

PS#1
Elementary
School

Celebrating

40

Fall 2011

pe
pe



In This Issue:

PAGE 1
Head's Column

PAGES 2-3
Traditions... New and Old
Life After PS#1
Father's Breakfast
Halloween
Fall Festival
PAL Visit
Santa Monica Library
Grad/Alumni Dance
Clubs

PAGE 4
Building
40th Anniversary—Save the Date!

PAGES 5-7
Curriculum Connections

PAGES 8-9
Alumni Corner

PAGE 10
Mystery Photo
New Board Members
Save the Date

The Periscope
Volume 21, Number 4

Editors:
Deirdre Gainor
Doug O'Brien

Designer:
David Mellen Design

PS#1
1454 Euclid Street
Santa Monica, CA 90404
(310) 394-1313
(310) 395-1093 fax
www.psonline.org

Letter to the Editor

8/24/11

Hi Joel,
I just received the Periscope and I started remembering my family's wonderful experiences at PS#1 and especially your insightful contributions to my children's education. I am so grateful that we were part of the PS#1 family during the elementary school years. All three Fenster children are thriving at Crossroads, but the foundation they received at your school was monumental in helping them achieve all the successes they are now experiencing.

Thank you, thank you!
Alan Fenster

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

Head's Column

PS Fun!

"Football's what I do for a living and what I do for fun."

—Tim Tebow, *Denver Broncos quarterback*

Now that's something that Tim Tebow and I have in common. Being the Head of PS#1 is what I do for a living and what I do for fun. I am so glad that longevity can come with my profession. I can only hope that his career can last as long as he would want.

I have fun every day in my job. It is said that variety is the spice of life. How then can I still find contentment and fulfillment in a job that I started in September 1971 and have never left? I have a very short resume but a very long list of stories that sustain me, of challenges that have been overcome, of amazing people who have touched my life, of evolutions of dreams that have been fulfilled, of organizational procedures and policies that have grown out of need rather than reflex, of children and adults who have expressed gratitude for all that they have learned and all that they have been given by PS#1, of surprises that have turned into opportunities, and of people who have grown up before my eyes.

After forty years, I can still say that every day is fresh, and every day is filled with things that I love doing (and, alas, some that just come with the job). People assume that there can be nothing new under the sun for me in this job anymore. Those people are wrong. "Don't you ever get tired of people presenting problems that you have already dealt with countless times before?" All who know me know that I can honestly answer that question with an emphatic "No." Experience counts for a lot. The way it helps the most is to be able to reflect upon similar situations that have occurred in the past, but the people change, the exact circumstances change, the times have changed, and I have changed. So there is always something fresh and new about what I see and what gets presented to me. There is a parent in our school now who I have known since he was three years old. As a child, I remember he would answer many questions with a "Yeah, but." He meant there was always nuance, always something a little bit different, always something that meant that some thing could not be reduced to the same solution that worked the day before. I know what he meant – I have that experience every day in my work.

All over our campus, we are thinking and talking about the number 40 every day. I hope everyone who reads this column will join us at school for PS#1's Fortieth Anniversary Celebration on

Sunday, May 20, 2012. On Halloween this year, school administrators dressed the way we did in 1971. (Some had to find photos in history books!) Teachers all over school are bringing the number 40 into their classroom program all year long. Every week in the Weekly Notice, I am listing something that occurred forty years ago during PS#1's first days to help all adults realize how long we have been around and how far we have come. Two days ago was the 40th day of school and every Youngers class celebrated in their own unique way. One Youngers class wrote about 40 things they loved about their school. In our first Circle Time of the year, our Olders Cluster discussed many ways to understand the number 40. They told us: "Forty is two score;" "It is half a century minus a decade;" "It is seven squared minus the square root of 81;" "It is middle age;" "No way, it is old age!" Ah perspective.

