

Spring 2011

Sustainability

the periscOpe



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Printed on recycled paper

We encourage our readers to send in their thoughts, opinions and ideas to Deirdre@psone.org



March 17, 2011, the day of Joel's 64th birthday, was also the day of A Very Special PS#1 Event. Parents, students and alumni gathered at 8:30am and to a dusting of bubbles looked skyward where they saw Joel and John on the roof of the library. Joel announced, the exciting news—he would never be on that roof again!! We were getting a new MPR, library, music and art room, etc! Our Master Site Plan to create One Unified Campus was about to become a reality. The crowds cheered and two hours later, the construction workers arrived...

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## Head's Column

**PS#1 has been awarded the Sustainable Quality Award Grand Prize for 2011 by the City of Santa Monica, the Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce, and Sustainable Works. The award recognizes excellence in three areas - stewardship of the natural environment, economic development, and social responsibility.**

**The following is the acceptance speech Joel gave in front of 300 community leaders at an award luncheon on Wednesday, April 27, 2011. Our Periscope Sustainability issue could not have been better timed.**

# Use Less; Do More!

We are honored to receive the Grand Prize. I am Joel Pelcyger, the co-founder and still Head of PS#1 Elementary School. We started our school in Santa Monica in 1971, forty years ago, and we have been here ever since. We don't call a lot of attention to ourselves; that makes this award even more meaningful.

This is the third time in twelve years we have been honored with a Sustainable Quality Award from this collaboration between the City of Santa Monica, the Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce, and Sustainable Works. It is our first Grand Prize. It's not just about the campus we've built; not just the paper we save or the low waste lunches we eat; not just the Green products we use; not just the values we teach; not just the example we set; not just the conscientious students and citizens we raise - it is about all of these things taken together that we feel qualified us for this award.

There's no glitz at PS#1. It's wonderful to see how things have changed over the years - for a long time, parents wouldn't enroll their children in our school because there wasn't enough conspicuous consumption visible upon entering our campus - now families choose to enroll and we are the first choice of many BECAUSE we are not ostentatious; for many years, we even had the word unpretentious in our Mission Statement; do the simple things well, have a caring and nurturing environment for students, staff, and parents, and make and sustain a place that EVERYONE wants to come to every single day; it's just plain hard work and doing right by young people. One small example - I have so many I could describe - there are two parts to our annual Thanksgiving celebration. It begins with representatives from *Step Up on Second* coming to PS#1 to thank all of the children for working together to cook and prepare a meal they can serve to about 150 people. It ends with a stirring rendition from all students, staff, and parents of the song, 'Tis A Gift To be Simple.' That's PS#1 in a nutshell.

*Sustainable Works* did a sustainability audit for us several years ago that put us on the right track. Our largest faculty committee is the Sustainability Committee. A big part of this award goes for stewardship. You can't be a good steward unless you feel good about yourself - be actively engaged in your life and in your school; and feel empowered in your learning, in your relationships, and in your community. Sustainability is a full time job. We teach eight core values in our social studies program - stewardship, identity, citizenship, social justice, pluralism, environmental awareness, community awareness, and global awareness. That's the PS#1 way. I'd like to ask all of the



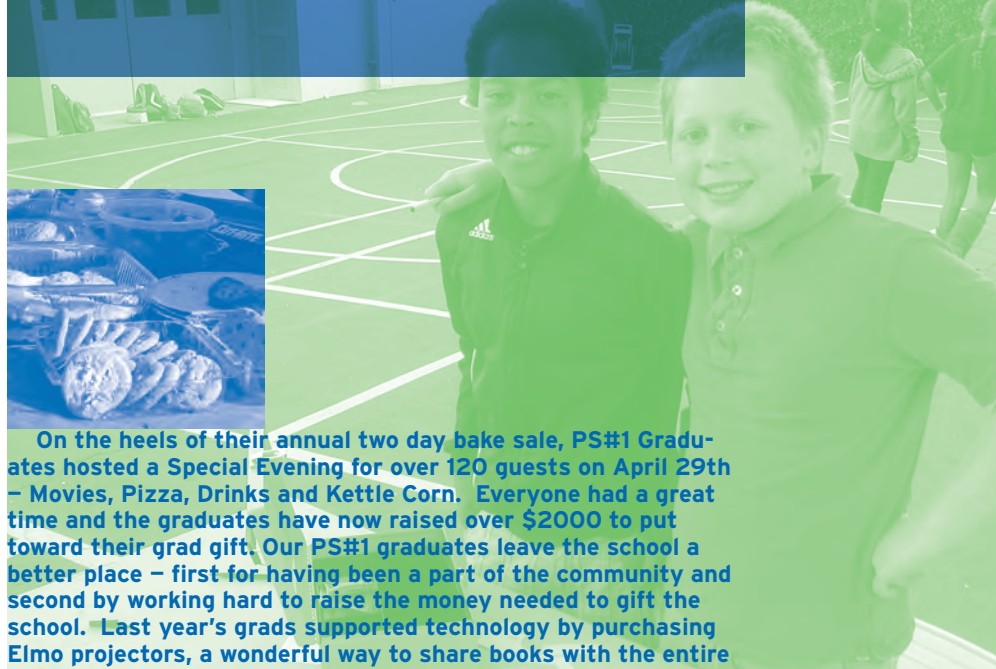
PS#1 teachers in attendance at this luncheon to stand and accept your applause. (Editor's Note: there were 17 of us at the luncheon - parents, administrators, and staff.) It's who they are, and what they do, and what they teach our children that makes us truly deserving of this award. (By the way, for those of you wondering how we can have nine teachers here for a few hours at this luncheon while your own kids are at school, it is because we have two lead teachers in every one of our classrooms.)

