

Oak Views

Veterans Share Experiences With View Crew

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Three local veterans were kind enough to come share their experiences in the military with Oak View students prior to Veterans Day in November.

Mike Greene, who served from '60-'63, has visited us before and has interesting stories about his service as a teletype crypto operator in Alaska. He received much education and training while in the service and experienced the Cuban Missile Crisis from a first-strike location!

Wayne Berger, husband of a local elementary school principal, was raised in the

military, had always planned to serve, and did so in the Vietnam war as a counter-intelligence specialist. He worked with a team near the Cambodian border, monitoring the Viet Cong in the area. He worked closely with a local tribe called the Montenards, primitive technologically but well advanced from many

"civilized" folks culturally as it is not part of their culture to prevaricate or misrepresent in any way. Mr. Berger was standing with them watching the night sky as the (cont. pge.11)



Cliff Moore, Wayne Berger, Mike Greene

Help Us Build It And They Will Come (To Read!)

Oak View High School is full of readers. Many of our students are voracious and eclectic consumers of all types of fiction and non-fiction. Though often disinterested in a traditional approach to literature, our students are passionate partakers of the printed page when given choice in their reading material.

Over the past few years, Ms. Allen, with the assistance of staff and students, has been working toward creating a library for Oak View students. That goal is almost within reach. We now have sufficient books to create a

fledgling library. All we lack are sufficient bookcases to hold all of the volumes collected.

We need your help! If you are reading this and are in possession of a sturdy, tall bookcase you really don't need, we could surely use it. If you are looking for a way to give back to the school, we could use any monetary donations to purchase new bookcases. Our wonderful site council member, Charmaine Herlong has volunteered to seek donations in the community and could use your assistance. Whatever you

can give, bookcases, books, gift cards for Barnes and Noble or Amazon, or money towards a bookcase will be much appreciated and appropriately used.

Our goal is to have the library up and running by the end of February. To do so, we will need approximately 10-15 6-foot bookcases. We currently have two.

Can you help?
Contact Ms. Allen at
sallen@oakparkusd.org
at your earliest convenience
and Let's Get Literate!

Special points of interest:

- Check out the opportunities to check out what your son or daughter is doing at school on page 11.
- Wishing you all a safe and happy holiday season.

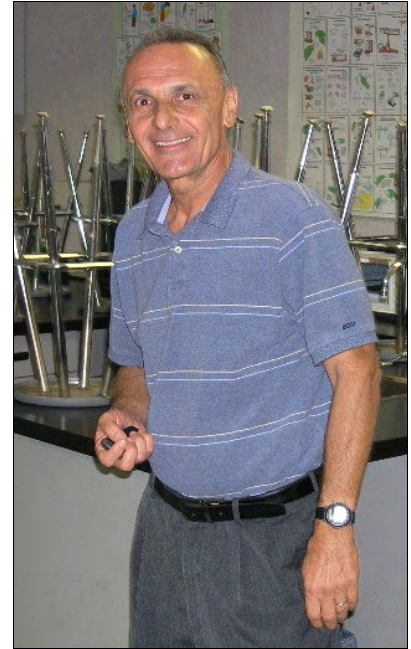
Principal's Corner

Holiday Greetings to our Oak View parents and students. We are so thankful for your generosity in support of our Turkey Walk for local needy families. Because of your outstanding support, Oak View donated over \$2500 to assist those in need. Our community service continues as we travel to the Valley to offer our holiday gifts to the multi-handicapped students at the West Valley Special Education School. We are so proud of the outstanding citizenship demonstrated by our Oak View students-with the support of their families. In January, we travel to the Ventura Mission to serve meals to the homeless.

We believe citizenship skills and experiences in community service nurture our entire school culture, and the attitude towards learning. Oak View is a great place to be....!

Enjoy this edition of *Oak Views*, filled with interesting stories and activities about Oak View High School. A huge thank you, again, to our guest veterans who always remind us about the service

and sacrifice in defense of our freedom. Don't miss



Because of your outstanding support, Oak View donated over \$2500 to assist those in need.

the exciting new aquarium club project, sponsored by Superintendent Tony Knight. Finally, we wish all of you a safe and peaceful holiday season.

Alumni Update

Ms. Liepman had a nice treat when

Don Coimbra ('85) stopped by. They certainly had a lot to catch up on! Don was a student before Ms. Liep-



man's kids were born, and Chris will be graduating from college this year!

