

Parkmont News

VOLUME 11, ISSUE 1

WINTER 2003

From Climbing Up Ropes to Skiing Down Mountains: MS Trips of 2002-2003

By Gina Duffin

We were standing at the top of Main Street, a steep and generally scary black diamond at Wisp ski resort in western Maryland. It wasn't easy looking down - straight down - at the people getting on the lift below. The people were the size of ants. But Michael, who had only skied down a black diamond once before, had no fear. Or at least, if he did, he was fighting hard not to show it. When Michael reached the bottom he had only fallen once, and was more proud of himself than I'd ever seen.

Later that day I took another student, Ben, for the first time down a steep black diamond, and others, like Laura, down their first ski slope, which can be just as terrifying when you're still not quite comfortable moving with the long sticks strapped to your feet. But once they reached the bottom, they all radiated an inner glow of delight and satisfaction that only comes when you've faced and overcome a difficult challenge.

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Above, Middle School students work as a team to ascend the wall at FLOC learning center. Students below set out to traverse the high ropes.



March 24, 2003

Dear Parkmont and Somerset Friends and Families:

Friday was a faculty retreat day. We spent the morning talking about Constructivism, guided by a book written by Bruce Marlowe and Marilyn Page. Bruce was our learning specialist 15 years ago when we were at Temple Sinai, so it's with singular pleasure that I see what help his models and encouragement do for our younger staff. Constructivism challenges the educator to pay particular attention to what the student learns. If that learning is that there are 103 elements and chemistry is boring, then we're not succeeding as teachers. With our size and structure it's always easier to assume that whatever's planned is then reshaped repeatedly by the needs and interests of our students.

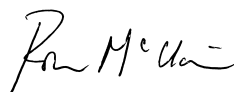
We spent the retreat afternoon working on our emergency preparedness plan, listing who rides in which vans in one evacuation mode, cutting plastic covers for windows and doors on the basement and the second floor, depending on the hazard. This has been a year marked by several assaults—the snipers, the weather, and now the increased anxiety about terrorism, exacerbated by our own decision to attack. We've had too many opportunities to wonder about where death awaits—metro, a suburban mall, a Smithsonian museum. And then we remember that too many children, here and elsewhere, would not find this the aberration that we do.

Last spring we joined NAIS promptly after being accredited by the Association of Independent Maryland Schools. This is a different NAIS than I first encountered when I entered private schools 31 years ago. It is home to a growing diversity of schools and on the forefront of work to make nonpublic schools hospitable to all. We hope such credentials and allies will be of great assistance to us as an "independent school" while the federally mandated testing tsunami sweeps the nation.

On the home front we're finishing our 31st year and approaching \$2,000,000 in financial aid given over the lifetime of Parkmont and Somerset. This generosity has accounted for much of the economic diversity that has characterized our student community since the 70's. We've had much discussion this year about what we might gain as a school by joining the current conversations about "diversity" that are de rigueur in some independent schools. We have always found it safest and most respectful at Parkmont to focus on what our families share in common—a search for teachers who have the time and empathy to care for their students, a program that allows students to discover their strengths, not be labeled by their differences.

I stood in the lobby last Wednesday as the middle school filed out energetically on their way to internship, knowing that by next week our plan would have to include some comment about how we'd respond to a crisis that occurred when our student are spread around town. I was touched by their enthusiasm—they were charged up, as was Wendel's Ecology class that day, returning from a field trip that prepares them to canoe amongst alligators next week in the Okefenokee. It's hard to know what to say to our young people about the why's of the war. But if it is to be made right, then we should be able to say in 10 and 20 years that children elsewhere and here live with more opportunity because of it—and that will require far more than victories in battle.

Best Wishes,



Ron McClain
Head of School

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Faculty Profile: Kim Schraf

By Nijole Gedutis

When Kim and I met at Tryst on 18th Street one warm Saturday afternoon in March, the place was, as usual, bustling. We'd been trying to meet for weeks, impeded by snowstorms and busy schedules, and that day we almost missed each other completely. All these complications and delays provided a lot of time to think about what to ask her, to wonder if I'd find the right questions. Before I even pressed record that afternoon, though, the conversation had begun to take shape, and I realized that sitting down, talking to Kim, and discovering something interesting to share with others is as easy as it comes. Here's the proof.

Since we already started talking about this, why don't you tell me about the show you're in now.

