

# Explorations

Blue Hill Consolidated School

March 30, 2017

## Brains on the Brain at BHCS

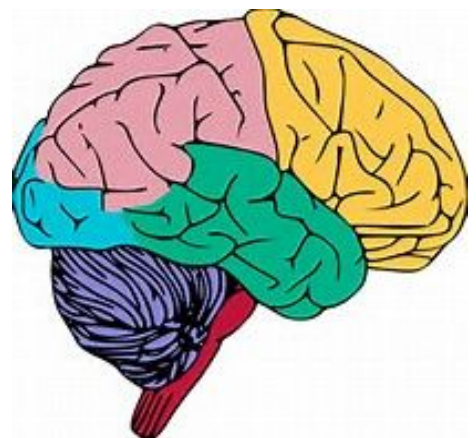
In the month of March, BHCS has had multiple groups of people learning more about the human brain. Guided by teachers Nell Herrmann and Kat Hudson, eighth grade students are modeling the actual practices of scientists including conducting simple cognitive tests, collecting and analyzing data, and presenting to a panel of their middle school peers. The culminating activity will be the first annual Neuroscience Inquiry Conference on April 11 here at BHCS!

As part of their research, special guest Eric Columer was asked to speak to the class about his own personal experience as the survivor of a traumatic brain injury that occurred this past September. While trying out a new skateboard, Eric fell backward without a helmet, causing severe trauma to his brain. He described the incident and his recovery to our students, including what it was like to spend twelve days in a coma as his brain healed. When Eric awoke, he was faced with a long recovery including physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech therapy. He noted that some parts of his brain and memory worked just fine (he remained an expert in Jeopardy trivia and never forgot anyone's names), but other parts did not, such as subtracting 7 from 100. Students were so engrossed in this real-life experience that they all wanted to keep asking questions, even though it was time to go. We are so appreciative that Eric took the time to come and speak to our students, and just so thankful that he has made such an incredible recovery!

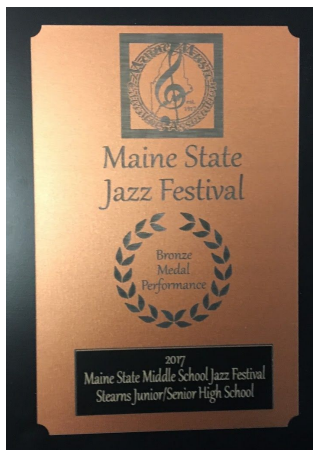
Students aren't the only ones that have been learning about brain science at BHCS. This week at our faculty meeting, teachers had the opportunity to hear from our Occupational Therapist, Sue Elcik. Sue explained four types of sensory deficiencies that we may see in our students and ways that we can help them get back on track in the classroom. The activities are designed to increase serotonin in our brains and help us to focus better. Many of us do these things without even realizing what we're doing, such as getting up and stretching or taking a quick walk. Some other suggestions were wall push-ups, carrying something heavy(ish), swinging, and many more. Sue also talked about how eating something crunchy or chewy can also help boost serotonin levels.

Finally, a few weeks ago, I attended the 32nd Annual Learning Differences Conference at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. There were educational researchers from all over the world that discussed topics from differentiated discipline to slow processing speeds to challenges with diagnosing Autism Spectrum Disorder. I cannot begin to summarize all that I learned there, but I definitely want to share sometime soon in this newsletter what I learned about the impact of neurosciences on education. Here is the biggest takeaway for parents: Have conversations with your children. You might roll your eyes at this, because it seems obvious, but researchers have found that the more back and forth interaction a child is exposed to, the more likely they are to achieve academic success. More on this coming soon!

Warmly,  
Shelly



## Jazz Band Congratulations



Milinoeket was rockin' last weekend as Jazz bands from middle schools all throughout Maine gathered for the Maine State Middle School Jazz Festival. Overall the band earned a second place. There were several musicians who were recognized for their outstanding solo

performances: Grace Broughton, Emma Brown, Fiona Larkin, Elia O'Hara, Cole Stewart, and Ross Stewart. Cole Stewart was also recognized with the highest honor in our division at the event, an Outstanding Musicianship Award. BHCS is proud of all our musicians and the amazing Jazz program directed by Mr. Schubeck.

## Town Meeting Childcare

Want to attend the Blue Hill Town Meeting (Saturday April 8th from 9 am - 12:00 pm and 1:00 pm until end), but don't know what to do with your children? PTF is providing FREE childcare to attendees. Contact Sarah at [sarahwjking@outlook.com](mailto:sarahwjking@outlook.com), or 479-7956 to reserve your space, or just show up on the day of Town Meeting (spaces will be first come first serve, unless you reserve ahead of time).

## Special Art for the SUN Room



Shari Ciomei, an artist in Stonington, recently painted and donated a beautiful piece of artwork to the BHCS SUN (Students with Unique Needs) program. Our school is very grateful for her generosity and this testament to what a wonderful, loving community we call home. Thank you so much, Shari!

### Dates to Remember

March 31	Grade 8 to MMA Dance in Sedgwick 6-9 pm
April 7	Elections at Town Hall 10 am - 8 pm
April 8	Blue Hill Town Meeting at BHCS 9 am
April 10 - 13	Conferences
April 12 & 13	School Play, 7 pm
April 12	School Board Meeting, 5 pm BHCS Library
April 14	No School, Goal Setting Day
April 17 - 21	No School, Spring Break



---

### Blue Hill Heritage Trust- Spring Tree ID Walk Saturday, April 1<sup>st</sup> at 1PM

Local landscape historian Val Libby will lead a Shrub and Tree ID walk at Kingdom Woods Conservation Area. Come and learn the secrets to identifying early spring vegetation! Join us at 1pm at the Kingdom Woods Conservation Area Woods Road off the Kingdom Road (where the pavement ends) in Blue Hill. Free and open for all ages. For more information and to pre-register, please contact Blue Hill Heritage Trust at 374-5118 or [info@bluehillheritagetrust.org](mailto:info@bluehillheritagetrust.org)

---

### HOP! Trail Run & Egg Hunt- April 15<sup>th</sup>, Blue Hill Town Park

<http://bluehillheritagetrust.org/2017/hop-trail-run-egg-hunt/>

The Blue Hill Heritage Trust, Blue Hill YMCA and Blue Hill Peninsula Community Compass are teaming up to host the **2nd Annual HOP! Trail Run & Egg Hunt** Saturday, April 15th at the Blue Hill Town Park.

Registration for the race/hike opens at **8:15am** on the 15th and the race will begin at **9am**. Suggested donation for the race is \$5. T-shirts for the first 50 to register. As runners finish they can draw an "Egg" for a chance to win a great prize!

The egg hunt is open to **children 12 and under** and will begin at **10am PROMPT**. **Children under 5 will get a head start.**

Light refreshments will be available to all!

Community articles submitted by the Blue Hill community are posted as-is. Those interested in submitting community news for the newsletter may contact Tracy Gandy ([tgandy@bhcs.org](mailto:tgandy@bhcs.org)). Views/opinions expressed in this section are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect official school positions or policies.