James Spence, who attended briefly during the 07/08 school year came by to say "thank you" for the help he received here. He is currently attending college and working in the area.

Ashley Camorlinga stopped by with her GED and the great news that she is doing well and will be attending

Moorpark in January.

Ashley had to leave us last year due to health issues, but is back on track and moving confidently into the future. We wish these three (and all our alumni) well this holiday season and throughout the year.



Superintendent's Message

On behalf of the Board of Education, the staff, and students of the Oak Park USD, I would like to wish you all a peaceful holiday season and a healthy and happy New Year!

At right, Superintendent Knight with members of the Amazon Aquatic Club.

Something's Very Fishy Here!

The Amazon Aquatic Club is made up of five Oak View High School Students. We are working with a 110 gallon aquarium that was donated to the OPUSD along with all the other necessary items, including a filter system, stand, and lighting system, all donated by Marineland Research Systems located in Moorpark. Our goal is to create an Amazon River biotope. A biotope is an exact replica of the environment, meaning that the water chemistry must be exactly like that of the Amazon River. All of the fish and plants will have originated from that river environment. The group is working on a room at the District Office that is an unused office and they are turning into the Amazon rainforest. The goal is to create an interpretive center that children the elementary schools can come and visit to learn more about the Amazon rainforest. "We believe that people often can't understand why they need to work to save something until they learn more about it and come to know the plants and fish and other species that are under severe threat at this time." The group will be painting a mural that will depict life both under the water and in the canopy. They are working on

a website as well. The big plan is to paint a map of the Amazon on the floor!

Anthony W. Knight, Ed.D.
Superintendent

At right, club members Justin Karotkin, Jenna Hamilton, and Jenny Kaidin fill the tank. Angela Smolarski is also a member and will join with Jenny Kaidin in creating a mural for the aquarium room. Both women are particularly gifted artists and are sure to create something both memorable and appropriate. Members of the club will continue to work on the aquarium throughout the year, not only maintaining it, but also in helping to create the materials to make it an interpretive center. They will also act as docents for the visiting school children. Dylan Geremia is very interested in this project as he has his own tanks and experience working at a tropical fish store.



At left, Dylan Geremia and Jenny Kaidin prepare the tank for the water. Many hours went into putting the aquarium together before the fish ever got there. Students worked during the school day, taking care to keep up with their school work while also getting this project on the road. After the initial setup, students got the water just right, then put the plants in. After another adjustment period, the fish were finally added.

These Turkeys Don't Trot — They Walk!



This year we celebrated our Fifth Annual Turkey Walk. Every year, OVHS students, parents, and staff collect and deliver cash donations to Santa Comes to Agoura to support their commendable work during the holidays. Above left, Doron Arad gets things underway. Above right, Jeff Rossiter, Jenny Kaidin, and Angela Smolariski take the lead. At left, Cameron Murphy, Jenna Hamilton, and Melissa King enjoying the event. At right, Kathy Millas, Tony Millas, and Michelle Taylor enjoy their third and final Turkey Walk. Below left, Devon Delgado enlightens Lindsay Bilodeau. Below right, Principal Tabone, recovering from a recent surgery, prepares to be the pace car for the walk.





