



LEYSIN AMERICAN SCHOOL IN SWITZERLAND

2014 EDITION

panorama

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Chairman Of The Board
Dr. Steven Ott

Editors
Benjamin Smith, Natalia Musielak
and Brittany Howes

Graphic Design
Brittany Howes

Contributors
Marc-Frédéric Ott, Benjamin Smith,
Steven Ott, Fred Sharp, Ira Bigalow '12P, '13P, Kelly
Deklinski, Joan Flynn, Thom Padick, Jan O'Hara '73,
Stephen Dexter, Ethan Harris
Brittany Howes and Natalia Musielak

Contributing Photographers
Peter Howard, Thom Padick,
Danilo Bertazzo, Marta Krause, Brittany Howes,
Kimberly Treese, Stephen Dexter, Ethan Harris,
James McKenna, Joan Flynn, The North Face/Domdahr,
Sarah Wilson, Fred Sharp and Viwan Opanukij

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Submit Letters And Questions To:

Development Office
Leysin American School
CP108
1854 Leysin, Switzerland

Phone: +41.24.493.3777
Web: www.las.ch
Email: alumni@las.ch

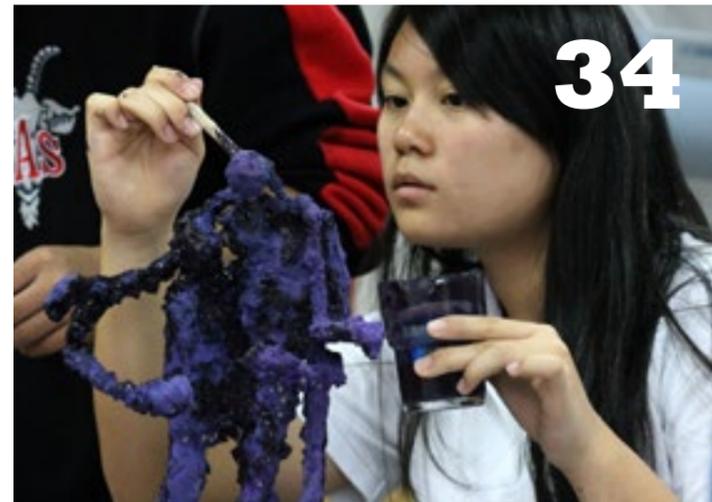
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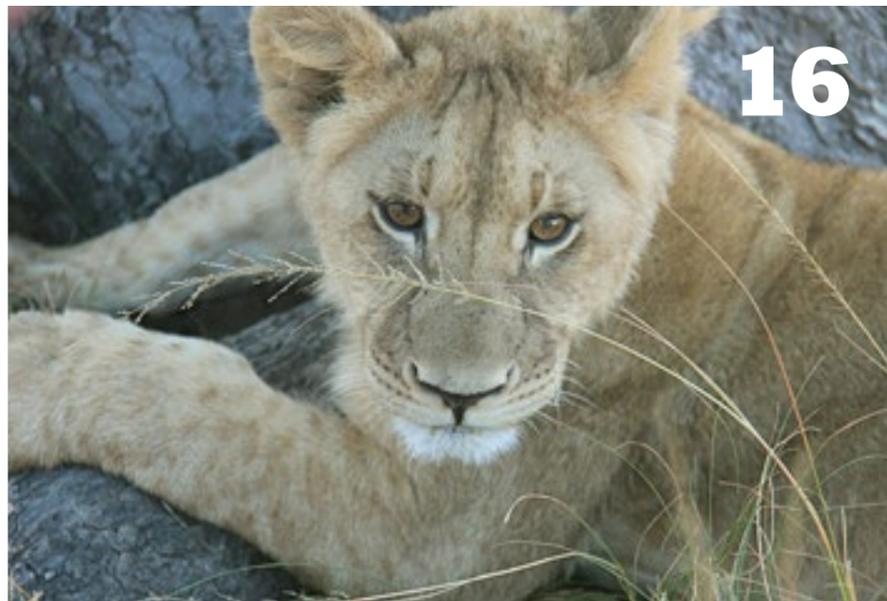
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2014 Edition

On the Back Cover: Sarah (White) Lauerman '94 visited LAS this past summer with Songmi (Huff) Keating '94 and their families. Sarah's children, Gwen and Sam, are naturals at fitting in at the the Kuklos.



Letter

from our Head of School

Dear Alumni, Parents & Friends of LAS,

Early December, I returned from a trip to Ulaanbaatar (Mongolia), Almaty (Kazakhstan), Moscow and Saint Petersburg, where I met with current and future families, and LAS alumni. With the exception of Almaty, it was my first trip to these cities. I am very thankful to many of you for your hospitality and for spending time showing me wonderful sites such as the Kremlin and the Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg. The bitter cold in Ulaanbaatar, with a low of -27C, was in stark contrast to the warm hospitality of our alumni and current families. In order to enjoy the full experience of Mongolia, one of our families organized a short horseback-riding trek – living like the local nomads.

I had wonderful evenings with alumni in Ulaanbaatar, Almaty, and Moscow. While I did not plan to meet any alumni in Saint Petersburg, during a dinner at a restaurant with a current family, a young man, David Karpatian '08 unexpectedly walked up to our table - what a small world.

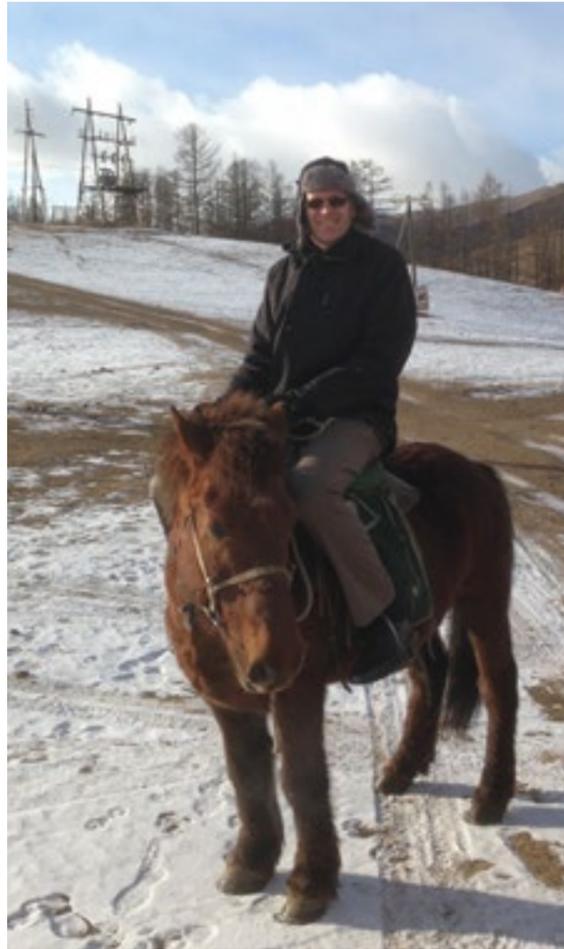
During my trip, I had very interesting conversations with several alumni and current parents about the future of LAS: what is planned, how they see the school moving forward, and finally how families and alumni can help the school continue to strive towards excellence as embodied in our mission statement.

The future of the school is built around the goals set forth in the Strategic Plan, which are to build an ever-increasing sustainable quality of the school. This means to (1) strengthen the development of the application pool for admission so as to become more selective, (2) continue strengthening the school's finances through the implementation of a fully-fledged development program and (3) continue to improve our academic and extracurricular programs.

The demand for LAS programs from the Russian-speaking countries has grown rapidly in recent years. In order to maintain a healthy balance in language groups, LAS has been capping the number of students and thus become more selective. As a language group, the native Russian-speakers are excellent students.

As demand from all over the world continues to grow, we will not only become more selective, but we also plan to introduce an expectation, not a requirement, of support of the school's fundraising efforts in the admission process – a common practice in boarding schools in the United States. This approach will strengthen the culture of giving at LAS.

