



**PLURALISTIC
SCHOOL**

Where Knowledge Meets Imagination

the periscope

Winter '06

and 2004-05 Annual Report

Connection

The Periscope

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A new feature of The Periscope, *Parent Perspective* invites new, returning and alumni parents to submit editorial articles on topics of interest to our community.

Parent Perspective

In this issue, Mary Garvey, a first-year PS#1 parent, offers her definition of pluralism as it applies to our community, based on her family's experiences with us over the current school year.



Pluralism, as I See It

By Mary Garvey, mother of Harry (Class of '13)

More often than not, when I've told people my son goes to PS#1, Pluralistic School, the reaction has been a polite, "Okaaaay... what does that mean?" Admittedly, when I stepped onto the grounds of PS#1 as a new parent this year, I wasn't quite sure what I thought of the term or how it applied to my son - though I had faith it wasn't as obscure as it sounded. I know I wasn't the only one grasping to define pluralism and yet, the idea of pluralism has been central to the mission of the school since its founding in 1971. Pluralism was why we choose PS#1, with or without full knowledge of its meaning for our child, so I thought I'd take this opportunity to explain what pluralism has come to mean to me.

Pluralism is not about liking each other and in turn being liked, or forming like-minded clubs and organizations. It is about respect for free thought, promoting global citizenship, developing compassion and empathy and trusting that open dialogue leads to a common good. At PS#1 the common good is an academically competent and emotionally secure student population. Our children know about historic and economic challenges faced by the world's peoples, but they also know how to laugh with each other or build paper airplanes and simply enjoy childhood, regardless of their differences.

As a member of the PS#1 community, I believe that an inclusive approach to life creates a richer outcome for all. A commitment to pluralism honors ideas and respects opinions in and of themselves. The whole concept is to foster relationships based not on what makes us, as individual families, unique, but how our individuality makes our school stronger. Acknowledging and celebrating each

Volume 16, Number 2

In This Issue:

PAGE 1
Letter from the Editor

PAGE 2
Curriculum Connections

2004-05 Annual Report

PAGE 4
Positive Parenting Approaches
Reaching Out to Katrina Victims

PAGE 5
Alumni Corner

other's differences will convey acceptance and a love of inquiry to our children.

I encourage everyone to participate in organizations like Common Ground and Parent Pop, two positive and fun ways to learn about each other and strengthen the ties between PS#1 families. Be involved! Reach out to our community of families, faculty and staff. Learning to appreciate the differences between us makes us further value the precious individuality of our children—and how our school works to help each child respect others and love whatever it is that makes him or her unique.

For my own part, I plan on staying involved and supporting the mission of our school by not ducking the question of what pluralism means to me. In my opinion, PS#1, *Pluralistic* School, embodies the American motto, *E Pluribus Unum*. Out of many, one.



Core Values

I have seen many schools in my years as a teacher, grade leader, district curriculum representative and educational technology mentor—from traditional to constructivist, from west coast to east. Each new class held its own unique personality just as each school exuded a certain character that distinguished itself from the last. As PS#1's new Director of Development, this past school year has provided me another opportunity to hone my definition of what it takes to provide a great elementary education.

I have come to understand many things about the distinctive character of PS#1—the most significant being that we *walk the walk*, as they say. Our core values, which can be found unobtrusively hung in a simple frame in each classroom, permeate every aspect of our teaching, working, and community relationships. They aren't just static words hung on the wall. For us, they are living, breathing ideals given new life each day through the discoveries made by our students, the encouragement offered by our faculty and staff, and the commitment to PS#1 demonstrated by you, our parents and friends.

In this issue, we have chosen to focus on the third value, *Connection - What we do with what we know*. We connect to the world around us in many ways. Of course, our most vital connections begin at home. In our early years, we discover ourselves and our egos are developed. As we grow, our families become the centers of our worlds, and we eventually come to expand our connections to include extended family, playgroups, school communities, colleagues, and greater society. Ideally, our formal educations and life experiences help to shape us into global citizens who seek out ways to relate to the rest of the world. At PS#1, we strive to model the importance of doing something with the knowledge we gain. It is PS#1's experience that students emerge from their elementary school years with the ability to apply what they've learned to their own lives, while also reaching out to others.

I am proud of the connections our students make between their classroom experiences and the world around them. I am impressed that our faculty and staff

members go above and beyond, serving as volunteers to the greater community and to those in need. I am thrilled to know that PS#1 parents have clearly made a remarkable connection to the school, as evidenced by the enclosed Annual Report, and whose generous support is a tribute to our unique community.

