

Parkmont News

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• SPRING 2004

Middle School Adventures

By Gina Duffin

Have you ever stood on the very top of a telephone poll with nothing to hold on to? Well neither have I. But many of the Parkmont Middle School students have! That's right, most of this year's middle school students climbed right up a telephone poll, stood at the top (which had a diameter of less than a foot!) and then jumped off to grab and swing on a trapeze! While this might seem shocking, it was completely safe, as it was part of Tuckahoe State Park's outdoor education confidence course.

This October trip was just one of the many trips that the middle schoolers have taken and will be taking this school year. In fact, one of the most unique aspects of *continued on page 3*

Right Inset: Students prepare for the zip wire at the FLOC ropes course. Below: Mike Sanchez, Ben Buchbinder, and Maya Solomon-Lane reach the top of Old Rag on the Middle School Hike.



Spring 2004

Dear Parkmont and Somerset Families and Friends,

It's a busy time at school, where we're helping 11 seniors graduate by working with them on 11 senior petitions which represent the culmination of their Parkmont experience. And we're sending out the final school trips for the year, to canoe the Shenandoah, bike the Canal, raft the Youghiogheny, and fight the sun's rays at Assateague. We've made our annual visit to Merida, Tulum, and the flamingo preserve in Celestun on the Yucatan. Another generation of Parkmont students has canoed up Buttonwood canal at Flamingo in the everglades and trekked through the Audubon Society's Corkscrew Swamp with its teeming wildlife. In the next month the upper school and middle school students will wrap up this year's more than 7000 hours spent working in the community, helping political campaigns, taking temperatures at local clinics, putting together bikes from scratch, and developing websites for nonprofits.

32 years ago, a more public relations conscious parent group starting Parkmont might have taken the motto "no child left behind" so that it could have escaped association with the testing frenzy that it monikers today. School has always been a perilous experience for many young people's self-esteem—but now with NCLB we've found a way to share the pain with adults and systems, all of whom risk being failures. On the other hand, we're cheered by the work spreading nationally (some of it sponsored the Gates Foundation) to "small size" our public schools. We have an independent school system that folks are willing to pay 20 grand for annually that tops out high schools at 500 and class sizes at 17 to 20 and promotes achievement by engaging students in meaningful study and connecting them with concerned adults. We don't need to experiment for 20 years to see if testing will leverage higher achievement. We have models that work.

This coming weekend 40 young poets will gather at Parkmont to share their work at the 22nd annual Parkmont Poetry Festival. I was at the table when we came up with this idea (in part meant to inspire more independent school collaborations with public schools) in 1982 but it's been Judy Lentz who's run with it for more than 2 decades and made it one of the most respected children's cultural events in the city.

Parkmont's supporters have been active this year. Foundation dollars are scarce in this time of tax giveaways but this year's Annual Campaign was our most successful ever (\$68,000 and still counting) and our auction group engineered a 60% increase in take with some inspirational new board help.

Parkmont lost one of its best friends when Judy Jacobs passed away from cancer back in February in Rochester. Judy and Marc's children Liane and Stephen attended Parkmont back in the 70's where Judy contributed her Montessori expertise to mix in our Parent cooperative. She reappeared in the late eighties to help on our board and she led us as President during the school-saving year that we merged with Somerset. And then she returned again, as a learning specialist and advocate for children in FLOC's foster care program, who knew better than me which unusual kids in the foster system might use Parkmont to advantage. The first student she sent me was an eighth grader who couldn't divide 20 by 5 but proceeded to lecture me about the successes of FDR's domestic policies, a prototype for Mel Levine's different minds study. Judy's last student bequest to Parkmont wrote us a week ago from Hampton University, where he receives his political science degree this weekend.

"I am forever grateful to Parkmont. You and your committed staff never gave up on me. Parkmont prepared me for college, and gave me stability, when the rest of my life was unstable. . . The work that you and your staff do at Parkmont is immensely important to youth that would not fit into a traditional school environment, like myself. Parkmont is amazing! It is like a big family, and that type of environment changes lives. (I AM LIVING PROOF.)"

We're never short of meaningful work here. Thanks to all of you who help make it possible.