Several alumni spoke about their wonderful experiences in their Faculty Families. This year, we made some changes in order to strengthen the family dimension of LAS such as (re) incorporating weekly *family advising time* during the school day and still offering regular *family social time* on Wednesday



evenings. One alumnus asked specifically to keep the ski program for his daughter when she enrolls in 10 years time. I promised we would keep it and even strengthen it.

There is a very positive feeling at the school. I am convinced LAS - your school - is heading in the right direction. Our alumni, parents and friends continue to show their belief in our mission and efforts by sharing ideas, referring new students and by a growing number of pledges and donations to the LAS Foundations. Most importantly, we continue to strengthen our network of alumni, parents, and friends around the world through events, communication, social media and personal visits.

In closing, thank you for your trust in the school, support and donations. I hope to welcome you to LAS - your second home - and wish you and your family best wishes for 2014.

Cordially,

MARC-FRÉDÉRIC OTT, Ed.D.
HEAD OF SCHOOL

Living the LAS Legacy:

>>>> **PANORAMA:** What does it mean to you to be LAS's first legacy family?

>>>> **JUDY:** It is a tradition that we would like to continue. Sending my daughter Jill to LAS opened up her world and has had a continued positive effect on her life.

>>>> **JILL:** It's an incredible bond for my mom and me. While our LAS experiences were over 40 years apart, they paralleled each other because of the nature of the school and the town. She knew it would change my life.

>>>> **PANORAMA:** What were your impressions when you arrived and when you left?

>>>> **JUDY:** When I first arrived in 1961, it was a bit of a culture shock, as I had been living in Libya for a few years. But by the time I had to leave after my junior year, I was very sad. LAS had been such a good experience and I had made so many great friends.

>>>> **PANORAMA:** What would you tell people who have the opportunity to send a 2nd or 3rd generation to LAS?

>>>> **JUDY:** I would say, don't hesitate! It is such a wonderful opportunity to expose your child to many cultures, get an excellent education, and broaden their world. It is an experience that will stay with them the rest of their lives.

>>>> **JILL:** Why in the world wouldn't they? (Laughing) I would say, save your money, make it happen and know that there is nothing cooler than having that bond and connection that always takes you back to Switzerland.



MOTHER

Judy Vanderhost '63S, '95P

DAUGHTER

Jill Hodges '95

>>>> **PANORAMA:** Growing up, did you think about attending LAS?

>>>> **JILL:** I had heard about LAS my whole life, and all of my mom's best friends were her friends from LAS. I think she subconsciously knew what she was doing because she started sending me to Summer in Switzerland early. ♦



Bonjour, Leysin American School!

>>> Stephen Dexter, Jr.
PRINCIPAL

After five years on the Magic Mountain, Principal Stephen Dexter bids farewell.



When I have the opportunity to speak at assembly, I often start with a healthy 'bonjourrrrr, Leysin American School' in my acute American accent. It has caught on over the years to the point where my notoriety as the 'bonjour guy' far outweighs any identity I may have as Principal.

It feels like decades since I arrived on the mountain cog in 2009 with my family in tow. My daughter Zoe was a little over two, my son just entering middle school at the tender age of nine, and neither spoke french. Five years later, both are immersed in the Swiss schools and speak the language fluently, a reminder to me of how incredibly adaptive young brains can be. My wife Stephanie, had left her job of twelve years managing a mental health department of a large hospital in Boston and I stepped away from fourteen years in the American public schools. We rented our house, sold our cars, our furniture, gave away our pets,

and started all over on this big adventure. Looking back, the feeling of anxiety was probably not too far from what many of our students experience when they arrive for the first time in Leysin.

As we adapted to our new home and international life, I hit the ground running with a number of initiatives and new projects. The Belle Époque Campus was just opening and only partially complete, grade eight was being introduced, eighteen new teachers eagerly awaited their new assignments, and I had an entirely new administration to manage. Additionally, Dr. Marc-Frederic Ott was transitioning into his new role as Head of School after two decades of direction under his father, Dr. Steven Ott. Needless to say, it was a case study in change and transition.

Our boarding school parents who mostly live far from Leysin, rarely see the small victories and important moments in their sons' and daughters' lives, when our teachers support them in the classrooms, in the dorms after a difficult day, or within the close-knit comfort of faculty family. We watch our students grow so much and contribute in so many ways towards becoming more responsible, more compassionate, and more innovative with each passing day, thanks to the sensitivity and leadership of our teaching and residential staff.

On a typical day, for example, a teacher can come home after a long day of teaching, change quickly to lead a sport or an activity, grab a quick bite to eat, and then maybe even run a tutoring session before dashing off to an evening of duty that often doesn't end until 23:00. Indeed, we have a special group of teachers and support staff who make a difference in our students' lives, who look out for our students and make sure that they are not only learning subjects, but about life.

When I talk to our teachers, they truly know our students, what makes them tick, and how much they've grown. When I go to our performances in music and theatre, I am continually

amazed at how such a diverse group of individuals is able to work together, thanks to the commitment of our teachers like our drama director Ms. Carolyn Swanson and music director Dr. Ira Bigelow, who bring out their best. I will always cherish the memories of watching students with a variety of accents

"Looking back, the feeling of anxiety was probably not too far from what many of our students experience when they arrive for the first time in Leysin."

trying to deliver lines in German, Scottish, or even twangy American.

I have witnessed leadership in the residential side of things, where our ambassador program, under the direction of Ms. Krause, has blossomed into a true cornerstone of LAS, providing a stable source of student leadership and benefit especially to our younger students. Our student life program continues to get better and better, with MFK (Ms. Mary Field Keenan), always managing the complexities of cultural celebrations on two campuses and putting students at the forefront of everything from running assembly to leading international day.

I cherish the memories of chatting in my mediocre French each morning with our support staff, a stable backbone of the school, many of whom have been at the school for many years and represent countries like Serbia, Portugal, Italy, and Sri Lanka. People like Mr. Sutha Ponnurathai and Mr. Slaveshia Arsic have



been familiar names for many, many years and are always behind the scenes, making sure that our facilities support our students and teachers so that they can do their important work.

LAS has come a long way since 2009. Our teachers are the best in the business, truly professional, compassionate about our students, and committed to their futures. Our vision for the future is strong, our student body is outstanding, and we finally have systems of support in place to guide the way. It has been a pleasure to work with so many cultures and so many people, in spite of the challenges. It has been an experience that I will always carry with me.

Au revoir, Leysin American School!

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Athletic Roundup

>>> Ethan Harris | ATHLETIC DIRECTOR



LAS might be called the little train that could. Our school, with only 340 students, is able to form and develop teams that compete with schools much larger than us.

Many of the teams we compete against have been playing together for several years and likely have elite players on local clubs. Yet every year, as a testament to the hard work of our teacher-coaches and student-athletes, the LAS Goats do a fantastic job of representing our school while going toe to toe with schools that should have the edge on paper.

This year was no exception. While the tennis, alpine skiing and swim teams have yet to wrap up - the swim team already took 3rd place at the Neuchatel Invitational - we can look back on the Fall term with pride.

Of course, our teams have their cycles, but on the whole we've had another Fall season to gloat. **The Rugby Team** returned after a one-year hiatus. Throughout the Fall they trained hard for an October tournament that was suddenly cancelled. However, they took their pent-up energy into their only match of the season and pummeled Champittet of Lausanne 45-9. **Girls Volleyball** had a rebuilding year but still managed to earn a respectable 6th place (out of 14 teams) at the SGIS Volleyball Championships. The event, hosted each year by LAS, saw the **Boys Volleyball** team just missing the medals, but the talented squad was determined to make the podium at the ADISR Finals at the end of season and took home bronze medals.

