



THE FABINDIA SCHOOL

newsletter

PUBLISHED BY THE FABINDIA SCHOOL FOR THE JOHN BISSELL SCHOLARS FUND
FABINDIA, P.O. BOX 118, NEW HARTFORD, CT 06057, USA ☎ SPRING 2006

LETTER FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Friends,

I am pleased to write this school update for you. This current academic year of 2005-06, is about to come to a close. By the time you get this newsletter, our Grade-10 students would have already completed their year-end public exams and the rest of the students, their annual assessments. The new academic session begins from 6th April.

During these last few months, we've had several visitors to the school. Prominent amongst them were the Graham family (of the Washington Post), and Liz Moynihan. They all visited school in the end of December '05. Liz dedicated the computer room in memory of her son, John. John Moynihan's close friend, Michael Tallon spoke of the Indian links and associations of John. We appreciate the kind donation made by Liz for the school. The Grahams applauded the work of the school in such a rural setting. We are grateful to Bim Bissell for bringing all her friends to visit the school, while they were traveling in Rajasthan. Then in January, we had Hendon Chubb and Phyllis Nauts visit the school, who have donated the Science room in memory of John Bissell. We are very grateful to them for their kind donation.

We have just received last month a check for over \$40,000, comprising of a total of the donations received during 2005 towards our annual scholarships, endowment fund and building expansion. We want to say a BIG THANK YOU to each and every one of you for your help and support for our cause.

As we look forward to another fruitful session, with anticipated increased enrolments, I want to express our sincere appreciation of all the support and the good wishes of all our friends in the US, and other parts of the world.

Thank you,

With my very best wishes,

Jayant Biswas

PRINCIPAL,

On behalf of everyone at the school.

Spring of 2006



UPDATE ON THE JOHN BISSELL SCHOLARS FUND - A NOTE FROM KATHERINE ALLEN:

I recently returned from India where I heard great stories about the American visitors at the school this winter. These memorable encounters in remote Rajasthan allow the students to feel like true global citizens.

As some of you know, I have been working with Fabindia since 1993 and started assisting with the John Bissell Scholars Fund this past Fall. It is thrilling for me to receive all of your letters of support and I want to share our progress to date.

In 2003 we raised enough funds for 60 girl students and in 2004 we were able to increase this to 75. We are still working towards our target of scholarships for 90 girls this year, but I am extremely pleased to report that we have already exceeded last year by providing 78 scholarships so far! Your support has such a tremendous impact, literally enabling the female students to continue their education.

I hope that these stories and images will help bring the school to life for you and give you a window into the world of especially the female students. We thank you all for your generous support.

Many thanks,

Katherine

JOHN BISSELL SCHOLARS FUND MEMBERS INAUGURATE TWO NEW FACILITIES



Liz Moynihan, Bim Bissell and Madhukar Khera

This winter the students were thrilled to host two very memorable groups of American visitors. In December Mrs. Elizabeth Moynihan visited the school with Bim Bissell and a large number of guests to inaugurate the new

Computer Centre which she donated in memory of John Moynihan and John Bissell.

In January Ms. Phyllis Nauts and Mr. Hendon Chubb visited the school and were given a tour of the new Science Room which they had donated in memory of John Bissell.

Ms. Phyllis Nauts writes, "Hendon and I were lucky enough to have a tour of the Fabindia School in

January. We took pictures of the students while they were outside for their "tiffin", all eagerly crowding around, first, to get into the



Liz Moynihan, Don Graham and Jagat Mehta

picture, and then to see themselves in the viewfinder. Sadly, my camera was stolen before I had a chance to download and send them to Jayant. We talked to the kids in the classrooms, and were impressed by their career goals. They wanted to be doctors, airplane pilots, architects and engineers. They are a beautiful, enthusiastic and lively bunch of students." Phyllis Nauts and Hendon Chubb



Student shows project to Margaret Bright

"I had the opportunity to visit the Fabindia School with Bim Bissell and Liz Moynihan and other friends in December 2005 to commemorate the opening of the computer center which Liz

Moynihan has supported honoring her John. It was such a wonderful day meeting those wonderful children and their teachers. I keep remembering those beautiful attentive children sitting as the program went on and thinking: "There are India's leaders of tomorrow." I can't help but mention how proud I was of those wonderful little girls taking their places right up front!"