Olders sang us songs written forty years ago – *Wild World* ("it's hard to get by just 'upon a smile'. But that's just what Joel, Ellie, and the first teachers did – they started the school we all love today!"); *You've Got a Friend*; and *Joy to the World*. John Lennon's song, *Imagine*, came out the first week there was a PS#1 in September 1971 and is becoming our school anthem for the year. The Olders shared more at their Circle Time. Shannon told us, "40 years ago, Joel and Ellie dreamed a school. They wanted to create a school where every child could learn in their own way, where there was love and respect between teachers, students, and families, and where every child was treasured." Others asked, "Did you know that on the first day that PS#1 opened, Joel found out that they would be kicked out of their building, and would have to move to a whole new campus at Winter Break?" or "that forty years ago a movie ticket only cost \$1.50, it only cost 8 cents to mail a letter, and gas cost 40 cents a gallon?" or "that in 1971 kids had to type reports on typewriters or they had to write them all by hand because they didn't have computers?" or "that Joel loved going to summer camp so much that he wanted to start a school that was just as much fun?" It's all true.

John Lennon from his 1971 *Imagine* record (remember vinyl?): "You may say that I'm a dreamer, but I'm not the only one. I hope someday you'll join us, and the world will live as one."

Good luck Tim Tebow. Before you know it, forty years will have passed. Take it from me. It's all worth it. —Joel Pelcyger

Halloween

On Halloween afternoon, bats, gladiators and storybook characters descended upon the Field of Dreams for PS#1's 40th annual Halloween parade. Students, teachers, administrators and parents demonstrated our trademark ingenuity, flair, and humor - along with pluralism - with hundreds of novel and entertaining costumes. The surprises began when AB entertained revelers with a choreographed "flash mob" dance to lyrics of Monster Mash. Whether you are an alum or a current student, Halloween at PS#1 has its own special place in your heart. This year was no exception. Joyous faces, creative costumes, and a chance to parade around the block and show off the grandeur of the day.

Life After PS#1

Life After PS#1 was born 25 years ago with an inspiration from Wade Killefer, Alumni Parent, Former President of the Board, and Current Architect for the school. It gives our alumni an opportunity to come back and share their experiences of life beyond elementary school. It also gives the audience a chance to marvel at the strong, grounded, and innovative young people that 'grew up' at PS#1. This year was no exception. (For details see the Alumni Corner section of this newsletter.)

Fathers' Breakfast

Fathers' Breakfast was a smashing success! Our dads outdid themselves again. Scrumptious breakfast offerings, with mini golf, amphibians, and a face-painting clown; all designed to capture a child's imagination and have fun.

Alumni/Grad Party

Everyone remembered the code at the Blue gate. They bounded up the stairs to J/C's class, which had been transformed for the Party. Many friends to reconnect with, music to dance to, photo booth for combining friends and capturing memories, slide show to view their days at PS#1 and t-shirts to decorate. Pizza, cookies, and Keith from After Care's Wii games rounded out the evening of fun. An important tradition lives on!

Traditions... New and Old



Santa Monica Library

Aftercare student volunteers walked with PS#1 administrative staff to Santa Monica library, carrying books to donate. For many years of PS#1's history our students walked to check out books. Everyone felt great, walking to give books. The students helped unload the van filled with all the books that couldn't be carried. As one PS#1 student said, "Every kid should have books to read."

Clubs

Cartooning or Cooking, Yoga or Rockets, Storytelling or Scrapbooking. It all takes place in the all-inclusive Clubs Program at PS#1. Into our third year of this new version of the PS#1 electives, every student is placed in one of their "top five" Club picks. For five meeting times in the fall, students all ages from all clusters connect with a pair of teachers and staff to try out a new area of interest. Oh, the possibilities of being in a club entitled Bubbles or "If I Could Change the World!"

PAL

This year PS#1 partnered with the Police Activities League on the corner of Olympic and 14th Street to focus our community service activities. PAL sponsors an after school program for all students from Santa Monica schools. Fridays in October, PAL students joined our aftercare program from 4-5 and quickly made friends. Then on Halloween, several of our aftercare students went to Barker Hangar to participate in PAL's Palloween Party. We look forward to making more connections with our larger community.