Boys Soccer had some impressive victories this year but fell one goal short in a couple of games that cost them a chance at the play-offs. At the SGIS Soccer championships in Lugano, however, Timur R. '15, was chosen as one of the tournament's All Star team members, a great distinction. **Girls Soccer** had some tough games

in their ADISR league matches, but countered any losses with impressive tournament results. The Lady Goats were victorious in the SGIS Category B Championship, and placed an impressive 2nd (out of 10 teams) at the season-ending ADISR Indoor Soccer Championship. Team MVP and co-captain Renata B. '16, put together a well-made video (viewable at the Home of the Goats website) that highlights the team's triumphs.

The **Boys Basketball** team, showcased some talented players led by leading scorer Desmond A. '15. The fruition of the team's efforts resulted in a hard-fought 4th place at the ultra-competitive SGIS Championship, their best result since LAS won the event in 2009. Their female counterparts on the **Girls Basketball** team however, won the SGIS Championship in dramatic fashion with a buzzer-beating 3-point shot by Sayaka S. '14, that lifted the girls over a talented team from the Int'l School of Geneva. Remarkably, the Lady Goats lost to the Int'l School of Geneva by more than 20 points in their first game of the season. The Lady Goats then went on to defeat Leysin rival Kumon in the final.

The hard work of our teams has shown success in one form or another. Our players learn the values of teamwork, sportsmanship and the importance of developing strong character. Whether the success comes in the form of developing better athletes, molding better human beings or bringing home trophies for the display case, the LAS community can be proud of the school's student-athletes, 150 strong. Win or lose, our students learn that full effort means success. ♦

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Music Education at LAS

>>> Dr. Ira Bigalow '12P, '13P and Kelly Deklinski, MUSIC DEPARTMENT

Music education is an integral part of every student's education. Music helps develop self-esteem, self-discipline, self-motivation and cooperation necessary for success in life.

Music is a powerful vehicle for motivating, teaching, and learning. Because music allows people to express themselves in unique and meaningful ways, participation in music courses motivates students and keeps them engaged. Music is for everyone. Just as we expect students to be competent in other core subjects, we

also expect them to be proficient in music literacy and performance.

Music at LAS is a rigorous academic discipline requiring active learning through creation, practice, performance and evaluation. Studying music also encompasses critical and creative thinking as well as problem-solving skills. The

study of music addresses intellectual and emotional components. It builds a bridge between verbal and non-verbal communication as well as between the strictly logical and the emotional. When students create, perform, and evaluate music, they nurture their ability to comprehend the world they live in while learning to communicate in distinctively expressive ways.

This year the arts department welcomes Ms. Kelly Deklinski as a new teacher on the music staff. Ms. Deklinski comes to LAS from Florida, USA, with an impressive background as an instrumental teacher and marching band director. Her instructional skills will certainly compliment the foundation of academic excellence established by Dr. Bigalow and serves to expand the number of music courses students may choose to take. Classes offered at LAS this year include Guitar, Piano Keyboarding, Music

Appreciation, Music Exploration, Composition and Recording, Choir, and Jazz Band. In music classes at LAS, students learn to appreciate the role of music in their daily lives while developing principles for evaluating creative works. Students study the history, experiences and contributions of music from cultures around the world. In addition, students learn about and prepare for career opportunities that exist in the world of music.

Concerts scheduled for the 2013-14 school year afford students the opportunity to showcase their music performance skills to the LAS and Leysin communities.

Participating in society is more than earning a living; it is also living a life rich in meaning, engaging in self-expression and delighting in the creative efforts of others in a world of diversity. Music education is valuable in and of itself, providing expression for universal human values. Through music education at LAS, the character and spirit of our civilization will be passed on to future generations as we address our mission of developing innovative, compassionate and responsible citizens of the world. ♦

Upcoming Concerts

Winter Concert
Tuesday, 3 December 2013
Savoy - Black Box Theater

Family Week Concert
Tuesday, 11 February 2014
6:30pm
Savoy - Black Box Theater

Evening with the Stars
Friday, 14 March 2014
6:30pm
Belle Époque - Grand Salle

Spring Concert
Wednesday, 7 May 2014
6:30pm
Savoy - Black Box Theater





PLAN

~~A~~ B

epitome of a
dream
destination

Text by Joan Flynn, English
& Thom Padick, Digital Arts
Photos by Thom Padick

Why did a group of ten LAS students and two teachers travel to Zimbabwe for Spring Break? To be honest, it was an accident, a plan B solution to an unexpected problem. To be even more honest, it turned out to be the epitome of dream destinations for the LAS Service & Safari team that made the fortuitous journey.

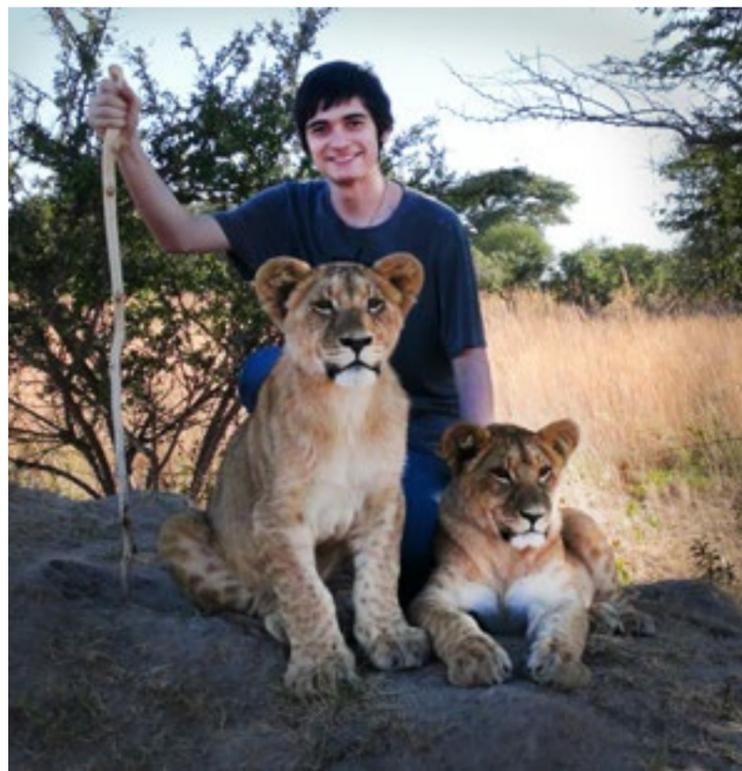
Service trips over Spring Break are not new at LAS. Every year there are teachers and students who seek out opportunities to combine travel with service initiatives. They want to contribute in personal ways to make the world a better place. It's a simple shared vision that consistently brings people together. At LAS, it is one of the ways teachers and students model the mission of being responsible, innovative, and compassionate citizens of the world.

In 2013, the plan was to follow tradition and go to Lilongwe, Malawi to work in conjunction with the Bishop Mackenzie School and the LEAP organization. However, after a month of planning, the local contacts in Lilongwe suddenly evaporated like the mist coming off of Victoria Falls. Emails and phone calls went unanswered. Reservations could not be confirmed and we, as trip sponsors, grew progressively uneasy as deadlines approached. Our sights shifted and we began formulating a plan B. Then, like Dorothy from *The Wizard of Oz*, we found the solution to our problem right here at our home, at LAS.

Mrs. Thabbeth Cotton, an LAS nurse and a native of Zimbabwe, works with a service group in her home town of Bulawayo. This group, The Sethule Orphans Trust, provides orphan care and bereavement counseling to children and families in some of the poorest rural communities of Matabeleland near Bulawayo. From previous conversations, we learned that Sethule sponsored trips for medical students who came to Matabeleland to work at bush clinics. Earlier in the year, we had actually spoken with Mrs. Cotton and LAS Health Center Manager, Mrs. Stephanie Johnson (another Sethule supporter) about the possibility of getting LAS students involved in service trips to Zimbabwe once our Malawi obligations had been met.

Could Sethule possibly accommodate our group this year? We decided to find out and scheduled a meeting with Mrs. Cotton to discuss our hopes and concerns. Her response was positive and our collaborations began in earnest. We began to feel as if we had won the lottery.