I've just opened a play at Metro Stage in Alexandria called (not a name that'll sell a lot of tickets) Sidney Bichet Killed a Man. It's a new play. That means it doesn't have all of its bugs worked out. It's a big risk for everyone involved, but a lot of fun for the actors. And it's kind of film noire-esque and obsessive and rich. Everybody's rich.

What is your role?

I play the wife, the sort of



Kim's Theatre Headshot

neglected, repressed wife of a multi-millionaire heart surgeon.

Are you working with actors that you've worked with before?

I am. It's one of the best things about the project. The two other principal characters are both men that I've done numerous shows with over the years, so we have a history, we have a trust of each other, we have almost a way of working or

talking about the work. Two of the actors are new and the director is new to me, but it was a great security to have buddies in the acting company who I play a lot of scenes with.

So, during the rehearsal period, are you anxious and stressed the whole time? Is a month long enough?

It's not continuous stress. But there are stressful moments. The beginning is relaxed. The beginning is a lot of fun. Rehearsal is exploratory. You have a lot of time ahead of you. Then there's the week before you open that's tech week, and everything comes together fast and furious. You suddenly feel pressure to make it all work, you know there's an audience coming in days, and that's a highly pressured time.

Do you like that stress?

I wouldn't say I love it, but I'd say I need it. It pushes you over the edge. It focuses you intensely. I'm not sure we'd arrive at the place we need to arrive at if it weren't for the sort of lunacy of tech week.

That intensity that explodes.

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From Climbing Up Ropes to Skiing Down Mountains: MS Trips of 2002-2003

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The annual two-day trip to FLOC Outdoors out in West Virginia also gives students the opportunity to physically and mentally challenge themselves. The students participate in group building activities that require trust, communication, and teamwork to solve problems or overcome obstacles. This trip, taken in mid-October, culminated in a challenge that many feared to attempt - the high-ropes course.

While wearing harnesses, helmets, and ropes that protected them

from injury, students climbed a tree, walked across a tightrope with two wires at waist level running parallel to the tightrope to be used for balance. Once traveling at least 30 feet along the wire, the students reached a platform from which they zoomed down the zip-line to the ground. Some were afraid of being so high off the ground. Others feared falling off the tightrope (though they'd end up hanging only a foot or two below the rope to ensure the chance to climb back on and try again). But in the

end, most were up to the challenge and were rewarded with both the exhilaration of flying down the zip-line at the end of the course, and a new sense of confidence and accomplishment.

It is these most precious moments, when I witness the pure sense of elation that radiates from a student's face when he or she has confronted and completed a difficult mental or physical challenge, that I cherish most here at Parkmont.

Parkmont Students Read at National Book Festival

By Judy Lentz

The National Book Festival was held this past fall on the grounds of the U.S. Capitol. Several students from public and private schools shared the stage with Billy Collins, poet laureate of the United States. Mr. Collins' main project this year is the Poetry 180 website (www.loc.gov/poetry/180). Kim Schraf, Parkmont English Literature teacher, gave a brief talk about how teachers use the site in their high school classes.

Abigail Kabaker and Henry Solomon from Parkmont School read poems from the Poetry 180 collection. Poets, students, and teachers who participated in the National Book Festival were invited to the White House symposium on poetry, but it was canceled recently when some poets began planning to read some anti-war poems to protest the war in Iraq. In the Sunday, 2/23/03 NEW YORK TIMES magazine section, Billy Collins was interviewed.

Congratulations to Abigail and Henry for reading poetry so beautifully at the National Book Festival!



Top, Festival readers from Parkmont: Abigail Kabaker and Henry Solomon. Parkmont teacher Kim Schraf speaks about Billy Collins' poetry website, and, right, Parkmont students Abigail Kabaker, Rachel Lande and Henry Solomon with poet Billy Collins.



Above, students at Parkmont's International Dinner and Talent Show. Right, Upper Schooler Nikki Gross with Middle Schooler Sergio Luna.



Upper school students tubing in Antietam Creek this fall.



The Sky's The Limit

By Mike Moyer

Look! Up in the Air!!! It's not Superman?? It is a bird, a plane, a rocket, a hot air balloon, and more... It's Parkmont's Middle School "Flight" class at Carter Barron Park learning firsthand how things fly.