Best Wishes,



Ron McClain, Director

Parkmont's program is the amount of trips we take with our students. These trips give students

the opportunity to learn valuable lessons about themselves and the world, that they often wouldn't learn in a classroom.

At Tuckahoe State Park, we also climbed a rock wall; played various trust, cooperation, and team-building games; canoed and kayaked; and played two very intense games of capture the flag by the light of the moon.

On our most recent trip, the middle schoolers joined the upper schoolers for an all-day ski trip at Whitetail Ski Resort. Everyone had the opportunity to take lessons (whether they were beginner or experienced skiers/snowboarders) and although we



Above: Alex Acuna, Eli Nascimento, and Evcan Odoms take a deserved rest on Old Rag.

all came away with a few bruises, everyone felt that they had learned a little more or were at least a little more comfortable swishing down a mountain! It was wonderful witnessing experienced students helping the neophytes as well as older students helping out the younger ones. At the end of the day, everyone was happily exhausted and I'm sure that many climbed eagerly into their beds.

One of the other trips that the middle schoolers have to look forward to this year is a trip to the Chesapeake Bay, where students will have the opportunity to learn about the bay's natural resources and diverse habitats. Also, middle schoolers will attend our annual end of the year beach trip to Assateague National Park on the Eastern Shore. As always, these trips are my favorite part of our *Right: Middle Schoolers spot each other on the high ropes. Below: Vincent Alozie, teacher Gina Duffin, and Dalton Bush at lunch.*

curriculum, because they help demonstrate Parkmont's belief that learning is a life-long journey, and we're here to help them see the possibilities ahead more clearly.



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Photo Essay: A Day on The Susquehanna

Gina Duffin's middle school Chesapeake Bay Ecology Class studies the relationships between the bay's organisms and their environment. Students in this class began by studying the rivers and streams, starting as far north as New York and extending as far south as West Virginia and Virginia that create the bay's watershed.

From this, they began to understand that the health of everything within its watershed affects the health of the bay. Students learned about the history of the bay, and important ecological and environmental concepts that not only helped them understand how human activities have hurt the health of the bay, but also how we can make changes in our homes and communities to help save the bay and its wildlife, as well as create a more sustainable society. This spring, the group took a trip on a Potomac River Workboat, called the "Susquehanna." By testing the water quality of the Potomac and the Anacostia Rivers, and by examining the different wildlife and man-made garbage found within these rivers, students learned about the many environmental issues that are affecting these historic rivers.

Parkmont Abroad

By Kim Schraf

So here's one of my Secret Life of Walter Mitty fantasies: I'm hunched forward over the handlebars of my bicycle, academic robes streaming precariously in the wind, rattling over cobblestones in a mad dash to Balliol or Christ Church (whichever) to defend my thesis on the classical elegy. I know, not very original; I've torn it from the frames of Iris or Goodbye Mr. Chips or the pages of Dorothy Sayers' Gaudy Nights. I've always, always wanted to taste Oxford, and two summers ago Parkmont sent me there to do just that.

Faculty development is a burgeoning focus for us, but it has typically taken the form of evening lectures, day-long symposia, or weekend seminars as far afield as Baltimore or Glenelg, Maryland. And Ron has sent staff to some fabulous locales to scout out an itinerary for a traveling Main Lesson (so important to know your way around that Mexican campo with nine restless upper school students in tow). This was different, though: a two-week residence at Mansfield College, Oxford, with thirty educators from all over the world, run by dons of the university. Each of us chose an area of interest to be explored intensively three times a week in intimate "discussion groups" (mine was English literature), and met as a larger group for plenary sessions (lectures), guided tours, theatre outings, meals and – religiously – tea. I'm spearheading a giving campaign to fund the implementation of this mid-afternoon ritual here at Parkmont. It's the pause that revives and civilizes.

Well, I was in heaven. No frills, mind you – we lived like university students in spartan dorms, but we ate communally in stately dining halls like something out of Harry Potter, and combed the immediate environs in sunshine and rain (mostly rain): the Bodleian Library, the Ashmolean Museum, Broughton Castle (site of the filming of Shakespeare in Love) and, a short "tube"-ride away, Windsor Castle and Eton College. I thought about some of our kids who have never ventured beyond the four sectors of DC climbing Aztec pyramids and swimming with manatees in freshwater springs.

