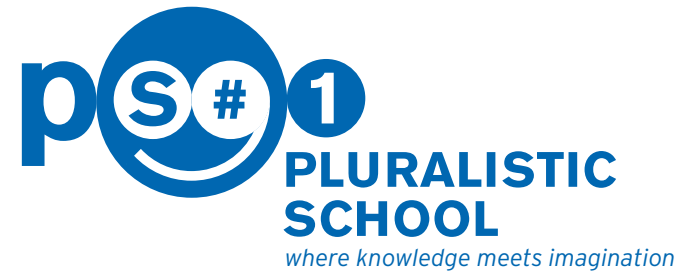


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the periscope  
Spring 2009

# PS#1 Fact

From 1986 to 1989 PS#1 had a number of hearing-impaired students at the school. It was a special collaboration between PS#1 and an organization called Tripod. One of the teachers in the classroom was fluent in sign language and many of our hearing students became great communicators in sign. See photo below.



P S N O I  
PATTY & LESLIE S  
CLASS  
1988-1989

## Save The Date!

- |      |       |                                      |
|------|-------|--------------------------------------|
| May  | 18-21 | Camping Trip                         |
|      | 25    | No School - Memorial Day             |
| June | 1-5   | Volunteer Appreciation Week          |
|      | 2     | Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast     |
|      | 3     | Annual Giving and Board Reception    |
|      | 4     | School Tour, 8:45-10:45 a.m.         |
|      | 4     | Parent/Staff Basketball Game, 2 p.m. |
|      | 5     | New Family Dinner, 6-8 p.m.          |
|      | 11    | Graduation, 4 p.m.                   |
|      | 12    | Moving Up Day, 10 a.m.               |



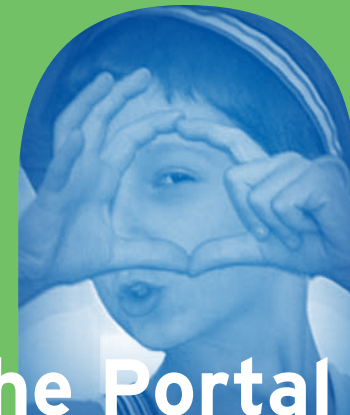
## Mystery Photo

Do you hold the key to identifying these PS#1 Alumni? Please email Deirdre at [deirdre@psone.org](mailto:deirdre@psone.org)



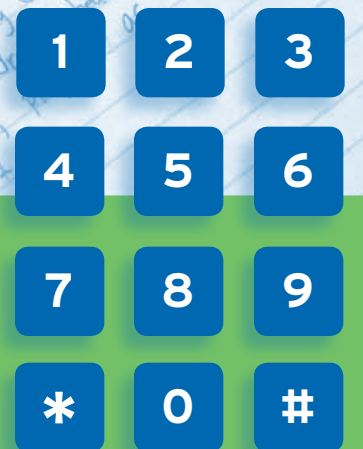
John Waldman was the first to name all four girls in our mystery photo, earning him an alumni t-shirt. From left to right they are: Betty Villalobos, Zoe Meredith, Christine Chun, and Chassity Griffith. We look forward to including an update of these wonderful girls in a future issue of Periscope.

Discover...



The Portal

[www.psone.org/portal](http://www.psone.org/portal)





## In This Issue:

The Periscope  
Volume 19, Number 2

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PS#1 Fact  
Save the Date

## Head's Column

**Achieving Utopia is a lifelong journey. I haven't been to the mountaintop, but I know we are getting closer. The PS#1 journey will complete its fourth decade in a few years. I still speak with prospective parents on school tours about the magic of PS#1; only the examples change over time. All of you reading this column have contributed to that magic - parents, students, staff and faculty, and Board members working together day in and day out.**



Here are some of the more recent puzzle pieces that have been added:

PS#1 just received a Sustainable Quality Award for Excellence in the Area of Social Responsibility. This is the second time we've received this award. The first was in 1999, when we completed construction of our seven classrooms and administration building. Now we received a Sustainable Quality Award from the City of Santa Monica and the Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce for Excellence in the Area of Stewardship of the Built Environment. Both awards are well deserved because they represent a huge amount of work on the part of many in our community. So many of you leave your mark on our institution. The ten of us who arrived in our hybrid vehicles when we received our recent award in March were there to represent all of us.

