

Community Schools FAMILY ALBUM

Volume XIX *The Newsletter for Community School Alumni* Spring 2007

Community Alumni Provide "Distance Learning" for Fifth Graders

by Nora Kelleher, 5th Grade Parent

How do you make the 50 states mean more than names and shapes on a map? Community School's fifth grade teachers have found a way: correspond with people who live in those states.

For the past three years, fifth graders have written letters to many of Community's far-flung alumni asking for information about the states where those graduates live today. In return, they've received postcards, brochures, books, and souvenirs, as well as many wonderful letters full of facts about the states and memories of Community School.

In addition to memorizing the 50 states and their capitals, teacher Lynn Smith says each fifth grader selects one state for in-depth study. Early in the year, the students research, write, and illustrate travel brochures that describe important events, emblems, and landmarks in their chosen states. Creating the brochures gives them an informational framework for their letters to alumni.

Working with the Office of Advancement, Mrs. Smith and co-teachers Kristen Hammond and Heather Sanders locate alumni in each of the states their students are studying. "We write about a month ahead of time as a courtesy to let them know the children's letters will be coming," Mrs. Smith says, "and just about everyone is happy to participate." Her students are always delighted to get a reply, she adds, "whether it's a quick note on the back of a postcard or a longer letter. The facts and photos they receive from their alumni pen pals make these places real and alive for them."



Some fifth graders proudly show off the postcards and letters they received back from alumni.

Natchez Trace Parkway in Mississippi to Lake Superior in Minnesota.

Barb Zwick Sanders '54 of Sarasota chose "the water" as her favorite Florida attraction. Perhaps this accomplished sailor derives her love of boats and waterways in part from Community teacher Ruth Ferris. Like many alumni, she remembered Miss Ferris both for her excellence as a teacher and for her expertise on the Mississippi River and its riverboats.

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This year, Mrs. Smith says, students chose postage stamps from the "Wonders of America" series and asked alumni about their favorite natural and man-made attractions. Responses spanned the United States, from Acadia National Park in Maine to the beach at Kailua in Hawaii, from the

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Family Album

The alumni newsletter of

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2006-2007

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Headlines

A Message from Matthew Gould

Skills for a Changing World

"To be able to be caught up into the world of thought – that is being educated." -- Edith Hamilton

Society in the United States and throughout the world is undergoing unprecedented change. Demographic shifts, technological advances, globalization, and methods of information sharing are all changing the world as we know it. In fact, some demographers and economists are predicting that the top ten jobs available to college graduates in 2010 will be jobs that did not exist in 2000. What does this mean for education in general and for Community School in particular? It means, in part, that we are preparing children for a world we currently know little about. It has always been the objective of the School to prepare students in the broadest sense, not only for further academic achievement, but also for the continuing process of choosing for themselves from the widest range of possibilities life offers. Further, it has always been the objective of the School to teach those skills and encourage those traits of character which enables achievement in a society undergoing constant social and technological change. But which skills really matter? Which traits of character will truly equip children for the future?

I believe that there are four skill sets that are imperative for children to develop during childhood in order to be successful in the "world of tomorrow" – communication skills, leadership skills, conflict resolution skills,



and the ability to interact in a diverse environment. I also believe that Community School develops these skills in children better than any other place. Community School's emphasis on these particular skills as well as "whole child" development provides our children the best possible preparation.

Communication skills are essential for the future. Of course, Community School students have such wonderful opportunities to develop communication skills – both written and oral. In the early grades, children volunteer and answer questions and share stories with their classmates. In the middle years, children engage in such activities as reading stories at Author's Tea and sharing "edible book reports" for family and friends. Throughout the years at Community, children stand in front of groups at Thursday assemblies and various holiday performances. And, of course, in their final Sixth Grade year students lead assemblies and share their poignant graduation speeches. Furthermore, in a society where instant messaging and short e-mail quips have been the norm, Community School still believes in the beauty of the written word. We ask our students to write constantly in every subject. Our students truly excel in writing as last year on the ERB writing assessment, Community School outscored independent school averages in 100% of the writing categories tested.