In this course, the sky is the limit-if there is one-to the knowledge and experience that can be learned by studying the science of aerodynamics. A part of the "AIMS" program (Activities Integrating Math and Science), "Flight" invites each student to explore every aspect of the history and science of aerodynamics. "Flying" is magic for all children, and this course attempts to clarify some of the reasons why the magic works while preserving its sense of mystery. Throughout the

course, students are challenged to observe, predict, test, and generalize. Beginning with a specific question, each of the investigations tempts them to open their minds, draw upon a variety of experiences, and explore a new range of possibilities, while simultaneously supporting their ideas with precise data and accurate calculations.

Learning the theory behind each project, students construct and test kites, rubber band powered airplanes, bottle rockets, super tubes, hot air balloons and more. The course culminates with the launching of student-constructed model rockets. Field trips to a local airport, the Goddard Space Flight Center, and the College Park Airport

Museum enhance their learning experience.

Above all, "Flight" tries to speak to the dreamer and the explorer, the child who dares to wonder, which is in all of us. Daedalus, daVinci, Verne, and Goddard; the hand glider, the helicopter, the Concorde, and the Columbia-man's fascination with flight is eternal even though knowledge is always increasing. Flying is "magic" for children of all ages! As Albert Einstein expresses it: "The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and science." The "Flight" course at Parkmont is one of the Middle School science courses that gives students an opportunity to "experience the magic!"

Poetry at Parkmont

By Kim Schraf

The first session of this school year was occasion for Kim Schraf's cadre of eight intrepid poets (some reluctant, some aspiring, some boldly self-styled) to take on the study, analysis and original composition of that elusive but articulate literary form, the poem. Joey Rubin, Chris Jochem, Christina Cade, Astryd Luna, Abigail Kabaker, Henry Solomon, Nikki Gross and Jeremy Castro were thoroughly up for the challenge and equal to the task.

In the tragic aftermath of September 11, poetry has served to salve some psychic, if not physical, wounds by provid-

ing reflection, outlet, elegy. Whether they acknowledge it or not, students who listen to rap and hip-hop embrace the concepts of meter and imagery each time they play a CD. And while they are rarely bestsellers, collections of poetry continue to move off the shelves in your friendly neighborhood Borders.

An affinity for poetry was no less evident among my students, who wrote about subjects ranging from identity, alienation, September 11, religion, family, nature, young love and the hell that is high school. Here is a sampling of their work, names withheld to protect the privacy-seekers.

Car

When I'm going as fast as I can
I can feel that she is loving every minute of
it
the adrenaline rush that anything can hap-
pen
satisfies us like none other
as we reach dangerous speeds
we both know one wrong move
could mean death
for the both of us
both of us seem to really love
living on the edge
as the driver and the driven

Sail Ship

Sailing soundly along the surface of the water
The ship moves with speed, balance, and a sense of direction
Aboard the ship there is much commotion
About what lies ahead in the ocean
The beards of men grow very hairy
In these modern times they look rather scary
The rudder rotates right through the rippled, rage-filled water
It survives another voyage
But just to go back out again

Jungle City

The jungle can be much like the city
noisy or loud
musty or dirty
but never quiet or calm.
From trees the size of buildings
or bugs the size of pennies,
it's all just the same.
There are animals out to get you
they'll show no remorse
they'll take advantage of you
if you look weak.

Hair

Tangly like 50 cords in a bag
Nappy as knotted shoelaces
Curly like a bag of ribbons
Slick as the Woodrow Wilson Bridge
the morning after a cold icy rain
Braided like a rope bridge
Straight as uncooked spaghetti
Long like the Mississippi River
And locked as a heavily bolted door

Immigrants
They work as hard as possible
When they need more money to feed their families
They make decisions that will change their lives
FOREVER
Packing, crying, saying goodbye.
They leave with a hope
A hope to improve their lives, to make a
DIFFERENCE
Some die, some live
Some have to swim
Some drown, others
LIVE
It takes a while to get used to living in the USA
Different language, different culture
And that's how life is for some
IMMIGRANTS

Peter Pan

I want to stay in Never Never Land
But they want to take my lollipop
And give me a briefcase
I struggle to hide under the blanket
And live with Peter Pan forever

mad as a hatter
I feel beaten like a rug
I'm the MVP batter
That struck out and shrugged
I care but I don't
I'm pissed but I laugh
why should I get angry
when it's just a little math

Reading

the smell of incense
the sight of words
the feeling of a book
the sound of waves
the taste of banana pudding is what I crave
I am reading my favorite book
imagining how it would be
if it were me
in the story
this is what I do when I get bored
and then I'll buy a new book
when I'm finished
and my old favorite book
will get stored

Faculty Profile: Kim Schraf

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Right. It's a catalyst. It makes it happen. It's not fun. It's hard on us, because we feel vulnerable as actors.

