

Xtra-curricular

NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTH COUNTRY EDUCATION FOUNDATION



From the Helm

I have been thinking a lot about education and what I can do to make sure that the students of our community get the best education possible. Since I am retired from the schools, I cannot affect what is going on directly but can just sit back and HOPE that everything will be okay? Hope is a great thing, but it has to become reality. What can we all do to make "hope" real?

h We can check to see how our schools are doing on state-wide exams as compared to similar schools. According to the New York State Education Department, some local districts that are similar to South Country are Bay Shore, Riverhead, Huntington and Patchogue-Medford. Are our students improving at the same rate as the students in those districts? If they are, great. If not, what are they doing differently? Could we adopt their ideas to our needs?

h We could volunteer in the schools and help out in the classrooms.

h We could tutor students through the Boys and Girls Club or other groups that have such programs.

h We could get involved with our children or grandchildren and encourage them and work with them.

h We could attend school functions and enjoy the talents of our students while supporting their efforts and developing talents. School concerts, plays, musicals and art exhibits are not only for parents.

Of course, it would be great if you could get involved with the South Country Education Foundation and support our efforts to enrich education for the children in our community. We are always looking for willing workers, but most of all we need willing donors. Please consider making a donation to us so we can continue to support our children, their schools and their teachers. You can use the form on the back page of this newsletter to make your donation.

—GENE WESTHOFF

The Becker/Gambles Music Fund

The Becker/Gambles Music Fund was created in the fall of 2001 to enhance musical experiences for students in our district by holding concerts, conducting master classes, giving music scholarships and accepting musical instrument donations. It borrowed its name and inspiration from two members of our com-



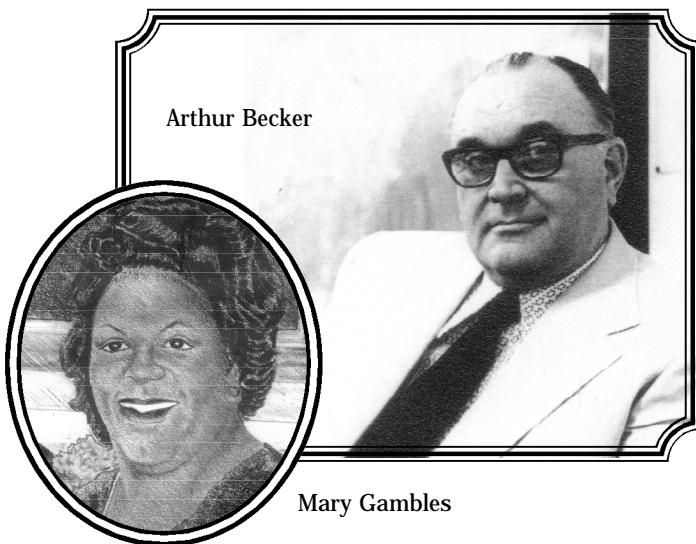
We were pleased to welcome St. Joseph's College as an event sponsor for the SCEF 10th Annual Cocktail Party and Auction held on Saturday, July 12, 2008. Gigi Lamens, Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management, greets SCEF board member Diane Zanazzi pledging a donation of \$1500 to this year's event. The South Country School District and St. Joseph's College have a strong connection as Sophia Perna (BHS '04) is this year's valedictorian at St. Joseph's College.

munity who cared deeply for our students and music and who knew that music had the power to lift all people. Our fund benefited from the financial contributions of Arthur Becker, a respected and admired former superintendent who wanted to be sure that music stayed strong in this district, and the vision and creativity of Mary Gambles, a beloved community resident who had worked tirelessly to improve the lives of children and their parents. We honor the contributions made by these two fine former members of this community and are proud to continue their legacy in the district. We have asked two members of our Community Advisory Council to reflect on Mary Gambles and Arthur Becker for this issue.

Nancy Marr, friend and community leader, writes:

In 1982, board members of the Bellport Area Community Action Committee, Inc. raised funds to start a music fund that would help the music programs in the schools include a more diverse group of children. The committee members publicized the need for donated instruments to give to the music departments in the schools to assist students who could not afford to own or rent their own instruments. They ran trips to musical events, from the Nutcracker Suite to African dance and drumming programs. They also granted scholarships to pay for private lessons for students to enhance the lessons they got in school.