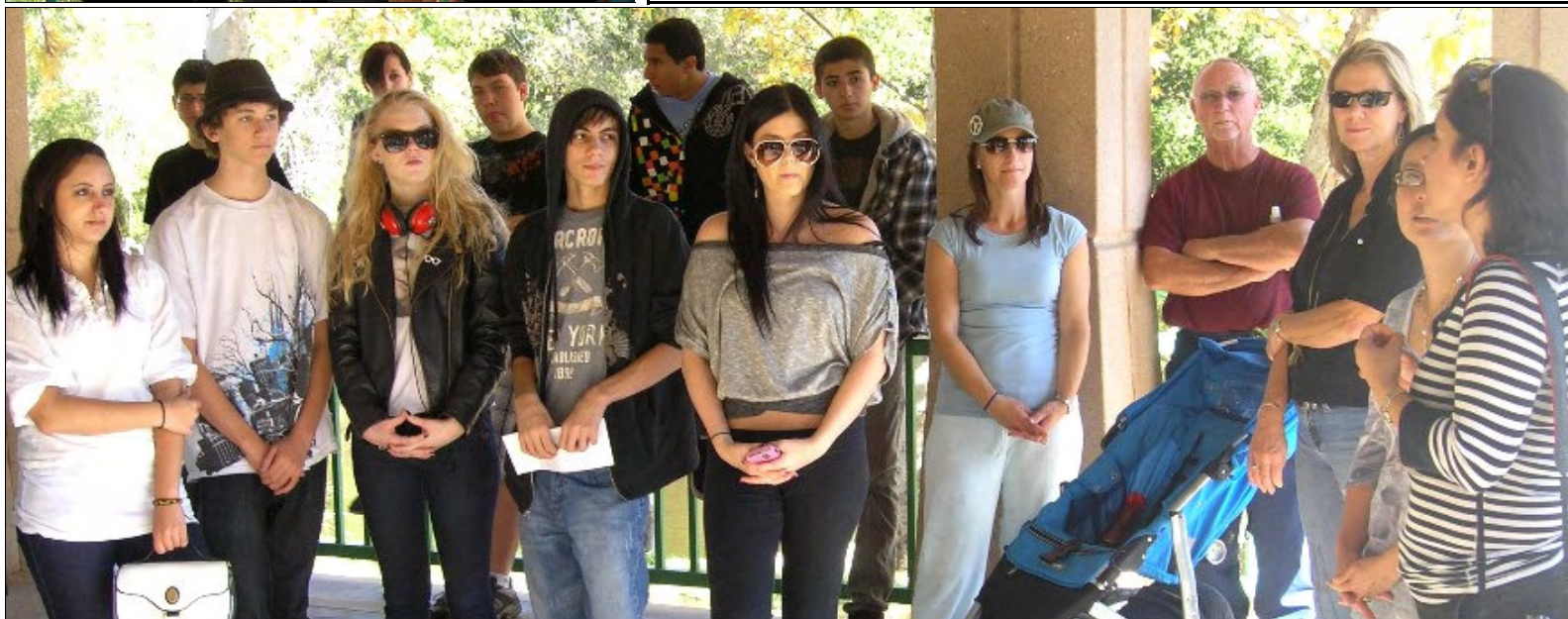
This year, the Oak Park Independent School partnered with us in raising over \$2500 for the Turkey Walk. If OPHS gave at the same rate our students and families did, that would mean \$30,000 toward Santa Comes to Agoura. As usual, the View Crew comes through with flying colors.

At left, Ashley Swartz, Allie Wittman, and Ashlea Sneed.

Below, the ASB receives thanks after the presentation of the check. From left to right, Hayley Gravino, Jeff Rossiter, Angela Smolarski, Robert Echave, and Michelle Taylor.

Far below left, Jordan Karotkin attempts to get to the dessert table, which is being guarded by Jonathan Rich-Ortiz.

Far below right, Matan Bouganim helps with the barbeque, which featured turkey dogs on the grill and salads, dessert, and side dishes from our wonderful parents. Thanks for the feast, folks! It was a wonderful way to head into the holiday and gave us all just one more thing to be thankful for.



Let's Have a Ball!

Imagine a classroom where some students sit on large, colorful balls while others are at café tables standing as they write or work on the computer. This scenario is coming to a classroom here at Oak View soon. As seen recently in an article in the Los Angeles Times by Georgia Garvey, students from kindergarten through college are trading in their traditional seating for exercise balls. "Subconscious mental activity lies at the core of the science behind the balls' success, experts say. The tiny movements kids make to stay balanced stimulate their brains and help them focus." Children with attention disorders are particularly receptive.

Sitting still can cause them to become sleepy and unfocused. The movement allowed while sitting on the balls helps them concentrate and stay alert and engaged while in class.

Café tables are similarly helpful for students who need to move during the day. Not only those with attention disorders, but bodily/kinesthetic learn-

If you have exercise balls and/or a café table/chairs you can donate, please contact Ms. Allen at sallen@oakparkusd.org

ers and students who just have a lot of energy benefit from being able to stand while writing or using the computer.

While desks or tables and chairs are the best kind of seating for most students, it doesn't hurt to make a few changes to make sure all are

given the tools they need to succeed in school.

Student Writing — A.J. Lapine

Every Monday, students start class with a piece of creative writing. They are shown a picture and asked to write a story in response to it. Following, and on pages 7 and 10, are three of these stories. Students write these cold; this is first-draft material. And yet, week after week, they compose compelling prose with no preparation and in only a very short time. Enjoy!