We were recognized for our far ranging and varied community service and service learning projects, Grandparents Memoir Club, Parent-In-Residence program, staff benefits and professional development programs, school membership in social justice organizations, the work of student Environmental Club and faculty Sustainability Committee, our progressive curriculum aimed at personal ownership of learning, our child care and community programs, and parent immersion in all aspects of the school program.

Evidence of PS#1's commitment to sustainable living is ever present in the architectural design, academic programs, school policies, and the mission to develop citizens who are confident, capable and connected. A green campus is evidenced in the construction materials and outdoor spaces, and seen in school-wide participation in recycling, reduction and reuse efforts. Daily routines, extracurricular activities and special events keep sustainability in the forefront of the community's conscience.

A socially responsible organization happens first because it is such an important value in our school. But it takes people - lots of people - to sustain it every day on our campus in how we care for each other, make our school and our world a better place, and value each other.

We have just completed another admissions cycle. We have a marvelous group of new incoming families. We also have all 22 students in our graduating class who will be attending middle schools of their choice. While the competition for limited places in independent middle schools apparently increases every year, our students continue to have many choices. Schools recognize the quality of PS#1 students and the education they receive - now more than ever.

We are excited about our new PS#1 portal which improves our ability to communicate with you—and you with us. It allows everyone access to PS#1's events and programs, in words and images. The portal is updated weekly. If you remember the code that got you in through the front gate of the school when you were here, then you can enter our portal through our website using that code any time you please. Otherwise, call Mindy at 310 394-1313 or e-mail her at [mindy@psone.org](mailto:mindy@psone.org) and she will help you sign in.

Also in March, SoCalPOCIS (Southern California People of Color in Independent Schools) sponsored a day with Angela Davis on social justice. More than 500 educators listened to her speak about issues surrounding social justice over the past four decades. But it was only the PS#1 contingent that consisted of adults from all of our constituencies who not only attended but then gathered outside on the lawn to share our reactions and perspectives afterwards. That group circle will stay with me, brought together by our PS#1 experience, but representing many walks of life, emerging from very different kinds of childhoods, engaging now in different stages of our lives. It was PS#1 at its best - cherishing the differences between us and realizing our common humanity. A passer-by from another school took one look at us and said, "I wish I were part of your school community."

## Letter to the Editor

We encourage our readers to send in their thoughts, opinions and ideas to [Deirdre@psone.org](mailto:Deirdre@psone.org)

Dear Editor,

When you're part of a minority group, chances are you're going to hear a few stereotypes thrown your way. It's par for the course, especially when you're an immigrant. As an English woman, I haven't had to endure racial slurs or threats of violence. For the most part, Americans are unfailingly hospitable and friendly. However, as I perused my Winter 2009 Periscope, and started to read about Dishiversity Day, I saw my country described as "proper" and my heart sank. I've heard this adjective used many times in the past twenty-four years. For example, "Oh you English are SO proper!" delivered with a laugh and sometimes a playful tap on the arm is said to show that there is no harm meant. "Proper" is meant as a compliment, but it doesn't feel like one. The "proper" Brit is simply a perception held by many Americans. It's a stereotype in the same way one would say the 'chic' French, the 'polite' Japanese, and the 'efficient' Germans.

I want to bring awareness to this issue knowing that writing about diversity isn't easy. Perhaps I have in turn offended someone with this letter, in which case, being a proper Brit, I apologize. But, while it's not easy to write (or talk) about diversity issues, it's always worth the effort.

-Louise Everett (half of L/H teaching team in the Bridge Cluster)



## Grandparents and Special Friends Day

# Traditions, Old...

Grandparents and Special Friends Day was GRAND AND SPECIAL. Memories were produced that will last forever. We marked the first year anniversary of the Memoir Club and a number of new grandparents decided to join in. It was a celebration of the deep respect and love that exists for our students.



