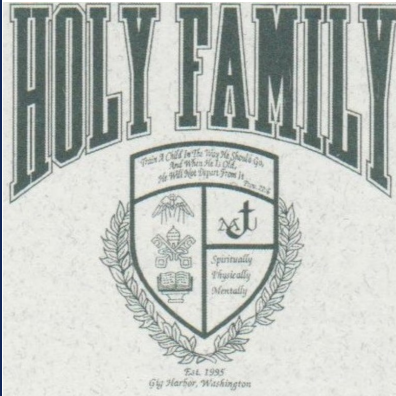


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Kids help hurting Indian children find a bright spot in their lives



St. Nicholas children pitch in trauma kits to broaden relief effort

BY CANDI CARTER
of The Peninsula Gateway

More than 400 Gig Harbor children are reaching out to other kids whose lives were shattered by the recent earthquake in India.

"These will make them feel like somebody loves them," said Marco Carbone, a second grader at St. Nicholas Catholic School, as he colored a card.

Students at the school and St. Nicholas Christian Education programs are assembling trauma

...
"We believe that when children are able to reach out to people in need, it teaches them a real lesson in empathy and compassion."

Tami Carbone, outreach coordinator for St. Nicholas Catholic School

kits for those students hit hardest by the earthquake's fury.

"It will put a smile on their face," said Kortnee Alcott, a second grader.

By the end of this week, those trauma kits will be on their way to the Northwest Medical Teams, which will airlift the offerings to India.

The project is part of the

school's ongoing effort to reach out to "its community and the world."

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Kortnee Alcott, St. Nicholas Catholic School second grade student

in empathy and compassion," said Tami Carbone, outreach coordinator for St. Nicholas.

Students wanted to do something, but they didn't know what. They decided to make the children in India their outreach project for the month.

"I could see all of the little faces and they were just overwhelmed and burdened by the sadness of this," Carbone said.

That's where she stepped in. She got onto the World Wide Web and found Northwest Medical Teams.

The nonprofit organization is composed entirely of volunteer medical and trauma professionals. They give up their time for six-week stints to fly out where their talents are most needed.

They also work throughout the Northwest providing free medical care to families living at or below poverty levels.

Carbone called the group and offered to help. The help was immediately accepted and the project began.

Each trauma kit contains a Beanie Baby, candy, medical supplies and a hand-colored card of

encouragement.

"I want to make them feel better, feel warm," said Matthew Blondin, second grade.

The students are hoping their homemade gifts will help heal some of the Indian children's wounds.

"I could say that we care for them," said Cameron Dreyer as he contemplated the world on the card his neighbor, Jacquie Gagnon, was coloring. "The whole entire world cares for them."

Reach education and bridge reporter Candi Carter at 853-9247 or e-mail candi.carter@mail.tribnet.com.

Airlifting help to India

Northwest Medical Teams is in need of monetary and supply donations. For more information on the organization or how to help, call 425-454-8326 or 800-958-HEAL.

Northwest Medical Teams can also be found online at www.nwmtl.org.

Gateway photo/Robert Davis
Second grade students at St. Nicholas Catholic School color cards for the earthquake survivors in India. The children took on the task as their monthly service project.



The Transition to the New Campus Begins in January 2001!

Here, Archbishop Brunett shovels some dirt at the site for the new St. Nicholas Catholic school on the St. Nicholas Catholic Church grounds.



Meanwhile, graduating students worked hard on projects to cap off their elementary school years.

It's not the typical show-and-tell session

By Terry McGuire

GIG HARBOR — The five students came armed last Friday with visual aids for their presentations: a motorbike; aerial photography camera; stained glass window; schematics for a new school garden; photos of smiling nursing home residents. But what may sound like a show-and-tell session was actually much more than that. The five 13- and 14-

Eighth-grade exit project demonstrates hard work

"It was hard to pace yourself," said Jay Grose, 14, who brought several motorbikes and a table load of engine parts for his presentation on the internal combustion engine. But Wittmann and fellow panel members last Friday were impressed with the variety of topics and with the

roles that sunlight, shade, irrigation, soil and compost play in laying out a garden, the eighth-grader presented her garden design, a low-maintenance, 20-by-12-foot plot featuring Northwest trees and plants. "The paths will be four feet wide to allow wheelchair access so everybody can enjoy this garden," she told the panel.