You walk down 5th Street then make a left on Main Street and you'll find station 1B. Many cities have dank, dull humdrum subway stations, but 1B was different. A place so bleak and colorless, men would go mad waiting for the train that never came. You walk down the drab stained concrete steps to a place of ruin and pain. Only one man was in the station, so quiet with his thoughts smashing through

his skull. No one else in the station to keep the man from wallowing in his deranged thoughts of meaninglessness and this pitiful existence of his. Second hand smoke was his only company; he filled the air with each sigh as he exhaled the cancer from deep within his lungs. Dark and ugly benches were the only standing objects in this penitentiary of defeat, a dim florescent light flickering over the mundane tile floor. A single trash can tipped over next to the man, newspapers of long ago and garbage of the everyday human



drone littered the floor. All ticket booths hung with the hindering red sign that simply read "Closed". The depressive and dismal wallpaper surrounding the forlorn man as it mocked him from the cold and filthy walls. All alone, he held only a single object in his pale hands, a string. He wasn't a vagrant, or a drug-crazed wanderer; he was a successful man. He wore a clean fitted suit, had posh cigarettes next to him and a set of shined swank shoes, all typical among the business types. As he sat there thinking to himself intently, "Too much force and the string will break...String... so very short, thin and meager.....Too much pull and it will split..." "...A lot like life really, so short, worn so thin... sure you can become old... but what's the point? Nothing but a living fossil... life can be reaped from you in seconds... life is thin by the means that

Lapine's Story Continued.

any slight change or radical action can cause your decease...

"Too much force on life and it will break... with the pressure from your peers and family... the weight of the world causing you to be crushed... slowly pulling you apart... Too much force and the string will break..."

He heard a snap, his eyes not even looking down, paralyzed by the sound of his life itself breaking, being snapped, split in two. His eyes focused on

the tracks so intently, so delirious and deranged. His eyes burning with the remnants of his shattered spirit and crushed soul. His will cremated by his madness. His hands went limp; he dropped the string, got up, fixed on the tracks. He shuffled toward the tracks without a sound, his shined shoes scuffing on every step he took closer and closer to his fate. Lights came flooding through the tunnel, rushing into the station like a flood of life. He walked past the yellow line for waiting passengers by the tracks. He jumped on to the tracks,

staring at the glorious light coming towards him. Embracing the thought of being washed clean, forgiven and blessed by this rushing spirit. Not a sound was made when the ten o'clock to Seattle ran through. Nothing left of the man, gone off the face of the Earth, as if eaten by life's depression. The station empty... the fluorescent light flickering over the bench, with the second hand smoke still looming in the air. The string lying on the filthy-ridden tile floor... the string... is a lot like life... too much force on it and it will break...

Student Writing — Jeff Rossiter

I watched the stranger from behind the light post on the busy streets of New York. I am sure that, by all appearances, I seemed to be stalking this stranger. Smiling, I shook my head and those thoughts from it. I was not the only one looking at this desperate looking man. He was dressed as if he belonged high up in the towering skyscrapers of the city, a backpack in one hand. The other hand was busily scratching through a garbage can, then moving on to the next one. Next to me another stranger snapped a picture of the poor fellow. I watched his eyes, eyes wrought of desperation. I had seen him go about this for 10 minutes, desperately trying to forage for leftovers, and I knew his story. The economy had likely taken his job like some horrible beast. The economy had probably lost him his family and his friends. People watched him and laughed as they passed, yet I could not bring myself to disregard this pitiful sight. After a few long moments I walked to him, putting my hand on his shoulder. He turned and looked at my, his face a visage of hunger and sadness.

"Do you need a place to stay tonight? I was going to order some

pizza for me and the family if you would care to join us?" I grinned, trying to put him at ease. He stared back silently at me. I went on, committing myself to my words.

"If you're not a pizza guy you should not be living in New York City," I laughed, pulling him along as we began to walk along the streets, "So I won't take no for an answer." We walked down a few blocks, myself talking and himself silently listening and occasionally bobbing his head. We made it to my apartment, where my wife waved from the window. The stranger stopped in his tracks and looked up at me, eyes glistening. Finally he spoke, in a voice wrought with emotion.