Read on to learn about some of the remarkable connections our students and staff have recently made to the world around them. They are examples of our core values in action.

Competence. Confidence. *Connection*.

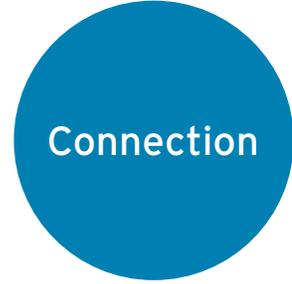
Warm Regards,

Lisa Wilson
Director of Development

How we feel about what we know



What we do with what we know



Curriculum Connections

Academically speaking, PS#1 students are on fire! Halfway through the school year, they have been provided a myriad of rich learning experiences, specially designed to spark enthusiastic participation. In keeping with our philosophy that students learn best through direct experience and cooperative exploration, this issue's Curriculum Connections showcases the work of three of our kids who have been inspired to make connections between academics and the world around them.

Sew Inspired

During a visit with his grandmother, Dylan Vecchione shared a special book he had chosen from the PS#1 library entitled *Kids Making Quilts for Kids* by ABC Quilts. When his *nonna* asked why he had chosen the book, Dylan replied, "I like the pictures in it!" Together, they looked at his favorite pages and decided to make their own quilt, using felt squares and a lot of creativity.

First, Dylan chose the colors of each square and then set about cutting out paper patterns for each of the designs he chose. His *nonna* carefully sewed them onto the quilt. Each design represented something personal to him. A favorite flower, a candle, stars and a moon, hearts... One design, originally meant to be a train, was quickly turned into a dog howling atop a cave after a tiny slip of the scissors. The large rainbow framing the top of the quilt was inspired by the memory of a family trip to Hawaii, during which he lost a tooth. According to his grandmother, the rainbow was "not an easy task, because of the shape and the many pieces." Also, Dylan added, "Where there is a rainbow, there has to be a sun and clouds!" A long conversation ensued about the weather conditions that are necessary to create a rainbow.

"Deciding what was going on the quilt was the most fun," Dylan beamed. "I'm most proud of my name at the top." And he should be!

Drawing on happy memories and lots of creativity for inspiration, Dylan and his grandmother created a special quilt all their own. "It was such a pleasure to see how Dylan was developing, selecting and organizing his ideas with enthusiasm and love," noted Nonna. Making connections between Art, Science, Math and, maybe most importantly, Family, they are an inspiration to us all!



Midd



The island of Santa Cruz supports 12 species of plants and animals found nowhere else on Earth. During their visit, PS#1 students learned how humans have impacted the natural habitat on Santa Cruz. For example, island foxes have, historically, occupied the top spot in the Channel Islands food chain. In recent years, predatory golden eagles, attracted by the feral pigs introduced to the island by humans, reduced the native fox population from 1500 to 100. The island fox has now been added to the endangered species list. [Information provided by The Nature Conservancy].

Read on for a first-hand account of the exciting adventures of LiAnne and Billy's class on the island of Santa Cruz.

