

OIS' Bull Dog Bargain Mart Rakes It In

By Andrea A. Firth



OIS students at the Bargain Mart

Photo Ron Langer

The Bull Dog Bargain Mart held at Orinda Intermediate School last week could be characterized as a rummage sale for tweens or a middle school flea market, whatever you call it, the Mart was an unequivocal success. The sale, held over an extended lunch period, raised \$2,333 in one hour—a rate of return that many retailers would envy. “The Bargain Mart has been amazing from the get go,” notes OIS Associate Principal Ron Langer.

The first Bargain Mart was held four years ago in response to OIS students’ desire to do something to aid the victims of the 2004 Asian Tsunami. Langer was then teaching the Leadership Class that came up with the

idea of hosting an interschool sale of items donated by students. Kids were encouraged to clean out their bedrooms and garages and to donate their slightly used belongings for the sale. Music CDs, DVDs, toys, games, books, accessories, and sporting goods all came flowing in then quickly flowed out on sale day as the students took advantage of buying each others’ castoffs.

Each year the students research and choose a charity to receive the proceeds of the Bargain Mart. In 2006, the kids found another natural disaster to support with Hurricane Katrina, and the children of Darfur were the beneficiaries last year. “Character education is a big

part of our strategic focus and school climate,” states Langer. “The Bargain Mart aligns with our commitment to be compassionate and supportive.” The Mart monies this year will go to the Friendship Foundation established in honor of Keith Kelley who would have been a member of the current sixth grade class. It’s a “green” event as well. The items that do not get purchased find a home through a local organization for needy kids.

“This event provides the students with a real sense of accomplishment,” adds Langer, “It’s a bunch of kids, across all three grades, all having a good time, and supporting a good cause.”