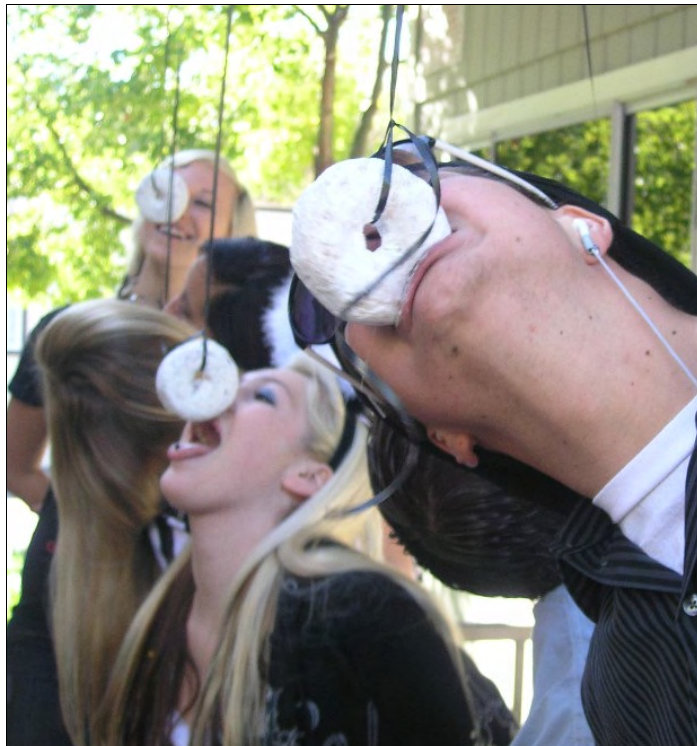
"Thank you stranger. I hope you know your kindness will not go unnoticed." He put his hand on my shoulder, and I felt myself being lifted, a feeling of lightness and goodness entering my body. I smiled sincerely, feeling a sense of accomplishment, and turned to call up to my wife that we were having company tonight.

"And who would that be?" She called down, her face twisted with an expression of confusion and her

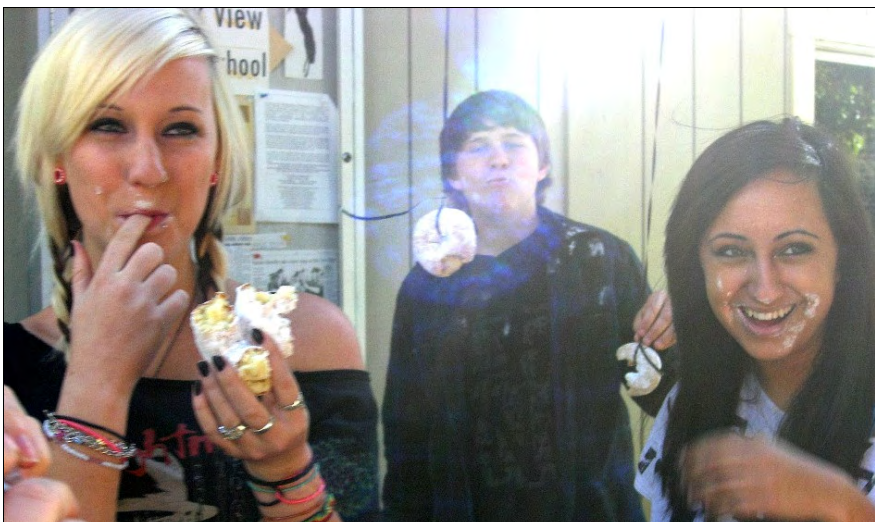
brown hair falling over her eyes. I turned to indicate the stranger whose name I still did not know. He was gone.

