

Bulldog Pride

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Baker High School, Baker Technical Institute, Eagle Cap Innovative High School, Baker Middle School, South Baker Intermediate, Brooklyn Primary, Haines, Keating

www.baker5j.org

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Calendar

February

13: Chili dog fundraiser at South Baker Intermediate School, 4:30-7 p.m.
17: Presidents Day, no school
20: School board meets, 6 p.m., Baker City Hall
21: School day
28: Brooklyn Primary Taco Feed/Silent Auction/Raffle/Book Fair; 5-7 p.m. at Baker High School

March

19: School board meets, 6 p.m., Baker City Hall
23-27: Spring break

April

17-19: "Midsummer Night's Dream" presented by BHS drama club

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Exploring world history

Marco Valerio poured extra-virgin olive oil into the sauce pan, then added a pile of chopped onions, carrots, and garlic.

Soon students started blinking their eyes as the pungent aroma of cooking onions fills Valerio's second-floor classroom at Baker Middle School.

He and his mom, Allison Valerio, demonstrated the Italian way of making pasta sauce (called salsa rossa) during a period of Cultural Exploration of Italy.

"Today we'll make it from scratch. Tomorrow we'll eat it," he said.

As his mom prepared fresh herbs, Valerio concocted a dipping sauce of olive oil from his family's trees in Italy, plus balsamic vinegar, salt, and pepper.

This dip plus homemade breadsticks gave students something to munch while the sauce simmered.

"When I was little, this was my snack," Valerio said.

This class is one of seven new social studies offerings this year at BMS. The department alternates years for U.S. History and World History, and classes are mixed seventh- and eighth- graders.

This year for world history Valerio, fellow teacher Emily Mery, and Principal Skye Flanagan brainstormed new classes focused on specific time periods that met the state standards. In the past,



Students in Marco Valerio's Cultural Exploration of Italy class take a peek at the simmering pasta sauce made from scratch by Valerio, and his mom Allison, far left.

teachers had only a few days or a week to cover topics such as World War I.

A list of 20 options was whittled down after surveying students.

"This has been a four-year process," Valerio said.

This year's classes are Ancient Greece and Rome, Military History, World War I and II, Cultural Exploration of France and Italy, Mesopotamia and Ancient Egypt, Medieval Europe, and China and Japan.

Valerio and Mery divided the classes. All are semester long, with

the exception of Cultural Exploration of France and Italy. For that course, the two teachers combine to each teach a quarter — Mery's section is France, while Valerio teaches about Italy (she spent three weeks in France as a short exchange; his father was born and raised in Verona, Italy).

"It's been great," Mery said. "I find students are engaged, especially if they got their first choices."

The two teachers combined art, writing, cooking, and experiences while teaching their classes.

Valerio, for instance, upturned his desks one day and strung string to simulate trenches. Upon entering the class, students chose a number between 1 and 20. Throughout his lecture that day (swapping between his German and British helmets), Valerio rolled a 20-sided dice to decide which students were casualties of an artillery barrage. Any heads lifted above the trench were in danger of sniper fire.

"In the bulletin the next morning, I listed all the casualties," Valerio said.