## Dear PS#1

# and New

Dear PS#1,

After 7 years of leaving the reading of the Weekly Notice at PS#1 to my wife, I have discovered The PS#1 Portal! It contains the weekly notice, letters from the teachers, previous issues of the Periscope and Parent POP, and best of all, pictures of my son and his classmates. I can also log into other classrooms to see pictures of what they are doing. The link for the portal comes directly to my email and connecting couldn't be easier. I feel more involved in his daily PS#1 experience and now know what to ask about since my son doesn't always tell me all that's going on at school. I can't believe I went so many years missing out on this information. This week I felt like I went to The House of Blues as I viewed pictures of their recent field trip.

Sincerely,  
Austin Fite  
(Father of alum Lexi 2006 and grad Aidan 2009)

Enter the **PORTAL!**

[www.psone.org/portal](http://www.psone.org/portal)

## Fund-A-Need

Thanks to the generous support of our parents at last year's auction, we have been able to videotape and stream video of our circle times on our portal. We have purchased new video and sound and lighting equipment and created the PS#1 portal. This has given opportunities to our families who live far from Santa Monica to see our students in action and for those who were there in person to have their memories captured forever. Go to [www.psone.org/portal](http://www.psone.org/portal) and sign in with the same code you use to open the blue gate. Need assistance? E-mail [Mindy@psone.org](mailto:Mindy@psone.org)

## Open House

A rousing band of alumni came to Open House on April 2, some to revisit happy days, some to show new families around the school. Among those touring the classrooms with new families were: Ariel, Jacob and Isaac Fenster, Oliver Curry and his mom, Emanuela Boni, Elijah Cuffee, Louly Maya, and alumna parent Sharon Wertheimer. Seen happily roaming the halls were Archer Brosh, Benny Fillo, Emma Brown, Leslie and Robin Dinkin, Jonah Eatman, Madison Moss, Maddy Stedman, Emma Laurent, and David Gasster. We love having our alums enrich the campus.

## Zero Waste Lunch

This year the Sustainability Committee has generated many activities to raise the awareness of caring for our planet by using fewer resources. On Earth Day, April 22, 2009 PS#1 students and staff brought zero waste lunches to school.