Do you have anything else in the works?

I get a rest after Sidney Bichet, then I start to rehearse another relatively new play called *Patience* at Woolly Mammoth, which is a theater that I have a really fond history with. That's not until May and June. Again, working with a cast of people, 90% of whom I've known from 10-15 years. Literally, old, dear, respected friends.

My sense of the DC theater community is that it's pretty small, pretty tight knit.

That's right.

So do you end up working with a lot of the same people?

I do. I end up competing with the same people, and they are my best friends in the theater community, which is a very interesting phenomenon, but I think we all manage it. I think that makes our work deeper. It's a fish bowl.

Okay, so let me back up. When and how did you start getting involved in theater? Is this something you've done since you can remember, or was there a moment? Were you in a play in the 8th grade?

Well, that's funny. My parents came to see a show I did in Baltimore. My father made this big deal of kidding me-he thought I was lying about my age because in my actor's bio it said I've been acting professionally for 17 years. In his mind, I've been acting since kindergarten, which is when I did my first show. The whole weekend, he did not stop ribbing me for trying to pass myself off as 17 years younger than I am. So technically, and my father is the witness to this, my first play was in kindergarten - *Miranda the Sheriff's Daughter*. And I did do plays all through school. I loved it. I sort of thrived on it, but I didn't think it was my career. I was going to be a veterinarian. That was just patently clear.

I would put the start of my professional theater career at when I moved to Washington, after college. I took a scene study class at Arena Stage. I had to audition for it. I was new to the town. Thoroughly intimidated. Didn't feel I had the know-how. Stanley Anderson, a former

member of the acting company at Arena Stage, taught the course. He was a guru, I was smitten with all of it, and I feel like that was the beginning of my saying, I have to do this on a whole different plane.

Were you teaching at that time as well, or did that come later?

It's interesting. The professional theater study almost coincided with my interview at Somerset School with John Potter. Those two things ran parallel for me. I started to teach part time at Somerset, never stopped, and I ramped up my professional acting training and started to do some little shows.

Are they, in your mind, linked? Beyond just happening at the same time. Does one feed the other?

They definitely feed each other. I've thought lots about this, and it became clearest to me at a faculty

lunch with Sharan Strange. We were talking about how to model behavior for students, and she said she thought one of the most important things to model for students is a passion for what you do. And I realize it's a very significant way that those two things dovetail. That what I bring of theater into the classroom is not some performance ability. I'd have that anyway, or not have it anyway. But it's important for me to reveal to students that I have a thing I do that I love very much, that the world lets me do . . .and it makes me a whole person. I'm this happier, more whole teacher, and I think it informs what happens in the classroom. It's a huge passion in my life. I didn't have to give that up to teach, I didn't have to quit teaching to do it, and they enrich each other all the time.

They really are connected.

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Faculty Profile: Kim Schraf

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Here's an analogy. There are two times in my life when I can remember intense terror. One was when I walked into a Somerset classroom for the first time to teach a main lesson, knowing this was really funky and alternative and these kids were judging me. Then there was doing a one woman show, walking out onto stage the first night, as mortally terrified as I've ever been in my life. Knowing I'm the only one talking, no one's coming out on stage to keep me company or bail me out. Very, very similar, the vulnerability of both those experiences. And I love both experiences. You know, in spite of the terror, you crave something, you keep coming back.

Are there plays that you really like to teach?

It's infectious for me to teach Shakespeare, because I love it so much and...there's always at least one student who does a 180, who has the armor up, who's ready to spit on it, they're so convinced that they'll hate it. And it's always exciting to see someone overtaken by a piece of literature. Of modern plays, I have had a really good time teaching Arthur Miller's *All My Sons*. The first time I did it, I thought the students might find it dated and stuffy, but they dove into it emotionally. I think it might be the father/son thing. Much more than ever when I taught *Death of a Salesman*. So *All My Sons* rose in my list of teachable plays.

