

What makes Sanibel special?

Story and Photos by Jonathan Crowell

There is a very special island off the southwest coast of Florida called Sanibel. What makes it so special? On the island Sanibel if you go to the top of an observation tower you could see the whole island. This is possible due in part to a law passed in the early 70's. In the 1940s most of Sanibel was divided into building lots but in 1974 a law was passed that said no building could stand over four stories tall. Residents protested overdevelopment by establishing the Sanibel Comprehensive Land Use Plan in 1974.



Sanibel is a great place to go if you like to look at wildlife, because 70% of the island is a nature preserve. Some of the animals in these preserves are the rosette spoonbill, the great egret, pelicans, dolphins, alligators, manatees, the great blue heron, the king heron, the tricolored heron, the night heron, raccoons, bald eagles, ospreys, and more! Sanibel also has tons of under-water animals, most of which live in shells. When the animals die or get eaten the shells wash up onto the shore where tourists find them and pick them up. Sanibel is well-known for this. Why drive when you can bike or walk?



Sanibel has tons of biking/walking trails that go practically all over the island. On the island there are at least 22 miles of paved bike paths. You can see many types of bikes like four-wheeled pedal-cars with canopies, tandems, adult trikes, etc.

So now you know why Sanibel is so special!



The Team

- Editor:
Téa Mottolèse
- Reporters:
Mairin Kelly
Jonathan Crowell
Téa Mottolèse
Grace Bossolini
- Chief Photographer:
Jonathan Crowell



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PENPALS *by Tea Mottolese*

Many children around the world have penpals. A young child in Russia could have a penpal who lives in Nebraska. Sending letters or "snail mail" is a very traditional way to communicate with other people. Instead of emails, everyone used to send letters.

Since the Upper Elementary kids at Woodland Hill Montessori started working on the Water Project, they've started communicating with the kids they're helping at the Sinai Primary School in Babati, Tanzania.

I have a penpal from Tanzania. Her name is Eliwaza Johnson. She is in "standard seven" or seventh grade. She writes very well, in both English and "Kiswahili" or Swahili. In Africa, having good handwriting is a sign of how intelligent you are. She seems to be very smart.

Grace Cavanagh, a fifth grader at Woodland Hill Montessori, has a penpal named Arafa who is ten years old. "I love communicating with her because it's cool to be able to communicate with someone across the world," she says. "The Water Project is an amazing experience especially for the younger children." Grace is Karen Cavanagh's daughter. Karen Cavanagh is the CEO of Sabre Technical Services. Karen came up with the idea of the Water Project.

Cindy Bishop, an Upper Elementary teacher, has two penpals from the Sinai Primary School, who are also teachers. Their names are Judy and Anna. Both are in their forties and are loving life. Cindy says her favorite African Proverb is "If you educate a boy, you educate an individual. If you educate a girl, you educate the whole community." I asked Cindy what she thought about the Water Project. She said "I think the water project is bringing two communities and cultures together and you learn from each other." I also asked her to describe the Water Project in one word. She said "Liquefying."

You could be asking yourself right now, "What is the Water Project?" The Water Project is a special project that Woodland Hill Montessori started in 2008, when Sabre Technical Services from Delmar NY, decided to build a new playground for our school. This wasn't just any playground; it was a special playground that has a water

tower and solar panels. On the playground there is a swing set, a jungle-gym, gyroscopes and a merry-go-round. When you think of a merry-go-round you think of a merry-go-round with horses but this is different. It's more like a blue round-about that turns a big wheel and then turns a smaller wheel. The small wheel turns sixty times around when the big wheel turns one time around. These two wheels are actually pumping water which goes through pipes to the water tower. The water tower has two solar panels on it. The solar panels collect the energy and use it for the basketball court lights and the flashing lights near the round-about.

Karen Cavanagh and her husband John Mason went to the Sinai Primary School in Tanzania. Sinai is Woodland Hill's sister school. In other words, we help each other. The last time that Karen, John, Woodland Hill teachers and Middle School kids visited Tanzania was in the summer of 2009. During the previous trips that John, Karen and members of the Woodland Hill staff helped install a hand-washing station. They have also been working on finding a spot for a well and a round-a-bout near the school because the nearest well is two miles.

That's about 8,400 steps with a five gallon bucket of fresh water on your shoulders. For the girls at the Sinai Primary School, this is not fun. Most girls get to carry the water because boys need to be more educated. It is not equal but that's how they choose to live. The girls go out and get water for the school about two or three times a day. When they return home from school, they must go and get water for their family. Therefore, it's a daily chore. The girls are less educated so it is unfair. Plus, the girls do most of the housework while men supply some food. This illustrates the lack of equality.

To make sure that the kids at the Sinai Primary School have fresh, clean water, four teachers, along with Karen Cavanagh and John Mason travelled to Tanzania to see the kids. The kids were overjoyed, as were the teachers. The kids go to the bathroom in pit latrines, don't have a hand-washing station and still walk two miles to get water. Sherrie Clune, Cindy Bishop, Andrew McClain, Sandy Blakeman, Karen, and John went with the kids to get

water from the well. They carried five-gallon buckets of water on their heads. They enjoyed their visit. They were in Tanzania through Thanksgiving. Their Thanksgiving dinner was made up of plantains, antelope and rice.