The music fund was named for Mary Gambles who was Community Aide for the Bellport Head Start and a member of People for Adequate Welfare. She led the effort to start the Bellport Day Care Center, Inc. to make it possible for parents to work while their children were provided a safe and nurturing environment. Her efforts embraced children, allowing them freedom to express themselves; young adults, urging them to stay in school and talk together; and adults, for whom she was a model of one who works at self-improvement and delights in the process.



Arthur Becker

Mary Gambles

Sheldon Stiefeld, retired fellow district administrator, writes:

I remember the first time I met Mr. Becker. I had come to Bellport for an interview for my first administrative position at the high school. It was in the old school building on Dunton Ave. I had to climb the creaky staircase to the back office, past Mrs. Terry, the secretary. Mr. Becker sat behind a large desk that fit his large frame, in shirt sleeves. The desk was piled high with stacks of papers and books. It seemed so relaxed and informal. He told me of the difficulties the high school had faced (October, 1970) and the expectations the Board had for anyone who would fill the position of Dean of Student Affairs. Then he let me talk and he said very little until the end when he stood up, shook my hand and told me to see Mr. Gerardi. That was it, I was hired.

Mr. Becker was always like that, a man of few words but decisive. After that initial interview I saw him only when there was a specific problem to solve or at a meeting. He would say little, which, of course, prompted you to speak a great deal and provide all the information he would need. It was a unique technique and over the years I noticed that the "silent" interview garnered Mr. Becker a lot of information about what was happening in the district. He let the administrative staff have a lot of leeway on day to day operations. He intervened when a problem was bumped up to his level by request of a district employee, a parent, student or Board member. Most of the time this was pretty liberating.

Mr. Becker clearly understood that the District Principal followed the Board's lead but, whenever possible, he allowed the Principals freedom of action. His years at South Country included racial tensions, labor disputes, financial problems and Board controversies, but Mr. Becker provided a sense of stability from the central office, stability in the administrative staff, the teaching staff and in the educational policies of the district.

The principal was a genuinely kind man who privately and quietly expressed his personal interest when a staff member faced personal difficulty. He had a quiet sense of humor. I remember his circling the reason for a student's suspension on a suspension form. The student had been suspended for driving recklessly in the parking lot at the high school. The form indicated "driving wrecklessly." Mr. Becker circled the word and sent the form back with a comment, "so what is

wrong with that." He caught the typo and took the time to show some humor but also to slyly let us know that he was reading everything that came his way carefully. That was the way he ran the district, carefully, plainly, deliberately, day to day and down to earth. It was a good thing!

Current members of the Becker/Gambles Music Fund are Chantal Berman, Tim Hogan, Nancy Marr, Karen Rowley, Dava Stravinsky, Will Struyk and Gene Westhoff.

—DAVA STRAVINSKY

Daedalus Quartet Establishes Residency

Since 2002, the Daedalus Quartet has performed an annual fundraising concert for the Foundation that supports music scholarships given by the Becker/Gambles Music Fund, accompanied by a day of performing and coaching in the schools. Now the Quartet and SCEF have created a more intensive residency, one that allows the Quartet to interact repeatedly with the same students and to construct a multi-year, multi-layered program. A strategic plan for the residency grew out of the Quartet's relationship with the Foundation and the Becker/Gambles Music Fund and newly-forged relationships with four other community partners: the Boys and Girls Club of the Bellport Area, the Patchogue Theatre for the Performing Arts, Shoreham-Wading River School District and North Babylon Public Schools.

This effort resulted in the Quartet being named winner of the 2007 Guarneri String Quartet Award from Chamber Music America (CMA) and earning a three year grant through the CMA America Residency Partnership Program. Interactive concerts, master classes, coaching sessions, lecture demonstrations and workshops are offered to students in the various school districts as a result of this program. Daedalus will present public events as well, many targeting the economically challenged community of North Bellport. The Daedalus Quartet and the Foundation believe chamber music is a unifying force that benefits the entire community. Three of the four members of the Quartet are grad-

June 2, 2008

Dear Members of the South Country Education Foundation,

I wanted to thank you for affording my students the opportunity to work with working artists. It was a rewarding experience inside and outside the classroom. They never would have had this experience if it weren't for your insight and generosity.