Are there roles that you would love to play? Is there a Lady MacBeth for you?

Strangely, ever since I worked on it in an acting class, Hedda Gabler is a role I'd want to play. It's been branded a sort of impossible role. You can't win. It doesn't make sense, it's incomplete. I'm intrigued by her. And Lady Macbeth is definitely a role I want to play. It's on some other level. She's two different people in the two halves of the play. Shakespeare doesn't document her descent into madness well, he just gives her a blow away scene at the end, we don't see it happening all along.

Is directing something you'd like to do?

I think eventually actors who

want to create more than just a role are drawn to direction. A part of me is, but I would want to do it gradually. There's so much of the technical world that I'm green about. My friends who do it say, "What are you talking about? You just surround yourself with brilliant people. Hire brilliant actors and pick a stunning play." Sometimes I think, I could do that. Someday I'd love to direct.

Tell me some funny anecdotes. Some good stories.

I thought you might ask me about that, so I was trying to remember some on my way here. Years ago, I did a production of *Dial M for Murder*. It's a thriller, with a pivotal scene where a wife wakes up in the middle of the night and comes down into the den to make a phone call, and it's a set up. There's already a scary guy hiding behind the curtains with a scarf, and he's going to strangle her. So, I'm the wife. We've rehearsed it a million times, we've performed it a million times: the guy gets the scarf around my neck, backs me down across a desk, I grope and find some scissors, raise them dramatically, stab him in the back and kill him. But late in our run, when it's clockwork, I reached for the scissors and somehow knocked them off the desk. The man who's strangling me is enormous. It's utterly improbable I could kill him any other way. He looks at me, I look at him, just terrified. We somehow, without harming ourselves, wrestle to the floor. Surging adrenaline, I got the scissors. He says that I hit him so hard with those scissors, I knocked the wind out of him. If they had gone off the stage, I think they would have had to bring the lights down.

It's really exciting when unexpected things happen in the moment. You can't stop, you can't rewind, you can't cut. You have to stay honest, solve the problem, say the lines. It's as exciting as it gets. When you know in an instant you have to solve an intense problem. Suddenly everything is very immediate and very desperate. That's really fun.

What do you think is most interesting about theater right now? What plays would you love to see?

Are there contemporary playwrights who you're excited about?

You know, when I was in Oxford this summer, I saw some really exciting theater. And in two cases I said, nobody's doing work like this at home. One was (it sounds deadly) a two part, six or seven hour adaptation of all the Henry VI plays. It was called *Rose Rage*. It was the most exciting approach to Shakespeare I've seen. And it was minimal. Incredibly minimal. The other was this new, hot Irish playwright. Martin McDonagh. It was a new play that was brazenly political. I roared with laughter and I had a sick feeling in my gut. He was satirizing IRA terrorists from an Irishman's point of view in this broad, crude, funny way. So it made me think I want to do more political theater. And it made me think I want to do classical theater simply and powerfully and honestly.

Do you feel like roles are opening up for women in theater?

I don't feel like it's happening fast enough. What I see, in my little microcosm, is women becoming seasoned, coming into a certain maturity with their work, just as the roles dry up. So, the writing isn't keeping pace with the growth of the performers, which makes no sense to me. I would think anybody seeing the work being done on stage could figure that out. But it's not where the money is. The money's in the movies, and theater has always been this almost ivory tower artistic pursuit. It's pure, it has integrity, but you won't make a mint.

You do it because you love it.

Yes. Students always say, "Why don't you do movies?" It's a different thing. It would be fun to do, but it wouldn't give me as much pleasure.

How would you like an article on you to end?

If you go to the theater and enjoy the theater, continue to support it. If you've never been to the theater, come to the theater. It's not what you think. It's not like anything else you've done. I think everyone should experience live theater. And it needs help right now, as we sit on the brink of war. The arts will suffer, the economy will suffer. Come out and see actors. It will soothe your soul.

Somerset Alumni Gather in New Hampshire



Somerset Alumni gathered at the fall reunion in New Hampshire.

Some sun, some clouds, some rain- and everywhere the glorious backdrop of New England fall foliage, highlighted against the rain-wet black bark of the trees. The view from Rudy's porch has changed little.