The 'P' in PS#1 stands for Pluralistic - it means we emphasize diversity; it means we give more of our tuition in the form of Financial Aid than just about any other school in our 200 member California Association of Independent Schools; it means we have a large percentage of people of color in our student body and on our staff; it means it's not just about how smart you, but how you are smart. All kids should learn about people different from themselves when they go to school. It means we all work together every day - out of many, one. We take issues of social responsibility and social justice seriously... every single day.

PS#1 - we've been on Euclid Street between Broadway and Santa Monica Boulevard since 1976. And many of you are saying to yourselves - "I know that area and I've never seen a school there." - am I right? Well getting this award helps put us on the map. And so does the fact that we are embarking on a building project all along Broadway that will be complete a year from now. We are building a multi-purpose activity center and conference room to serve our families and also to host more community events.

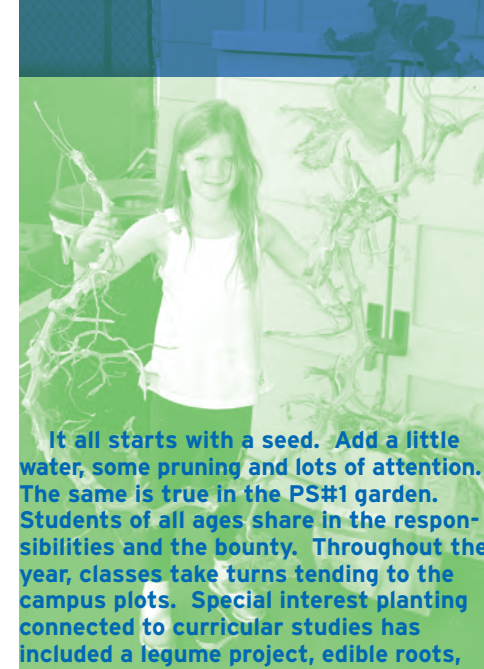
Make a difference. Give back to your community. Use less and do more. Let me leave you with a thought. Three years ago, we got our 2nd Sustainable Quality Award. The Grand Prize winner that year was *Taxi! Taxi!* We need to take care of our own. Ever since that luncheon, the only cabs I take are *Taxi! Taxi!* cabs. I humbly suggest we continue that tradition today. We share the Grand Prize Award today with *LACarGUY*. I'd like to see a show of hands in the audience of all those people who believe, like me, that a great way of demonstrating shared responsibility for our environment and our local community would be for the number one hybrid car dealership in the world to donate a hybrid car for our upcoming fundraising Auction which raises money for financial aid. Give to those who stand up for what you stand for. That gets my vote. (Editor's note: This part of the speech was shared with *LACarGUY* in advance.) Thanks for the award; thanks for all you do to help make for a sustainable planet; and thanks for listening.

## Grad Bake Sale/Movie Night



On the heels of their annual two day bake sale, PS#1 Graduates hosted a Special Evening for over 120 guests on April 29th – Movies, Pizza, Drinks and Kettle Corn. Everyone had a great time and the graduates have now raised over \$2000 to put toward their grad gift. Our PS#1 graduates leave the school a better place – first for having been a part of the community and second by working hard to raise the money needed to gift the school. Last year's grads supported technology by purchasing Elmo projectors, a wonderful way to share books with the entire class or cluster. We look forward to hearing what this year's graduates have in mind.

## Growing Day by Day



It all starts with a seed. Add a little water, some pruning and lots of attention. The same is true in the PS#1 garden. Students of all ages share in the responsibilities and the bounty. Throughout the year, classes take turns tending to the campus plots. Special interest planting connected to curricular studies has included a legume project, edible roots, and a replica of WWII Victory Gardens.