Fall Festival

PS#1 parents know how to put on a great event. We invited the community to share in the magic of our school and magic it was - Kids' karaoke was a huge hit on the small stage, construction with the wooden sticks reached over six feet tall and came down with a satisfying crash every time. The variety of flying machines created for the wind tunnel did not stop as all age groups were involved in the science project. The Olders' Haunted House was scary, original, and addictive and the beauty of the painted sun prints graced our walls as more and more children participated. Over 600 books were donated. We gave 200 to PAL for their reading program and 400 to the Santa Monica Library to support all the wonderful programs they do for children. Thanks to all the volunteers for making this day so memorable!



One Campus. One Community.

An alum at this year's Life After PS#1 evening said,
"What else could PS1 possibly need?
The school was perfect when I went here."



How about:

- > A new MPR with an indoor basketball court, a performance stage, and enough room to hold our entire community?
- > A new Music Room on main campus?
- > A new Art Room on main campus?
- > A new Library?
- > A new community Room?
- > New offices?
- > New playground space and entrance to the school?
- > New visual identity for the school?

Here it comes! And it will all be completed by the time school opens in September 2012!



Save the Date!

In this 40th Anniversary year, PS#1 has a lot to celebrate. So we hope you'll join us on Sunday, May 20, 2012 for the Ultimate Reunion – our 40th Anniversary Party on the Field of Dreams. Save the Date. Come and celebrate with us!

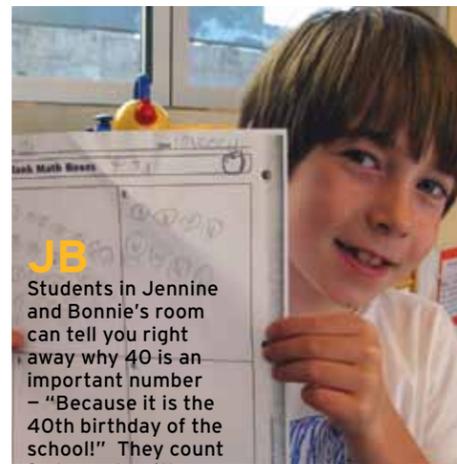


TK
Traci and Karissa's class celebrated our fortieth day of school this year with activities involving the number 40. We counted up to forty by fives and tens. We took a forty-step walk together to see where we would wind up. We bounced and threw a ball forty times. During Exploration Stations, we baked forty blueberry muffins, built with forty blocks, and made necklaces out of forty beads. Then finally, as a class we came up with forty reasons we LOVE PS#1!



Curriculum Connection

"How do our students say 40?"



JB
Students in Jennine and Bonnie's room can tell you right away why 40 is an important number – "Because it is the 40th birthday of the school!" They count forty cents with pennies and nickels, flip a coin to get forty tally marks, play a dice game called "Roll to 40," make pattern block buildings with forty blocks, and punch out forty designs and glued them into a 4x10 grid.



LJ
Lucia and Jen's students keep track of the number of days we have been in school. On Day Forty which landed on November 2, we shared our private collections of favorite marbles, baseball cards, hair barrettes and more – all consisting of forty items each.



PE
Our Physical Education program offers over forty unique units of activities each year to PS#1 students. From juggling, parachutes and yoga to traditional sports with a non-competitive twist, we build skills that we can use for a lifetime.



AB
Students in Abbie and Billy's class are skilled in a math concept called the name collection box. The objective is to come up with as many ways to express a specific target number. We decided to write the number 40 in forty different ways. The activity comprised adding, subtracting, using tally marks, counting coins, writing in expanded notation, and using Roman numerals and foreign languages.

Curriculum Connections



LG
Louise and Gina's students know forty ways to be kind! Greet a neighbor, hold the door, share a cookie... and many more.



JC
Throughout this year John and Chris' class is looking at "all things 40 from this being a milestone anniversary to "forty" an essential number in many cultural traditions, in sports, in astronomy, in proverbs, and in sayings such as "Life begins at 40."



Music
This year's first Circle Time was a trip down Memory Lane with songs learned in Music class. Olders performed four of the "Top 40" hit songs from 1971 with enthusiasm reminiscent of the era.



Art
In Art we say forty by taking a close look at British author and artist Roger Hargraves' and his son Adam's cartoons. Just as PS#1 was created forty years ago by two talented people, Joel and Ellie Pelcyger, Roger and Adam Hargraves inspired a global phenomenon of their own with Mr. Men and Little Miss in 1971.