Sethule is an established organization with a solid track record and trusted network of staff already working with rural communities, schools, and clinics. Their in-house travel agency creates balanced itineraries of service and safari activities for visiting groups. They



“ They want to contribute in personal ways to make the world a better place. It’s a simple shared vision that consistently brings people together. ”

assured us they could accommodate us. With their assurances, we reset our service and safari compasses for Zimbabwe and immediately got to work. It was already mid-October.

Spring break trips at LAS begin with a risk assessment. We immediately revised ours to include Zimbabwe and resubmitted it to School Operations Committee for consideration. Interested students were notified of the location change and we generated more attention through the use of promotional presentations, flyers, and electronic postings. The student selection process began with seniors and worked progressively down to younger

students.

This approach was based on several factors. Our group would travel through largely unknown territory in an economically depressed foreign country with a considerable amount of transportation logistics involved. Students would work with communities of peers and younger students who had faced and continue to grapple with multiple personal and social difficulties. A certain level of maturity and decorum of interaction was needed. Seniors and juniors who embodied the optimal degree of maturity required for the travel and interaction inherent

in this type of trip had first priority. Also, as upperclassmen, we felt they deserved the opportunity to participate in what was likely to be their most meaningful and last service venture as LAS students. The final roster included seniors, juniors, one sophomore and one freshman (the younger brother of an upperclassman trip participant).

Fast forward to January. Our team was now ready to set service project goals. Students decided they wanted to work with high school age peers so Sethule put a plan in place. We would head to The White Water High School in the Matopo Hills area, about 50 kilometers outside of Bulawayo. Sethule projects manager, Matshelela Mcebisi, contacted the school principal to inform him that a group of non-Zimbabwean volunteers was coming to work at his school. These volunteers would provide labor, training, and much needed investment capital if they could arrange for the purchase of necessary building materials and supplies. Nothing like this had happened at White Water before. "What do you need most?" was the question put to the principal. "New doors for the classrooms, paint for the walls, repairs for the broken desks and chairs, and patches for the holes in the concrete floors," was his response. Books and school supplies were also items the school desperately needed.

These were pressing concerns for a school that had seen virtually no improvements or maintenance in almost 35 years. The difficult economic situation in Zimbabwe left schools like White Water with no budgets for maintenance or supplies. Once the pride of the continent, Zimbabwe schools in this area now suffered from lack of support.

Determined to help, we made a materials list, tallied estimates, and came up with a figure. We needed to raise at least 12,000 CHF to purchase the supplies for the projects we committed to accomplishing: 1,360 liters of paint, brushes and rollers, nuts, bolts, wood, doors, concrete, chisels, hammers, drills and saws. When we were there, it was difficult to find a pencil to mark off boards for sawing. Imagine a 40 minute search to find a pencil at a school for 400 students.

Thankfully, LAS has a long history of charitable giving to those in need around the world. The LAS National Honor Society is a long time supporter of the Mercy Center Orphanage in Thailand. Service and disaster relief projects in Malawi, Nepal, and Romania have benefitted directly from the generous support of LAS students, families, faculty, and staff. When the tsunami devastated parts of Japan in 2011, a small group of our Japanese students led a spontaneous relief drive that generated thousands of francs in just a few days. A year before, a similar drive raised thousands of francs for relief efforts following the devastating earthquake in Haiti.

It is this LAS spirit of generosity that spurred the creation of a fundraising auction several years ago. The auction has since become the primary vehicle for fundraising by the spring break service trip leaders. Now it was our turn to plan and run the event. We were nervous but inspired by need.

It was February and time was winding down. The faculty, staff and members of the LAS community mobilized to donate auction goods and services as diverse as our student body. Auction donations included home cooked meals, movie and

sports viewing nights, ethnic culinary treats, handmade jewelry, works of art, breakfast in bed, laundry and ironing services, specialized dorm room cleaning, and a multitude of creative items geared toward student interests. On a wintery Wednesday night in February, students packed the Savoy library for a raucous and fun-filled evening.

LAS teacher, Mr. Daryl Hitchcock, acted as Master of Ceremonies and Grand Auctioneer. Students bid voraciously and at the closing strike of the gavel, they had pledged a total of 16,000 CHF - more than we needed. Thanks to the outpouring of generosity, we were faced with a magnificent problem - we had a surplus of funds.

Now we wondered, what else could we do for White Water and the students we would be working with? Our group met with Mrs. Cotton. She explained the critical need to balance our giving with the local community needs of receiving. We could not set the precedent of being outsiders coming in and over-giving. Instead a plan was crafted to purchase and bring some simple necessities that could be distributed as incentives for students to achieve academic and personal goals. Additional funds could be used later, when we were on site, for additional supplies and projects. It was a great plan.

Our team researched The White Water School and surrounding area. When they discovered that White Water students were currently engaged in a competition to design a new logo for The Sethule Trust, they

decided to bring a collection of new art supplies to give as prizes for the winning artists. They also found that electricity was not available in the homes of most White Water students. This caused problems for student who walked long hours to and from school and who might not be able to complete homework assignments due to darkness. So we purchased a number hand-cranking and solar-powered "torches" (flashlights). Rather than hand these out randomly, they would be used as awards to students who had demonstrated a commitment to either their academic pursuits or who were very active in local community service activities. When athletic director, Mr. Ethan Harris, offered to donate outdated LAS sporting uniforms and equipment, our students generously decided to leave some of their own belongings home to make room in their suitcases.

We were finally ready to go after months of planning. Our "Zim Team" met on March 23rd to check and double check our plans. We had parental agreements, passports, visas, health records, and first-aid supplies. Parents had contact numbers and copies of the itineraries. With bags stuffed to the hilt, we left Leysin and we boarded our Swiss Air flight to Heathrow only to sit for far too long on the tarmac in Geneva. Despite what Mr. Hitchcock says, "Swiss time is on time," we were more than 90 minutes late for take-off. At Heathrow, we rushed through the airport accompanied by a Swiss Air attendant who assured us that our South African Air flight to Johannesburg was waiting for us. However, when we arrived at the gate, the agents would not let us board. We could see the plane still attached to the gangway ramp. Despite our desperate pleas, we were left standing at the counter as agents prepared to rebook our seats for the following day. And then a miracle happened - fuel troubles delayed the flight. With the mechanical failure as our green light to board, we cried out in



celebration and began the long journey to Johannesburg, South Africa and finally to Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.

A Sethule team met us at the airport, a single tin covered building standing in the sparse and scruffy landscape outside of town. Our hosts were as warm and as welcoming as the weather. Nokuthula, Cathy and Beke became fast friends. We exchanged greetings and piled into two vehicles for the short ride to base camp, a lovely modest compound of bungalows nestled by a pool under a canopy of trees.

Our itinerary began with three days of service so early the next morning we set off, full of excitement, towards Matopo Hills. Zimbabwe roads are not unlike other well worn paths in developing areas. Adequate in town, they trickled down to single strips of pavement share by vehicles traveling in both directions. Along the sides of the roads, people dressed in brightly colored fabrics walked long distances balancing packages precariously on their heads or backs. Cathy and Beke navigated the one-hour drive like pros, coaxing the vehicles through police road blocks and around blind bends with just the right combination of humor and speed.

Our first stop was at a preschool where we were enthusiastically welcomed by bright eyed children who were celebrating a school sports day. Shortly after, we finally pulled into the driveway of The White Water School - the place we could only dream about until now. The stark white buildings stood out in contrast to the dry open fields. Colorfully dressed locals, young

and old, lined the pavement and streamed between buildings. They were students, school staff, and community members who had come to meet us, the first foreign visitors who had come to work with them. They were as curious about us as we were about them.

School administrators arranged a formal greeting. We gathered in the sun behind the administration building and exchanged pleasantries. Students giggled at our accents and sang a cappella tunes that floated on the breeze. It was a transformational experience for our group. We knew we were in for a very special adventure.