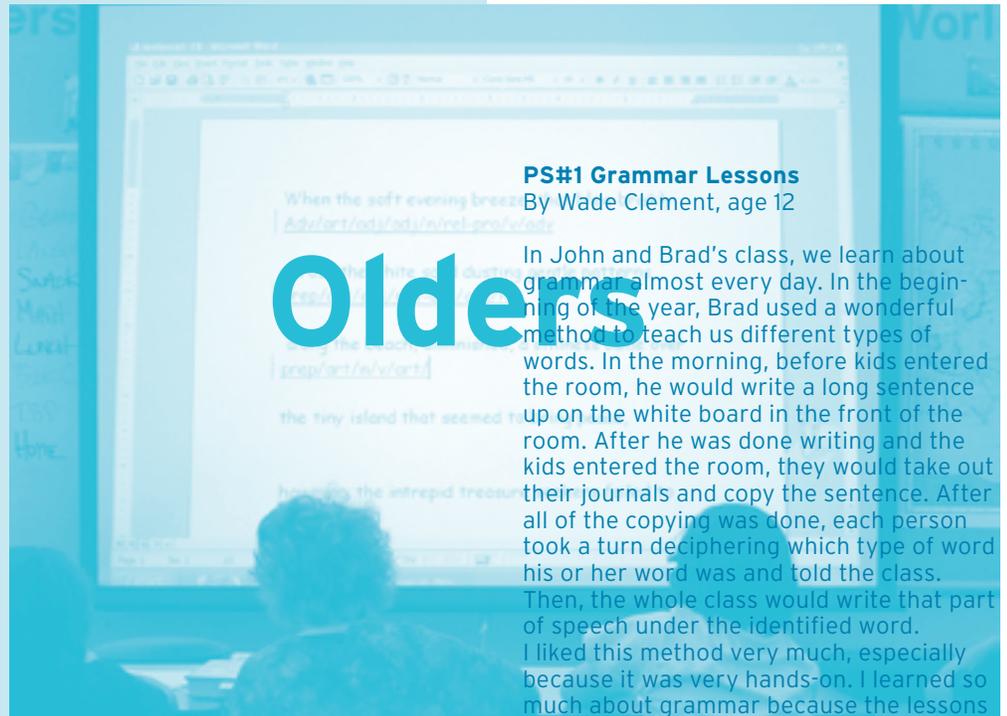
les

Our Class Field Trip to Santa Cruz
By Sofia Duffy, age 8

It was a one-hour drive to Ventura County. Then we went to the dock to get on the boat. The boat ride was rocky, but it was my favorite part. It was kind of like Space Mountain. It was sunny out. There was food and drinks on the boat. When we got closer to the island we saw dolphins. Ian, Dean, Rudy, Jack and a couple of others said they saw a shark! The next day Sara, my teachers, and I got a postcard with a shark on it. We gave it to the boys as a joke, as if we took a picture!

When we got to the island we saw five pigs. Actually, they were domesticated but still pigs! Near a little cabin, Cruz saw a fig tree and picked a fig and gave it to his mom.

We learned about Chumash Indians in class. They lived on the island, but we didn't see their houses. We talked about food chains. The fish ate DDT and Bald Eagles ate fish and aren't on the island any more. Golden Eagles eat the foxes so there aren't many foxes left. I like the foxes and feel bad about that.



PS#1 Grammar Lessons

By Wade Clement, age 12

In John and Brad's class, we learn about grammar almost every day. In the beginning of the year, Brad used a wonderful method to teach us different types of words. In the morning, before kids entered the room, he would write a long sentence up on the white board in the front of the room. After he was done writing and the kids entered the room, they would take out their journals and copy the sentence. After all of the copying was done, each person took a turn deciphering which type of word his or her word was and told the class. Then, the whole class would write that part of speech under the identified word. I liked this method very much, especially because it was very hands-on. I learned so much about grammar because the lessons

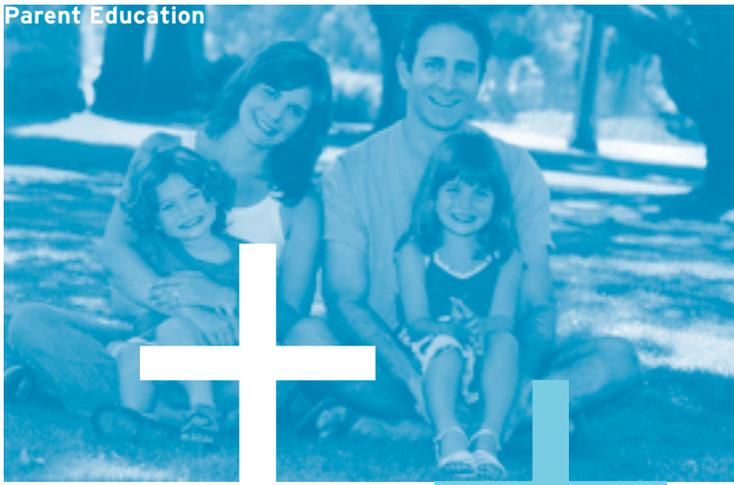
were actually fun. Another reason I liked this method was because each participant gained confidence in themselves in the wide world of grammar.

We now have more technology, which helps us save class time. Our new technology (recently nicknamed "Phillup") is a beautiful projector that not only projects slideshows, but also DVDs, VHS and anything that can show up on the computer screen. Phillup also is equipped with a humongous screen that hangs next to the board. During our daily grammar lessons, Phillup makes a huge difference. Now, instead of using the board, Brad uses his laptop to write the sentences. He prints the sentences for each member of the class. Then Phillup projects the sentences up onto the screen so that everybody can see them. Just like in the beginning of the year, each person decipheres a word. This new method saves five to ten minutes, which allows us to go into more detail about what part of speech the word is and what job it does in the sentence.