Leadership skills are essential to resolving many problems. As children progress through the grades at Community School, the level of responsibility granted to them



increases. Beginning as early as Nursery and Junior Kindergarten, children are expected to perform such “jobs” as “line leader” or “snack helper.” In the sixth grade year, students are afforded a multitude of leadership opportunities such as raising the flag each morning, serving younger students at lunch, leading Thursday assemblies, and delivering their personal graduation speeches. Because we give our students genuine responsibility and offer leadership opportunities, secondary school leaders tell me that our graduates often emerge as leaders when they move on to their next school experience.



Children need to learn conflict resolution. Interpersonal skills, negotiation, and teamwork becomes increasingly important as our world becomes more interconnected and dependent on cooperation for survival. Students at Community work cooperatively in every subject and in every grade. Students learn the give-and-take of discussion, how to stand up for their ideas, and how to listen to the ideas of others. Whether in math class, science class, or around the lunch table, Community School students listen to, learn about, and respect the diverse ideas and opinions of others.

And, finally, with the world becoming ever smaller, our children need to develop the ability to interact in a diverse environment. When our students move into secondary school, college and the workplace, they will encounter di-

verse perspectives and points of view. Negotiating and appreciating differences will be a skill that leads to success. Community School believes that diverse perspectives and meaningful inquiry fuel academic excellence and promote personal growth. The School nurtures and values an environment which embraces genuine respect for individualized talents, perspectives, and opinions. It is fortunate for our students that they come from a multitude of racial and ethnic backgrounds and from 39 different zip codes across the area, so that they may experience the diversity that exists not only in St. Louis, but around the world. Furthermore, Community School’s curriculum is truly global. Our students study a variety of world cultures (e.g., Mexico, China, Australia, India, Japan, and Egypt), read many genres of literature, and come to appreciate the diversity, not only of our world, but of our city and neighborhood communities.

Community School is, indeed, a special place. It is a place where children are appreciated for who they are and for their many individual talents. It is a place where children are loved and where children shine. But it is also a place where thought and care are given to nurturing those skills most necessary for children to be successful – today and tomorrow.

Matthew



Above: Two sixth graders give flag etiquette lessons to the Third Grade. Left: A second grader shares his model rocket hobby during “In the Spotlight.”



A Note from the President

Dear Fellow Alumni,

Depending on when you attended Community School, you have seen it evolve through the years to accommodate its growing needs. Since its founding in 1914, Community School has grown from a small city school located on DeMun Avenue to a larger country school and campus on Lay Road. Along the way, major improvements have been made to the original 1931 home-like school building which have included the Community Center addition in 1948 and the Buder Gymnasium in 1974.

The most recent significant change to the School was in 1994 when Community School expanded and built the wonderful Discovery Center Wing and new Early Childhood Center. These changes enhanced the facility by allowing the enrollment to increase as well as provide the new library and classroom space for Third Grade, French, and a computer lab.

Last fall the Board of Trustees approved a new Master Facilities Plan which was developed by the Buildings and Grounds Committee. This plan encompasses the needs, wants, and dreams of Community while at the same time keeping in mind the School's strong traditions and the mission of nurturing the gifts of mind, body, and spirit. Community School has also maintained an emphasis on performing arts and public speaking.

Many of the needs are directly related to the growth of the school and the need to maintain the highest quality education for the children. These include: a renovated

and expanded kitchen, enhancements to Lay Road and the driveways to provide easier and safer access to the school, and restoring the covered entry porch to its original state. Other changes include moving the fourth grade classrooms to a bigger space away from the east driveway side of the School, and the distractions of delivery and maintenance traffic. A new wing will be built for the fifth and sixth graders to set them apart as leaders of the school. A gross motor and music space for the early childhood building will be created as well as a wonderful performing arts space with adjoining studio space for art, music and drama.