- *Margaret Bright*



Donald Graham visits the new Science lab donated by Hendon Chubb and Phyllis Nauts

"We were among the group who visited your school last December with Liz Moynihan. We were very impressed with the teachers, the students, and the quality of education your school offers.... with our sincere admiration and best wishes"

Mary and Donald Graham

CEO of the Washington Post



Young girl students perform a traditional Rajasthani folk dance to welcome the December guests

"We all travelled from Sadar Samand in various jeeps and cars to arrive in Bali at the school, which seemed miles from any large town or village. On arrival we were garlanded and welcomed by hundreds of beautiful, smiling children all in impeccable uniforms. The children put on an absolutely splendid traditional dance followed by an inspiring yoga demonstration. Following each visitors short introduction of themselves and what they did in America we went on a guided tour of the classrooms which we all enjoyed immensely. The one on one communication with the senior student guides was astounding to all of us as was the quality of the science projects and the visits to individual classrooms. We left the school inspired by what can be achieved in a remote area. Dedicated teachers and patrons who guide the progress of the children has transformed lives forever. This is remarkable India at work. Congratulations to everybody involved. Please visit the school and see firsthand what a fantastic education these children are receiving. My best wishes to all at the school."

Neil Greentree, photographer

The Smithsonian Institution Washington DC USA

PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS

- Jayant Biswas

The Fabindia School has established partnership links with two schools in the US. One is the Advent School, a progressive school in Boston, MA. We have an active pen-pal link with this school, wherein students exchange letters at least 4 times a year. We have also recently partnered with them for a 20/20 Challenge project. The Headmaster visited the school in the summer of 2004. This spring the students organized a fund raiser for the girls at The Fabindia School.

Louise Ambler Osborne, a parent of an Advent school student and supporter of the JB Scholars Fund, wrote, "The Fabindia/Advent Schools partnership seems to be developing nicely. This Tuesday (April 11) the students at Advent are going to be making crafts based on Indian techniques (tie dye, woodblock printing of notecards and bookmarks) that they will then sell to raise money for Fabindia school. The parents committee at the school is organizing all this."

The other link is with the Horace Mann School in New York. They are linked to us through the Girls Learn International programme operating from New York City. Katherine Allen reports:

Girls Learn International:

Summit 2006, New York City

On April 30, 2006 I attended the 3rd annual Girls Learn International Summit in New York City as a representative of The Fabindia School. Girls Learn International (GLI) is a US-based non-profit organization with chapters at 30 schools in Northeastern USA that involve students to engage in the international effort for global girls' education. The Fabindia School is the "Partner Classroom" with the GLI chapter at the Horace Mann School in Riverdale, New York. In addition to a pen-pal relationship, the students at Horace Mann also hosted a fund raiser for the girls at the Fabindia School this spring.

Gabby Bromberg, an 11th grader, is the student chair of GLI at Horace Mann. She writes, "The Horace Mann chapter of Girls Learn International raised \$750 dollars at our bake sale last week. We are giving this to the organization to be sent over to your school. We hope it makes a difference." Gabby's younger sister Talia, an 8th grader at The Churchill School in New York City, was so inspired by the Horace Mann students that she and her classmates also decided to do a fund raiser at their school.

This spring the Churchill School students organized a bake sale which raised \$300 for girls at The Fabindia School. It was wonderful to meet the Bromberg sisters at the GLI Summit and thank them personally for their leadership roles. On behalf of the students and staff at The Fabindia School, we send our tremendous thanks to the Bromberg sisters and all their classmates for their amazing commitment and selfless efforts!

