



BVPAGE PAGES

www.bvpage.org

From the President

Ann Ryan

I hope you had a refreshing and rich time with your children this summer. It is with anticipation that I welcome you to the new academic year with Blue Valley Parent Advocates for Gifted Education. Our membership year follows the academic year, and it's time to renew your membership and pay your annual dues. For your convenience, your dues statement and mailing instructions are attached to this newsletter.

We are looking forward to providing programs of interest to parents and educators of gifted children, working with the District to enhance enrichment opportunities for our children and actively monitoring pending legislation that has the potential to affect our gifted students and the funding of gifted education. This year we will conduct a survey to identify the primary issues that you, our members, believe to be the most pressing, and accordingly, most worthy of the focus of BVPAGE's educational and advocacy efforts. Our September program will address all aspects of navigating the waters of creation, modification and implementation of individual educational plans, plus other helpful information about parenting a gifted child. Watch our website (www.bvpage.org) for announcements of other fall programs and activities!

We are grateful for our unique, symbiotic relationship between BVPAGE, our school district's enrichment teachers, and Dr. Sheri Nowak, our

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

From the President	1
DCT's Corner	2
KGTC Convention	3
Student Showcase	4
Student Showcase Continued	5
BVPAGE Upcoming Events	6
News You Can Use	7

district's coordinating teacher for gifted education. It is a relationship that affords opportunities for worthwhile dialogue and collaborative change. As always, we encourage your active participation in BVPAGE. BVPAGE Board meetings are held each month at the District office (dates listed in this issue) and are open to all members. Our committees (program, student events, legislative and advocacy, communications and membership) are vital to the successful functioning of our organization – and we earnestly urge you to become involved in BVPAGE by serving on a committee. We need your talent, participation and input! Through your contribution of time and talents to BVPAGE, you are making a direct investment in and positive influence upon the academic life of your children.



BVPAGE Hosts Session at KGTG Convention

Dr. Sheri Nowak

The gifted education program is off to a great start for the 2006–07 school year! We have some new teachers and there are some new initiatives we will be starting. The new teachers are: Susan Schuckman (Cottonwood Point Elementary), Kathy Coughlin (Prairie Star Elementary), Athena Sullivan (Blue Valley Middle), Judith Lacey (Oxford Middle), Jennifer Johnson (Blue Valley High), Helen Hardgree (Blue Valley Northwest). We also have a long-term substitute at Sunrise Point Elementary, Sandra Tiffany.

Also, we have a “Gifted Leadership Cadre” that will assist me in setting priorities for the year, serving as a communications conduit, and to be liaisons to the BVPAGE board. They are: Pam Fellingham (Blue Valley West), Kelda Smith (Lakewood Middle), Patsy Mura (Lakewood Elementary), and Lucie Medbery (Heartland Elementary).

Second, we are anticipating a workshop in November by Dr. George Betts, author of the Autonomous Learner Model (ALM). He will be working with gifted education teachers on November 9 and 10, and possibly will do a program for BVPAGE on the evening of November 9. The ALM is our curriculum model for group activities for our gifted students. (The students also work on their individual IEP goals.) We continue to refine our learning so we can deliver the most appropriate opportunities to our students.

Third, we will begin curriculum mapping the ALM. This will allow us as a district to collaborate on the content, skills, assessments and activities delivered to gifted students. By “laying out” the curriculum we can see what works best at each grade level.

Next, we will be refining our math acceleration protocol and beginning to formulate a Communication Arts acceleration protocol. After using the math protocol last spring and testing students this summer, we will tweak that math protocol to make sure we are using an instrument that best predicts successful acceleration in math. In addition, we need to look at what will be the best factors to determine whether to accelerate a student in communication arts.

Finally, will look at best ways to identify and serve “twice exceptional” students. These are students who are both gifted and also have a disability. For instance, we have students who are gifted and learning disabled, gifted and hearing impaired, gifted with Asperger’s Syndrome, and other combinations. To best understand these children we need to do research, collaborate with others in the special education field, and share our ideas and successes.

I look forward to another exciting year of growing, collaborating, and meeting the needs of our gifted students!

Feel free to call (239–4333) or email (snowak@bluevalleyk12.org).