Before the work could begin, a "transfer ceremony" was in order. Sharing resources with the school was a unique and formal process. In order for our group to work effectively with the community, there had to be balance. As outsiders, we arrived with resources that could be blinding for those on the receiving end. Our big pockets might enable the community in less than optimal ways. Our gifts of materials, time, interest, and talents needed to be shared in a cooperative and positive fashion, one that we could build on in successive trips in future years.

While the students mingled, sponsors met privately with community and school leaders. Standing in a storage room, surrounded by buckets of paint and stacks of supplies, LAS sponsors "transferred" the materials to the community with the caveat that community members would work with us during our stay and use the supplies only for the specific intended purposes.

“Imagine a 40 minute search to find a pencil at a school for 400 students.”

Once we departed, the community would have 60 days to finish the projects. Sethule personnel planned follow up visits and would monitor the use of the materials. Mr. Thom Padick explained how happy the LAS team was that we could offer these supplies and our services. In response, local elders accepted our services and resources and agreed to the stipulations regarding participation and completion.

This transfer ceremony was culturally powerful and emotionally significant. It set the tone for our exchange while minimizing the chance for misuse of materials. It also empowered the community to participate with us and to complete the projects we were about to start together.

When we finally set to work, a moment of hesitation forced us all to realize how unique this venture was. Most of the locals had never held a hammer, a paint brush or a roller. They had never used a saw or drill. For that matter, neither had most of our LAS students. This realization caused everyone to smile. Thankfully, the learning curve was short.

We joined together to clear spaces, haul dilapidated furniture, and prepare materials. We set up a staging area for desk and seat repairs. Enthusiastic novice painting crews descended on the classrooms. White Water and LAS students pitched in, side by side, laughing as both groups learned new skills. We measured, marked, cut and drilled the large wooden sheets down to size.

The men of the local community hammered out the old doors and installed new ones with LAS students working beside them. Combined crews patched cracks in classroom floors. The local women, many of whom were “grannies”, preferred to paint. They lined up, along with students, to grab the few and precious paint rollers and brushes. Resourceful students found long tree branches to use as extension poles for the paint rollers to reach the higher areas of the walls. Curiosity was contagious. The lively and joyful exchanges of Armenian, Brazilian, Japanese, Mexican, American and Zimbabwe linguistic and cultural elements, fueled by youthful exuberance, created a priceless mosaic of memories for everyone.

We worked at the school for three long days. As we left campus each afternoon for the comfort of our temporary quarters where we could shower, relax, and enjoyed prepared meals, we drove past and waved to students and grannies who were making the trek home. Later, we learned that many walked up to two hours each way. Amazingly, by the time we arrived each morning these same people were already back at work. Their stamina and dedication were humbling.

Very quickly, the results of our combined efforts became visible and significant. Buildings had smooth floors and new doors. Classrooms were brighter because of the newly painted white walls. Most students (up to sixty) could now sit and study at desks instead of standing or lying on cement floors in the classrooms. We became more than the sum of our parts as we worked in partnership and service. This realization gave us all reason to pause and be grateful. With full hearts and tearful eyes on the third day, we packed the red jeep and silver van and headed back to base camp to continue our journey.

The following morning we headed north west towards Victoria Falls and Hwange National Park for two nights. The journey was long but well worth it. As sponsors, we had prepared the students for modest accommodations at best. We thought the drivers made a mistake when they pulled into the winding driveway of the Elephant Hills Resort but it turned out this magnificent resort would our home for an evening.

Elephant Hills Resort was over the top and we loved it.

From our balcony, we could see the rising mist from the distant Victoria Falls, giving credence to the native name: Mosi-oa-Tunya—“the smoke that thunders”. At times, up to 300,000 gallons a second of roiling water cascades over the cliffs to the river 350 feet below. When we hiked the cliff trails the next day, all of us got soaked and swallowed up in the rainbows that constantly dot the views on sunny days. Some of us took the opportunity to take a helicopter ride to get a bird’s eye view of the landscape while others traversed the Zambezi River via zip line. Bungy jumping was not allowed, as we could not imagine our risk assessment allowing it.

From Victoria Falls, we headed south to the largest game park in Zimbabwe. We spent a day traversing Hwange National Park with guides in safari vehicles, spotting a grand range of exotic animals including zebras, antelopes, hippos, crocodiles, giraffes, elephants, and even lions. At camp that night, we viewed two large herds of elephants at a watering hole and listened to, what our guides confirmed as, the killing of a lost young elephant by a pride of lions. The following morning we toured the spotted dog sanctuary before heading back to Bulawayo. After a brief respite, our travels took us south to Antelope Park, a 3000 acre game reserve set in open savannah grasslands. There we walked with lions, rode elephants and enjoyed the continued warmth of Zimbabwean hospitality that we had grown to know so well.

With only a few days left, we headed back to the White



“ Living the compassion component of the LAS mission makes you think you are giving a lot when, truly, you are getting much more in return. ”

Water area for a farewell cultural exchange. We arrived at the primary school where we stopped our first day. White Water and primary school students welcomed us with hugs and smiles like old friends. It was our turn to take the stage and share stories, songs, and dances from our home countries so local students could learn more about these distant places. We taught short lessons to small groups of children. Our hosts organized a community dance extravaganza that turned out to be the perfect finale. Once again, we were close to tears as we climbed into the red and silver vehicles for our final journey out of the bush.

Back in Bulawayo, our last night was a festive celebration with the entire Sethule staff. They had worked tirelessly throughout our trip to be great hosts and deserved significant recognition for the success of our trip. They consistently went the extra mile to make every detail work - even scrambling to secure rooms and drove miles to get supplies to prepare dinner for us when a glitch resulted in the cancellation of a reservation one evening.

At the conclusion of our trip, after all the previously planned construction projects had been completed, we had a 4,000 CHF surplus. Ever since working with the students and community at the White Water School, our group wanted to do more and we knew what to do with these additional funds. The absence of electricity and running water at White Water was a huge problem. We asked what it would take to run electricity to the school’s six buildings. The price tag was 2,000 CHF. Our group unanimously approved and we continued down the list provided by the school elders and principal.

During our visit, local grannies and other community members walked back and forth repeatedly to the distant well carrying heavy buckets of water so hands could be washed and

dishes cleaned. The cost for plumbing supplies and water storage tank that would bring clean water to the school was 1,000 CHF. Approved.

The principal at the White Water School was still interested in supplies for students so we topped off our school purchases by allocating the remainder of our funds for stationery, books and school supplies. Every franc raised was spent. Our Zimbabwe account sheet showed a zero balance and not a single CHF had been spent on travel, accommodations, or our safari portion of our trip (nor would it ever have been).

Thanks to the generosity and efforts of the entire LAS community, the lights are on at The White Water School. Students now have seats to sit on and desks to work at. Classrooms are brighter, more comfortable and better supplied. Students and the White Water community are enjoying the fruits of their labors and ours. Yes, there is still work that needs to be done and White Water can still use help. This year’s trip sponsors, Mr. & Mrs. Hanowitz are working closely with Mrs. Cotton and the Sethule Orphans Trust to expand on the work we started to build a sustainable program. We will do this one year at a time - with much gratitude for all the support we receive.

This trip was truly the journey of a lifetime. We were sad when it was completed and to say “so long” to our new friends and family in Bulawayo, but it was not “good bye”. Armen, Ana, Davi, Eriko, Yuriko, Miranda, Ana Lucia, Mauricio, Maddy, Colin, Mrs. Flynn, and Mr. Padick all now carry Zimbabwe in our hearts. We remember the beauty and the kindness of the people. We savor the colors of the streets and the sounds of the landscape. There’s a charm in Zimbabwe that becomes a part of you. It makes you happy and grateful to the core. The Service & Safari spring break trip offers that kind of experience. Living the compassion component of the LAS mission makes you think you are giving a lot when, truly, you are getting much more in return. ♦

CARL
IS NOT
YOUR EVERY
DAY BOARDING
SCHOOL STUDENT.