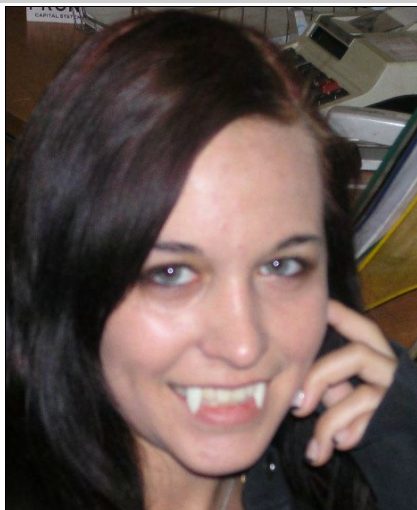


Halloween Happenings

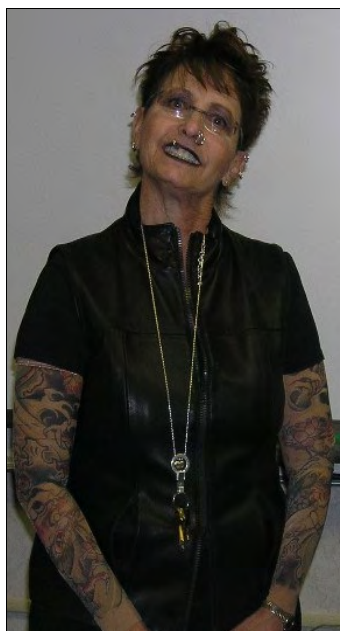


Students participate enthusiastically in the donut eating contest sponsored by Site Council. Above left, Dylan Geremia, Jeff Rossiter, and Kevin Fermin. Above right, Lindsay Bilodeau, Hayley Gravino, Desi Dusablon, Bree Mercer, and Tony Millas. Far left, Jordan Karotkin. Left, Jon Rich-Ortiz. Dylan Below left, Lindsay Bilodeau, Kevin Fermin, and Hayley Gravino enjoy the aftermath. Geremia was the winner, and everyone had a good time, especially the spectators! Below right, Ms. Allen enjoys having a chance to let her hair loose.





Top far left, Jenny Kaidin. Top left, Ashley Swartz. Top right, Jen Shaktah and Ashlea Sneed. At far left, Ms Liepman and Mr. Tabone. At left, Ms. Cohen. At right, Desi Dusablon and Bree Mercer. At far right, Brendan Grifflin-Blair.



Below left, ASB officer Angela Smolarski distributes candy to Jeff Rossiter and Melissa King, two of our costume contest winners. Below right, Jeff Rossiter, Nico Renyer, Dylan Geremia, Robbie Kolasas, and a visiting former student.

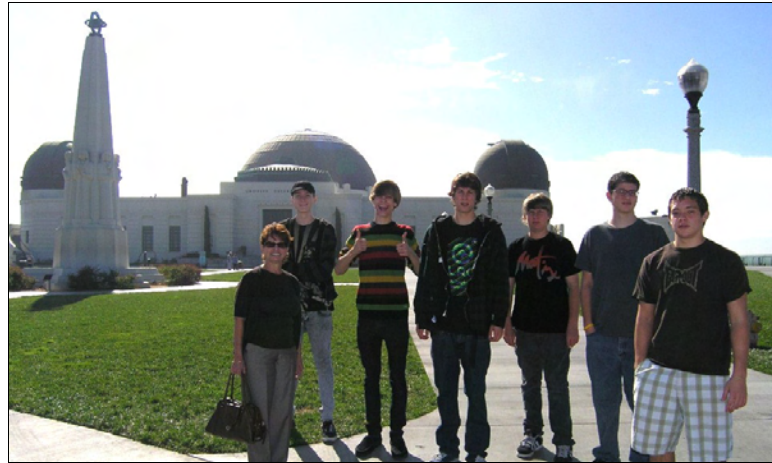


Planetarium Trip — Out of This World!

Ms. Cohen lead a field trip of her Global Science class in November. Lucky students traveled to the Griffith Park Observatory and had lunch at In and Out Burger. Students particularly enjoyed the special displays. Each planet has its own area with information pertinent to each. At the press of a button, recordings of all sorts of information pour forth about the orbs. In addition, students could stand on a special scale that would determine their weight on each of the planets. That will surely mess up your BMI! Students were also pleased to see a Foucault's Pendulum, a device that was conceived as an experiment that demonstrated the rotation of the earth.

Global Science students had previously constructed one of their own in class; the one at the planetarium was on a much grander scale. This field trip was one in a series of small class-specific excursions Oak View students have been taking over the past few years. It is not always financially feasible to take the entire school on a trip, nor is it scholastically relevant. Individual teachers have

been finding and spearheading these trips for their classes. Thank you, Ms. Cohen for taking the lead!