## Mary Cowhey Author Visit

Youngers teacher Jennine Rodriguez reflects on Mary's visit: On April 28-29th PS#1 hosted Mary Cowhey, author of the acclaimed book, "Black Ants and Buddhists: Thinking Critically and Teaching Differently in the Primary Grades." As Early Childhood representative to the CAIS (California Association of Independent Schools) Southern Regional division, it was my privilege to organize and host this workshop at PS#1. I chose a topic that took me back to my own roots of teaching social justice.

In preparation for her visit our faculty read and reflected on her book. Mary's work encourages teachers to be equal learners in the classroom, careful listeners, and purveyors of social responsibility and everyday activism. She outlines how the academic subjects not only can be integrated with long term, investigative projects but how learning basic skills makes more sense through real-world experiences and meaningful work for peace.

Her ideology is very much in sync with that of PS#1 teachers. PS#1 also joined with three other local independent schools, Brentwood, Westland and Children's Community School, at a joint faculty meeting and a parent education evening. Parents had the opportunity to share their own memories and thoughts about class distinctions and began to scratch the surface of how we can all do more for our communities and world.

Mary's was a two-day visit packed with inspiration, connections and a new consciousness for all.



# Traditions, New...

## Santa Monica Festival

PS#1, recent winner of the Grand Prize Sustainable Quality Award from the City of Santa Monica, was invited to participate in the Environmental section of the Santa Monica Festival at Clover Park on May 7th. The seven and eight year olds in Louise, Jen and Gina's class lent us four posters from their study of water and many of our oldest students demonstrated and educated with their unique science projects. Many visitors, eager to learn, stopped by the PS#1 booth. Children were also able to make a spinning top out of recycled materials with the help of our creative aftercare staff. It was a joyous day!



## PS#1 Entertains Our Community

Students, teachers and parents from The Growing Place, First United Methodist, and Our World Preschools visited PS#1 to attend a performance of "Little Red Riding Hood" by AB's class. What big ears, eyes, and smiles they had as they watched, enthralled by the delightful 7-9 year old cast.



# and Old...

## Multigenerations Enhance PS#1



Traci Saruwatari, one of our Youngers teachers, arranged for Nisei writers to visit campus and share their experiences of being interned during World War II with our middles students who are studying that era.

Grandparents who attend PS#1's Memoir Club were invited to come into the Middles classrooms and share their stories from World War II, as well. They enriched the curriculum and were honored to be invited.

The PS#1 campus was filled with laughter and love on February 11th as our students hosted Grandparent's/Special Friends Day. Our guests came from as far away as England to participate in the festivities.



# Curriculum Connections



HL self-initiated a campus improvement project as gigantic as the mound of Lost 'n' Found! Determined that they could make a difference by returning lost items to the rightful owners, the kids drew upon their new math skills to develop a campaign that measured the pile at the onset, coordinated a sophisticated redistribution process, and conducted a comparative study as analysis of their success.

TMS, HL and JB  
**Youngers**



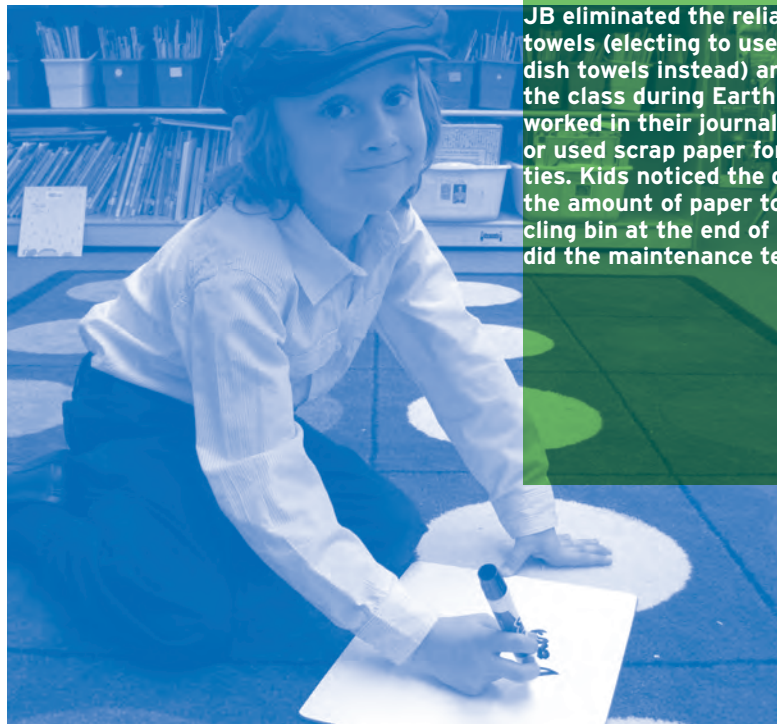
TMS knows that "saving the Earth" begins at home. Using a dollhouse, kids designed interior and exterior "green" elements. There were solar panels for the roof, a garden, and recycling bins. They were even able to turn off the lights using candles instead.