I knew how they felt.

What's more, I stepped back into the shoes of a student as I stepped into the English fellows' academic office at Corpus Christi College for my seminar on critical and pedagogical approaches to teaching poetry in American classrooms, which boiled down to a hard look at how to teach hard texts. I hadn't tackled Shelley's "Adonais" or Larkin's "The Whitsun Weddings" in many a year, and while I don't plan to teach them next session in British Literature, I reconnected with some of the frustrations as well as the little epiphanies of being the learner. And of doing so at the feet of Val Cunningham, the wildly eccentric, truly brilliant, flamboyant mad-scientist-Ph.D. who led our group. I fear that with all of my singular quirks, I shall never be as colorful a figure in the memories of my students as he was for me.

The other key piece of the experience, of course, was the society and camaraderie of the other teachers, most of them from schools as unlike Parkmont as Oxford was. I listened to countless tales of the chokehold teachers felt by the imposition of standards of learning and mandated curriculum components. Several of them taught in the International Bacchalaureate (IB) program and bemoaned their inability to deviate from a proscribed reading list even when student enthusiasm warranted it. The group spent a day visiting classes and talking with students and staff at the Peers School, a technology "college" for middle- and high-school-aged kids in Oxford. There, in accordance with Tony Blair's version of "no child left behind," teachers are held to time limits for each segment of a lesson plan. Fifteen minutes for lecture; eight minutes for question and answer (must call on five different students); five minutes for oral reading; three minutes to assign new work! Beat the clock. I came away with genuine gratitude for the flexibility I wield at Parkmont, even with all of its challenges.



Kim Schraf and her teaching colleagues at Manchester College, Oxford, England.

Finally, if there remained any doubt that there was a serendipity and magic to my two-week lark, there came this confirmation. As I sat at a window station in an Internet café, checking mundane e-mails from the States, I was startled by a tapping on the windowpane. There, grinning in amazement, was Tej Rae, former Parkmont teacher who left a few years back to teach in Zambia. We made a date for tea (that's just what you do), and reminisced and caught up. Parkmont has indeed spread itself around, and manages still to reconnect in new places.

James Basker, a professor of English at Columbia and the president of Oxbridge Academic, says he started this program because he knew how burnt-out teachers were at the close of a demanding academic year and wanted to provide an opportunity for them to recharge and refresh their spirits. There is no denying that this work that we all do is important and difficult; to have that acknowledged and rewarded is a great thing. Before I left for England, I had just finished up another roller-coaster year at Parkmont (my twelfth), helped to chart an Action Plan to guide our newly-awarded accreditation, and bought my first house. The spirit needed serious recharging. I received it in romantic surroundings, indulging the life of the mind and the company of colleagues. Can I be a bit of an egghead and close with a quote from John Donne? "The University is a Paradise, Rivers of Knowledge are there, Arts and Sciences flow from thence, bottomless depths of unsearchable Counsels there." Thanks, Parkmont!

All-School Ski Trip

By Art Bierwirth

On Friday, January 23, 2004, approximately forty-five Parkmont students and staff left school around 7 a.m., destined for the all-school trip to the White Tail Ski Resort.

Chaperoned by Wendel Landes, Art Bierwirth, Rich Hoppock, Gina Duffin, Robin Bingham, Willa Reinhard, and Nijole Gedutis, both the faculty and students greatly appreciated the bus rental that allowed us to relax while someone else drove us in comfort for the hour and a half ride to the slopes.

Upon arriving at White Tail, I excitedly read the sign that indicated 19 slopes and trails were open for skiers and snowboarders, and all five lifts were in operation. There was plenty of snow, with a reported average base of nearly 44 inches. Looking upwards from outside the lodge, I could see and even feel the airborne flakes that erupted from the snow



Above: A cold and very blustery day on the slopes at whitetail

out wind chill. Despite the multiple layers of clothing I was wearing, I could still feel the cold biting at my face and fingertips. Departing the lift, I looked at the students beside me. Even with the cold, we were all excited about the day's adventures ahead without the pressures of academics on our minds. With a deep breath of anticipation, we zipped down the trail (some more cautiously than others), and I quickly forgot the cold as I watched the scenery fly by with an exhilarating sense of speed.