McGhee, in her presentation on church architecture, contrasted the lack of art and beauty in some of today's churches with the grand churches of centuries past. The builders of yesteryear put time, energy, love, passion and money into their work, she explained.

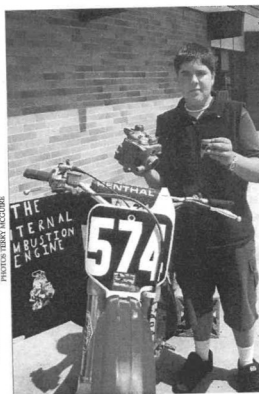
Brandon Koenen's exit project on aerial photography reflected his family's interest in the subject. His grandfather and an aunt are aerial photographers, and the 13-year-old Koenen has been taking flying lessons for about a year and has taken some photos himself from on high. He brought with him aerial photographs and the bulky but effective type of camera used to take the pictures. He explained to the panel the types of planes that work best for aerial photography, and how to avoid blurring the photos.

For her exit project, Jenny Etherington, 14, went to an Aberdeen nursing home where her grandmother volunteers and interviewed eight residents about their lives, and had her picture taken with each of them. She said she learned from the residents the importance of family, and of being "true to yourself and God." They also told her to strive "to be honest and happy."

Grose, in his presentation on engines, fired up the motorbikes he brought while explaining the workings of motors and the difference between two- and four-cylinder engines. "I learned a lot more about motors," he said later of his exit project. "It will help me fix them" in the future.

Wittmann said all the eighth-graders benefited from their projects. They gained experience as they researched their topic, discerned what was important, wrote their paper, and worked with adults, she said.

"The whole idea is to make them shine and be successful," she said. □



year-olds were eighth-graders completing their eighth-grade exit projects at St. Nicholas School by making their final presentations before an adult panel of judges.

Such in-depth projects are often required of graduating high school seniors, not eighth-graders. But St. Nicholas' eighth-graders, feeling their eighth-graders were equal to the task, instituted the requirement this year at the K-8 school.

"The project is to show students what they have learned, and to have them show us what they have learned," Wittmann said. It also helps strengthen ties between the school and parish communities, she said, noting that last Friday's five-member adult panel included three parishioners who had volunteered for the duty. Rounding out the panel were Wittmann and St. Nicholas School middle school teacher Amy Umrah.

For the five-member Class of 2001, last Friday's formal presentations in the parish center were the culmination of months of research and writing on topics of their choice. The effort started in January when their topics were approved, and continued in the months that followed as the students met deadlines for submitting first, second and final drafts and a journal. They were required to work with a mentor, and to invest at least 20 hours in the projects. All exceeded that limit, Wittmann said.

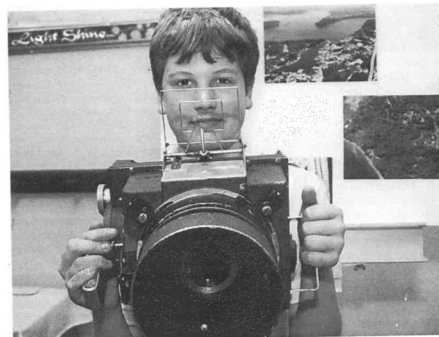
"It was a lot of work, and it was scary because you felt if you didn't do things right you wouldn't graduate," said Colleen McGhee, 14, who designed and made her own stained glass window to accompany her project on interior church architecture.



St. Nicholas School's Class of 2001 displays its exit projects. Counterclockwise from top: Jay Grose and his internal combustion engine; nursing home visitor Jenny Etherington; garden designer



Alexandria Skrivanich; Colleen McGhee with the stained glass window she crafted; and Brandon Koenen holding an aerial camera.



knowledge that the students imparted. In many cases, the students drew from personal experiences in selecting their topics.

Alexandria Skrivanich, 13, who has been gardening at home for about five years, designed a garden to be used for the new St. Nicholas School campus now under construction next door. After explaining to the panel the