



# ISC Views and Voices

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## Ode to Amanda

Here is an ode to an “artiste extraordinaire”  
Who happens to be our very own Madam Chair  
She recently wowed us with purple-blue hair  
And delights those around with the things that she shares.

She’s very well known for her wonderful laugh  
Highly infectious to students and staff  
You may also have seen her little art gallery  
Wonderful works for the public to see!

Her first weeks at school were any teen’s dream  
Taking the term “couch potato” to the extreme!  
But recent it was that I did hear her say,  
“This is getting boring – I need to *do* something today!”

So, as we predicted, boredom set in at last  
So off to the art room to make an arm cast  
It took a bit of help from her fine group of friends  
And with perseverance it worked in the end!

Next to the kitchen with Jessica to bake,  
Look what we have, a marble cheesecake!  
Then came the bubble wrap – warm and it floats  
Add a little duct tape and you’ve got a coat!  
Next came the Abraham Lincoln black hat  
And then she did rescue a wee baby cat!

But all these activities are not where it ends  
She sets a *great* example for all of her friends  
Such a fine leader, she does speak her mind  
She values our school and keeps others in line  
She’s growing, and learning important things to know  
Dynamic and bubbly, she goes with the flow.  
The “little ones” love her and she doesn’t mind  
To play or to read to them, she’ll take the time

And so, now you know her, if only a bit  
One last Amanda quote as this poem I quit:  
“Nicolette, don’t enroll any girls over 16,  
So let me remain the school’s dominant Queen!” ✎

by Nicolette Groeneveld



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### Spotlight on Greg

by Patrice Robson

Greg isn't overly talkative about his time at Indigo but I can share with you how happy he is -- both at school and generally. So often, when we're heading to school, he expresses how much he likes it, how grateful he is that he's not back at his old elementary.

In fact, he likes it so much that he insists on going in on his day 'off.' He's willing to ride the bus one hour each way, with two transfers, to spend time at Indigo every day of the week. For a kid who was creative last year in figuring out how to stay home from school, this is magical! ✎



# The Fruits of Frivolity

by Debra Alford, Parent and Staff member at Alpine Valley School in Colorado

Most young people, when given freedom, often engage in what most adults would label frivolous activities. What these adults don't realize, however, is that whatever activity a child chooses is often exactly what that uniquely developing person needs. Hidden within that "frivolous" activity are multiple strands of learning, self-discipline, purpose and self-discovery.

Try this: In the following scenario, insert whatever activity you wish, no matter how meaningless, childish, vacuous or random it may seem to you. Think of the most time-wasting, ridiculous pastime a child might engage in, or even an activity which may have some limited value, in your opinion. Then honestly examine that activity in this light, and I think you'll see what I mean.



**Anna-Marie and Kassie dissect a bird with Ric.**



**Boomer and Tyler play guitar.**

- ask for help from another student or adult, thereby expanding sources of information and inspiration
- discover some related subject or activity to explore
- push the boundaries of responsible behavior, at which point our judicial system will help him discover self-restraint and awareness of community norms
- be frustrated by her inability to read, or add, or write, or paint, and therefore incorporate this need into her activity, eventually finding a way to learn these things because they are necessary for her process
- concentrate on the activity, mining it for all it's worth to him, then suddenly apply that power of concentration to some other activity.



**Logan and Bretton love to skateboard.**



Let's consider what happens when a child chooses to engage intensely in an activity. Even before she begins, she's ahead: she has chosen for herself, and is not wasting energy resisting someone else's imperatives. She comes to it with joy and interest, and may even recruit some friends to join her. She's listening to her intuition, tuned in to her awareness of what she really wants, practicing communication skills and honing her powers of persuasion.

If the child does this activity for long periods of time or comes back to it repeatedly, skills are being practiced and mastered. And even if those skills seem useless to an adult, they undoubtedly have meaning and value to the child, as well as some "larger" value, such as the development of motor and verbal skills, perseverance, creativity, teamwork, or the experience of failure and the willingness to try again.

In the process of this activity, various results will develop. The child may:

- reach the limits of his interest and seek out something more interesting
- dig deeper with intense dedication, discovering additional resources within herself

Think of it: if you had the freedom to create anything in your life, what would you do? Your choices might not look like someone else's choices, but does that make them invalid? The truth is, in our country of liberty and opportunity, adults really are free, but often don't know what they want or how to achieve it. At AVS [and ISC!], kids are learning every day, all day – for years! – how to create their own lives.



**Sam enjoys baking, and Tyler does a lot of reading and artwork.**



# The Committed Sardines

Courtesy of [www.thecommittedsardine.net](http://www.thecommittedsardine.net)

A blue whale is the largest mammal on earth. An adult blue whale is the length of over three Greyhound buses, weighs more than a fully loaded 747 and has a heart the size of a Volkswagen Beetle. It is so large that it takes at least three minutes for it to make a turn of 180 degrees. Many people draw a strong parallel between blue whales and our schools, businesses and even communities. It just seems to take forever to change direction. But a school of sardines consisting of a greater mass than a blue whale can turn almost instantly. How

do they do it? Is it ESP? CB radio? The Internet?

If you take a careful look at a school of sardines, you'll see that the fish appear to be swimming in the same direction. In reality, there will be always be a small group of sardines swimming against the flow causing friction with the rest of the school. But when this dedicated group of 'committed sardines' reaches a critical mass of only 15 to 20 percent, they induce the rest of the school to suddenly turn and follow their leadership! Isn't that what happened with our attitudes towards

drinking and driving, and to our feelings about smoking?

