



# THE FACULTY CORNER

FROM ANACAPA SCHOOL . . .

## **The Importance of the Trips at Anacapa School from 1981 to 2014**

There is no doubt that Anacapa trips are some of the most positive long-term memories students take away from their Anacapa years. A comment often heard from our alumni is that they appreciate the fact that they went to places they would never have gone otherwise. Over the years, we've maintained the same annual scheduling for the Beginning-of-the-Year and End-of-the-Year Trips and returned to many of the same venues. We've also significantly advanced trips from the early days.

Trips in the first decades of our school history were primarily bonding and experiential in nature, emphasizing the personal-social component of the Anacapa philosophy. For example, the school climbed Half Dome in Yosemite nine different times, and the students certainly learned the importance of teamwork and coordination to meet the challenges involved with that epic hike.

As time has gone by, especially in the last ten years, trips have also become opportunities to engage in technical and critical thinking, the other two components of Anacapa's philosophy. For example, for the Santa Cruz Island trip last September, SBCC Professor of Geology Jeff Meyer came to Anacapa beforehand to prep students on the geologic history of the Channel Islands. Then, on the Island, students kayaked into sea caves and climbed to the top of the highest peak (Montanon) on the east side of Santa Cruz Island for first-hand experiences of island geology. They were also able to start their yearlong course in Marine Biology with a guided snorkeling activity along the Island's rocky shore. In addition, Ken Owen of Channel Islands Restoration led a guided walk explaining the ecology of native plants on the Channel Islands. These educational activities added to the personal/social experiences of camping and sharing time with classmates and teachers.

The majority of our trips have been camping trips, but occasionally we throw a city trip into the mix. For example, last school year students in the Upper School went to Boston to finish off their year of United States History I, and after their yearlong study of state and local government the Lower School went to Sacramento to gain first-hand knowledge of our State's representative government.

By popular demand, Anacapa is returning to San Francisco this month for our 2014-2015 End-of-the-Year Trip. In addition to the fun of bonding activities like the small groups City Walking tour and just hanging out in the very cool Fort Mason International Hostel, there will be plenty of educational opportunities. For example, after studying World War II this year, we will visit Richmond to see where so many of the ships that won the war were made, we'll tour the *Red Oak Memorial* Victory ship, and we'll meet the oldest National Park ranger in the United States, Betty Soskin, a true Rosie the Riveter, who worked in an all-black segregated unit. We recently mailed parents more detailed information about the San Francisco trip, and portions of that letter can also be found online at the following link to the school's Web site:

<http://www.anacapaschool.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/San-Francisco-2015-Trip-Information.pdf>

(over please)

Improving our students' experiences on trips is very important to our faculty, so we make sure we always review in our prep meetings the goals we've developed over the years for trips. These include the following:

1. Opportunities for student leadership
2. Personal/social development
3. Faculty bonding with students
4. Expanding students' geographical horizons
5. Student bonding
6. Learning independent camping and life skills
7. Spending time in nature
8. Personal challenge—pushing limits to accomplish something that students might not have thought they could do

We are convinced that experiential and academic learning really complement each other for extraordinary educational memories each time we complete a trip with these goals guiding our choices.

~ ~ **Gordon and Suzie Sichi**

**P.S.** We're very happy to announce that the destination for our Beginning-of-the-Year Trip for the 2015-2016 school year was recently finalized. In September, we will be returning to Big Sur to camp at Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park, which has an incredibly beautiful group campsite in the Redwoods. You can bet that, beforehand, the students will learn about Big Sur from specialists and, when we are there, we'll visit the Monterey Bay Aquarium and have plenty of bonding, hiking, and beach activities together!

For a full chronology of Anacapa School trips over the years, visit our school Web site at the following link:

<http://www.anacapaschool.org/experiential-learning/trips/>