Unfortunately, others could not overlook the cold. Several students forgot to bring gloves or scarves and scurried to buy them at the shop before frostbite set in, and even many of those warmly dressed sought refuge by the glowing fire in the lodge after an hour of skiing. The bravest and heartiest students took breaks only to eat, before returning for as many runs as possible before the 4 pm departure time.

Those lucky enough to see 10th grader Dana Ferguson witnessed his snowboarding acumen as he grinded on rails and caught air on the advanced slopes. Beginning snowboarder Dalton Bush was equally impressive with his daylong determination and desire to keep practicing and honing his skills, even after experiencing the multiple bumps and pains that first time snowboarders inevitably go through. Hard work and persistence benefited a number of other students as well, whose confidence and abilities had noticeably improved throughout the day.

The snowmaking machines ran constantly, the wind chilled us, but

we enjoyed short lift lines and a light crowd. We didn't lose anybody, nobody was seriously hurt, and most people had a good time either skiing, snowboarding, or bonding inside the lodge. By my standards, this was a very successful outing.



Above: Eli Nascimento happily relaxes on the bus home after a day of snowboarding

makers to provide a surface condition of machine made packed powder and loose granular snow.

Everyone headed to the lodge to bundle up and receive lift tickets. After getting equipped with either ski or snowboard gear, students ventured out in groups of two or more. Some opted for lessons and warmed up on the beginner slopes, while the more experienced, bold, or perhaps naïve dove headlong into the challenges of the blue and black diamond trails.

Just before getting off the ski lift at the top of the mountain for my first run of the day, I checked the temperature...eight degrees Fahrenheit...with-

Alumni Profile

Tom Mertens, 1999, had to become a certified welder to make this metal face out of found objects. An art student at Frostburg State University, he recently won an award for another sculpture. A computer graphic of his also was chosen for an exhibition poster. He plans to start work next year on his master's degree.

Quartered Orange by Tom Mertens, class of 1999





Above: Elias Kennedy putting together bikes at the Bicycle Place

Internship Support

Many thanks to the dozens of businesses across the city that have served as internships to our students this year. The “supervisor” at each organization has worked with our students, giving them guidance, ideas, and mentoring, as the students learn work skills, gain experience, and develop ideas about their own future careers.

Photography teacher Alison Duvall captured a few of the students who work at some of the commercial sites.

From right to left: Sergio Luna at the CD Game Exchange in Adams Morgan. Bricanna Jordan at Foot Locker. Mary Keegan-McClennon working at Commander Salamander in Georgetown.



Internship Sites

2Mac Barber Salon AFLCIO Asylum Wake Skate Snow Ayuda Para el Consumidor Brookside Nature Center Capitol Inquiry Cats R Us, Inc. CD/Game Exchange Center for the Advancement of Hispanics in the Sciences CJ Foreign Columbia Horse Center Columbia Road Health Services DC Courthouse DJ Hut Dream Wizards Games & Books Eagle Design and Management Fabulous Finds by Hasasah Fleet Feet Foot Locker GAP Community Child Care Center Goldies Child Development Center Grafitti Audio and Visual Hudson Trail Outfitters Iona Senior Services - Day Health Center Joy of Motion Dance Center

L'Academie de Cuisine Lowell School Martha's Table Meadowbrook Stables Morgan Day Care National Capital YMCA National Cathedral Other Realms Revolution Cycles Silver Spring Coop Southeast Library Spanish Educational Development Center Sports World Springvale Retirement Community Center Tee's Music Box The Bicycle Place The Tropical Lagoon Tina's Consignment Shop Touchstone Gallery Up Against the Wall/ Long Rap Inc. US Capitol Historical Society US International Trade Commission Walter Reed Army Medical Center YMCA — Calomiris Young Playwright's Theater

Faculty Profile: Wendel Landes

By Nijole Gedutis

This is Wendel Landes' 6th year teaching at Parkmont. He and I sat down after school one day to talk about what he's doing, both in and out of the classroom.

Nijole: My first question is, what are you up to these days? Are you still working on your house?