## Itty Bitty Art Sale

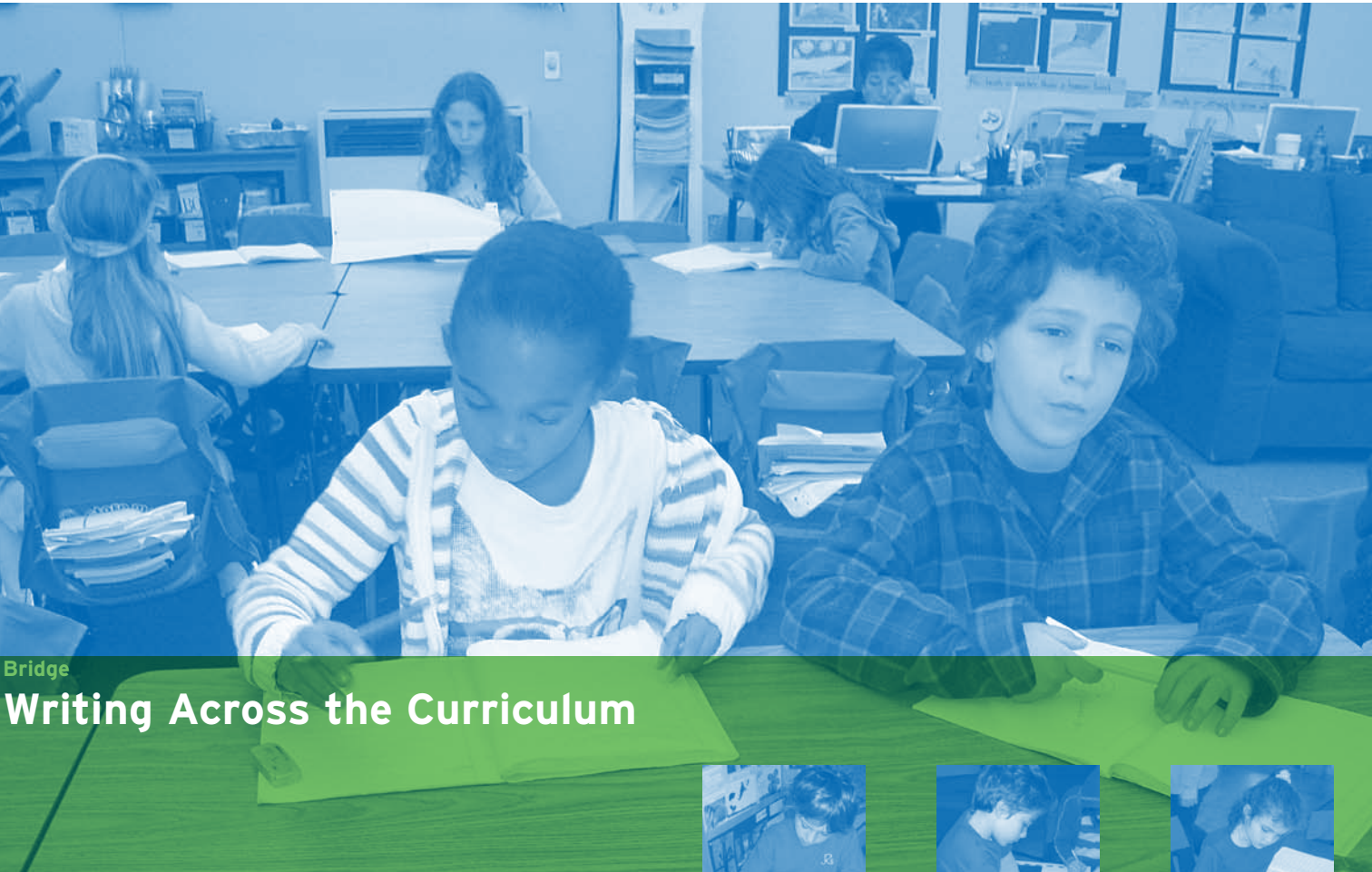
The Itty Bitty Art Sale was PS#1's first annual event at the Lois Lambert Functional Art Gallery at Bergamot Station. Hundreds of people arrived to vie for the opportunity to buy a piece of original art for only thirty five dollars. Live music, drinks, snacks and a fabulous ambience contributed to a wonderful gathering of present PS#1 families, friends and alumni. After such a great event, the good news is next year we are doing it again. Check out the website at [IttyBittyArt.org](http://IttyBittyArt.org).





...sessions  
...writers  
...shop children  
...with labels  
...boards which  
...in the hands  
...stored in  
...that are  
...work  
...boxes.  
...Chair” and  
...Parties”  
...opportunities for  
...to celebrate  
...writing.

Youngers  
**Transitioning**



Bridge  
**Writing Across the Curriculum**



# Curriculum Connections

Writing in the Younger's addresses a wide range of learning abilities. Early writing begins in the form of illustrations representing ideas. Children practice listening for sounds and recording those they hear. As new sounds are learned and recognized, children begin to transition from developmental to conventional forms of writing. Various writing genres are introduced over the course of the school year supporting writing in the real world: lists, letters, personal narratives, poetry, how-to... and non-fiction writing are practiced.



One of the key components in our writing curriculum is the collaborative approach. Writing has often been described as a lonely pursuit, but not in our classrooms! Every student has a reading/writing partner – someone with whom to share ideas, frustrations, achievements and feedback. The Bridge cluster is fortunate to have four teachers who have been trained in the Columbia Teachers' College approach to writing instruction, so we also get to collaborate on curriculum planning and implementation. We all believe it's important to celebrate writing achievement and both classes have had publishing parties to showcase the hard-earned talents of our students. Writers' Workshop focuses on specific genres – memoir, poetry, non-fiction. Often, we use writing to tie together a series of lessons so that we can integrate across different subjects. For example, we brainstormed a list of community