He's not your everyday skier either. Carl is a freerider. What does that mean exactly? Well, the exact definition states "freeriding is a discipline of skiing, performed on natural, un-groomed, terrain, without a set course, goals or rules." It can be called "backcountry," "side country", or "off-piste" skiing. It's an extreme and sometimes dangerous sport that is not for the faint of heart. Raised in Verbier, Switzerland, Carl grew up in an ideal environment and here's what he's got to say about it...

with Carl '14 Sweden/Switzerland
By Natalia Musielak, Univ. of Waterloo Co-op 2013

Photo by: The North Face®/ Domdaher
Location: Verbier, Switzerland

>>> PANORAMA: Tell me about freeriding!

>>> CARL: Basically, it's skiing on non man-made surfaces. For the competition, you choose one face of the mountain, pick your line down and ski it with as much fluidity and style as possible. Dropping cliffs is a big part and it's all off-piste. They recently started a new worldwide score system. It used to be out of 10 with decimals and now it's out of 100 without decimals. All riders start at 50 and then 3-4 judges all have sheets and rate you going up and down the scale of 50. If you stop for a second you lose a point per second. If you drop a cliff you win maybe 20 points, but if you don't land well or the landing is not stable, you also lose points. They also score you on Line, Air & Style, Fluidity, Control and Technique. All of these are then combined to form a final score.

>>> PANORAMA: How long have you been skiing for?

>>> CARL: I have been skiing since before I turned two and I have been freeriding for three years. My dad was going to be a mountain guide. He completed all the requirements and a week before his exam he hurt his knee and had to stop, but he has been taking me off-piste since I was five. The only difference between freeride and off-piste really is the speed and the drops. Often in freeriding you can access places where in the end you have to drop and I also like that people don't really go there.

>>> PANORAMA: What made you choose freeriding?

>>> CARL: I was doing a lot of racing before on teams. I went to school for it, got a scholarship, but then I hurt my knee. I didn't really ski for a year and a half. Racing is way too serious for me. It's really strict with all the training and diets, which is not really my thing. It is way too much stress. Instead of training myself to death and trying to keep up with them for a year, I chose freeriding. Me and my friend are in the same scenario. He is two years older than me and we both stopped the school we were in for skiing. He started working, I came here, and we started freeriding. We started competing last year.

>>> PANORAMA: Tell me about your first competition. Was last year the first one?

>>> CARL: Yeah, because you're not allowed to do it if you're younger than fourteen. The first one I entered was in Verbier for the final of the European junior tour. Because of my results in alpine skiing and because I knew the guy, he let me in. I scored fifth which is pretty good. This year I decided to do the tour. The tour is three different stages; the first one is in Chamonix, France, second in Fieberbrunn in Austria, and the final in Verbier- European final. They started two categories- 15/16 and 17/18. I won all the younger ones and then I went to Utah for the world final.

>>> PANORAMA: How did you do at the competition in Utah?

>>> CARL: Well, I injured myself before I left. I went skiing the day before I left and I hurt my knee and had to get stitches on my mouth. I couldn't really ski as well, but I had a ticket and the opportunity, so I went. I ended up 9th. I was the youngest one there so I'm just happy just to be a part of it.

>>> PANORAMA: How do you feel about being invited to compete in the U.S. in Utah?

>>> CARL: I felt like it was a huge privilege. Not many Europeans went, maybe only about 5. First, I thought about getting

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"YOU'RE IN THE
MOUNTAINS IN THEIR
PUREST FORM. NOTHING
IS GROOMED OR CARVED.
YOU REALLY GET TO PLAY
WITH THE MOUNTAIN,
THERE IS NO
RIGHT OR
WRONG."

tickets then going around to sponsors and shops to see if I could find money. Then the female winner from Europe and I both got over there. Traveling for skiing was a dream come true.

>>> PANORAMA: What inspired you to pursue freeriding skiing/enter freeriding competitions?

>>> CARL: It's a way to put yourself out there and create an image. That's how you get noticed- you have to be better than someone else. I will probably start filming more. What inspired me the most was an alpine teacher I had when I was racing, he was the second trainer. He did a spontaneous competition and was actually really good and won. He got wildcards and got into the final in Verbier for adults. I've skied with him quite a bit and skiing with him inspired me.

>>> PANORAMA: Would you say he is your skiing idol or is there someone else?

>>> CARL: No. I would say he inspired me to get into freeriding but I have Kaj Zackrisson. He is a Swedish skier who had been doing the freeride adult World Tour and he has won in Verbier 2-3 times. He is a really classic freeride skier and an overall strong skier. There is this new generation freeriding with all the tricks and stuff and less skiing- which I am not a big fan of. And this guy shows that you don't really need that because he skis so big and is such a powerful skier.

>>> PANORAMA: Do you have any sponsors?

>>> CARL: Everything started for me this season so I didn't have any sponsors, but they are already lined up for next season. I have already tested out Smiths this year and will probably take them for next year for my helmet and goggles. I have the NorthFace - that I did a video contest with for a week. I will probably also go with them for next year; they are a pretty big deal. And K2 as well, which is not 100% sure yet, but the guy came to me and said he was interested so I'm hopeful. These are all pure gear sponsors, I still have to find money sponsors.



>>> **PANORAMA:** What gear do you wear now? (company, skis)

>>> **CARL:** I have been getting help from my dad's ski shop with gear so far. I have K2 skis, a Poc helmet and a jacket and pants from Oakley.

>>> **PANORAMA:** What do you like most about freeriding?

>>> **CARL:** I enjoy being in the mountains. What I like that is specific to freeride and not racing, is that you're in the mountains in their purest form. Nothing is groomed or carved. You really get to play with the mountain, there is no right or wrong.

>>> **PANORAMA:** Do you ever worry about getting hurt?

>>> **CARL:** Yeah, after my knee injury I was scared for a while to drop cliffs. I was backslapping the smallest thing. If you want to go big that's what you do. I was doing that on cliffs that were way too small, which is why I did not do so well in my first competition. I was scared for my knees and I'm scared of course because you don't want the season to end knowing you have so much more to do.

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"IF I GET AN OPPORTUNITY
TO KEEP GOING WITH THIS
AS A CAREER,
I WON'T HESITATE
FOR A SECOND."

>>> **PANORAMA:** What is your most memorable moment?

>>> **CARL:** December 19th of this season, I had the most amazing day of my life, probably. It was such a great moment. I went on the mountain with my best friend in Verbier, the one I started freeriding with, and have never skied on so much fresh snow in our lives. It was all fresh powder. It was so good that day and that's where everything started. We filmed with GoPros that day just for fun and watched it later and were both like "what just happened?" We skied from 8:30-5:00 and even forgot to eat. It was just too good.

>>> **PANORAMA:** Is freeriding something you want to pursue as a career or a hobby?

>>> **CARL:** If I get an opportunity to keep going with this as a career, I would not hesitate a second. This is what I really like to do. I have no idea about my future at all- I have absolutely no clue. I just know I love what I'm doing when I'm skiing.

>>> **PANORAMA:** Did LAS help fuel, nurture your interest in freeriding?

>>> **CARL:** Before I came here, I was in a ski school, for racing. I used to go to ski camps and when I decided I did not want to do racing anymore, I wanted to find a school that still offered skiing. The ski days twice a week helped me a lot. Even if Leysin is not as big of a mountain as I'm used to at home, it helped me improve my tricks. When I come home, I go back to the big mountain. LAS has supported me and gave me two free days to go to the U.S.

>>> **PANORAMA:** You mentioned you also do climbing/bouldering. Can you tell me about that? Are there any other (extreme) sports that you are involved in?