The important thing is not to stop questioning. Curiosity has its own reason for existing. One cannot help but be in awe when he contemplates the mysteries of eternity, of life, of the marvelous structure of reality. It is enough if one tries merely to comprehend a little of this mystery every day. Never lose a holy curiosity. – Albert Einstein



The Kansas Association for the Gifted, Talented, and Creative
Presents

**Expanding the Possibilities
2006 Parent Day**

Sunday, October 8, 2006
Holiday Inn Lawrence, KS

Keynote speaker: Tracy L. Cross, Ph.D.

From Underachievement to Suicide: How Students Cope with Being Gifted

10:30 a.m.– Noon	Registration (Exhibits open)
Noon – 1:45	Lunch, Special Presentations, and Keynote
1:45 – 2:00	Break
2:00 – 3:15	Breakout Sessions with emphasis on parent issues
3:15 – 3:30	Snack and time to visit the exhibits
3:30 – 4:45	Breakout Sessions with emphasis on parent issues

Free 2007 KGTC membership (\$25 value) including our newsletter The BUGLE
Special sessions with parents' needs in mind
Important information on advocacy and other topics of interest
Lunch and snack included
Chance to network with parents and professionals
Books and materials on giftedness will be available to purchase

You are welcome to join us for the entire convention October 8-10.
For more information about the convention or about KGTC and its work visit our website at www.kgtc.org.

Name: (Please Print Clearly) _____

Address: _____ City _____ ST _____ Zip _____

Phone: () _____ Email: _____

School District: (Name, not #) _____

It is important we have your email address so you can receive our newsletters.

Please mail form with check for \$45 payable to KGTC to: Carolyn Pitts, KGTC Treasurer
11754 Gillette, Overland Park, KS 66210
Cost: \$45. PLEASE DO NOT mail after 9/16/06. Register on-site for \$50.

If you are certified employee of a school district, please use the regular registration form (available on the KGTC website, this communication, or in the August issue of The BUGLE.)

Rooms are available for \$80 + taxes. Reserve by 9/1/2006 at 785-841-7077. Mention you are with the KGTC Conference!

Holiday Inn, 200 McDonald Drive, Lawrence, KS
(Just off the West Lawrence exit of the KS Turnpike—I-70)

Parents as Partners: How's and Why's of Advocacy Groups

Want to find out more about gifted education in your district? Do you have ideas to help improve gifted education services? Would you like to be a part of the "bigger picture" of serving gifted children's needs? Then this session is your answer! We will offer information on: how to organize a parent advocacy group in your area; define advocacy and choose your battles; how to be a part of existing district committees; how to offer interesting programs for parents and children; and how to be a great volunteer! Ask questions and find out how you can be a powerful parent advocate and/or start your own parent advocacy group!

Visit the KGTC website for more information on the three day event. See below for information on a special offer from KGTC... the **\$45 registration fee includes a FREE one year membership in KGTC!**

Student Showcase

What I did This Summer...

Submitted by students in Lucie Medbery's Gifted Education Program at Heartland Elementary, Blue Valley District

The most enriching thing I did this summer was...

"This summer when I was in Shanghai, China, I went to a history museum with lots of ancient artifacts. First we visited the bronze artifacts. They had bronze food vessels, wine vessels, wash pans, and other things. After that we went to the jade artifacts and saw jade bracelets, combs, jewelry, and some ax-blades. Later we went through a room with beautiful pottery and porcelain items. There were also rooms with stamps and drawings. There was a final room with different fabrics, clothes, and other odds and ends."

Kevin

"This summer I did many enriching things, but one I remember the most was reviewing Chinese with my grandpa. It was a fun, exciting, and easy way to learn Chinese. We (my sister and I) took a test in the beginning to see what level we were on. I knew about 250 words. Everyday in the summer, we learned words, took tests, and studied hard. At the end of the summer, Claudia and I had learned 500 words already! Another great thing about this experience was that we could earn money! During this experience, I learned a lot of Chinese, and made so much money! But most of all, after this time, I felt closer than ever to my grandpa."

Michelle

"The most enriching thing I did was when I went to "SeaWorld" in San Antonio. I learned about sea animals from shows. It was fun at the same time."

Insia

Welcome Back STUDENTS

"The most enriching thing I did this summer was going on a sleeping train and walking on a nature-made bridge! I learned to never sleep on the top bunk in the train. That's where the air comes from..BRRRRRR! The bridge is very wobbly so my sister had to be held."

Mykell

"I went to Hoover Dam. I learned that It was named after Herbert Hoover, the President at the time it was built. The dam was build during the Great Depression when people couldn't pay for electricity. Hoover Dam uses hydroelectric power instead. Did you know it is over 726 feet tall??? They flooded out the Colorado River to make it!"