There was apple picking, and a short hike to a nearby fire tower, and a wonderful dinner Saturday night. There was a school meeting for everyone that same night, with introductions and updates. A smaller group met the next morning, trying to sort out the details of an alumni association, and how it could benefit the Community School and Parkmont. Sunday afternoon was spent at the Sandwich Fair, where we could see the Community School students participate in the parade.

In some ways, the people who arrived that weekend- drawn to the group, the event, the place- had not changed that much. Some of us had shorter hair- Llyn!- and many of us had grayer- mine included. We brought with us the embellishments of growing older- our families, accomplishments, dreams and memories. We also brought the same concerns for quality education, the right to individuality, and freedom of expression that was felt in high school. Not surprising the number of adults now involved in education, or drawn to service professions.

The Somerset Alumni Giving Association (SAGA) was formed from that weekend. A subsequent meeting at Mike Weaver's house in November cemented the need to expand our database, and to increase the resources available to the Community School, Parkmont, and to each other. Another reunion-local this time- is being planned for May. If you are interested in becoming involved, or if you have alumni contacts you'd like to share, you can contact me at jmnieman@erols.com, or Mike Weaver at mweaver@webfirst.com, or Llyn Peabody at

kokopellyn@earthlink.net. There is also an e-mail listserv at somersetalum@yahoo.com.

It was wonderful to see everyone last October, especially there. It's important to keep the momentum going, although difficult with busy lives in strange times like these. Hopefully we can continue with the great ideas we discussed. Hope to see you in May, and talk with you before that!

Peace,
Lucy Shivnan '83

Somerset Reunion

Saturday May 17th, 2003

At Parkmont School

Bring your family, bring yourself.

Volleyball? Picnic?

Storytelling? Frisbee?

Fun! Friendly! Far Out! Fantastic!

To get involved in creating the day or to be apprised of updates etc.

send an email to Llyn Peabody - kokopellyn@earthlink.net stating how you want to be involved.

Also, Sunday cookout brunch

@ Mike Weaver's in Arlington

Hope to see you there!

Somerset Alumni News

Beth Keegan (1978) is taking two classes in publishing at Portland State University. She says, "They're interesting and it gives me a chance to see what the master's program in writing is like and what graduate level courses are like. But what I'd really rather do is take fiction writing classes, so maybe at the community college spring term." She is "involved in a meditation practice with a spiritual community called Nityananda Institute, kundalini meditation with an American-born guru. I've been doing it about six years. It's pretty amazing. One of my fantasies was that I would move into the ashram, but right now, reality is a

two-bedroom apartment with a small yard and patio."

Stacy Chanin Butler (1980) was married in June 2002. She and her husband are living in Banning, California.

Llyn Peabody (1980) has been experimenting with having a "migratory lifestyle," where she is doing a regular circuit of living in a variety of places. Currently, she is in Santa Fe, and will be in Woodstock on the East Coast in the spring, and in Oregon by late summer. She's also considering Hawaii for next winter. This works well with the new business that Llyn has developed, called "Everything In Its Place." She helps

people organize their homes and offices on a practical, physical level. At the same time, she helps people "look at the underlying mental and emotional patterns that keep the clutter in place and, through goal setting and coaching, help people shift those patterns and create their lives in a manner consistent with their dreams and values..." Llyn's intention is to "create a means of livelihood that uses [her] unique set of gifts and skills in service to the world. [She] wants to feel fulfilled and have fun and know that what [she does] contributes to making this world a better place." Her email address is kokopellyn@earthlink.net.

Stephen Jacobs (1976) is an Associate Professor of Information Technology at Rochester Institute of Technology. He has a new radio show on WXXI AM, the local PBS station in Rochester. It is called "What the Tech" and is an anthology of serious and humorous takes on technology. It can be downloaded from the WXXI.com website.

Micah Solomon (1976) was recently named Music Executive of the Year by the Washington Area Music Association (WAMA). He is enjoying running his own company, Oasis CD Manufacturing (oasiscd.com), and would love to hear from fellow alumni. He has had the pleasure of manufacturing CD's for other Parkmont alumni and family including Matthew Jones and Garth Ross. Micah can be reached at micah@oasiscd.com.

Sally Nicolson (1977) and her husband had a baby boy named Ryan in May 2002. Congratulations! They continue to live in Pittsford, NY.

And for other baby news, **Rob Wylie** (1978) has a new baby daughter, Ruby Greenleaf Wylie!

Sara Cowey (1981) was married on December 28, 2002 to Paul Catalli in Washington, DC. Sara is an elementary school teacher in California, where they reside.