>>> **CARL:** I started longboarding last year, more as a summer thing, which I really enjoy. When I was younger, I did a lot of downhill unicycling. I haven't done it in a while because skiing is something I love more. I like messing around with people on my unicycle- I bring out the tall circus unicycle and dress up. ♦

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FREERIDING ISN'T JUST FOR THE BOYS

SARAH WILSON '09
UNIVERSITY OF DENVER
COLORADO, USA

Following graduation from LAS, Sarah continued her education at Williams College in Massachusetts (Astrophysics) before the call of the mountains and her home state became too much to ignore. Following in her mother's footsteps, Sarah returned to ski instructing at Copper Mountain and transferred to the University of Denver (Mathematics). In 2012, Sarah started competing on Freeride World Qualifying Tour and she credits that experience with completely changing the way she approaches and skis mountains. "I used to focus on technique to an extreme - the precision and feel of each individual turn. Now, I approach each line more creatively with a big-picture attitude, asking myself how to link together terrain features in a unique and fluid way." For Sarah, a former ski racer, competing is no longer about podium finishes, "it's about travelling, skiing new areas, pushing myself to ski bigger, harder, strong, and putting it all together in one run."



2014 junior freeride tour

Junior Freeride Tour by Dakine 2014 events will be organized in Europe in the following locations:

**Chamonix
Mont-Blanc, France**

January 25-26

.....

**Fieberbrunn-
Kitzbüheler alpen,
Austria**

February 1-2

.....

**Verbier,
Switzerland**

March 22-23

.....

The best juniors from Europe will join their North American friends to compete at the Junior Freeride World Championships at the end of the season in

Big Sky, MT, USA

April 4-7



LAS Then & Now

>>> Jan (Tanguay) O'Hara '73S

After 40 years, I returned to Leysin and had a wonderful visit with Ben Smith, the Director of Development, and three generations of the Ott Family. The town looks the same, many of the stores and the College have closed or have been replaced, but the magical feeling is still there! We took the telecabine up to the top of the Berneuse and I got to enjoy the view from the top without snow – that was different. There is now a revolving restaurant at the top.

Ben gave us a tour of both campuses and then we had lunch with the Otts, including Sigrid, who is 97 years old and the co-founder of our school. When I was there in 1972-73, the Patersons were in charge, so we did not see much of the Otts. The Otts are very much in charge now and have done amazing things with the school.

Here are some of my reflections on changes over the past 40 years:



Nationality

1973 - 80% of students were expat Americans. **2014** - 20% of students are expat/resident Americans an additional 10% are US Passport holders. 30% of the student body are ESL learning English while pursuing their diploma.

SKI TERM

1973 - During the winter, we had classes in the AM, skied every afternoon. **2014** - During winter, classes in AM and ski class in the afternoon twice a week.



Savoy

1973 - Dorm rooms had balconies where we hid our skis and food that we weren't supposed to have in the room and had a fire rope for safety. **2014** - The balconies on Savoy are now enclosed and there is a spiral staircase outside for fire escape and a central alarm system connected to every room.



TRANSPORTATION

1973 - Hitchhiking was frowned on but we all did it. We walked everywhere in town. **2014** - Hitchhiking is illegal in Switzerland and has never been a part of everyday culture during the lives of current students. Students use their pocket money to take taxis around town.



Tuition

1973 - \$13,000 per year
2014 - \$84,000 per year

EXCHANGE RATE

1973 - \$1 = 4 CHF
2014 - \$1 = .90 CHF



Pocket Money

(ALLOWANCE)
1973 - 20 CHF max. per week
2014 - 250 CHF max. per week

1973 TO 2014

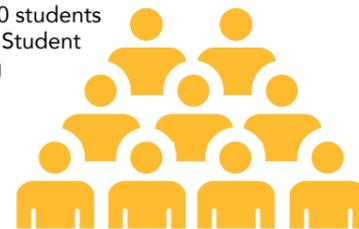


Bathrooms

1973 - Bathrooms and showers were down the hall. **2014** - All dorm rooms have ensuite bathrooms.

STUDENT POPULATION

1973 - Student population = 150 students all living at the "Savoy." **2014** - Student population = 340 students living between two campuses. Savoy campus houses 240 US High School Diploma students and the Belle Époque (Grand Hotel) campus houses 100 IB Diploma students.



Drinking

1973 - Students were allowed to drink in local bars. **2014** - Drinking permission granted 2nd semester of senior year after alcohol awareness class. Drinking is limited to the "Cave" at the Belle Époque (Grand Hotel) campus.

Restaurants

Some of our favorite local places have changed... Le Pavillion is now the Top Pub, Les Orchidees is closed, but Prafandaz is still owned by the same family and is still a beautiful site with great fondue.



Travel Office

1973 - Students had to find their own way to the school. **2014** - Students are picked up at the Geneva airport by LAS coach buses and LAS makes all the travel arrangements through its travel office.



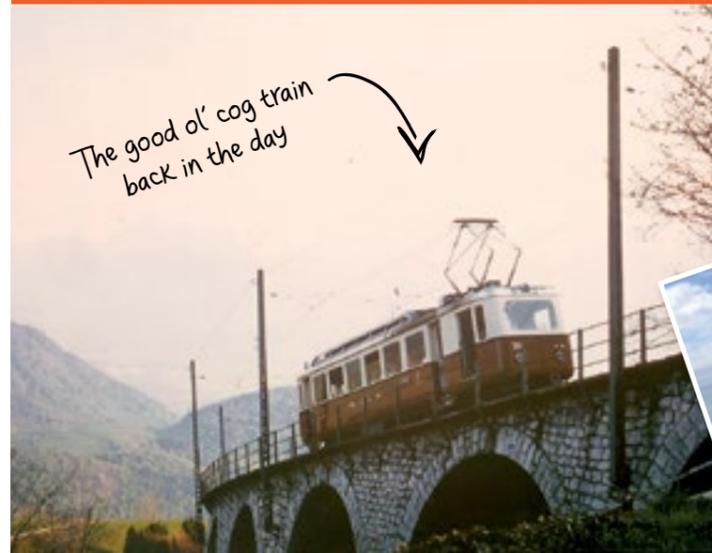
1973 - Average student stayed 1-2 years
2014 - Average student stays 3 years



LENGTH OF ATTENDANCE

"Life wasn't so bad back then... or now."

Jan (Tanguay) O'Hara '73S



The good ol' cog train back in the day



Leaving a Legacy - Building a Legacy

>>> Benjamin Smith
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

Seniors are asked sit down and truly contemplate their purpose not only at LAS, but to the world as well.

“What do I want my legacy to be?” This is a question most often asked later in life. After someone has reached the pinnacle of their career having accumulated wealth, taken full advantage of the resources made available to them, and at time when they can lift their nose from the grindstone, contemplate their life, and possibly make a difference in the lives of others.

At the semester-end senior class meeting, advisor Mr. Daryl Hitchcock asked the senior class this question in relation to LAS. As expected, the question was very thought provoking and much discussion ensued. For many of the students, the last two, three, or even five years at LAS have been the most formative and meaningful of their lives. However, they had never taken much time to think what their time at LAS has meant to them and how they might share their experience with future generations of LAS students.