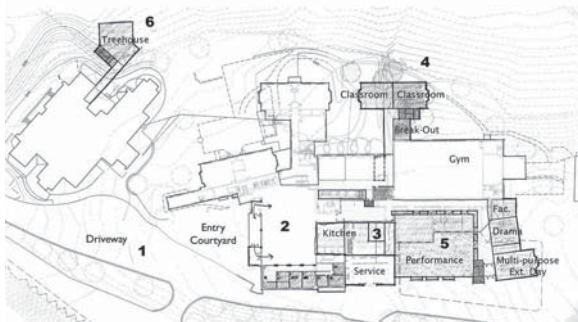
It is an exciting plan and one which will take the Community School we know and love to its next phase of providing the best possible environment for the education of elementary school children without taking away from the natural setting of the Community School campus.

I encourage all Alumni to come by the Haven Art Gallery to view a display of the new Master Facilities Plan and envision it for yourself. It is definitely worth the trip!

As we look ahead to the future,

Mary Jones Otto

Class of 1972



*Above: Site map of the proposed Master Facilities Plan
Right: The Alumni Board listens to a PowerPoint presentation outlining the Master Facilities Plan.*





First Grade Studies Community History

by Debbie Barmeier & Jessica Klingbeil, 1st Grade South teachers

On November 16, 2006 both first grade classes of Community School performed the play *Pieces of Our Past*, about the founding of Community School. The play was composed, written, and directed by Drama Teacher Caroline Van Stavern. Some of the highlights included Mrs. Eiseman's 10 Guiding Principles and fun facts about the barn, Liberty Tree, and traditions. This production taught about the dream of seven mothers to create a progressive school that provided a nurturing environment for children to develop their individual skills and unique talents. They wanted this school to be an extension of the home. This dream became a reality when Community School opened the doors of Grace Church Kindergarten in 1914. This play reinforced the First Grade social studies unit on Community School, present and past. Ms. Van Stavern took facts from the social studies unit to create this wonderful production, which not only educated students, but fulfilled part of the dream of the founding mothers, allowing each child to use his or her special talents by speaking lines, singing solos, etc.

The first grade students loved being in the play, *Pieces of Our Past*. Some of them discussed what they liked best. One liked that while they were practicing for the play they were also learning about Community School.



Another enjoyed introducing the first song because it was also the title of the play, "Pieces of Our Past." One little girl liked dressing up as founding mother Mrs. Culver.

Parents were enthusiastic about *Pieces of Our Past* as well. **Maureen McGarity Sheehan '80** commented, "The Community School play reminded me of the School history I learned about when I was a student. A lot of the traditions are still observed, like the sixth grade camping trip, family style dining, and being outside. It is really wonderful that the first grade students learn about how the founding mothers took on the challenge to start a school. I think that through the format of the play, the students were able to really understand that Community School is a special place for children to learn."

Ms. Van Stavern summarized the entire play experience. She said, "The foresight the founding mothers had in 1914 is inspiring to me every time we begin the rehearsal process. When the children speak of the Guiding Principles, they are quoting the founding mothers. It is important for our children to be grounded in our history while growing into their future."

They just can't stay away! At the 2006 Sixth Grade Graduation, these alumni returned to see their younger siblings graduate. (From left): **Jimmy Martin '01, Alex Bearman '03, Blake Diemer '04, Mike Jin '03, Rhyan Henson '04, Jenny Gerard '04, Alex Lehman '03, Cameron Lehman '01, Sarah Townsley '03, P.J. Kaminer '03, Nick Clemens '02, and James Arnold '01.**





2006-2007 New Life Members

Community School held its Annual Life Member Luncheon on December 14, honoring four new members. One highlight of the ceremony was a gift from Frank Rassieur to Matthew Gould — a photo from the 1930s showing Community students (*from left to right, see picture below*): Franklin Rassieur '38, Milton Rand '39, Bill Danforth '38, Joe Glik '38, J.O. Rand '38, and Willet Watkins '38.