Zack Fuller (1981) has been married for four years to Kaori and is pursuing his masters at Brown University.

Bitsy Cole (1982) and Geoff Guillot have a baby, Whitney Rose, born June 11, 2002. Bitsy has her PhD and is a professor at James Madison University.

Writing in from Evanston, IL, **Shoshana Waskow** (1982) says, "My husband, Michael Slater and I are happily enjoying the antics of our 2 1/2 year old, Yonit. I've settled into my primary care pediatrics practice here in the suburbs of Chicago and welcome news and visits from Parkmont friends! Contact us at mslater@northwestern.edu."

Working and living in NYC as a registered Dietician, **Doug Silverman** (1984) writes that he "finally gradu-

ated from Hunter College in 1999." Many congratulations!

Andrew Budnyj (1986) is the Executive Chef at Pisces Restaurant in Burlingame, CA.

Justin Press (1987) lives in Pennsylvania, where he operates his own martial arts studio.

In the D.C. area is **Blake Courtney** (1993), who is a freelance Sound System engineer for local nightclubs.

Reed Wirick (1994) is working at Cambridge Associates as an economic analyst. He has completed level 2 of his CFA. Meadow Wirick is working for the Japanese government in Gunma. Her parents write "Ron's travel bug never found a more susceptible host!" Their parents ("smitten by the C&O Canal after Ron's 1st bike journey!") have moved to Shepherdstown and regularly bike the trail with 2 "monstrous child replacement dogs!"

K.C. Higgins (1995) is applying to graduate school to get either a Masters or a PhD in International Development.

We received lots of college news from our alumni! **Ben Gradison** (1998) is attending the College of Santa Fe, after graduating from Edmund Burke School in 2002.

Matt Bittle (1999) is studying Political Science at Western Colorado State.

Tom Mertens (1999) is studying art at Frostburg University.

A senior at Rollins College,

Winter Park, FL, **Rachel Tyner** (1999) will graduate in May with a major in Environmental Studies. In January she traveled to the Tambopata Research Center in Peru with her sustainable development class.

Collin Bush (2000) attends Montgomery College, MD. His younger brother, Logan, is in 11th grade at Parkmont.

Mike Russell (2000) is spending the year abroad studying comparative religion and culture. He has traveled in Italy, Taiwan, Geneva, India, and more!

In Prince George's County, MD, **Matt Van Dyke** (2000) is on the police force in the Edmondston Township.

Jesse Battaile (2001) is training to become a commercial pilot at Embry Riddle Flight School in Florida.

Jay Cunnick (2002) is a freshman at Cabrini College, Radnor, PA. He is majoring in Information Systems and Technology.

Former Parkmont teacher **Tej Rae** is still living and teaching in Lusaka, Zambia. She has been teaching primarily history for the past several years, and this year is teaching only English, which she loves. She is also teaching the International Baccalaureate curriculum to the high school students. Tej also teaches yoga, travels a fair amount, and enjoys being part of the community in Lusaka.



...At work in Parkmont's computer center...

Please send in YOUR alumni news! We'd love to hear from you! Please send all correspondence to Christy Halvorson Ross, Director of Development, at cross@parkmont.org or to Parkmont School, 4842 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20011.

To Ski or not To Ski

By Ismail Yoder-Salim

Although it was seven in the morning on a Wednesday, most of Parkmont's upper school students, along with their advisors, were excited about the annual ski trip that took place on January 22. Our group took a charter bus to the Whitetail Ski Resort in Mercersburg, Pennsylvania, for a day of skiing, snowboarding, and general camaraderie. A number of us discovered first hand how difficult and frustrating snowboarding is. However, all of us had a good opportunity to try something new, build on athletic skills, and encourage and coach each other.

Student Rachel Lande commented that the trip was, "a nice break from all the stress" of schoolwork. Nikki Gross added that it was "good to hang out with friends all day." In addition, while Andrew Hanawalt had a complaint about the snow



Upper School Students and the author in the midst of their Whitetail adventure. Elias Kennedy takes a deliberate rest from snowboarding. More fun on the Whitetail slopes.

blowers, he found the conditions ideal for snowboarding.

For myself, the highlights of the trip were the moments when I saw

students working together to help each other through a daunting task; getting to the bottom of the hill without removing the skis and walking.

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