Wendel: Yeah, my house. I've been reminded of the saying that the last 10% of a job takes 90% of the time. That's what I've been doing. I started the job in June, and it's almost June again. It's fixing tiny little things, so it's lost its glamour, is not that much fun anymore. I'll be glad when it's done. But it looks very nice. It's an attic, a bedroom. A really big, open space.

Nijole: And you moved in . . .

Wendel: It'll be two years that we've been there in August.

Nijole: Are you still rock-climbing?

Wendel: All the time. In fact, as soon as we're done, that's where I'm going. That's definitely my biggest hobby. During the winter I go to the gym to climb at least a couple times a week. And if I can, I go outside at least once on the weekend.

Nijole: Is it stress relief?

Wendel: It definitely is. Probably the thing I like most about rock-climbing is the focus that it gives you. Your focus is really singular at that point. There's nothing, nothing else on your mind. Especially when things are more difficult or feel like they might be dangerous.

Nijole: Kind of Zen . . .

Wendel: Yeah, it is. Whenever I finish a weekend of climbing that's the thing that I remark on the most, that I was so focused during that time. There were no distractions.

Nijole: Which is nice when you have a job that's all consuming in some ways. I feel like sometimes it's hard to set aside what goes on here any given day.

Wendel: Yeah, thoughts swirling around in your head that kind of won't leave you alone.

Nijole: Good and bad.

Wendel: Definitely both good and bad.

Nijole: Along those lines, but stepping back, what drew you to teaching in the first place?

Wendel: Well, it was never really a conscious decision to be a teacher. It was sort of a case where the work lured me in progressively. I worked with For Love of Children for a period of time, doing outdoor activities, and that was something I really liked. We would do these 16 day trips. Out backpacking and canoeing, and that was my first intense work with youth, I guess. I eventually decided that that was too tiring to do for too long, though. I did that for two years, then had the chance to come here. It wasn't any less tiring . . .

Nijole: But at least you can go home at the end of the day . . .

Wendel: You can go home at the end of every day and regroup, and I still get a chance here to do some of the things I like, in terms of being outdoors, sharing that with people. So, I guess that's kind of what drew me in. I enjoy being able to share some of the things I'm interested in with people.

Nijole: Is that what keeps you going?

Wendel: Probably. Yeah, being here, the thing that keeps me going the most is being interested in the things I'm teaching and being able to learn new things myself as I prepare to teach them. When I teach Genetics and Evolution, it's something I'm really interested in and I enjoy doing a lot of reading for that class, so it brings some new ideas into what I'm doing in class, which makes it more interesting for me, and hopefully for everybody else.

Nijole: What are your favorite classes to teach?

Wendel: My favorite class to teach is probably Ecology, because we've had the chance to travel to some different locations and really learn in a pretty in depth way about a whole bunch of different eco-systems – ones that all ended up being pretty close to each other, they're all in the South, but they're also different. So I've enjoyed that class. I also like to teach about Genetics and Evolution. That's a fun class to do because it allows you to think a lot about human history and puts humanity in perspective with all the rest of the natural world.

Nijole: Aside from teaching, you do all the middle school coordinating . . .

Wendel: I enjoy working with the middle schoolers; teaching them because of their general enthusiasm, having conversations with them, and doing advisory with them. Especially the opportunities to do some of the traveling we do with the middle school, the events we fit in that aren't normal, day to day.

Nijole: If you could design the perfect class to teach, what would it be?

Wendel: I'd have to have the perfect students

Nijole: And they would do all their homework . . .

Wendel: Yeah. Right. I think the perfect class for me would be a class in the Rocky Mountains. The setting would be really important. We'd be doing a lot of backpacking, basically living outside for a period of time, traveling, learning about that area. I've thought periodically that I'd like to do a class on Lewis and Clark. Get into the history, and then also to retrace the journey. It'd be a little hard with all of the dams and things on the Missouri River, but there are parts of it that are still pretty wild, and we could do a lot of canoeing, a lot of backpacking as part of it. So some combination of that would be something I'd like to teach. And I'd need students who'd be into it, who'd be just as interested in it as I am so that the teacher ends up being more of a facilitator, less of a boss. Everybody would be a little more independent, maybe.