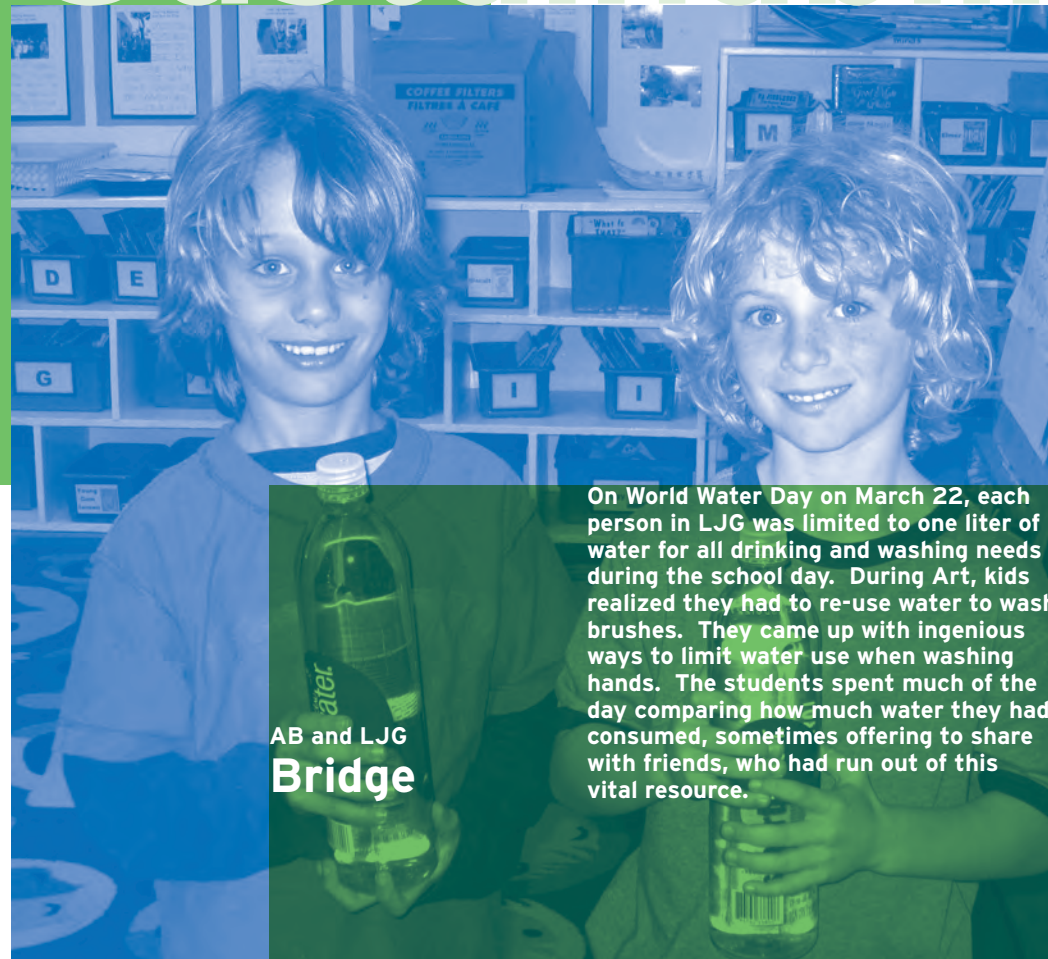
In LA, World War II study included issues related to conservation and sustainability. Students learned about sharing resources, making do or doing without, and recycling and reusing as many resources as possible. They planted a Victory Garden and shared in the harvest.

HK and LA  
**Middles**

# Sustainability



JB eliminated the reliance on paper towels (electing to use cloth napkins and dish towels instead) and writing paper in the class during Earth Week. Students worked in their journals, on white boards, or used scrap paper for curricular activities. Kids noticed the drastic difference in the amount of paper towels in the recycling bin at the end of each day... and so did the maintenance team!

