

Good Neighbors

Shore Country Day School Stresses Community Service for All Students

At Shore Country Day School in Beverly, even the youngest students know the importance of community service.



In students of all ages, the school uses its Community Code to instill an awareness of the needs of the community and the importance of giving to others. By offering leadership opportunities outside the classroom, the school strives to make the students sensitive to the needs of others and aware of their own effectiveness and responsibility.

Starting in the lower grades, students learn the importance of giving back to the community by helping out within their classrooms and local communities.

By the end of fifth grade, each student will have spent a trimester as part of the Junior Senate, which chooses issues or organizations on which to focus. The Junior Senate has sent packages to soldiers in Iraq, is learning about homelessness and has raised funds for a preschool and daycare program for homeless children.

Another group of fifth graders has raised money for the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and will visit the MSPCA's Nevins Farm in Methuen this spring to learn more about helping abandoned animals. Fifth graders also handle the paper recycling collection in the lower school.

Working together, the Junior and Upper School Senates conducted a school-wide drive to benefit the Salvation Army.

In the Upper School, sixth graders handle the recycling and seventh graders spend a spring day at a local farm.

Eighth graders volunteer five afternoons during the school year at local organizations, including the Beverly Historical Society, Beverly Bootstraps Community Services, the Essex Shipbuilding Museum, the Food Project, North Shore ARC and the Ocean View Senior Center.

Ninth graders are considered school leaders who assist with Shore events. Each ninth grader also completes 10 hours of community service within his or her local community. Students have worked with a wide range of organizations, from animal shelters to food pantries. The ninth grade class also sends postcards to Beverly Hospital patients during the holidays.

Nonprofit schools and colleges in Massachusetts make significant and often creative contributions that benefit the social life and economic health of their communities. Students volunteer with community service agencies, school and city officials work together on projects, and schools and colleges offer the use of their facilities to local groups, to name a few.

To include the activities of your school or college in this column, please send them to the MANS&C communications specialist, Ann Hall, at annhall68@comcast.net.

Nonprofits under Fire in Minnesota

The Minnesota Supreme Court ruled recently that unless organizations provide services for free or a substantially reduced rate as a "substantial part of their operations," they are not exempt from paying property taxes in the state.

The ruling essentially creates a new definition of nonprofit organizations in Minnesota, according to a December, 2007 article in *The Nonprofit Quarterly*. The new definition is based on whether an organization makes a profit, rather than on the organization's stated charitable purpose.

In Minnesota, as in Massachusetts, nonprofit educational institutions are coming under increased scrutiny by local communities looking for new sources of revenue. Businesses and homeowners chafing under their tax rates also are accusing nonprofits of not paying their fair share.

To be designated a nonprofit in Massachusetts, organizations must meet certain requirements relating to their purpose and organizational structure. With some exceptions, the property they own is generally tax-exempt and free from local zoning control.

The article urges nonprofits to educate local officials, the courts and the public about the importance of property tax-exemption

for nonprofits. The public also should be educated about the importance of profitability for nonprofit organizations.

To read the entire article, go to <http://www.nonprofitquarterly.org/content/view/257/30/>.

Upcoming Meetings



The MANS&C executive board has scheduled the following meetings for the coming months:

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| March 27 | Wellesley College Club |
| April 17 | Wellesley College Club |
| May 12 | Annual Government Relations Meeting, Hampshire House, Boston |

No date has been set yet for the Annual Meeting, which will include the election of officers and board members.