Frank and Mary Rassieur have a long affiliation with Community School and are enthusiastic supporters of its mission. Frank is a 1938 graduate, a member of the second class to graduate from the "Country" School. Frank's sons, Ben and Terry, are former Community School parents, and both have served on the Community School Board of Trustees. Two of Mary's children are graduates: Dan McDonald '74 and Carrie Martin '78. Five grandchildren are Community graduates: Ben '98, Karen '01, Tee '02, Emily '03, and Nick '05, and two are current students, Koehler Martin in grade three and Toby Martin in grade two. Mary and Frank served as grandparent chairs of Annual Giving last year. Frank is former Chairman, President and CEO of Paulo Products Company. He has served on the boards of many professional and business organizations, locally and nationally. Mary and Frank have both served on the boards and committees of many St. Louis civic and educational institutions.

Terry Rassieur is a past parent whose dedication to the School was evident as an active Board member and later as President of the Board of Trustees. He and his wife Peggy are the parents of two daughters, both Community School graduates. Karen '01 is currently a senior at Westminster Christian Academy. Emily '03 is a sophomore at Westminster Christian Academy. Terry served on the Board



(From left): Frank Rassieur '38, Mary Rassieur, Matthew Gould, Darlene Finkes & Terry Rassieur

of Trustees for five years (1997-2002) and participated in or chaired a broad range of committees. He culminated his service by taking the position of Board President during the 2002-2003 school year. Professionally, Terry is Executive VP of Paulo Products Company and serves the greater community as a member of the finance committee of COCA and as treasurer of the members' board of the Missouri Botanical Garden. He also serves on the board of the Center for Biblical Counseling & Education and enjoys cycling.

Darlene Finkes retired from her position at Community School after 19 years of dedicated service as a member of the school staff. Her warm smile, comforting voice, and gracious attitude were a welcome support to the many parents, students, faculty, and staff who surrounded her every day. She came to the School in 1985 to be the main office secretary, a position she held for 14 years. In 1999, Darlene took the position of Administrative Assistant to the Head of School and remained there for the next five years before retiring. Along with her husband Bob, Darlene enjoys sailing, walking, reading, and spending time with their family of four grown children and eight grandchildren. In addition, Darlene's commitment to serve her community has always been of great importance, and now in retirement she is able to spend more time in the community as a Red Cross Disaster Assistance volunteer and a member of the St. Vincent DePaul Society.





The Barn, Liberty Tree, Butterfly Garden & More

contributed by Second Grade students

Each year second graders work on a newspaper unit, and this year several students wrote short articles about various facets of Community School history:

Who Carved This?

Community School has this amazing sculpture called the Liberty Tree. The Liberty Tree stands in the Community Center. It was carved from a White Oak tree that was 200 years old. It stood outside Mrs. Hunkins' office. The person who carved Liberty Tree was Robert Cassilly. The carving shows a little girl standing on a boy with a turtle at the bottom. The tree is special to everyone in the school. There is a plaque at the bottom of the statue that tells us about it.

Butterfly Garden and Tiles

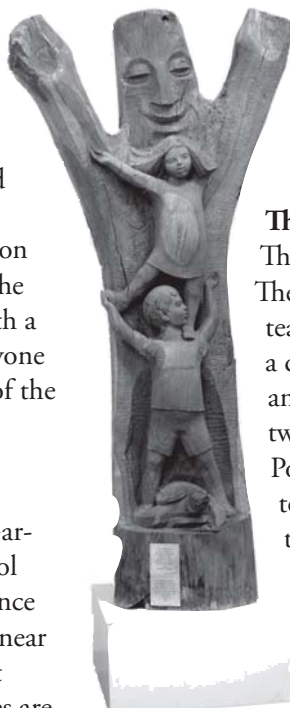
Community School has a beautiful Butterfly Garden. The garden has been at Community School since 1995 and the tile project has been here since 2001. The garden is located behind the school near the driveway. The plants and the flowers attract butterflies and bees. The butterflies and the bees are attracted to the nectar. In the middle of the garden

there is a birdbath. A birdbath is a bowl for a bird to bathe in. The birdbath is made out of tiles which were made by Community School students.

The tile walkway is also made out of tiles made by the children, too. The tiles were installed during the summer. The pictures show hearts and hands from different countries.