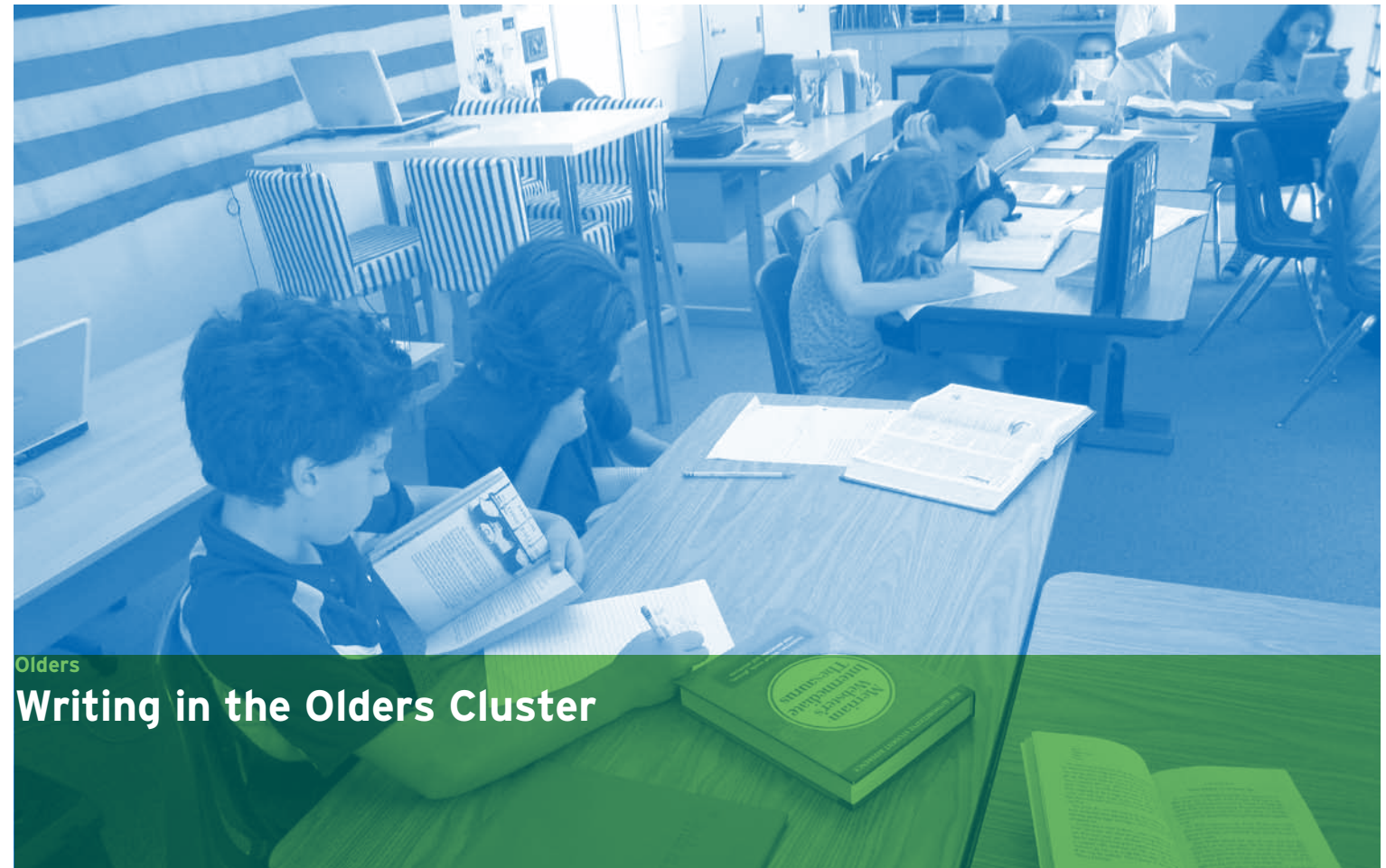
buildings and had each student choose one to design and build for a miniature block city. The children sketched their buildings and wrote about them in their science and social studies journals. This work was then edited and re-written for a wall display designed to complement the finished city. The students also worked on an integrated science, art, and literature project. The children built robots out of recycled materials, visited a robot exhibition at The Art House, read robot stories and wrote their own fiction picture books about their robots. Another example is a non-fiction reading and writing project. Children studied the components of non-fiction, researched a topic that interested them, and wrote their own nonfiction or combination fiction/nonfiction story.