After having this activity for the whole year, most of us in John and Brad's class have experienced wonderful side effects. When some of us read a word, we (almost like second nature) decipher what kind of word it is. Also, while reading, some of us recognize participle phrases or adverb clauses and every other kind of construction! Thanks to the teaching methods and technology used by Brad in our class, we're learning a great deal.



You'll Miss Out On The Grandest Event Of The Year?...



Positive Parenting Approaches

by Diane Solomon

Do you ever feel like you try to reason or negotiate with your child to get them to do what you ask? Perhaps you lecture, criticize or give advice? Or maybe you just give in because it's easier?

On January 30th, PS#1 and Crossroads co-sponsored an enlightening evening with Noel Janis-Norton entitled, "Introduction to 'Calmer, Easier, Happier Parenting'." Noel, founder of The New Learning Centre in London, is a learning and behavior specialist and author with more than 30 years' experience in the U.K. and U.S. as a teacher, special needs advisor, consultant and lecturer.

Opening the lecture, Noel's first comment was, "I don't promise Calm, Easy and Happy. Just Calmer, Easier and Happier. It's all in the 'er's'!" What she did provide us with, however, were some immediate tools to help get more cooperation from our children and be less stressed.

Traditionally, most of us do what comes naturally (and what our parents did), which is remind, repeat and nag our children. She gave us techniques to help our children become more cooperative, confident, motivated, self-reliant and considerate. Our main job as parents is to transmit to our children the VALUES, SKILLS AND HABITS that we believe are right.

Her definition of cooperation is: Your children do what you ask them to do, the first time, without any fuss. In order to do this we must teach and train our children into good habits. According to Ms. Janis-Norton, Descriptive Praise is the most powerful motivator and training tool. To use Descriptive Praise, notice and mention every tiny thing your child is doing that is: Right, Just Okay or Not Wrong. It's about being pro-active, rather than reactive.

Further, by engaging your children in what she calls "talk-throughs" all day, you will reduce their resistance. We do this in three ways: by establishing age-appropriate rules and routines; using Descriptive Praise; and asking them instead of telling them what is expected. By having them tell us what is expected of them, it gets internalized.

If you'd like more information about Noel's seminars, please contact the school office.

Reaching Out to Katrina Victims

By Heather Kallemeyn, PS#1 Development Assistant

I recently returned from a week in Mississippi, where I witnessed, firsthand, the destruction wrought by Hurricane Katrina. I volunteered at Camp Coast Care, a relief center for victims of the hurricanes, which serves as a distribution center for food, water, clothing, and other necessary supplies. There is also a free medical clinic staffed by volunteer doctors and nurses. The camp is still serving thousands of people daily.

The wreckage along the Mississippi coastline is much more devastating than any picture on the news or in the papers can convey. So much of the land, as well as the people, will not recover for years; some, it seems, may never fully recover. Entire communities were wiped out, with nothing left but cement foundations and remnants of people's everyday lives.

Our group spent much of our time gutting houses, raking debris, removing fallen trees, and digging through mud to find any salvageable items. One day, I staffed the camp's registration desk. It was sitting there that I saw the situ-



Before



After

ation clearly: the hurricane did not discriminate. People who, seemingly, had everything and people who had little lost everything. They lost their homes, their belongings, and their sources of income. They all now stand in the same lines to receive free food, clothing and medical care. Seeing all those people from all walks of life, suddenly equalized by this catastrophe, it occurred to me that this could so easily be me—my family, my friends, my neighbors.

I am grateful to have had the chance to talk to survivors and hear their stories, and was moved by their willingness to open up to me. One older gentleman told me, "Everything is damaged. I took a step back, had a good cry, and decided to let it go." I also heard, surprisingly often, "I'm all right. I'm alive, happy that my family is safe, grateful to have somewhere to come for help. I'm keeping on."

Returning to work at PS#1, my concerns that the rest of the world may be tiring of Hurricane Relief efforts have been somewhat eased, knowing that our students have also made an ongoing connection to the survivors of Katrina. After the hurricane, a PS#1 committee of students, teachers, administrators and parents researched schools in the area and chose Woolmarket Elementary in Biloxi, Mississippi, as our sister school. Our service projects began with every PS#1 student

writing a letter or drawing a picture for a friend at Woolmarket. Our Youngers collected and sorted travel-sized toiletries and placed them in bags they decorated. The Middles held a nickel and dime drive to purchase gift cards for Woolmarket families. Our After Care students made and sent all kinds of gifts: paper bag puppets, lanyards, tie-dye t-shirts, shell-covered boxes and Lego toys. Currently, our Olders are working on writing persuasive essays to encourage companies to donate necessary supplies to our sister school. And it won't end there.