As I reflect on my 25-year career at South Country, I am grateful that the SCEF helped me and my colleagues reach another dimension of artistic experiences with our students through your grant program. The Arts definitely need you!

Thank you once again.

**Yours in Art Education,
Juliette Marotta**



Daedalus Quartet members Kyu-Young Kim, Jessica Thompson and Raman Ramakrishnan worked with the orchestra at BHS this spring.

uates of Bellport High School and their aim is to bring chamber music and its attending spirit of cooperation to the community that nurtured them.

The Quartet's program is designed to inspire students and adults through interactive performances, to raise the level of student string players and to bring together students from three very different school districts to build new audiences for chamber music. The inaugural visit of the Quartet's new residency was this past October and the culminating free concert at the Victory Church of God in East Patchogue, co-sponsored with the Boys and Girls Club, was well received. A second visit by the Quartet concluded with a performance at the Patchogue Theatre. Their third visit concluded with a concert at Bellport High School. In all cases the music included works by many outstanding musical masters including Brahms, Debussy and Shostakovich.

Daedalus will be back at the Walter Ebersole Auditorium at Bellport High School on Sept. 25 at 7:30 p.m. Be sure to join us.

—GENE WESTHOFF

SCEF Supports "Mathletes"—Family Math Day 2008

Once again, we were pleased to be able to support the third annual Family Math Day held on Saturday, March 29th at Bellport High School. More than 300 students in Pre-K to fifth grade, along with their parents, participated in sports-inspired math activities throughout the morning program.

Approximately 100 volunteers including faculty, BHS students and community members presented hands-on math activities and workshops for the young students. The exciting morning ended with a high-energy performance by Mark Rothstein's World of Rope Jumping. Through his spectacular rope jumping, Rothstein focused on math concepts as well as on reinforcing the importance of nutrition, fitness, character and a drug-free lifestyle. It was a great day for all!

Clipper Classic Awards \$8000 in Scholarships

For 25 years, revenues from the Clipper Classic have provided scholarships for seniors going on to study at colleges and universities around the country. Each of the following student athletes has participated in at least two varsity sports in his/her senior year and received \$500 each at the ceremony following this year's 25th annual race.

Congratulations !

Laurin Albie	Kaitlin Hughes	Amanda Rivera
Ashley Baron	Douglas Kramer	Aubry Russo
Erica Castro	Ryan Kroog	Matthew Smith
Matthew Fitz	Alexander McKenna	Alexander Webster
Emily Hagemann	Nicole Padilla	Andrew Seidman
	Christopher Petillo	



Members of the SCEF board and Community Advisory Council manned a table at this year's Family Math Day. Participating were L- R, Jackie Kendrick, Louise Miller, Dava Stravinsky, Elena Brodie-Kusa, Mary Mojallali and Diane Zanazzi

Our hosts Richard and Chantal Berman with grandson Oscar



Robin and Pete Roe



Auctioneer John Stravinsky with the "Doors of Bellport".

Brian and Susan Quatralo with Roy Eddey



Wes Springhorn, Elaine Hendrie, Jean Pokorny, and Sara and Seth Faison

The Sun Shines Bright on SCEF..

as hundreds flock to auction raising hopes for the future.

Supporters gathered at the Bellport Bay home of Richard and Chantal Berman on July 12th to mark the 10th Anniversary Auction and Cocktail Party for the South Country Education Foundation. As usual, the event was bathed in sunshine and good spirits. The auction was lively with a one-week vacation home in San Miguel, Costa Rica, capturing the fancy of many bidders. A David Ebner table and a student poster titled "The Doors of Bellport" also stirred interest. In all, SCEF raised upwards of \$40,000.

The annual event is made possible through the generosity of the Berman family as well as dozens upon dozens of local merchants and individuals who volunteer their time and their services supplying hors d'oeuvres, auction items and much, much more.

This year's SCEF cocktail hour was sponsored by St. Joseph's College, forging a new and valuable relationship between students in the district and advanced educational opportunities.



Sarah Mackie serves one of the delicious trays contributed by our members and neighborhood restaurants.