Nijole: This is the time of year when things start winding up – not down, per say. Do you have plans for the summer yet?

Wendel: Cheryl and I are planning right now to go on a road trip out to Colorado, Wyoming, the northern Rockies, basically camp out there for about a month, do some backpacking, and if I can convince her, some rock-climbing, whatever comes up. Just sort of relaxed, travel and see the west. We've both been out there, but never for a long time, and it seems like that's what you'd need in order to experience it. I may be working here, too. So it depends on what happens, I guess.

Nijole: Sounds amazing. So, I guess I should let you get to your rock-climbing now.

Wendel: I'm on my way.

Auction Raises Funds for Financial Aid and Computers

by Christy Halvorson Ross

Parkmont's Computer Center and Students on Financial Aid were greatly aided by April 3rd's Silent Auction proceeds. The event raised more than \$20,000—a 60% increase over last year's auction fundraiser!

Not only was the fundraiser successful, it was a lot of fun. The silent auction was spread throughout the second floor, with different classrooms being host to themed items. Attendees

had the opportunity to bid on restaurants & home-cooked meals, recreational events like bowling, pool, rock-climbing and canoeing, theatre events throughout the city, services ranging from pedicures to tax preparation or financial assistance, and a variety of goods including paintings, bike helmets, and beautifully knit scarves knit by parent Elaine Aldrich.

Downstairs was an elaborate and delicious spread of hors d'oeuvres, desserts, coffee, and drinks, all of which was donated by parents and friends of Parkmont. Also on display was the collection of baskets, many of which were put together by Parkmont student advisory groups! These advisory groups compiled a garden basket, a movie basket, a bath basket, a picnic date basket, and a candy basket. These items (and other baskets) were enjoyed by all and generated many bids.

Over 100 people (parents, teachers, friends, alumni, former parents...) attended the event. People had a great time, wandering throughout the building, bidding on items, sipping wine,



Left: The Auctions wonderful co-chairs, Sharon Hess and Cille Kennedy Above: Guests browse and bid on the 130+ fabulous items at the silent auction, benefitting financial aid and the computer center

meeting other parents, eating well, and helping support Parkmont.

So many people made the 2004 auction so successful. Below is a list of the generous donors who contributed 130 items to the event. Many parents, board members, and staff helped solicit items (special thanks to Maria Ortiz, who kept those items rolling in!) Others brought in food, or wine for the "Wine Cellar" item. Numerous people helped with setup, decorations, and check-out. A special thanks to Board Development Chair, Cari Gradison, who offered a toffee challenge to staff and board members in order to build the number of attendees at the auction (on the same front, she also invited many of her own friends to attend!) She also came up with the "Financial Aid" item, where, for the first time, we invited guests to contribute directly to financial aid with a winning "bid." This item, alone, brought in over \$4,000 to the School!

Finally, we owe our co-chairs, Cille Kennedy and Sharon Hess, heaping thanks! They ran this event from start to finish, soliciting items, buying supplies, managing volunteers, calling parents, cooking food, setting up, cleaning up...you NAME it! They were absolutely the most fun, energetic, and organized people I could imagine working with. They enabled the event to occur so seamlessly, and thus brought in so many dollars to the School. Thank you.

