olivia Holmes '16, Editor

Cleft palates are one of the most common birth defects, worldwide. For children and adults with this deformity living in rural areas, life is very difficult. They face societal rejection, medical problems, and a complete sense of alienation. Furthermore, there are virtually no available treatment options.

That's where organizations like “Operation Smile,” come in. Operation Smile is a global coalition comprising surgeons, doctors, and nurses who work towards the common goal of giving cleft palate victims in rural areas the chance to smile. Finding this a very noble cause, seniors Linda Li and Sylan Yuan decided to work with Operation Smile for their ROSE project.



Seniors Linda Li and Sylan Yuan, along with other Operation Smile staffers, at the clinic in Chengdu.



Senior Sylan Yuan registering patients for the procedure to correct cleft palates

Over the summer, Li and Yuan traveled to Chengdu, the capital of China's Sichuan province, to volunteer at one of Operation Smile's regional events. These events, which are held all around the world, screen hundreds of people with cleft palates and give many of them surgery to fix their deformities. Many of these surgery recipients would have no other means to get treatment. Li and Yuan spent their time screening hundreds of potential patients, often acting as translators between the English speaking staff and their patients. These two seniors also spent time volunteering in the recovery room, which was highly understaffed. Li and Yuan took on many of the duties of nurses and attended the

recovering patients, many of whom were children. Because the awaking patients were in a great deal of pain, Li and Yuan had to make sure that they didn't hurt themselves.

Although these two seniors only spent around a week volunteering for Operation Smile, the experience had a significant impact on them. “Cleft-lip patients are often marginalized from the mainstream society, especially in developing countries. We want to increase the social awareness and acceptance for cleft-lip patient,” said Yuan. “The goal of our service project is not only to help the patients get surgeries, but also to ask for justice and awareness for the entire group.”

Aeqvitas is published by the student members of San Domenico's Social Justice Club.

Aeqvitas Editor: Olivia Holmes **Contributors to this issue:** Rachel Clyde, Makenna Dixon-Essien, Olivia Holmes, Gabrielle Huffman, Rikako Kubota, Sylan Yuan **Faculty Moderators:** Kristen Levine and Ian Sethre *The San Domenico Social Justice Club is committed to creating awareness among ourselves and our community concerning local and global social injustices. We act upon this knowledge in solidarity with the global community in order to positively impact the world. As a group of young people, we are dedicated to fostering respect and equality, and we strive for equal opportunities for all.*

Distinguished Alumna Hoonae Kim '75 Visits Campus

By Rachel Clyde '17

Last month, San Domenico graduate Hoonae Kim '75 was honored during alumnae weekend with the Distinguished Alumnae Award for her work in international development. Kim was the first Korean student to attend San Domenico. She paved the path for more international students from other countries to pursue education here.

However, coming to the United States for school was not the end of Kim's overseas journeys. During a recent visit to a few classes, she explained her current work as the Director of all programs in Asia and the Pacific region for the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). She oversees agricultural programs in 31 countries in



Distinguished Alumna Hoonae Kim '75, chatting with current students with Korean heritage, Hyun Gill '18 and Amy Kwon '16.

partnership with with governments and local organizations to improve the quality of life for rural people.

IFAD travels to the most rural and isolated communities to find sustainable solutions for the people's needs; what Kim referred to as "interlinked problem solving". IFAD's teams want to include the entire community in their decisions

in order to truly benefit their lives. Kim's recent visit to San Domenico has left an impact on the students and inspires them to also make a change. Junior Whitney Huff '17 was impressed by the reach and effectiveness of IFAD. "For such a big organization, they reach the smallest communities," Huff said. "And she personally goes there herself even though she is the director of all of Asia".

In reflecting on her experience at San Domenico in the 1970s, she explained that throughout her career and lifetime she has carried many San Domenico values with her. Her graduating class had only 20 students, and the developed bonds as strong as family that remains even today. To me, that's the best thing about San Domenico: family," she said. "This is home."

Sylan Yuan Reflects on Children in Needs' Visit to Stanford

By Sylan Yuan '16, Service Coordinator

On October 19, nine members of San Domenico's Children in Need Club (CiN), along with faculty moderator John Bowermaster, held a program called What M.A.T.T.E.R.S., which stands for Motivation and Advancement Towards The Education Rights for Students. This program sponsored 29 children from Canal Area of San Rafael to visit Stanford University.

For nearly two years, San Domenico's Children in Need chapter has held a weekly tutoring program in Canal Area for children from low-income families. In order to support their pursuit of higher education, we want to expose them to the environment of one of the most prestigious universities in the U.S.—Stanford University. As club officer Dina Martinez explained, it was the Club's intention to expose the students to higher learning. "It's not about us leading them to go to college," she said. "But encouraging them to continue their education in the future."

We arrived at Stanford and met with organizer Sherman Lo, who led the group to the Aerospace Department for a tour. We first went to some labs that were led by PhD students, including the Space Environment & Satellite Systems Lab, the Aerospace Robotics Lab. The children from Canal Area were enthralled by the automation of drones and a submarine used for undersea detection.



The Children in Need volunteers along with the 29 students from the Canal neighborhood during their daytrip to Stanford earlier this month.

Another researcher gave us a demonstration of one drone they had developed. The drone can fly up to 300ft height legally. The children kept asking if they could watch the drones flying for one more time. One of them even yelled out, "The technology is amazing!" Most of these children never had a chance to visit a college before. Just walking on the campus was very exciting for them.

We were able to walk around campus and enjoy lunch there. Before we left, I asked Brian, one of the kids from Canal Area, which part of the trip he liked the most. He replied to me, "Just being here is great for me. I never knew college could be so fun and beautiful before."