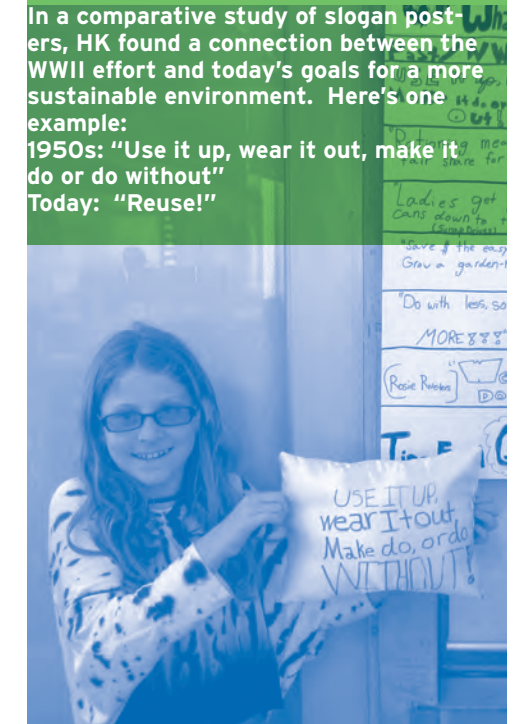


AB and LJJ  
**Bridge**

On World Water Day on March 22, each person in LJJ was limited to one liter of water for all drinking and washing needs during the school day. During Art, kids realized they had to re-use water to wash brushes. They came up with ingenious ways to limit water use when washing hands. The students spent much of the day comparing how much water they had consumed, sometimes offering to share with friends, who had run out of this vital resource.