The Old Community School Barn

There used to be a barn at Community School. The barn was built by the sixth graders' parents and teachers. The old barn at Community School had a donkey and a horse. The horse's name was Pooka and the donkey's name was Ladeo. The barn had two stalls. Sixth graders had to take care of Ladeo, Pooka, and the stalls. Second Grade brought sheep to the barn. Sixth Grade raised chickens. Sometimes classes brought other animals to stay for a while. The older students rode Pooka bareback sometimes. There were times when Pooka and Ladeo got out of the pasture over the weekend and Community School parents and teachers had to catch them.



Alumni News & Notes

Friends of **Fran Rubin**, a former Community School teacher, donated a beautiful rocking chair in her memory. Community School remained one of Fran's most favorite places. The chair now sits in the Discovery Center.

Gerry Papin '46 had a productive career in investment counseling spanning 45 years. Finally retired, Gerry says, "I am still very healthy and will now pursue my passion for skiing and fly fishing."

Virginia Brilliant '91 received her Ph.D. in History of Art from the Courtauld Institute in London in May 2005, and has been working at the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles as Assistant Curator of European Painting.

Many alumni have visited Community School over the past year: **Ann Ward '42**, **Carol Timson '39**, and **Dan DeHovitz '66**, to name a few!

Please send us your updates and we'll fill your former classmates in on where you are and what you're up to!



*In the spring, it's not unusual to see Community School graduates (who are now seniors in high school) come back to do brief internships. In the picture above, **Amanda Rast '00** helps first grade girls with their reading.*



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Donald Gibbins '43 of Greenville, South Carolina also studied with Miss Ferris and recalled that she “brought the entire pilot house from the Golden Eagle steamship to Community School.” One of several alumni who made the connection between their favorite subjects at Community and their eventual professions, Mr. Gibbins felt that his early love of creative writing at Community helped foster his career in Communications. He also enhanced the class’ study of the American Revolution with the interesting fact that South Carolina chose the palmetto as its state tree to commemorate the role it once played in protecting the city of Charleston. Palmetto wood, used to construct the original fort on Sullivan’s Island, was key to “the defense of our fort in Charleston during the Revolutionary War against the British. They bombarded our fort and tried to destroy it, but the palmetto logs repelled the cannon balls.”

Waite Thompson '52 wrote from New Mexico that he “loved history” as a Community student, “and I still do.” In fact, his favorite attraction is the oldest continuously used public building in the United States: The Palace of the Governors in Santa Fe was built by the Spanish in the early 17th century. Today it serves as the state historical museum.

The fifth grader who asked **Mary-Liz Johnston '70** for information on Minnesota’s Mall of America was rewarded with her recollection of attending a fireworks display inside the mall: “smoky, but worth it.” Ms. Johnston sent a number of postcards with her letter, including one of Minnesota’s capitol in St. Paul. The city’s original name, she said, was Pig’s Eye, in honor of its founder. Sadly, his fame was short-lived. When the Cathedral of St. Paul was built, the church fathers advocated for a more auspicious name for the seat of their beautiful church. Reflecting on her Community years, Ms. Johnston wondered if students still go sledding on the hill. (Yes, they do!)

Writing from Manhattan, **Hope Gladney Jessup '72** chose Central Park — “our best example of nature” — as her favorite attraction. She confirmed for her correspondent that she, too, constructed a Viking ship in fifth grade woodshop class.

From Jackson Hole, Wyoming, **Michael Pruett '79** offered the Rocky Mountains as a hard-to-beat natural attraction. He also gave the fifth graders a demographic perspective, pointing out that his entire state is home to

only 500,000 people, whereas greater St. Louis has 2.5 million.

Roblee McCarthy '59 sent information on his favorite attraction, the Nasher Sculpture Center in Dallas, Texas, but did so via e-mail, “the medium of your generation.” His correspondent had expressed her fondness for islands, but Dallas, he said, “is landlocked” — no islands.



Another corner of the continent, however, has an abundance of islands. **Bill Alcorn '47** described the coast of Maine and its hundreds of islands, inlets and bays. If you could measure along this irregular edge, he said, the coastline would be thousands of miles long. Perhaps just as astonishing to today’s Community students was Mr. Alcorn’s recollection of his mode of transport to and from Sixth Grade: Bingo — his horse!