Janet Kraynak and her son Julio.



Waitpersons in the back row are Sean Burke, Jack Ramirez, Katie Ramirez, Reina VanFlorcke; and in the front row are Kaitlyn Kendrick, and Brittney Miller

Annie Rohrmeier and Hwasoon Mullaney chat while Susie Esikoff test-drives an auction item.



For a look at more pictures from this year's party, please see our website www.scefonline.org.

The 25th Clipper Classic...



Lori Klamut sets cones for the 25th Clipper Classic, an event that has attracted thousands of runners in the past quarter century.

Proceeds from the event fund scholarships for graduates of Bellport High School pursuing higher education.

This annual event has benefited from the support of many local sponsors including King Kullen, a major supporter of the 5K road race.

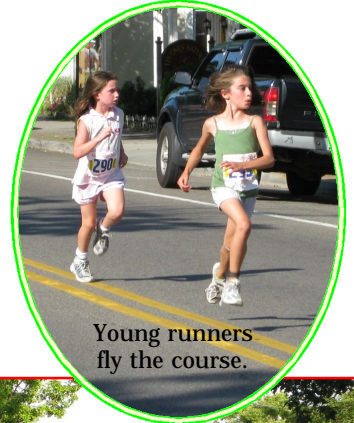
2006 women's division race winner Kelly Powell with her little sister.



Soaring temperatures did not deter the hundreds of runners.



Volunteers attend to banner details.



Young runners fly the course.



Above photos by Lori Klamut

And the 1984 inaugural race...



Dick Realand starts the first race.



The runners register at Bellport Middle School.

Lou Snead provides water for the first water stop.



First water stop before the race.



Co-founder of the Clipper Classic, #1, the late Frank Gill, in the chute at the finish.



Tom Cullen #2, race co-founder, and Bellport resident Jim Tripp at the finish line.

SPRING GRANT CYCLE TOPS \$22,000

The South Country Education Foundation, Inc. board of directors awarded grants to thirteen applicants this spring. The successful applicants used the funds to finance programs such as one aimed at rewarding academic achievement, several centered on new health and fitness initiatives and a popular gardening program for fourth and fifth graders. We appreciate the generosity of our donors who through their gifts of time, talents and financial contributions make all of these grants possible.

**Courtyard: An
Outdoor Classroom
\$2745.83**

*Sonia Orfin and Aussa Connell
Brookhaven Elementary School*

Students in Pre-Kindergarten to Third Grade will raise and study frogs for the courtyard pond. They will also learn about the life cycles of butterflies and praying mantises, study earthworms and composting and improve reading and writing skills through the content areas of math and science. The grant covers the cost of supplies including butterfly feeders, praying mantis egg cases and a frog hatchery.

**Large and Small Group
Differentiated Instruction
\$800.00**

*Susan Mineo, Shawana Hughes,
Mary Winfield and
Deirdre Wittman,
Kreamer Street Elementary*

Four Kindergarten teachers have requested funds to purchase interactive manipulative based materials to enrich the students' literacy experience. Four individual learning centers will be set up in the four different classrooms. The interactive materials will help students understand letter sounds, phonemics and rhyming. The materials in the centers will help students with oral language development, vocabulary and comprehension.

**Alvin Ailey American
Dance Theater
Performance**

\$500, *Boys & Girls Club
of the Bellport Area*

The Boys & Girls Club is awarded \$500 for tickets and transportation to attend an Alvin Ailey performance at the City Center Theatre and receive a tour.

**Dance Dance Revolution
\$808.50**

*Alfred Nolan, Frank P. Long
Intermediate School*

The applicant will purchase 12 additional Dance Dance Revolution practice pads in order to introduce DDR to the school's daily physical education program. DDR is a music video game series that engages students through music, dance and exercise.

**Honor Roll
\$130.00**

*Donna Warshaw, Frank P. Long
Intermediate School*

Academic excellence will be rewarded in the Honor Roll program with the distribution of medals, ribbons and certificates. The grant will pay for certificates. In addition to Gold and Silver Honor Rolls, a High-5 Club will be established to recognize students who improve their average by five points from the previous marking period.