At the GLI Summit students from all the chapters shared compelling information about global girls'

education and presented "Lead Her Awards" to an impressive line up of inspirational women. The honorees included NY Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton, NY Representative Carolyn Maloney, editor-in-chief of Glamour Magazine Cindi Leive, and activists Gloria Steinem, Amna Buttar and Mukhtar Mai. Mukhtar Mai, a Pakistani woman who has established a school for girls in her village in Punjab, Pakistan, received a standing ovation from the crowd and the greatest praise from her fellow award recipients. Mukhtar

Mai, called the "Bravest Woman Alive," gave a short speech in Hindi and said her slogan is "End Oppression with Education." I felt very honored to represent the Fabindia School at this inspiring event.

- Katherine Allen, John Bissell Scholars Fund



Girls Learn Summit
Katherine Allen (center) from JB Scholars Fund joins Gabby Bromberg (left) and Talia Bromberg (right) at the 2006 Summit for Girls Learn International (GLI) in New York City on April 30.



Girls Learn Summit
At the entrance to the 2006 Summit for Girls Learn International (GLI) in New York City on April 30. From left to right, Katherine Allen from JB Scholars Fund joins Hope Salvant, an 8th grader whose mom is the Secretary for GLI, Talia Bromberg, an 8th grader who organized a bake sale this spring to raise \$300 for The Fabindia School, and Daphne Kis, an officer of GLI and mother of Talia and Gabby Bromberg.

STUDENT REPORTS ABOUT THE VISITS:



Mary Graham visits with one of the Fabindia School female scholars during her December trip to the school

We all know that on 22nd December 2005 many guests from United States visited our school. It was very interesting and important day for our school. They came for the inauguration for our school computer lab. We welcome them with the garlands and with an Indian traditional method. They all introduced themselves one by one. A folk dance was performed by some little girls of our school for the entertainment of the guest. After this all programme our computer lab was inaugurated by Liz Moynihan in the memory of her son – John Moynihan who was born on 15/2/1960 and died on 15/10/2004. Now, our computer lab is named- John Moynihan Computer Centre. They all saw our school and our science lab was also given by Hendon Chubb and Phyllis Nauts in the memory of John Bissell.

MS. AJAYDEEP DEORA
CLASS-VIII

On 22nd December many visitors visited our school. They were from U.S.A. They were the relatives and friends of John Moynihan and John Bissell. John Moynihan was son of Liz Moynihan. She donated the computer lab and now computer lab is known as John Moynihan Computer centre. On this day a function was held. First of all we welcome them with garlands. Then a small dance was performed by small girls. After that they introduced themselves. Then they saw our computer lab and science lab. Then they went to see our classes and went. It was a nice day.

MS. PARUL VYAS
CLASS- VIII

Before ten days of the guest arrival, we knew about them and started decorating our classes. Some small girls also prepared a dance. They were coming to donate the John Moynihan computer centre. John Moynihan was a great artist. He was born on 15/2/1960 and died on 15/10/2004. In his loving memory his mother Liz Moynihan donated the computer lab. We welcomed them by garlands. Then the small girls performed the traditional Rajasthani dance. Then one by one they introduced themselves. They all were from U.S.A. They were either John's friends or relatives. After that they visited the computer lab and then other classes. They were all happy and we all were also happy.

DARSHAN VAISHNAV
CLASS- VIII

The Fabindia School was established by William and John Bissell who saw the need for a model school to empower young people in rural Rajasthan where literacy rates are extremely low, especially among women. From the beginning the school has been committed to encouraging education for girls in a region where most parents who can afford an English medium school would send only their sons. To attract girls the school subsidizes their tuition. Starting in 1992 with 11 pupils, the school now has over 250. The John Bissell Scholars Fund was established in 2000 in memory of John Bissell. Its purpose is to support scholarships for female students.

For comments or further information about the fund, contact Katherine Allen at k.allen@fabindia.com or write to the following address:

THE JOHN BISSELL SCHOLARS FUND
Katherine Allen,
Fabindia, P. O. Box 118, New Hartford, CT 06057, USA
Ph: 860-693-1123