Also on their trip, they built a hand-washing station for the kids to use. The kids thought it was so cool that they could wash their hands. When it came time for our teachers to leave, everyone wanted to take pictures. The kids at the Sinai Primary School had never seen a camera before and they thought that it was such a cool gadget. They could actually see themselves on this little screen and then shut it off and turn it on again and the picture would still be saved onto the camera. The things that we use on a daily basis, are very special things in disadvantaged countries. The group agreed it was an amazing trip and they definitely wanted to go back.

Since then, Karen Cavanagh and John Mason have travelled to Tanzania frequently and have been mapping out a spot for a merry-go-round at the Sinai school. They want to build a playground for the kids at our sister school. Sabre Technical Services and Livingstone Tanzania Trust are working together to create a closer well so kids don't miss that much of their education and don't have to walk that far for fresh water.

In the summer of 2009, Andrew McClain, Sandy Blakeman, Sherrie Clune, Cindy Bishop, Karen Cavanagh, John Mason and some of the middle school kids from Woodland Hill Montessori returned to Babati. When the kids saw the Middle School children from our school, they were so happy. They finally could see kids from America. The students from WHMS also enjoyed playing with the Sinai Primary School children because many had the same interests. Netball, similar to Basketball, and Football, more commonly known in America as Soccer.

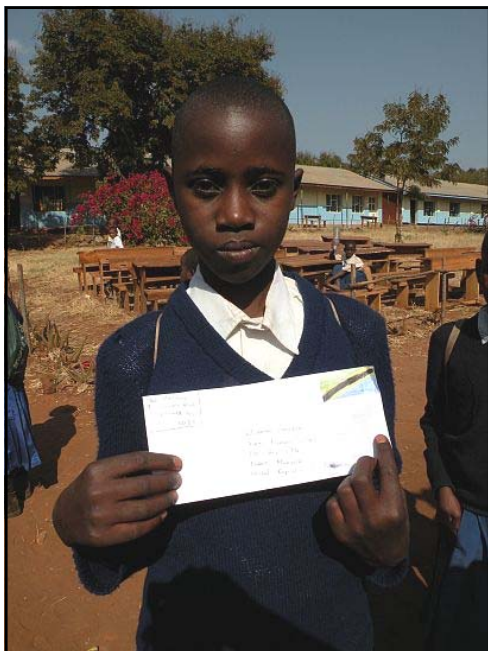
They had a great time. Each of the students, from WHMS and the Sinai Primary School, despite the language barriers they could relate to each other. It seems all children enjoy meeting new friends and learning how to relate to them. They took some more pictures and have amazing memories. The students at WHMS were very happy when they returned home.

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Currently, the Play for Power, Play for Peace, Play for Water project is still under way. The Water Club at our school has gone to many places to advertise our special project. If you look around, you can find us almost anywhere. We have been on T.V. several times and have been in local papers a number of times as well. The Water Club presents their multimedia presentation and their play at many different places. They've already been to the New York Legislature. We will continue the project until every country has fresh clean water.

In Africa 30,000 kids die everyday from hunger or water related sicknesses. We can beat water related sicknesses like Malaria. You can help by going to <http://www.livingstonetanzaniatrust.com/index.php?page=waterproject> and you can watch the video that Daniel Cavanagh, Karen's son, put together for the Movie Contest in Bethlehem. He won an award for it and we are all very proud. If you would like to donate please press the donate button on the bottom. For more information please visit <http://waterpowerpeace.org/>.

On Friday, March 19 2010, our Tanzania Friends came to our school. They had a great time.



Poetry Submissions

Thank you all for participating in the Poem Contest. These are all the poems sent in to the WHMS Times. We'll be starting with the Upper El and Middle School submissions.

Untitled

by Haylie Gernert-Dott

I'd really hoped we'd grown
As a nation, as a home.
We could be great they say,
But look at where we are today!
The rope of life is fraying
As of now we are still paying
For things we haven't done.
I hope someday we'll stand as one
If we're the future,
The world's ours to protest
We are the future
But will there be any left?
Help save the future
A good tomorrow is today.
Come be the future,
We should all have a say.
The children have to take
Upon their shoulders, another's mistake.
Don't abandon us this way,
We're here tomorrow and today.

When Winter Leaves and Spring Comes

By Aminah Praileau

When winter leaves the snow melts
And lots of flowers bloom.
The birds sing and the bells ring
Because spring is coming soon.



Waiting for Spring

By Tori Gernert-Dott

Winter is over, but it's not quite
spring.
The snow has melted, but the birds
don't sing!
The world is still all brown and gray,
waiting for green to brighten our
day.
Sitting at the window while my fin-
gers drum.
Waiting, waiting for Spring to come.

A Poem For Peace

by Rebecca Carlson-Lee

Peace is everything.
From a dance and a song,
To a stone in the pond,
And a bell that goes ding dong.
From a flying dove
To a couple in love.
A circle with three lines
To a boy that finds
All his friends importing PEACE!