Our students have not forgotten. They will continue to do what they can to help. Through their efforts, our students will understand how critical it is to get involved, to not stand idly by, as I learned during my time in Mississippi. Through helping others, we learn how to turn compassion into action, and that each of us has the power to effect positive change. I am so glad that PS#1 is "keeping on" in our efforts to reach out, making vital connections to the world around us.

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Nico Zimmerman ('90)

A UCSD, Suma Cum Laude History major and UCLA Law School grad, Nico has just moved to Australia to work with an international law firm.

Sid Perkins ('93)

A Tulane graduate ('03), Sid spent over a year in London and now resides in Philadelphia. He is about to start up a new oil trading company with his uncle.

Andrew Rosenfeld ('94)

Andrew graduated magna cum laude from Yale University in 2004, with both a B.A. and M.A. in Economics. He was a four-year letterman starter on the Yale tennis team and was awarded the annual prize by the university for the male varsity athlete with the highest grade point average. He is currently living in Los Angeles and working as an investment analyst at Canyon Partners in Beverly Hills.

Emma Anderson ('94)

After graduating Suma Cum Laude from Barnard with a degree in History, Emma can now be found studying away at Yale Law.

Killian Clarke ('96)

Killian recently sent us an update and has just graduated from Deerfield Academy. He headed off to Harvard to study Political Science and Arabic this fall. Best wishes, Killian!

Daniel Rosenfeld ('97)

Daniel is currently a junior at Yale University with his PS#1 classmates, Cody Dashiell-Earp (a senior) and Adrienne Quinlan. He is majoring in Physical Chemistry and hopes to pursue a PhD after graduation. Last year, he was named a Beckman Scholar, which funds his research for two years. In March, he will present a paper to the American Chemical Society at their annual meeting in Atlanta. Daniel also plays on the Yale Chemistry softball team that won last year's league championship.

The PS#1 Alumni Association



Alumni Corner

Chassity Griffin ('00)

Chassity tells us that, in her senior year at Crossroads, she is "filling out tons of college applications" while "trying to enjoy (her) last days of high school before it's too late."

Sam Alper ('01)

Judged by Jason Alexander, Seth Green and Alfre Woodard, Sam and a friend wrote and performed a brilliant comedy sketch, earning first place at Harvard Westlake's recent talent competition. Two of Sam's one-act plays were also chosen for this year's Festival of One-Acts at H-W. Congratulations, Sam!

Jordan Alper ('04)

Jordan is enjoying Crossroads, learning tech in the theatre, working on the yearbook, playing tennis and growing.

Diana Conovitz (PS#1 Middles and Olders Teacher '83 - '93) Diana is currently working for the Telluride Historical Museum as a writer and creator of exhibits. She also writes for a local magazine, and enjoys skiing, hiking and spending time with her dogs. We hope you'll come back to visit us soon, Diana.



Auction Tickets Today, So You **Toucan** Celebrate...

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2005-2006 Annual Giving Update

A Commitment to Excellence

Thank you to all who have given so generously to this year's Annual Giving Campaign. We have raised \$375,024 toward our school-wide goal of \$450,000, including donations from our Board of Directors, Faculty and Staff, Current Families, Alumni, Grandparents, Special Friends and Matching Gifts.

Special thanks go out to our Annual Giving Committee:

Alan Wertheimer, Chair

Jeff Dinkin, Lauren Fite, Buzz Harris, Hugh Harrison, Ron Segall, Bruce Tobey, Andrew Watts, Karen Ciccone, Bob Eatman, Jonathan Feldman, Alan Fenster, Christy Full, Rob Jacobs, Ronnie Reade, Scott Stedman, and Mark Terman

The school's fiscal year ends June 30, 2006. All contributions will be acknowledged in the 2005-06 Annual Report. Make your tax-deductible donation or pledge today!



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Save The Date!

March	10	Staff Appreciation Day
	13-17	Conference Days
	30	Open House
April	3-7	Spring Break
	29	An Evening in the Rainforest
May	22-25	Graduates Trip
	23-25	All-School Camping Trip
	26	Post Camping Trip Holiday, No school
	29	Memorial Day, No school
June	15	Last day of classes, Graduation at 4pm
	16	Moving Up Day, 3:30pm

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Annual Auction Fundraiser
at Shutters Hotel
Call Lisa at extension 109
or email Andi Holtzman at
MadHarry1@aol.com
for tickets