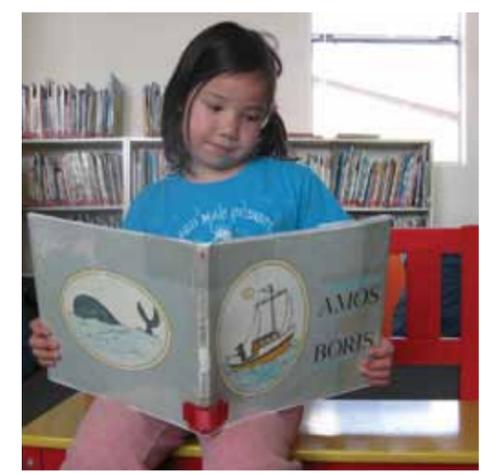
BH
Brad and Holly's class are researchers, historians, and writers. We delved into PS#1's own archives to find forty facts from forty years ago, and we wrote essays about favorite places on campus inspired from their investigations.



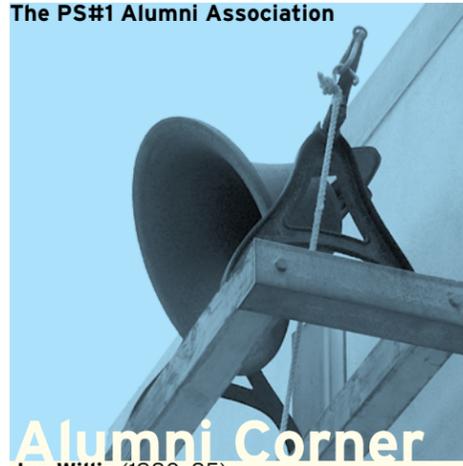
HS
Kelp, parsley, dandelion greens... Student scientists studying the food chain in Holly and Shannon's class can name forty different "producers."



LA
Bon jour! Konichiwa! Shalom! Aloha! Every morning the students and teachers in LiAnne and Alia's class pass a greeting around the room to acknowledge each other and make everyone feel welcome. This year we hope to learn greetings in forty different languages!



Library
Library Time included an examination of what life and books were like forty years ago. Two favorites: Amos & Boris by William Steig and Pancakes, Pancakes by Eric Carle, were in the PS#1 Library in 1971. And, we looked at biographies of John Lennon and Celia Cruz—just two of the people who made all of our lives better in 1971 (and beyond!).



Alumni Corner

Joe Willis (1980-85)

In 2002, Joe Willis and his wife, Shayna Samuels, founded City Threads, a thriving company based in West Hollywood that designs and sells great looking clothes for kids from birth to 14 years. Their website at www.citythreads.com showcases their large selection. They design and manufacture all their clothes in Los Angeles.

Tondi Cahill (1984-88)

Yes it has been a LONG time! My little elementary school has really grown into something. From PS#1 I went on to Crossroads for middle school and then to public school. I met my husband the summer between 10th and 11th grade and we have been together since. Our first son Mason was born in July of 2001 and his brother Aidan followed in May of 2005. My husband Ethan is an engineer at 20th Century Fox. I am so happy to be back in touch with Peter (Hopelain) after all these years. I am still in contact with Renee Smith and Caitlin Shamburg through Facebook. I can't believe it is PS#1's 40th Anniversary! I would love to see some of the old photos and written work.

Alumni Staff Update

In this year of looking back, we thought you might be interested in hearing about the recent lives of early staff members. One of our founding teachers, **Sherry Wilds (Elms)**, former Dean of Students at Naropa University, now teaches contemplative practice there. PS#1 classroom teacher **Leslie Puce** (1975-90), continues to teach young children in Charlotte, NC public schools where she lives with her family. **Cathy Coil Nevin**, day care teacher in the 80's, is an attorney in the Indianapolis area where she lives with her husband and family. **Jim Cantor** (1978-83), whose productions and music instruction at PS#1 are legendary, was first teacher, then principal at SMASH. Now a professor of Teacher Education at Cal State Dominguez Hills, Jim often instructs nascent teachers how to reach students through music.