Chris Larsen '64 particularly loved Art and Shop at Community School, and he grew up to be an architect. He lived and worked in Albuquerque for many years, but wrote from his new home in Las Vegas, Nevada. He expressed the feeling so many alumni seem to have for their old school when he told his Fifth Grade pen pal that at Community he “made several lifelong friends and also learned so much. This school,” he advised her, “will provide you with an outstanding foundation for learning and life.”

“These letters enrich our study of the states so much,” Lynn Smith says, “and I think the alumni enjoy the project almost as much as the kids!” Perhaps one Fifth Grader put it best, offering a succinct summation of this year’s alumni pen pal project: “It was pretty cool!”

Wonders of America Stamps © 2005 USPS. Used with permission. All rights reserved.

We’d like to send a special thank you to the alumni who participated (as of publication):

William Alcorn '47	Wendy Burrows Iannarilli '70	Nathaniel Osburne '67
John Belz '53	Hope Gladney Jessup '72	Michael Pruett '79
Frances May Burton '47	Mary-Liz Johnston '70	Barbara Zwick Sanders '54
Scott Cornwell '79	Clarke Jones '77	David Shores '57
Joan DeHovitz '73	Roy Langenberg '50	David Stix '60
Donald Gibbons '43	Christopher Larsen '64	David Thompson '68
Mary Green '70	Tiger Louis, Jr. '43	Waite Thompson '52
Peter Hobler '69	Roblee McCarthy Jr. '59	Patricia Vibert
Robert Hollander '72	Lee Newman '79	



Where in the World is the Class of 2000?

Community School's Class of 2000 headed off to college earlier this year. Seven years ago these students lived and learned together each day, and now they are scattered across two continents. While we cannot take all the credit for these fine students and what they are up to today, Community School, without a doubt, provided a strong foundation for the pursuit of lifelong learning. We wish them well!



Here is where members of the Class of 2000 are studying today:

Cate Aselage <i>Southern Methodist Univ.</i>	Nicholas Fridrich <i>Wake Forest University</i>	Michael Reese <i>Xavier University</i>
Ricky Birenbaum <i>George Washington Univ.</i>	Lara Gershman <i>University of Michigan</i>	Andrew Steck <i>Boston College</i>
Michael Brasher <i>Dartmouth College</i>	Andrew Jacobson <i>Southern Methodist Univ.</i>	Jonathan Terry <i>Unknown</i>
Caroline Cherrick <i>Washington University</i>	Andrew LaBarge <i>University of Denver</i>	Andrew Trovillion <i>University of Notre Dame</i>
Maisie Culver <i>University of Leeds (England)</i>	Connor McKinney <i>Johns Hopkins</i>	Jennifer Weinstein <i>Bucknell University</i>
William "Bo" Danforth <i>Vanderbilt University</i>	Kirsten Muckler <i>Santa Clara University</i>	Kaitlin Westfall <i>Emory University</i>
Kimberly Denson <i>Wesleyan</i>	Kevin Petroff <i>Unknown</i>	Ronnie Wight <i>Rhodes College</i>
Jack Edison <i>Boston University</i>	Lucy Plegge <i>Vanderbilt University</i>	Alexandra Woolsey <i>University of Indiana</i>
Sam Fowle <i>University of Michigan</i>	Amanda Rast <i>Southern Methodist Univ.</i>	Melissa Wright <i>Vanderbilt University</i>



Want to see this issue in color? Check it out online at:
www.communityschool.com/CS_Involvement/Alumni.html

What's New?

Thanks to all who contributed to this issue of Family Album Alumni News. Please keep the information coming! We love hearing from you and so do your classmates! Updates will be published in the next issue. You may also email us at mail@communityschool.com. If you'd like to start receiving our monthly e-newsletter, the **OakLe@f**, and find out even *more* about what's happening at Community, please let us know your e-mail address too!

Name: _____ Class: _____
 First (Maiden) Last

Email: _____

Please let my classmates know that I . . .

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