Middles  
**Middles Cluster Steps Back in Time!**



Olders  
**Writing in the Olders Cluster**

# Curriculum Connections

Do you know the name and history of the first and only female to start a colony? What about details on the childhood of a well-known Colonial astronomer? How about information about the first job of the person who invented swim fins? If not, you should stop by our Middles classrooms and take a look at our biography research projects.

Using plaster, yarn, good old-fashioned research and a lot of inspiration, the Middles Cluster recently experienced time travel – well, in a manner of sorts! Our social studies project spanned the disciplines of writing, research, social studies, math and art. Our cluster worked diligently to produce reports and puppets for notable women and men of the Colonial period.

We began our study with a "meet and greet," where kids randomly chose brief biographies of some well-known people from the time period. Next, we used our imagination to get into character and we became our person of study. This activity gave us the opportunity to get to know

our "new/old" classmates as we worked together gathering information and filling out a sheet where we looked for specific information on various people in order to help us choose a person of interest to research. For the biography portion, we did an enormous amount of research by information hunting from three different sources (encyclopedia, Internet and library books). Afterward, we organized all of our research into a report that included a hook, opening and closing paragraph. Finally, we prepared costumes or visual aids and an oral presentation, so that we could share detailed information about our Colonial people with our classmates. The end result – a complete biography that included a bibliography, timeline, presentation, and a puppet!

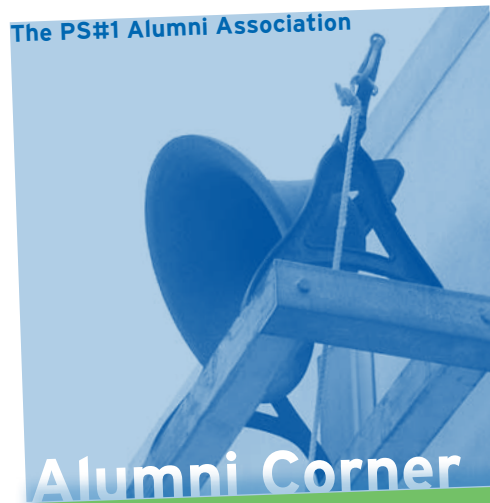
Come by the Middles Cluster to "shake hands" and read more about the fascinating lives of some Colonial notables!



Be it following the inspiration of the muse, employing powers of persuasion, or the simple catharsis of turning thought and emotion into word, the students in the Olders cluster are extraordinary writers. The gift of an eighth classroom has meant two fifth-sixth grade equivalent groups writing under the watchful eye of four teachers. The result has been such diverse pieces as campaign speeches, persuasive and comparative essays, the self-publication of long-term novellas, editorials, poetry and poetry critiques, and marrying word to image in personal textbooks. The scaffolding for such an extensive program is grammar instruction that moves well beyond subject and predicate into all parts of speech and the variety of phrases as well as particular emphasis on spelling, vocabulary building and language mechanics. In a time when the complexities of human expression are reduced to text message abbreviations and electronic emoticons, the oldest students on our campus emerge as dedicated practitioners of written language.







The PS#1 Alumni Association

## Alumni Corner

PS#1 was created to feel more like a family than a school, so it is no surprise that it spawned another family 17 years ago: our Book Club.

Denise Mahdesian Rabinovitch discussed the idea of a book club with other first grade parents such as Connie Hyman, and what was to become an institution was born. Many of our kids were 7, 8 or 9 with younger siblings at home.

The Book Club provided a much-needed respite for those of us hungry for engaging, adult conversation. Reading a book every month without fail for all these years has meant that we have read over 200 books together! Occasionally, we even serve book-related food. I recently served Cuban food when we read "Telex From Cuba," by Rachel Kushner. Like every family, we don't always agree. However, our best discussions about the merits of the books are when we don't agree.