DONORS WHO CONTRIBUTED ITEMS TO THE PARKMONT AUCTION

Elaine Aldrich	AMC Theatres	Gina's Advisory	Outback Steakhouse
Joan Cushing and Paul Buchbinder	American Inn of Bethesda	Hawk N' Dove Restaurant	Panera Bread
Jo Cox and John Cox	Amernick Bakery	Hillwood Museum	Parkway Custom Dry Cleaning
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Gary Heurich	Art's Advisory	Maggiano's Little Italy	Rota Portait & Design
Cille Kennedy	Arucola	Mamma Lucia Restaurants	Shakespeare Theater
Jeri Roth Lande	Baltimore Orioles	Marrakesh Restaurant	Sherwin Williams
Wendel Landes	Barry Stelzer Photography	Mayorga Coffee Factory	Silver Stars Gymnastics
Judy Lentz	Bill Gruen, CPA	Mehler + Wichansky PC, Andrea B. Feinberg	Starpower
Brenda Maier	Blair Mansion Inn	Minute Man Press	The Bicycle Place
Nicole Manly Hanawalt	Blue Ridge Outfitters	Monarch Paint and Wallpaper	The Honey Baked Ham Co.
Elizabeth McDermott	Buffalo Billiards	Moorenko's Ice Cream Café	The Kennedy Center
Shannon Morris	Café Deluxe	Morris Miller Liquors	The Oval Room
Maria Ortiz	Capri Restaurant	Morrison-Clark Inn	Theater J
Jane Perkins	Chadwicks—Friendship Heights	National Museum - Women in the Arts, Carol Lascaris	Trader Joe's Tysons Corner
Willa Reinhardt	Circuit City Foundation	Nijole's Advisory	Vertigo Books
Dick Roth	Colors	Noel Brazil	Washington Redskins
Kim Schraf	Duron Paints and Wallcoverings	Old Sarge Handyman Services	Wendel's Advisory
Judy Weisman	ESPN Zone	Olney Theatre Center for the Arts	Wheat's Landscape Design Center
Lee Wolff-Silver	Everyman Theater	Opera Lafayette	White Flint Golf Park
Aikido Shobukan Dojo	Giant Foods		

Photo Essay: Springtime Means Ceramic Time at Parkmont

Each spring and fall, Parkmont art teacher Alison Duvall offers Ceramics as an Afternoon Class. The studio houses 2 electric and 2 kick wheels in a covered outdoor area, and handbuilding is done at picnic tables outside. Each session, students are able to take home a number of glazed pots and sculptures done by hand and on the wheel. At right and below are some of the beautiful results from this year!



Somerset Alumni News

Llyn Peabody (1980) writes, "I now have my own business as a professional organizer. I've been traveling for about a year and helping people clear clutter and set up systems to make their lives work better and help them reach their dreams and goals."

Stacy (Chanin) Butler (1980) gave us lots of wonderful news about her life in Banning, California. She teaches students with varying degrees of medical conditions and disabilities. Working in a high school gives her ample time to think about her Somerset experiences, "I am reminded of the contrast to my high school days and treasure them. I am so grateful for my experience at Somerset. Despite what wasn't perfect, I really don't know where I would be without it. The encouragement to learn who I am gave me the courage to pursue what I have and experience many things in my life. Stacy is "currently in my second marriage with a wonderful man I met while hiking in the Sierra Club." They have hiked, camped, climbed, kayaked, canoed and taken advantage of the numerous opportunities near CA, including Death Valley, the Grand Canyon, Joshua Tree, Sequoia National Forest, the Channel Islands, the Redwoods, Yosemite, and Newport Bay.

Laurie Anderson (1984) is a professor of plant ecology at Ohio Wesleyan University.

Jenny (Cataldo) Gentry (1990) would love to get back in touch with a number of classmates and teachers from her era. She is living in Chincoteague, Virginia. Her email address is jenny-gentry@hotmail.com.

In the fall, **Erik Patterson (1991)** wrote to us his news since leaving Parkmont. "I left the Metro area in '94, moved to Prescott, AZ and thought that I would become a professional rock climber. After realizing that I am scared of heights and nobody pays anyone to hang out in the desert climbing rocks, I moved. It took me five years and the incidental acquisition of a college degree to wake up to these facts. After my epiphany I roasted coffee for a while then made my way to Portland, OR, coffee Mecca of the western hemisphere. The beer is good too. I found a job working with the homeless, mentally ill in a downtown housing facility. Actually, the job found me, and thank god it did because it kindled

an interest in psychiatry/social work that has kept me humble ever since. I now work for a mobile crisis team, as a social worker, responding to various mental health crises throughout our county. I still enjoy the occasional rock climb and various other forms of entertainment (writing short stories, playing Rock Paper Scissors, sky diving). I just returned from Europe and am planning a trip to Sri Lanka."

Parkmont Alumni News

Daphne Kwok (1976) would love to hear from former classmates! Daphne522@hotmail.com. She is currently working as the Executive Director of the Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies, seeking to fill the political pipeline with more Asian Pacific Americans.