Gina Rockenwagner (1994-2000)

We finally tracked down Gina Rockenwagner and found her in New York, working in Soho at the foremost authority in all things with big needles: Purl Bee. She says, "Like all members of the Purl family, I live in a world where color rules. If you shop at our store in Soho, you've probably seen me restocking shelves and cutting fabric. I'm the one wearing a colorful dress (that I made myself, most likely out of lovely Liberty of London!) and the reddest red lipstick. In my view, nothing perks up a gray day more than a brightly hued ensemble. Top it all off with a hand knit scarf or hat, and I'm happy!"



2011 Update on the Cantor family:

Elsewhere in this issue we mention 80's alumni parent and teacher, Jim Cantor; his wife, Julie Cantor is a special education teacher for LA schools in the South Bay. Their offspring are in three far-flung cities. **Jo Cantor** (1978-83) is living and working in his first love, photography, in Brooklyn, New York, where he owns his own home. His sister, **Jamila** (1979-83), is a Spanish sign language teacher at Cerritos College in California. Their brother, **Jesse** (1977-82), an attorney in Seattle, became a father this year.



Aaryn Costello (1991-98)

After PS#1, Aaryn attended Archer School, which she calls, "Best high school EVER!" and got her BA in drama at UC Irvine. Aaryn and her mom opened a clothing showroom in the CalMart. Aaryn created her own clothing line, Shay California, and was named one of the 25 most influential people in fashion under the age of 25. In 2008 Aaryn fell in love with the world of film production. Aaryn writes us: "I am working to re-launch Shay California with a baby clothing line division and find work in the entertainment world, which has always been my BIG dream. I want to be a part of creating films, the entire production part of it, behind or in front of the scenes. I was born into Fashion, but Film is where I really, and have always, wanted to be."



News from the Killefer/Flammang clan:

Wade is a past president of the Board of Directors, and Wade and Barbara's firm Killefer Flammang Architects helped transform the MPR in the 90's. Now they are transforming the whole south side of the campus, MPR and much more. Wade and Barbara's roles in the planning and design of the campus have been huge. **Annie Killefer** (1988-93) lives in Washington, DC, having finished her master's degree in Peace and Conflict Resolution Studies at American U. Annie is job hunting and hopes to go overseas, preferably Africa. **Joe Killefer** (1989-96) is here in LA, working in construction project management. Joe took the major role in building a recently finished four unit project in Mar Vista, designed by his parents. Three units are already sold and Barbara reports that working together "was really fun, along with a wee bit of stress."

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!

Check out the website this spring. We are creating a portal where all the alumni updates will be available.

Life After PS#1

November 1, 2011

Jake Mindel (2010) probably said it best: "I came here tonight to give back to PS1." Jake joined 20 other graduates on a clear November evening from nine schools, public and private at our annual Life After PS#1. Former grads chatted over dinner on the roof patio and heard Joel's explanation of the construction project in process, then adjourned to a Middles Classroom. In the audience were about 100 soon-to-be grads and their parents, teachers, and alumni parents, who asked what it's like for former elementary students out there in middle and high school. Their frank, self-possessed, and good-humored replies lent the whole evening an air of calm and reassurance.

Two topics dominated: The Application Process and Adjusting to the New School. When asked how to find the right school, **Emma Laurent** said if you answer the questions on the application and in the interview honestly, the right school will accept you for who you really are. **Maddie Stedman** said, "The way you deal with it makes a difference. If you don't get accepted at your first choice, it's not about you, schools have their own goals for a group of entering students." **Mason Allport** and **Gabbie Reade** suggested that prospective students pay close attention when they take the tour, even though as Tristan DeVito pointed out, the tour can be a daunting experience. They affirmed that you are the best judge of whether the place feels good to you. **Archer Brosh** and **Max Staley** both found their middle schools to be the wrong fit and transferred to a different high school that each feels fits them like a glove. **Gina Segall** advised, "Follow your heart."

There was universal agreement that making friends is hugely important to adjusting to a new school. **Caroline Watts** and **Avery Hill** both loved having a large student body from which to choose friends. **Liam Stevens** and **Madi Holtzman** pointed out that they continue to see old friends from former schools and make friends as well from other high schools. **Austin Wilson** and **Sam Gaynor** stressed the importance of making strong connections with teachers, saying that their PS#1 experience made that easy. Many alumni mentioned that they are grateful for the broad choices of subject matter and activities to choose from, finding it a growth experience. There was an overwhelming sense in this group of competent students that they felt their PS#1 career had prepared them to be inquisitive, eager learners in a wide variety of settings.