More Student Writing — A.J. Lapine

2009 Iraq War Correspondent Diary,

I'm here in Fallujah with the 1st Recon Division patrolling the city's outer sector with a small division of thirty or so Marines. We're at the first line of the invading force of the city; we have been probing small sectors to find an opening to get our Humvees and trucks in to re-supply cut off forces. We're off on patrol around

a small village where mortar fire has been seen in the previous days of the invasion. I arrive late on the scene with one other journalist and two Marines. As I stepped out of the Humvee a gust of wind and sand practically blinds me and sends some of my papers flying. We step off and head out toward the rest of the men on patrol. They're all sitting around a burnt-out car, no one is talking or laughing, all are silent. Drawing nearer I think maybe a guy got hit; if I have to look at another poor kid lying lifeless on the ground, I will turn in my reports and just go home. The death and carnage here is just too much. They're all crowded around one Marine; I recognized him. PFC.

Doyel Waltkin, young guy out of Texas, only eighteen when he signed up. Standing right behind him I peer over him to see what he's holding. It's a girl, a little girl maybe three or four years old. He turns around and says, "She was just laying here by the side of the car... I think her parents were in it..." A ghostly silence fell upon everyone; we all knew that we had been hitting this area with artillery and air-strikes. I stood in front of him and snapped a picture. It's enclosed with the caption "The price of war..." These boys out here see plenty of violence and destruction but when you come face to face with the grim reality of war it can bring the toughest of soldiers to their knees. We're on the move now into the city where there was heavy fighting yesterday; I'll write my report on it tonight.



New Quarter — New Classes

Ms. Allen

Period 1 — Careers
Period 2/3 — English
Period 4/5 — English
Period 6 — Computers

Ms. Cohen

Period 1 — Geometry
Period 2/3 — Biology
Period 4/5 — Global Science
Period 6 — CAHSEE Math Intervention

Ms. Liepman

Period 1 — Algebra
Period 2/3 — Parenting
Period 4/5 — World History
Period 6 — Current World Affairs

Veteran's Visit Continued

astronauts from the first lunar landing moved through outer atmosphere on their way home.

Assistant Superintendent Cliff Moore, a former history teacher, even used the Smartboard to talk with students about his experiences. He served from '67 to '69 as an enlisted man in the Navy, serving as a storekeeper on a flat bottom ship in the Mekong River. As part of the "Brown Water" Navy, he

and his shipmates provided support for the 9th infantry and a SEAL unit. His first two weeks of duty was in graves registration, as it was for all new personnel, to give arrivals the proper perspective. He spoke eloquently about the general history of the war as well as about the individual soldiers, such as his friend Patrick Delaney, who were victims of the war.

All of the veterans spoke well of their time in the service, despite the difficulties they endured. Especially appreciated were the opportunities for travel while in the service and for education both during and after their time in the service. We thank these men for sharing their stories with us and honor them for their service to our country.

Here's How To Get The Inside Scoop!

Conferences including teachers, parents, and students are scheduled for the week of February 22—26 this school year. This is an opportunity for all to sit down and discuss progress during the school year. Students are asked to be present to support a meaningful meeting by empowering students to express themselves about their work. They will have work examples to show to parents as evidence of their learning and growth. More information is forthcoming in the next newsletter; this is just a heads up. Parents will be asked to RSVP to schedule a 15 minute meeting between 2:00 and 3:00 during that week. One teacher of your choice will be present at the meeting. This is a won-

derful opportunity for all involved to convey the excellent work and the often huge gains in student growth over the school year.

At Open House

every year, parents are invited to come to the school, see examples of student work, and speak with teachers informally. We are expanding this idea to include parent observation during the regular class time. While parents are always welcome to observe after having made an appointment to do so, we will be inviting parents during particular class periods to observe particular happenings.

The first opportunity will come up

Parent involvement and communication opportunities abound at Oak View.

in Careers. A special invitation will be sent to parents of seniors who will give career presentations to observe on the day it is given. Students will sign up for their slot before break and parents will be notified the first week we return from winter break. We hope to have more opportunities to observe students in action soon. Check the newsletter for updates.

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OVHS

December 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	Robert Echave's Birthday 2	3	Quarter Progress Reports 4	5
6	7	West Valley Gift Giving 8	9	Art Gallery Field Trip 10	11	12
13	14	15	16	Jordan Feinberg's Birthday 17	Early Out 12:30 18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
<i>Winter Break — Enjoy your time off!</i>						
Jenna Hamilton's Birthday 27	28	29	30	31		