Danny Rotner (1978) has moved to Boulder, CO.

Parkmont sends love to the family of Judy Jacobs, who died in Rochester, New York, this winter. Judy spent her career working with & changing the lives of countless youth, and also served on Parkmont's Board for a time.

Liane Jacobs (1979) and **Stephen Jacobs (1976)** both wrote to Parkmont and established a fund in their mother's name. Liane also gave us news on some of her classmates.

Amalia Parsons Jones is married and has two great kids. She is still living in D.C. Liane wrote, "Lincoln [Leibner] is one of our nation's heroes, having pulled 9 people out of the Pentagon on September 11th." Cara Biasucci is an independent film maker.

Monica Rotner (1980) has 2 year-old twins and a 7 year-old.

Deborah Archer, mother of Matthew and **Robert Archer (1989)**, wrote in to say, "Thanks to Parkmont for helping Matt and Rob grow into confident, independent, and happy adults. Matthew works at Yellowstone National Park and Big Sky Ski Resort doing those things he learned to love at Parkmont. Rob is married to Audrey, living in Atlanta. He is an engineer working on an MBA. His wife Audrey is a Physical Therapist working on a PhD.

Michael Volpe (1991) have been living and working in Thailand for the past two years.

K.C. Higgins (1995) is having a great time writing books and doing research for others.

Paula Borges (1997) is working is

working for a law office and is going back to school. She is living at home in Adelphi, MD.

Matt Van Dyke (1997) is a policeman in Berwyn Heights in P.G. County. Congratulations on the birth of his first child!

Cayman Eby (1998) got out of the Army infantry in April 2001, lived in Florida for about 18 months where he worked as a bartender, waiter, financial planner and retail shop manager. He now lives in Savannah, GA with his girlfriend and their son, Ryan, who is now 2. He is finishing up his first year of film school at the Savannah College of Art and Design.

Melissa Jackson (1999) is living in Adams Morgan and is working at the Washington Hospital Center. She is a pharmaceutical tech.

Olivia Soileau (2000) will be graduating from Evergreen State College on June 11th! Congratulations! She will be receiving her BA with a focused study in education and social change. Olivia is moving back to D.C. in June. She kindly says of Parkmont, "I send my love to all the faculty members that helped me along the way; if it wasn't for my experience at Parkmont I would not be where I am today, so thank you everyone."

Henry Solomon (2003) appeared in The Maui News in February, as part of a feature on the AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps. Henry was part of a nine-member AmeriCorps crew that cleared away nonnative plants on Kanaha Beach Park. The crew spent nine weeks on Maui, part of their 10 months in the program. After an intense orientation in the fall, which included CPR & First Aid training, 15-passenger van and pick-up truck driving training, and much more, Henry's first project was working at a food bank in San Francisco. His "specialties" include physical training and security. In addition to his AmeriCorps work, Henry is also in a band—piano, guitar, trash cans, and Henry on the djembe.

Parkmont wants to keep in touch with you! Please send your latest mailing and e-mail addresses to cross@parkmont.org or call us at 202.726.0740.

continued on page 12

Restricted Funds Allow Parkmont Unique Travel and Study Opportunities

The John Lentz Adventure Fund this year supported student travel in the Yucatan and the Everglades. This was Parkmont's 8th trip to Mexico in the last 10 years and our fifth to the Everglades in the last 18. The Lentz Adventure Fund provides financial aid for Upper School travel classes, making such opportunities available to all of our students, regardless of circumstance.

The Randy Pellaton Memorial Fund supported the middle school adventure programming for the 12th consecutive year. Parkmont's middle schoolers spent 2 days at the Tuck-

ahoe State Park environmental center in October and another day on a skipjack in the Chesapeake with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation in March.

The Popkin Social Studies Fund supported the development of a new upper school course this year called "The British Empire and American Imperialism" through the purchase of \$800 in texts and \$400 in DVD and VHS tapes. The course integrates the use of commercial film (Zulu, Khartoum, Exodus, Gandhi, The Ugly American) in the study of Imperialism and has provided a remarkable opportunity for Parkmont students to be close observers of the Iraqi post-war period during their review of earlier experiences in empire building and maintenance.

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