We used to joke that if there were a mini crisis brewing at PS#1, Joel would have loved to be a fly on the wall at our book club to find out which way the wind was blowing, because surely we knew the answer. Our members earned the respect to have their opinions considered. Three of our members chaired or co-chaired the

## PS#1 BOOK CLUB



l to r: Donnie Krenzien, Martha Groszewski, Denise Mahdesian, Carol Ames, Bella Flaherty

## No Wonder We Feel Like Sisters!



l to r: Randy Rutkin, Connie Hyman, Madeline Schwarzman, Carol Nevitt

by Bella Flaherty

### Here is what fifteen of our kids have been up to since their PS#1 days:

#### Charlotte Perebinosoff, 1989-96

Charlotte graduated Summa Cum Laude from UC Irvine majoring in dance. She is an instructor and program coordinator for California Dance Institute, a non-profit affiliate of the National Dance Institute. CDI, founded by Jacques d'Amboise, teaches dance in elementary schools and camps.

#### Michael Feldman, 1991-96

After graduating from Sarah Lawrence in 2006, Michael lived in New York City, working as a tour guide at Madison Square Garden. He's back in Santa Monica this year, working at Santa Monica College Disabled Student Center as a proctor and a note taker for students.

#### Brianna Dollinger, 1992-97

Brianna graduated from Cornell University in 2007 with a degree in Government and International Relations. She competed on the policy debate team, served the student body in a judicial function on the Peer Review Board, briefly tried to play polo, learned about wines and wine production at the Hotel School, endured below freezing temperatures, high speed winds, and incomparable snow fall, and discovered her interest in foreign affairs and film.

She currently lives in Manhattan in a tiny studio in the West Village, where she often works long hours as a Business Analyst at a small management consulting firm. Brianna regularly travels for work to such varied cities as Charlotte, NC and Madrid, Spain, but still tries to make it back to Los Angeles as often as possible to see her family. From PS#1 she drew a love of learning which has inspired her as she continues to explore new industries in her career. She has never lost her love of poetry and writing inspired by Barbara and her Friday poetry classes.

"If there are any current PS#1 students (or alumni) who have any interest in either Harvard-Westlake (the high school I went to after PS#1), or Cornell, feel free to pass my contact information along to them

PS#1 Auction during their tenures at PS#1 (Connie Hyman, Martha Groszewski and Madeline Schwarzman).

We have had our joys (all those great college acceptances), and also our sorrows, such as the death of the wonderful and brilliant John Liebeskind, husband of Julia and father of Ben. He died not long after Ben graduated from PS#1 in 1997.

So much time has quickly passed, all the more evident by looking at our kids now and remembering their early poems and sticky fingers. We see photos of ourselves and try to remember being younger, like we try to remember where we just put our keys. We are reminded, even if we sometimes take our good fortune for granted, just how lucky we are when someone we meet wistfully says, "You've been in a book club for all that time?" No wonder we feel like sisters!

- Bella Flaherty

Other essential members of the club not mentioned in the article are: Donna Krenzien, Carol Nevitt, Randy Rutkin, Carol Ames, and Gilda Feldman.

as I would be happy to help in any way I can, especially if they have any career questions. I really believe my education at PS#1 helped set me up to take advantage of all the future opportunities I was exposed to later on."

#### Max Lebowitz, 1992-99

An avid winter sports fan, Max graduated from Colorado University at Boulder in 2007. Since graduation he has worked in Morocco, in Vail for a ski season, and traveled in South America. He's returned to Los Angeles after directing a hockey tournament in Canada, and is working on his next excellent adventure.

#### Bella Lebowitz, 1992-99

In her last year at Loyola Marymount University, Bella is majoring in history and Jewish Studies. She's a hostess at the Pearl Dragon in the Palisades.