Seen and heard at Life After PS1...

Liam Stevens, **Bryce Terman**, and **Caroline Watts** were there from Harvard Westlake, all reporting they're really happy with their choice. **Todahtiyah Forbes** was surprised to discover herself becoming a poet and loving English Literature at Culver City High. She is hoping to take her role as Keeper on her Club Soccer team straight into college play. **Jake Mindel** came back from Brentwood to reconnect with his teachers. He and **Sam Gaynor** and **Gabbie Reade** represented the Brentwood School alumni. Gabbie is not only managing the boys' water polo team at Brentwood, she is on the swim team, and is having fun starting the first-ever Brentwood Girls' water polo team! **Mason Allport** of Wildwood commented that friendships you make at PS#1 will last a lifetime.



Madi Stedman, also from Wildwood, was very grateful for what she had learned in Brad Gilbert's grammar classes. **Austin Wilson** will represent Wildwood at a leadership conference in Philadelphia this month. **Elijah Cuffee**, **Tristan DeVito**, **Madi Holtzman**, **Gina Segall**, **Savannah Ennis**, **Emma Laurent** and **Gabe Schuman** were all there from Windward School. Elijah is enjoying his experience in athletics at the school, finding it "like a family." Madi still sees a lot of her horseback-riding friends. Gina came last night to see the building project and Gabe to "Take a trip down memory lane." A senior, Gabe reports that he is applying early to Georgetown.

Avery Hill returned yesterday from a visit with her sister Haley (1998-04) at Washington University in St. Louis in time to represent Samo High. Her first impressions of public school were a bit overwhelming, she said, but she grew to enjoy the largeness and diversity. **Kalia Bornstein** loves the wide variety of academic options at Marlborough, but not so much the early start of each school day. **Max Staley** began at Lincoln Middle School, but transferred to Crossroads and found it a broad and rich academic experience that has prepared him well for college next year. **Archer Brosh** was another transfer student from Windward to New Roads, which he feels is exactly the right fit for him, offering him the opportunity to engage in class discussions and learn from the entire class rather than just relying on his own thoughts while writing a paper.

PS#1 Welcomes New Board Members

Rachel Bank

Rachel is the mom of Alexa, a student in B/H's class. Rachel has been active on the school's Fundraising Committee and is also the Room Parent Coordinator this year. She is a Vice-President at City National Bank.



Afshin Ghodsi

Afshin is the parent of Lily in H/S's class. His older daughter, Yasmine, a graduate of PS#1, is currently in the 7th grade at Crossroads School. Afshin is a member of the Building and Grounds Committee and has been very involved in the current building project as the structural engineer on the project. He is also co-chair of the Annual Giving Campaign this year.



Anna Tran Reyna

Anna is the mother of Hailey, a student in L/G's class. Anna is an attorney and Senior Vice President at Fox Cable Networks. She has been active on the school's Fundraising Committee and is co-chairing the Annual Giving Campaign with Afshin.



Matt Schwab

Matt is the dad of Jordan in J/B's class. Matt is Chair of the Building and Grounds Committee and is a member of the Administration and Finance Committee. He is currently Managing Director of Karlin Real Estate.



Do you hold the key to identifying these PS#1 Alumni? Please email Deirdre at deirdre@psone.org

Mystery Photo

Last Issue's Mystery Photo: Jo Chandler, Alumni Parent and Former Staff member, recognized her son Adrian from the photo. They were singing New York, New York at the 20th Anniversary Celebration.

Save The Date!

November	28	PAL gift drive (11/27-12/9)
December	1	School Tour
	2	PJ Story Time
	19	Winter Break begins
January	3	School Resumes
	16	Martin Luther King Day (no school)
	18	Noon Dismissal
	19	School Tour
February	2	School Tour
	12	Itty Bitty Art Sale
May	20	Save The Date 40th Anniversary Celebration