Makenzie

"This summer my family and I drove to Canada. We drove to Toronto to visit my aunt. Then we went to Montreal. We climbed wooden stairs up to the top."

Tammy

"The most enriching thing I did this summer was going to gymnastics camp at the University of Georgia. All the gymnasts stayed in very small dorms. There were two twin beds in the dorms. We took the bus to eat delicious breakfasts in the morning. Then, we would walk to the gym. We would walk back to lunch and take the bus back to the dorm. Later, we would go back to the gum then go to dinner. I stayed in Georgia for 6 days. I loved to go to fascinating Georgia."

Katie

"The most fun thing I did this summer was going to Colorado. I rode around on a trolley. While I was on the trolley, I saw the Denver Broncos stadium, Colorado Rapids Stadium, and I went to an aquarium and leaned a lot about fish."

Abhi

"This summer I went to a Summer Science Camp for 2 weeks. We learned about different kinds of experiments....even stuff that can kill you! We discovered how pennies and made. We even made a fake penny."

Priyanka

Student Showcase Continued

What I Did This Summer... Continued from Page 4

"I did three Civil War reenactments this summer. I was on T.V. It was so cool!"

Daniel

"The most enriching thing I did this summer was learning how to grow crystals and other minerals. First, you need a pop rock, a jar lid, and food coloring. You fill the jar lid with water. Then put the pop rock in the water. After that, you put 2 or 4 drops of food coloring on the pop rock. Next, you wait 24 hours, then check on it, and there will be little crystals on all of the white powdery parts of the pop rock."

Sam

"The most enriching thing I did this summer is I learned how to sail. I went to 2 two- hour lessons with my family."

Brandon

"The most enriching thing that I did this summer was collecting different samples of rock from Colorado."

Charley

"The most enriching thing I did this summer was going to the ocean in Goa, India, and letting the waves splash on my feet."

Dhruv

"The most enriching thing I did this summer is I that went to Johnson County Community College for special classes for kids that need harder work in school. This program was very well-organized, and the teachers were great! If you are a parent with a child that needs harder work I highly recommend Johnson County Community College's Summer Program."

Mickey

"I went to Canada and went horseback riding. The horse I rode was named Cashew. I learned more about how to ride horses. It was very fun (and exciting)!"

Hannah



Harmony Middle School Student Travels to Europe with People to People Program

Submitted by Carolyn Hill-Demory, Guided Discovery Program at Harmony Middle School, Blue Valley District

Harmony Middle School seventh grader Jesse Cutter traveled to Europe this summer as a Student Ambassador on the People to People program. People to People is a program founded by Dwight D. Eisenhower to promote world peace through communication and education of cultures outside the United States. Cutter traveled from June 16, 2006-July 5, 2006 and visited France, Italy, and Greece. During her stay in these countries, Cutter was able to spend time with other European students and compare lifestyles, school experiences and cultures.

For more information on the **Student Ambassadors of**

The *BVPAGE Pages* are published quarterly. If you have any news items for this newsletter, you may contact the editor, Angela Case, at: scase0@yahoo.com

BVPAGE UPCOMING EVENTS

**BVPAGE
SURVEY**

BVPAGE is developing a survey to be released this fall--- target date November 2006.

Notices will be sent home from your child's enrichment teachers, and e-mailed to all members. The survey will be accessed by a listed weblink or from our website, www.bvpage.org.

The survey will help us gather information about how BVPAGE can best advocate for the gifted learners in our district. Survey respondents do not need to be BVPAGE members, but should have an identified gifted child in the Blue Valley

People to People program, visit their website at:

<http://www.studentambassadors.org/>



BVPAGE Presents:

**Gifted Ed Jeopardy:
We've got answers.**

Do you have questions?

When:

Thursday, September 28, 2006, 7-9 pm

Where:

Overland Trail Middle School
6201 W.133rd (Lamar & 133rd)

Anyone who has an interest in Gifted Education is invited to attend this informative night of questions and answers. Parents do not need to have an identified child or be BVPAGE members to attend. Parents will have an opportunity to join BVPAGE this evening.

Parents of gifted and high ability learners will have the opportunity to choose from several topics as we present this seminar in the form of small group sessions. We will start at 7:00 pm in the commons with remarks from BVPAGE president Ann Ryan. Then we will have two breakout sessions of 30 minutes each. Each topic will be offered twice during the evening, and facilitated by various school district staff and BVPAGE members. We'll wrap up with a panel discussion and Q and A. There will be two door prize drawings... one for current BVPAGE members, and another for those new members joining this evening.