They were changes of direction induced by a small group of people who were truly committed to change, to go against the flow, to cause discomfort, and to challenge the normal direction.

That's why we're Committed Sardines. ✈

*Hats off to ISC students, parents and staff for being Committed Sardines!*



## Sudbury Resourcefulness

Courtesy of Lisa Lyons – Fairhaven School, Maryland

I had a conversation this morning with a person who's always been skeptical of the Sudbury model. She said, "I have a perfect example of why your schools don't work: My granddaughter had to write a term paper for one of her first college classes, and she had NO IDEA how to do it! If she'd gone to a regular school, she would have had four years of training in writing."



**October resourcefulness:**

**Jessica needed a Halloween costume...**

**Amanda + idea + Saran Wrap...**

**Presto!**

"At our schools kids get training in problem solving and in being resourceful. What happened?"

"She had to go in to the professor and explain that she had never written a term paper, and he gave her a bunch of materials and some reference books, and she wrote it."

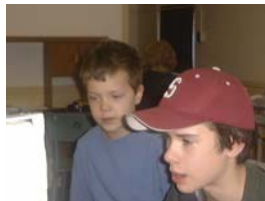
"How did she do?"

"She got a B+." ✈



**Handmade sword and shields by Johnny.**

Welcome to our new student, Boomer!



## We are looking for...

Our students have requested the following materials and equipment. If you happen to have this and would be willing to donate it, or can tell us where we could get it inexpensively, we'd be very grateful to hear from you!

- punching bag (heavy bag)
- hairdressing chair, salon "tools" and make-up
- video camera
- costumes
- television
- floor hockey equipment



## Volunteer Corner

Meet Mark (left) and Jason (right); Jason was recently voted in as Campus Volunteer, and Mark is preparing his presentation to the Campus Meeting so he can gain Volunteer status. Mark is the "Bobcat man" who facilitated the Bobcat experience for students last month. He is a tradesman who knows a little bit about everything! Jason knows Ric and Nicolette through his work with an associated Teen Group. He is an engineer by profession but is currently working with the Boys and Girls club of Edmonton. ✈



**A great quote by Victor when asked by Global TV if he'd ever go back to regular school: "NO!"** (with emphatic shaking of his head) "I want to stay here FOREVER!"

# Announcements



**Website:** Have you seen our new and improved website? It has been updated with photos of our students, and the home page has been rewritten. More “personalization” of the website is yet to happen: ie. writing about being a “One Rule School” etc.

**TV Interviews:** If you haven’t seen our three TV interviews—A-Channel, CFRN and Global—we have them on video at the school and will happily make them available to you to watch at the school.

## This month’s most memorable quote:

Kassie: “I never knew washing dishes was this much fun!”

## Sudbury quote:

“There is simply no comparison between a student who has spent several years in a Sudbury school and one who has gone to the best school somewhere else. The one who has spent [his/her] time in a Sudbury school will almost every time seem to have better judgment [and] to be more competent at problem-solving than the other. And, ironically, [Sudbury students] know how to work harder because they don’t consider work to be painful. They consider work to be what you do to get what you want. Or, to put it another way, they consider work to be play.”

*Mimsy Sadofsky—  
Sudbury Valley  
School*

## Don’t worry, Parents!

Your son/daughter is not the only one eating his/her lunch in the car on the way home! Students are just too busy during the day and often forget to eat!

## Guess who? (How well do you know ISC’s students?)

- 1) Who often starts his/her stories with, “Hear this..”
- 2) Who can tell you any number of facts about schooners?
- 3) Who is nicknamed Sai Baba?
- 4) Who always wants to know where Nathen is?
- 5) Who auditioned for the Hollywood movie “Peter Pan”?
- 6) Who is our monkey-man, super climber?
- 7) Who can do great imitations of characters in movies?
- 8) Whose pogo stick record is 120?
- 9) Who loves to make cinnamon rolls?
- 10) Who is our newest student?
- 11) Who recently read poetry to Nicolette and Corinne?
- 12) Who has the “blind” skateboard?
- 13) Whose goal is to win prizes at video games at Klondike Days this year?
- 14) Who painted his/her arm purple?
- 15) Who calls Volunteer Mark “the Enforcer”?
- 16) Who can sleep through just about anything (including Kassie and Anna-Marie screaming)?
- 17) Who was seen pogo sticking down stairs? (S/He was wearing a helmet!)
- 18) Who has drawn all kinds of pictures for Corinne?
- 19) Who is nicknamed Confucius?
- 20) Who wants to be a dog trainer?

20) Lael  
19) Johnny  
18) Kassie  
17) Logan  
16) Tyler

15) Dylan  
14) Jessica  
13) Greg  
12) Victor  
11) Amanda

10) Boomer  
9) Nathen  
8) Sam  
7) Kennedy  
6) Michael

5) Saige  
4) Yusuke  
3) Breton  
2) Alex  
1) Anna-Marie



## “Can We Keep Him?”

One of Kassie and Anna-Marie’s favorite activities is to go for walks with Ric around the Charles Camsell hospital. On November 25th, they found a kitten while on their walk. The kitten followed them back to the school and was brought in by Amanda. It was fed milk and played with in the library while all deliberated on what to do with it. Finally, we decided to call the Pound and were instructed to bring the kitten in. Ric did the drop off and two days later, we were able to see the kitten on the Pound’s website. We sure hope the owner of the kitten claims it—it was a beautiful animal and very friendly and cuddly!✂



*Prepared by Nicolette Groeneveld*