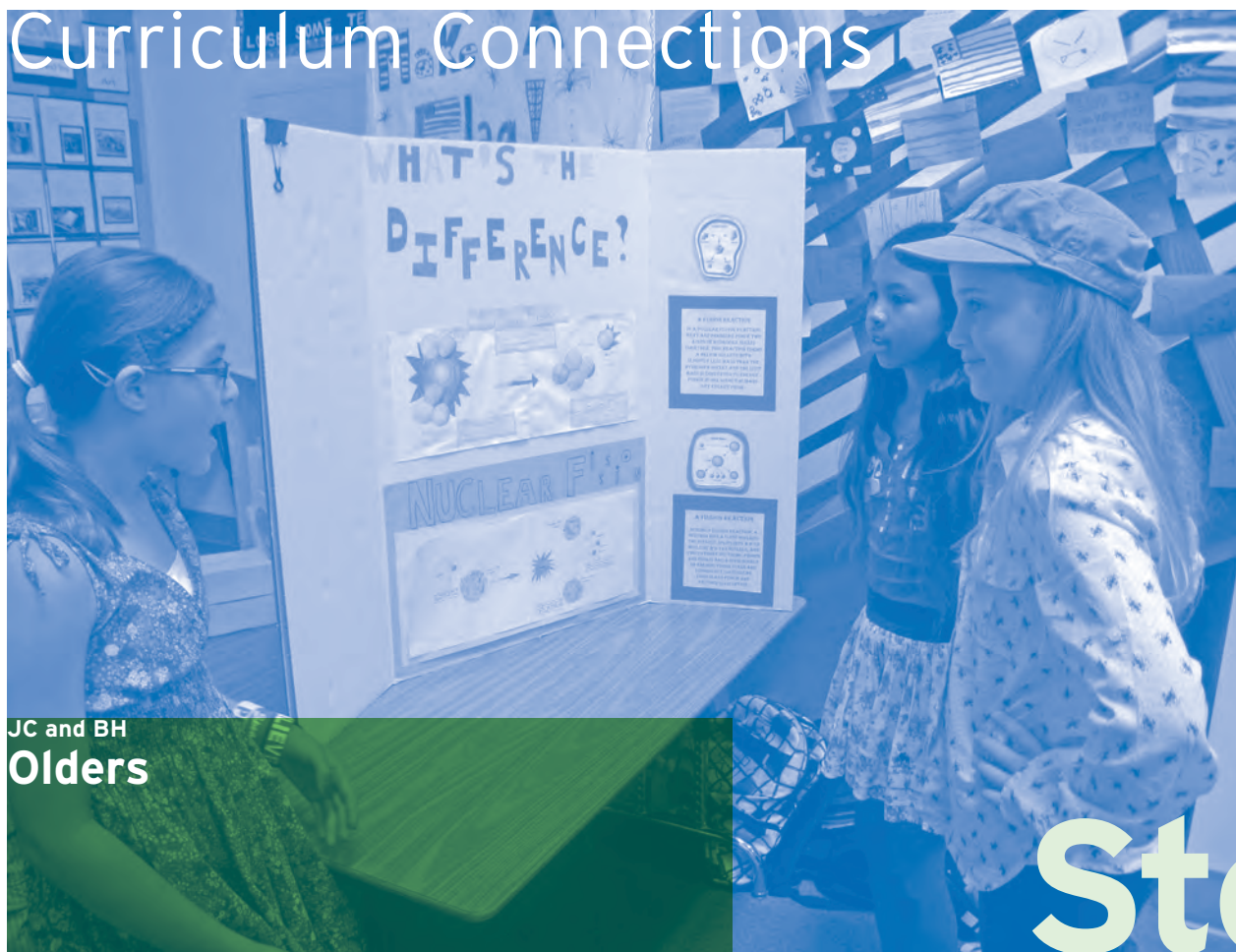


AB students assumed full production, promotion and performance of their own Pet Show. Laden with facts and funny stories, the performance demonstrated that AB students are truly guardians of the planet.



In a comparative study of slogan posters, HK found a connection between the WWII effort and today's goals for a more sustainable environment. Here's one example:  
1950s: "Use it up, wear it out, make it do or do without"  
Today: "Reuse!"

# Curriculum Connections



JC and BH  
Olders

From nuclear fusion to the effects of radiation, and a study of the best alternative power sources for LA's Westside, BH students researched topics of environmental significance. The Olders Science Fair became a venue in which they could share their new knowledge with the school and greater community.

Stewardship is power as modeled in JC. Olders student Dylan Vecchione presented his passion of the sea and his sense of activism in his own multi-media presentation on conservation of coral reefs for an audience of his cluster peers during Earth Week.



# Stewardship



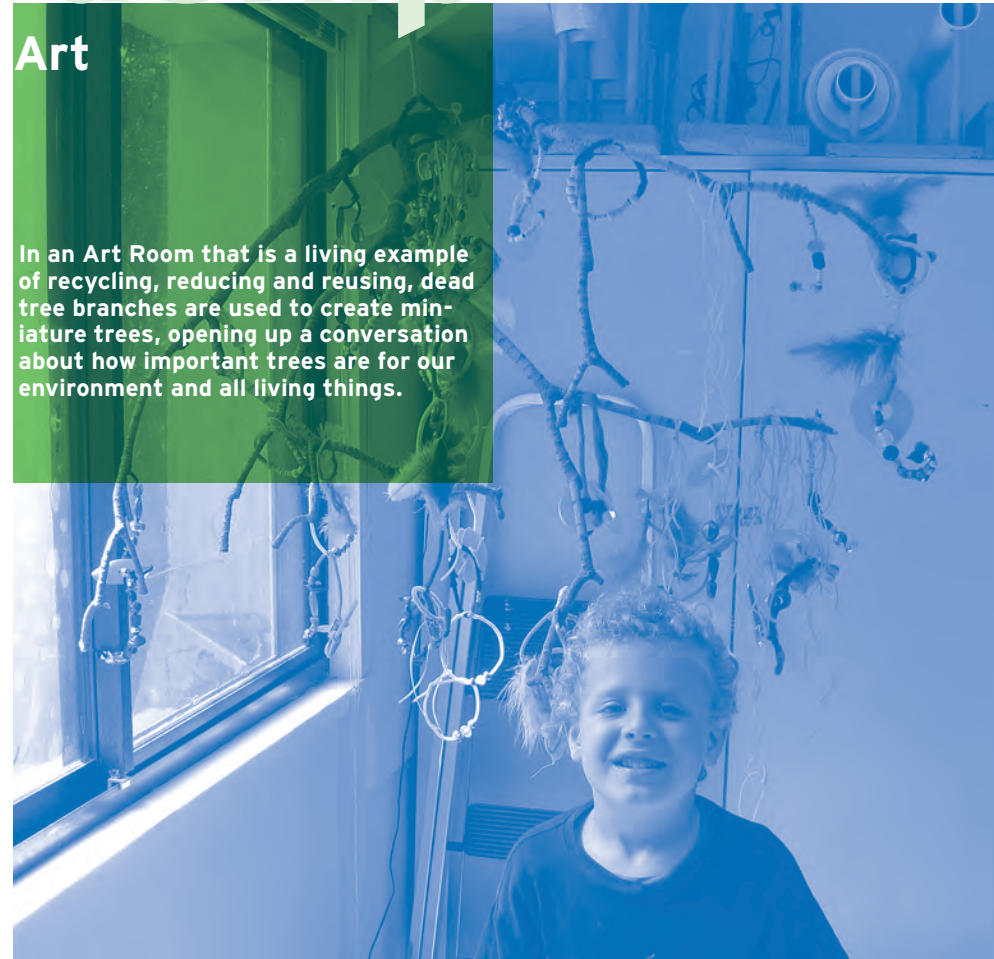
## Music

In Music, students discover that activist lyrics from the 1960's folk movement are apropos today.