**Character Counts
\$1,207.00**

*Loraine McCray,
Bellport Middle School*

The grant will purchase starter kits for the Character Counts Program. The program fosters good character in youth. Character Counts is a national program that helps reduce truancy and behavior problems while increasing test scores.

**Pre-School Library
\$800.00**

*Sarah Colichio, Bellport United
Methodist Church*

Sarah Colichio, a 12-year-old Girl Scout, will purchase books and storage shelves as part of her project to refurbish the toddler's library at the Bellport United Methodist Church Pre-School. The project advances her toward a Silver Award, the highest honor for a Girl Scout.

**Everybody Reads
\$1,729.35**

Carolyn Conroy-Kelly,
Verne W. Critz Elementary School

This grant is for the purchase of 20 personal cassette players/recorders with headphones, batteries, carrying bags and texts to be used to promote greater literacy for First Graders, particularly ELL and other at risk students. The cassette players will enable students who do not have an English-speaking parent to help them read a minimum of 20 minutes each night, the paradigm for literacy success. The tapes will contain recordings of books currently being read in class. At the end of each story, the teacher will record comprehension questions, give directions for a reader's response, or reiterate a skill learned in class. The recorders will also be used in the classroom during "buddy reading," independent reading, and as a tool in other literacy activities.

**Woodworkers Club
\$1,100.00**

Peter Cisek,
Frank P. Long
Intermediate School

Approximately 125 students will work cooperatively on building small industrial arts projects during a 30-week period. Students will use rulers, tool and project design elements to create at least seven craft projects. Multiplication, division, addition and subtraction facts will be used during the design and construction of the woodcraft items. The grant will pay for tools, latex gloves, glue, wood, nails, screws and other wood-working items.

**Garden Club
\$1,350.00**

Peter Cisek,
Frank P. Long
Intermediate School

The Frank P. Long Intermediate School Garden Club requested funds to restore two gardens damaged by a septic system construction project at the school. The Garden Club engages approximately 30 students who meet before the beginning of the school day to design and implement plant gardens for the school courtyard. The grant will pay for an ornamental Japanese maple tree, perennial flowers, ornamentals grasses and bulbs, rakes, work gloves, materials for a stonewall as well as other garden equipment.

**Ruby Bridges, Author
Visit, \$3,000.00**

Susan Cook,
Verne W. Critz Elementary School

Historical figure and author, Ruby Bridges, will visit Verne W. Critz and Kreamer Street Elementary Schools. Ms. Bridges will discuss her experiences as a child living through the Civil Rights Movement. She will present two two-hour programs, one at each school in March 2009. Approximately 650 children will participate.

**Consider the Possibilities:
A Career Exploration,
\$390.00**

K. Munisteri,
Verne W. Critz Elementary School

Third grade students will research career opportunities including the skill set and education needed for a particular occupation. At the end of their study, the students will take a field trip to Dowling College. The grant will cover display boards enabling the students to share their research in a career fair setting.

**Project Summer Swim
\$2,411.00**

Tracie Van Dina, Boys & Girls Club
of the Bellport Area

Approximately 30 members of the Boys & Girls Club participated in a learn-to-swim summer program. The cost was \$40 per child. The grant also covered transportation costs for the Club-owned vans and for the Club's staff time. The lessons were offered between June 30th and July 12th, 2008.

2008 FALL CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FRIDAY, AUGUST 15—Grant applications available

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 22—Deadline for grant applications

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 25—Daedalus Quartet, 7:30pm,
in the Walter Ebersole Auditorium, Bellport High School

MONDAY, OCTOBER 28—Announcement of grant winners

(For further information about coming events, see our website www.scefonline.org)



South Country Education Foundation, Inc.
P.O. Box 512, Bellport, New York 11713-1502

WWW.SCEFONLINE.ORG

SCEF Mission Statement:

South Country Education Foundation, Inc. is a non-profit organization committed to improving educational opportunities for all students in the South Country School District. Its mission is to promote and enhance educational initiatives by providing supplemental financial support for projects and programs that are outside of the South Country School District budget.

HELP US INVEST IN THE FUTURE OF OUR CHILDREN

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Sun and Fun at the 10th Annual Auction Party..

And the 25th Clipper Classic!

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