#### Aaron Hyman, 1990-95

Aaron graduated Phi Beta Kappa UC Berkeley in 2008 as valedictorian of the Art History Department. He is applying to graduate schools and loves living in the Bay Area. He cooked professionally in his last three years at Berkeley and is taking a third foreign language.

#### David Hyman, 1992-95

David is in his last year at Northwestern as a Costume Design major in the theater department. He was selected as one of 15 undergraduates and grad students to present his portfolio in The Young Designer's Forum at the USITT national conference and is applying for grad school in costume design.

#### Evan Krenzien, 1991-97

Evan graduated from Brentwood School and attended University of Virginia in Charlottesville, VA. He pursued a double major, Economics and Environmental Planning and Design, and minored in Architecture. He graduated in 2008. Evan recently wrote to us to say: "Yes I am back in LA working as an Associate in Real Estate development for Caruso Affiliated, developers of The Grove. I recently moved into my own apartment nearby."

#### Ben Liebeskind, (1992-97)

Ben graduated from St. John's College in May. He lives in Portland and will be attending grad school for a PhD in evolutionary biology at University of Texas at Austin. He writes:

"I came into my interest in evolutionary biology sideways. I don't suppose 'free-associated his way into UT' would look good in print. When I was finishing St. John's and writing my senior thesis on Michael Faraday and his electromagnetic theory, we were studying biology in our lab class. Those together sparked my interest in bioelectricity and I thought maybe I should look into biophysics. It turned out that I would need a lot more physics to do that, and anyway most biophysics labs are very focused on one phenomenon. But, I found a guy who was studying electric fish at UT Austin, and his lab employs biophysics and evolutionary techniques while using the fish for insight into bigger questions. Evolution is a neat field because it studies itself, if you know what I mean. So I decided, what the heck, and applied. I am not in touch with any other PS#1 graduates, I'm afraid, although I do sometimes hear updates through my mom. I hope you and Joel and PS#1 are doing great. I'm sure the campus is completely unrecognizable to me at this point!"

#### Naomi Nevitt, 1990-97

After PS#1, Naomi went to Brentwood School. Naomi graduated from Barnard College, the women's college of Columbia University, in 2007 with a major in Art History. She tells us: "I am currently a fashion blogger for Teen Vogue. I write and edit stories about everything from up-and-coming fashion designers to how to dress like Miley Cyrus or the cast of High School Musical to how to 'green' your wardrobe. I live in NYC's Chinatown with my boyfriend Erik Lindman and our cat Freja."

#### Anna Rabinovitch, 1991-97

Anna Rabinovitch graduated magna cum laude from Wesleyan University in 2008, and is living in New York City. She works as a production assistant on "Did You Hear

For the whole story about the book club go to [www.pstone.org/portal](http://www.pstone.org/portal) sign in and look under alumni.

About the Morgans?" a new film starring Hugh Grant and Sarah Jessica Parker shooting in New Mexico this Spring.

#### Nick Rabinovitch, (1994-00)

Nick is a Junior at the USC Annenberg School which specializes in communications and journalism. He is currently studying in London and has written articles for City Search LA and Big Shot magazine;

#### Kate Rutkin, 1993-97

Kate graduated from USC in 2007. She received her special education credential and now teaches both gifted and learning disabled elementary students in Santa Barbara.

#### Elana Blank Schwarzman, (1989-96)

Elana, a Los Angeles actress and graduate of USC, is the owner of Popstar Kettle Corn, a Kettle Corn manufacturing and distributing company that sells several flavors of this very popular snack to a long list of celebrity customers and weekly popcorn addicts. Popstar has been featured in the film "Surfer Dude" as well as on the TV show "Dirt". Her company can service parties and businesses and has a website, <http://www.popstarkettlecorn.com>, where orders can be taken.

#### Alexa Schwarzman, 1992-99

Alexa will graduate from Hamilton College in May as a philosophy major. In addition to her studies, she has been an emergency medical technician for the past four years, and plans to move to Manhattan to contemplate her next career move.

We try to include as many Alumni updates as space allows. If you were not included in this column, and you sent us an update, please look for your feature in an upcoming issue. We love hearing your news!