## PE

Equipment care is an important part of every PE lesson. Stewardship shows when balls go back into the box, hoops are hung on the racks, and cones get neatly stacked.



## Art

In an Art Room that is a living example of recycling, reducing and reusing, dead tree branches are used to create miniature trees, opening up a conversation about how important trees are for our environment and all living things.



## Libraries

Libraries are the Original Recyclers, because we re-use, and re-use, and re-use every book we have! In the PS#1 Library, we reduce and re-use with whiteboards for drawing projects. All the expression and creativity of paper, but one swipe of an eraser and the board is ready to go all over again!



## Alumni Corner

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! Write to [ellie@psone.org](mailto:ellie@psone.org).



Courtney Applebaum



Caitlin Shamberg



Ellie Pelcyger gets behind the POPSTAR counter with owner and alum Elana Schwarzman to help serve delicious kettle-corn to all the avid PS#1 moviegoers at Grad Movie Night.



Nick Maya



(l to r) Ellie, Deborah Bogen, Kim Pagani, and Joel Former teacher and alumni parent Kim Pagani made a surprise visit to PS #1 on a Memoir Class Thursday and reunited with grandparents Joel, Ellie, Deborah and Abbie. Kim lives in Reston, VA. Deborah is an alumni parent and former Board member of the school.



Kate Berlant



Sami Shapiro

### PS#1 in Gotham

The largest concentration of PS#1 alumni after Santa Monica/Los Angeles would have to be New York City. At last count there were 24 known alumni living, working, or going to school (or all three) there. Eighties alumni **Hallie Hobson, Violet Ramis, Caitlin Shamberg, Nico Zimmerman, Lincoln Madley, Nick Starr** and **Casey Mortensen** all work there, and Caitlin's brother **Jacob Shamberg**, who was a Tripod Project student does too. **Andrew Rosenfeld** and **Paul Henry, Frances Perkins, Anna Rabinovitch, Courtney Applebaum, Briana Dollinger, Caitlin** and **Killian Clarke, Harley Wertheimer, Kate Berlant, Sid Perkins, Naomi Nevitt** and **Megan Romano**—all 90's alums—can be found in the Big Apple. Three 2002 grads, **Nick Maya, Delaney Simon** and **Molly Wertheimer** are all in school in New York. We're pretty sure there are more. So readers, keep us up to date!



#### Bartholomew Di Modica 1997-2004

Bartholomew is in his freshman year at Stanford University and already on the Dean's list. Among other things, he's studying Japanese, and feels quite at home on campus. His dorm is thirty percent international students and his roommate, with whom he gets along well, is from Korea.

#### Nick Maya 1995-2002

Nick writes from Manhattan: "I am currently finishing up my junior year at NYU's Gallatin School of Individualized Study where I am studying Ethnomusicology. I live in the East Village, and I host a weekly radio show on East Village Radio with my best friend. After school I plan on moving to Jackson Hole, Wyoming for a year to do some fishing. I have always enjoyed fishing, but recently got into fly-fishing in the fall. Now that it is spring in New York, I am going to try to make it upstate every weekend to do a bit of fishing. Ultimately, I hope to end up in the Northwest working for public radio."

#### Sami Shapiro 1998-2005

Sami is headed to Stanford University in the Fall, but first PS#1 was lucky to have her on campus as a classroom volunteer for a week in April. She was a huge help to Pedro, Louise, Traci, Holly, Karissa and others. Busy bee!

#### James Weinberger 1994-2001

James, a graduate first of PS#1 and then Crossroads, is graduating this June from Duke University and has decided to go into medicine. His mom, Susan Pomerantz, reports that as natural a choice as that seems, "as recently as his Junior year he was headed in a different direction."

#### Courtney Applebaum 1991-1998

After Courtney graduated from PS#1 she attended Crossroads. She went to New York and received her BA in social and historical inquiry from the New School For Social Research. She comments that both institutions seemed to facilitate the same kind of individualized thinking that is cultivated and celebrated at PS#1, so it felt like a natural educational progression for her. After graduating college in 2008 she decided to pursue a career in interior design. Now the principle designer at her own firm, aptly named Courtney Applebaum Design, she's bicoastal, living in both Los Angeles and New York.

#### William Baskin-Gerwitz 1995-2002

William is a junior at the University of Pennsylvania studying Philosophy, Politics and Economics, but he's spent his third year abroad at the London School of Economics. He'll be back at Penn in the fall to finish up.