Topics that will be covered in sessions include:

- ⊙ IEP meetings—How to prepare, what to expect
- ⊙ The Identification process—Multiple criteria are used to determine eligibility
- ⊙ Interacting with classroom and gifted teachers
- ⊙ Social and Emotional needs of the gifted student
- ⊙ What happens in the gifted classroom?
- ⊙ Acceleration (grade-skipping) by subject and whole grade
- ⊙ College Bound? How to prepare academically and financially

News You Can Use Legislative Update

Submitted by Rhona Alter, Legislation/Advocacy Committee

The 2006 legislative session was a busy one, and included several bills affecting education. The bill that got the most attention was school finance. The legislature passed, and the governor signed, a school finance bill that provides \$466 million dollars in additional funding to public education this year. The Supreme Court ruled the bill substantially complies with the school finance act that was in place when the suit challenging the act was filed.

The bulk of the money will go to rural schools and urban schools with a high density of children in the National Free Lunch Program. (Kansas City, Wichita, and Topeka school districts each will receive over \$600 per pupil; Blue Valley will receive \$195 per pupil.) The local option budget will remain capped, but will increase to 30% this year and to 31% for the next two years. Overall, though Johnson County schools did receive some extra money, we ended up getting the short end of the stick. While we have 18% of the students in the state, we get only 8% of state funds.

The news was not all unfavorable. One helpful provision was added for state funding of students who are not proficient in reading or math but who do not qualify for poverty funds. In another helpful move, the Supreme Court lifted a stay of a cost of living provision that will allow Blue Valley to tax up to five percent of its general fund. According to news articles, the district intends to levy only one percent this year, generating about \$1 million to fund school programs.

Other bills passed that will affect gifted education are:

- HB 2575: Amends present law to allow gifted students in grades 9 through 12 to enroll in high school and college or technical school concurrently. (Previously, the law applied only to students in grades 11 through 12.)
- HB2578: Creates a scholarship program providing up to 50 scholarships a year of \$3,000 per semester to licensed teachers enrolled in a program for licensure as a special education teacher. The recipient is required to teach special education for children with disabilities on a full-time basis for three years, or the equivalent length of time on a part-time basis. (Teaching gifted education does not satisfy the requirement.)
- SB139: Establishes the Kansas Academy of Mathematics and Science, subject to the appropriation of funds. The Academy would provide an accelerated residential and/or on-line (to be determined by the Board of Regents) program for Kansas high school juniors or seniors who are academically talented in science or math. The two-year curriculum would include coursework designed to meet both high school graduation requirements and requirements for an associate of arts or science degree.

Next year's legislative session may be quieter regarding education, with no school finance bill to consider. Stay tuned!



BVPAGE

BVPAGE strives to increase the quantity and enhance the quality of services, disseminate information to and maintain a support group for parents to benefit all gifted and talented students in the Blue Valley School District.

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.bvpage.org

A MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/ RENEWAL FORM IS AVAILABLE ONLINE

BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 29 – NEW EXHIBIT AT SCIENCE CITY!

ROBOTS: The Interactive Exhibition

captures the imagination and excitement of the hit animated film *Robots* and translates it into an entertaining and educational experience for the whole family. See how robots can make our lives better today and in the future. Learn how the movie was created, play interactive games, and build your own robot! Unique interactive displays enable fans of any age to interact with their favorite characters from the movie, while exploring the exciting real-life world of robotics. Displays include:

- » **Robot Explorers** – Using a computerized touch screen, build a robotic probe to explore these unique and challenging environments: underwater, deep space and the surface of Mars.
- » **Crosstown Express** – Climb aboard and take a spin inside a Robot City public transportation pod. Feel the movement and excitement in this three-dimensional environment.
- » **Build-A-Wonder-Bot** – No more dishpan hands! Create robots that perform actual tasks like washing dishes.
- » **Industrial Robots** – Control and manipulate a robotic arm and experience first-hand the important work of robotics in modern day factories.
- » **Domino Workspace** – Learn the physics of dominos through cause and effect.
- » **Future of Robots** – Discover the companies, robotic machines and young students shaping the next generation of robots and robotics. And more!



Visit <http://www.unionstation.org/exhibits.cfm>

For ticket options and exhibit hours

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