



# THE FACULTY CORNER

FROM THE ANACAPA SCHOOL HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT CLASSES. . .

## **HISTORY AT ANACAPA**

For thirty years, I've had the teaching experience of a lifetime to guide our students in their government and history studies. Because students take history every year, I've had continual contact with all of the Anacapa students. This has given me tremendous insights into the academic growth and maturation of every student who has attended Anacapa. Quite honestly, teaching is the part of my job I enjoy the most.

## **AMERICAN SOCIETY I**

This Lower School class in American government and society focuses on the founding of the national government and the history of our federal government system. This has been a unique year in American Society, because more than ever, we've been able to apply current national debates to bring to life how government works. For example, we followed closely the debates regarding whether or not to renew the "Bush Era" tax cuts. By the time the students took their final, the compromises had been made. Their job on the final exam was to explain how it happened that the President and Congress, the Republicans and the Democrats, came up with a compromise bill before the end of 2010. To do this, the students needed to take into account the changes that resulted from the 2010 national election. They were also responsible for following the results of the 2010 Census and how the new laws regarding redistricting in California will change how our congressional and state district lines are drawn.

Currently, the big news in American Society is that we are following an interesting local court case between Melchiori Construction and Developer Don Hughes over the Chapala One Building. The case is being heard in the courtroom of an Anacapa alum mom, Judge Denise de Bellefeuille. We attended our first session recently, and we just had a VIP private tour of the Chapala One building by the developer's representative. The kids loved the fourth floor penthouse with views of the mountains! We'll be back in court to follow this case, which is a complex study in how the business of constructing commercial buildings works.

## **U.S. HISTORY II**

This Upper School class in American history goes from the post-Civil War era to 2011. This has been a unique year for U.S. History II, as I have been driven to keep a fast pace, so we have time in May to do justice to studying the post-9/11 years. This has required much discipline on my part not to dawdle too long on eras I usually love to embellish. In years past, I could have spent much more time on, for example, the Progressive Era, the Depression, or World War II. We've done these topics justice, but we haven't lingered. After all, what is really relevant right now in history has more to do with the huge changes to our world in the last ten years than with the 50's or 60's (as interesting as those decades were). Sometimes, to keep the pace going, we've done two chapters at a time. I'm glad to report that we are on target to have enough time to study the past decade and do some good critical thinking about where we've been and where we're heading.

~ Gordon Sichi