



# The Midpointe

News and opinion for Southpointe Academy families

July 1, 2010

## Canada Day Issue

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# COMMENCEMENT

Our school year always ends with the Ceremony of Commencement at which our graduating students are celebrated and presented with their diplomas.

One of the highlights of the ceremony is the final speech of the Valedictorian. Having warmed up with speeches at the Graduation Ball in May and the Major Awards Ceremony just a week earlier, the Valedictorian in this speech addresses the grad class, assembled as they are for the very last time.

This year we were treated to one of the best valedictorian speeches I have heard. Of course, as you read it, you cannot hear the cadence, understand the pacing, see the facial expressions and the like, but you will certainly sense the call to the class to go out and make a better world.

Scott Stanger was the Valedictorian, and these are his words:

Good afternoon Mr. Baldwin, faculty, parents, guests, and of course, the Grad Class of 2010. I see proud parents, relieved students and faculty who are thankful to be one year closer to retirement. What an adventure this has been for all of us.

Our parents will say the adventure began the day we were born. But for us, it started five years later with grins showing missing teeth and dispositions that never left game mode. I'm sure all of us can recall our own first day at school... time does go by quickly. For us, the graduates here today, this time at school has been our whole life, at least the part we can remember well. So this commencement is not just about finishing high school, it is about finally arriving as young adults. It is the realization of the hope held by our parents, and the culmination of the love and guidance from all those who have cared about us. On behalf of the graduating class I thank you all.

Valedictorian speeches are often about sending graduates off to change the world, armed with philosophical quotes from great thinkers; and, I have a quote or two for you as well, but I will save that for later. First, I want to tell you a little about our grad class and I will start with a few statistics:

- For our Hamlet assignment 70% of us relied on the use of Spark Notes; the remaining 30% relied on those that read the Spark Notes.
- 50% of us Twitter regularly. Now here are some Twitter statistics of our parents: 60% of them think twittering is talking in class; 30% think it is something birds do; and, unfortunately 10% think twittering and tinkling are the same.
- 30% of us go to all you can eat sushi on a regular basis; of those 10% bring their own money.
- 100% of us have feet, but only Prabjot has a foot fetish.

Yes, my classmates are a unique group, and I thank you all, especially for the honour of speaking on your behalf.

I've really enjoyed the great times we've had, such as playing manhunt at camp Squeah, or eating pigs' blood and other exotic dishes in China. Remember camping in the rain that lasted sixteen hours? The rain was biblical on that camping trip; then just before we finished building our life rafts we were spared with clear skies and scenery of unfathomable beauty. These were all very good times, ones I won't forget. However, now as a graduating class, we are ready to embark on new journeys. Journeys that will take us to new summits, and to dark trenches; journeys that will give us new experiences and new dishes to taste. However, at times it will rain, and while underneath a blue tarp drenched with boots weighing 10 lbs each, we must remember that the sun will pierce the clouds; and, the grass, puddles, and lakes will glimmer again.

Graduation is like writing the first few chapters of a long story. We have an idea of where things are going, but we don't really know how it will end.

Moving the story along requires vision. Each of us must imagine ourselves and our world in the future.

Looking after ourselves won't be too difficult. We belong to families that are supportive and value education. It is not hard to imagine that each of us will be financially successful. But people with means and ability have a responsibility to a higher calling. We are called to seek justice, to be good stewards, and to be active in our local, national and world communities.

Seeking justice is not an easy task. Fairness often requires sacrifice, even restitution. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission is a national example of how difficult the pursuit of justice can be.

Stewardship is the responsibility to look after what belongs to others. First, we need to be better stewards of the environment. This too requires sacrifice. Quoting Mahatma Gandhi, "The earth provides enough to satisfy every man's need, but not every man's greed." So let's all do our part to minimize our impact on the environment.

Stewardship has many other facets. Every time we are in a position of trust, we are stewards of the well being of others. As graduates, we need to reflect carefully on our personal motivations, and on how our decisions will affect others.

Benjamin Disraeli said that, "Justice is truth in action." Thus, as a graduating class, we commit to being involved in the success of organizations that make our local, national and international communities work for all people.

To meet this responsibility we must lead by example. Leaders require good character as people will not follow someone they don't trust. Sure there are those who lead by force, but they are motivated by self interest and cannot inspire those they control. We need to be leaders who are in service to others.

In this quest we will meet those who want different results and others with similar goals, but disagree on how they can be achieved. How we test ourselves against these forces will be a measure of our character. We need to commit ourselves to being uncompromising on values, but flexible on the means to achieving our goals.

As a graduating class we have a duty to our school. As graduates we hope we have set a worthy example for younger students. And as alumni we pledge to support our school so that others can benefit, as we have done.

Our success is due largely to the opportunity and support that we've received. We leave this place with humility knowing that the success is not ours alone, and with confidence knowing that we are prepared for what the world may hold for us.

Until we meet again, thank you and good-bye.

## **MISS THE FUN? FOLLOW THE LEADER!**

The South Delta Leader currently has an article about our school on its website, where it also provides a link to a video of our flag-lacing ceremony, helicopter and all. If you missed the event, please take a look.

## **PLEDGES -PLEASE CHECK YOUR SCHOOL E-MAIL**

Our indefatigable pledge committee, known variously as 'The Bond Girls' and 'Bob's Angels', needs to communicate urgently with a few of our pledgers to deal with matters that have arisen. Please check your school mail regularly to ensure you receive their messages.

## **FRIDAYS**

Please note that office opening hours during the school vacation are 9am to 3pm, EXCEPT on Friday's when they are 9am to 1pm.

The school is closed for the first two weeks of August.

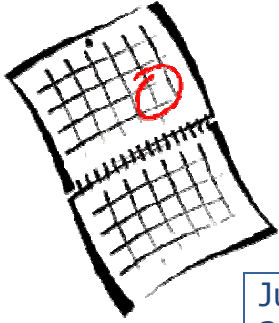
## **WHAT TO EXPECT AND WHEN**

Handbooks, Opening of School details, bus schedules and all other information for the new school year will be published at the end of July, sent by e-mail and placed on the website.

E-mail access is cancelled for leaving families on July 9 –please print any messages you wish to keep before then. Thanks.

**HAPPY CANADA DAY TO ALL!**

*Graham Baldwin*



## **CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS**

***June 28 – July 16***

June 28 – 30 Monday – Wednesday	Office Hours are now on Summer Schedule 9:00am – 3:00pm  GYP Exams continue Monday & Tuesday
July 1 Thursday	<b>School Closed for Canada Day</b>
July 2 Friday	Open Summer Hours 9:00am – 12:00pm
July 5 - 8 Monday – Thursday	Summer Hours Monday – Thursday 9:00am – 3:00pm
July 9 Friday	Summer Hours Friday – 9:00am – 12:00pm  *Zimbra Accounts will be closed for leaving families
July 12 - 15 Monday – Thursday	Summer Hours Monday – Thursday 9:00am – 3:00pm
July 16 Friday	Summer Hours Friday – 9:00am – 12:00pm