#### Caitlin Shamberg 1982-1988

Caitlin is a journalist, living in Brooklyn with her husband, Jason, and their 7 month old, Olive, who is just learning to crawl. She's worked for POV, PBS's independent documentary series; and Salon.com, where she got to produce video during the last presidential election. She's taught English in France and produced a short

documentary in Russia. Caitlin graduated from Vassar, attended University of Paris, and earned her M.A. in journalism from NYU.

More recently Caitlin has been working as a web producer at The Takeaway, a morning radio news show out of WNYC. She and her childhood friend, Violet Ramis, still see each other occasionally. Her brother, Jacob Shamberg, who was a Tripod student at PS#1, also lives in New York but is currently in Shanghai, working as a brand manager for a textile company. Caitlin hopes to move back to LA soon so that Olive can be closer to her grandparents and learn how to surf.

*(From 1985-1989 PS #1 partnered with TRIPOD, an organization serving deaf children and their families, to provide a model mainstreaming program combining deaf and hearing students through the use of American Sign Language.)*

#### Yoko Smith 2005-2010

*News from Japan from a family in Tokyo after the earthquake:*

We are OK. Our home has no damage. And Yoko is OK, too. Please tell everybody, thank you and we miss you.

Yoko, Kay and Chris

#### Sarah Elzas 1984-1989

Sarah writes: "I am still living in France—going on five years—and working as a journalist for Radio France International. I have recently started focusing only on France, which is not all that specialized as it turns out, as I end up covering a range of issues, from politics and labor relations, to health and culture. For example in just this past week I reported on a major speech by the far-right National Front leader; I looked into a growing measles epidemic in France; I profiled the mother of a Franco-Palestinian man who is in prison in Israel and is petitioning the French

government; and I spoke to an American DJ/composer who was performing in Paris over the weekend. Quite a range! I continue to be interested in immigration stories, particularly refugees and asylum seekers—issues that are particularly pertinent these days in France, and in Europe in general."

#### Kate Berlant 1994-1998

Kate Berlant is the producer/booker and host of New York Cake Shop's "Crime & Punishment" every Tuesday at 8:00. She was featured on Disney's hit television series *Lizzie McGuire* as Student #2 and has performed her comedic PowerPoint Presentations in various galleries including Chicago's Alagon Gallery. She is studying for her Masters in Performance Studies at Tisch School of the Arts at NYU, and keeps up with PS#1 Alum Alexa Schwarzman, Charlotte Baskin-Gerwitz and Harley and Molly Wertheimer.

**Bill Zimmerman**, father of former students Nico Zimmerman and Emma Andersson, has published a memoir. He writes: "I have written a book that is being published by Doubleday. It's called *Troublemaker: A Memoir from the Front Lines of the Sixties*. The book chronicles my life during those turbulent years as I participated in the civil rights and antiwar movements. It shows how millions of young people like me were swept into those movements, and it describes the many political and cultural changes that took place around us. The book tries to be more than a memoir by walking the reader through the social and political history of the times. I'm told it's also a good read, as I describe the many milestone events I participated in and the few very exciting, edge-of-your-chair adventures that I had."



Levi Maya Holzman was born on December 30, 2010. Her mother Becky Roll Holzman (1979-84) hopes she will be a future student at PS#1, someday.

Alumni have been popping by school to hang out and help out this April: **Aidan Fite** and **Jake Mindel** for two. Seen helping make Film Night a success was **Rudy Frayre, Gavin Abraham, Asa Ger-mann** and the POPCORN QUEEN, **Elana Schwartzman** serving up bags of her sweet or savory Pop Star popcorn.



## Save The Date!

May	23-26	All School <b>Camping Trip</b>
	30	<b>No School, Memorial Day</b>
.....		
June	2	<b>School Tour</b>
	8	<b>Graduates' Leaf Ceremony</b>
	9	<b>Graduation, 4pm</b>
	10	<b>Moving Up Day, 10am</b>

## New (and familiar) Faces

### Tina writes:

I am thrilled to be the new Volunteer and Event Coordinator at PS#1. Working so closely with the Parents Guild over the seven years that my daughter Makai was in school here, from stuffing packets with the Staff Assistance team my first year, to leading the Parents Guild as Parents Guild Executive Board Coordinator our last few years, I really got to know most of the committees and events inside and out. I am eager to help the current and future PS#1 parent body navigate their own calendar of events.

Thank you, for so warmly welcoming me back. I can't wait to meet some of you who are newer to PS#1 and I look forward to working with you all!

PS#1 welcomes  
Tina Andrews to  
our staff



## Mystery Photo



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



Last Issue's  
Mystery Photo:  
Becky Roll Holzman  
(1979-84) was the first to  
recognize Whitney Moss  
(1978-82), Joel and  
Jon Sheldon (1977-83).