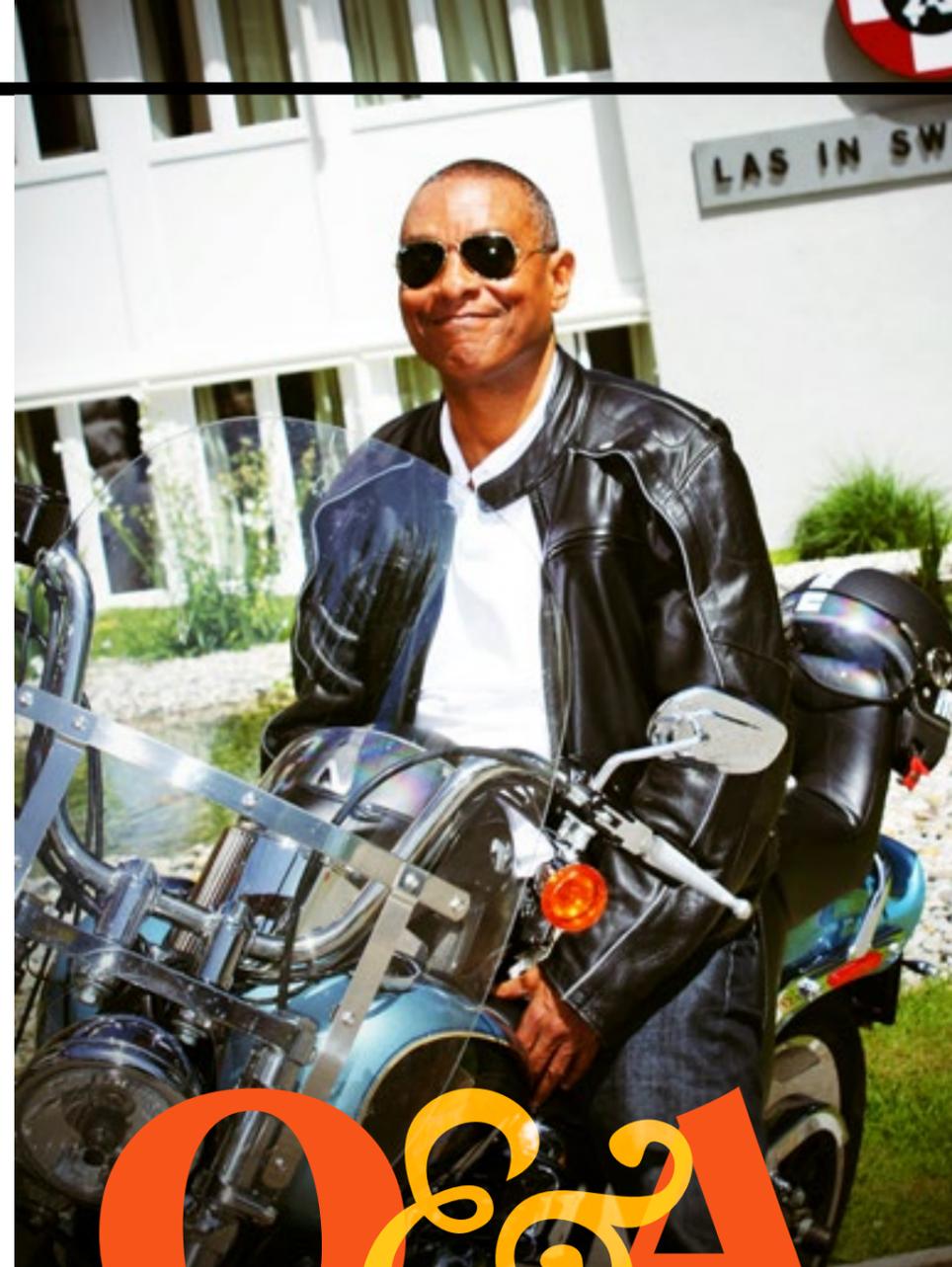
Days later, Mr. Hitchcock was still receiving emails from students with ideas of how to leave a meaningful legacy at LAS. Mr. Hitchcock is now working with a group of senior class

representatives to formalize their class legacy project, prepare a proposal to the school administration, and begin process of raising awareness and support.

The students ideas center around “building a legacy” at LAS - installation of public art, planting a “trees of the world garden” representing their home countries, or the creation of space for contemplation. Perhaps the most meaningful idea that will be a part of whichever project they choose is the students’ desire to share their experience with the other classes at LAS. The senior class will ask the other classes to consider their legacy at LAS from their first day at school.

It is truly amazing how one question can bring all the components of the LAS mission to life for our students and the entire LAS community. ♦

If you have would like to discuss the legacy you want to leave at LAS or support the senior class in their efforts, please contact **Benjamin Smith, Director of Development**, by email at development@las.ch.



Q&A

with Bill Carney '69
Entrepreneur, Musician, Father
2013 Alumni Induction Speaker

“LAS instilled me with an open and accepting mind, and taught me how to look after myself.”

>>> **PANORAMA:** First things first. Tell us about your Harley Davidson.

>>> **BILL:** Lady Blue.....one of my best friends. Live to Ride!

>>> **PANORAMA:** Any other hobbies we might not expect?

>>> **BILL:** Drummer, sound engineer

>>> **PANORAMA:** How do you feel about being reengaged with LAS?

>>> **BILL:** It's an honor.

>>> **PANORAMA:** What's next for Bill?

>>> **BILL:** To infinity and beyond; onwards and upwards! (Buzz Lightyear) ♦

>>> **PANORAMA:** Years ago you had a job and title with GM that was very straightforward. You made a very big decision to believe in “Bill” and to strike out on your own. How do you best describe what you do for living now?

>>> **BILL:** Three things have been motivating me since I decided to go out on my own: Fun, People and Money. In that order.

>>> **PANORAMA:** Best business/career advice you ever got?

>>> **BILL:** If you really, really, want something, the universe will conspire to help you get it. Believe in yourself and follow the little voice inside.

>>> **PANORAMA:** What was your time at LAS like?

>>> **BILL:** Painful initially, but evolved into one of the high points of my life so far.

>>> **PANORAMA:** Were your feelings different about LAS when you arrived and when you left?

>>> **BILL:** Scared to death when I arrived (I was only 12) and I loved it by the time I had to leave.

>>> **PANORAMA:** Fondest memory?

>>> **BILL:** The sound of the cowbells.

>>> **PANORAMA:** You were invited back last spring to serve as the Alumni Induction Speaker. What was your impression when you came back?

>>> **BILL:** Many changes and the school facilities have significantly improved, but the village stays the same.

>>> **PANORAMA:** What words of wisdom did you share with the graduating seniors?

>>> **BILL:** We are unique, we are international, and we are a family.

Internal Fundraising

>>> Benjamin Smith | DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

LAS students, faculty and staff embraced the “compassion” component of the LAS mission long before the school officially adopted it as part of its mission. Whether raising awareness or funds through auctions, bake sales, dorm stores, or student businesses, the LAS community has always been quick to respond to natural disasters, ongoing suffering and inequity across the globe.



In recent years, the desire and need for fundraising has grown dramatically. In recognition of this, LAS created an internal fundraising policy to formalize the procedure through which all fundraising activities were approved and monitored while promoting consistency, fairness, and transparency in the process and providing a mechanism for restraint. LAS is fortunate to have very generous students and the school recognizes a duty to those students, and the community, to prevent fundraising activities from becoming too numerous or overly demanding.

Last year, the LAS community contributed over 60,000 CHF to worthy causes through internal fundraising alone. This year, we are well on our way to matching those results and we know that our success is measured by both the impact we make and the funds we raise. We gain confidence from knowing our efforts will be well planned and managed.

Thanks to our students, parents, faculty and staff for

supporting the following LAS causes and volunteering hundreds, if not thousands, of hours of their personal time and effort:

Habitat for Humanity

Habitat is an international, non-governmental, and non-profit organization, which is devoted to building “simple, decent, and affordable” housing, and has addressed the issues of poverty housing all over the world. The LAS Campus Chapter has been participating in fundraising and service trips for over a decade and is the first official Campus Chapter in Switzerland. Last year’s Spring Cultural Trip took thirteen LAS students and three faculty members to Katowice, Poland.

www.habitat.org



Sethule Orphans Trust

Sethule is an orphan care project in some of the poorest rural communities such as Matopo, Hope Fountain and Tsholotsho, Zimbabwe. It is a locally driven Trust which seeks to reverse family disintegration resulting from the devastating effects of HIV/AIDS, poverty, consequently leading to countless numbers of orphans and ‘child headed families.’ LAS supports Sethule through numerous fundraising events during the school year and its annual Alternative Spring Break: Service & Safari trip.

www.sethuletrust.org

Service & Safari

Chaperoned alternative spring break trip that includes service and volunteerism. Please see the article titled, *Plan B: epitome of a dream destination*, in this edition for more information. LAS will return to Zimbabwe this spring break.



National Honors Society

A recognition society with membership based on four criteria: scholarship, leadership, service, and character. NHS requires its members to perform some sort of service to the community, school or other organization. The LAS Chapter organizes fundraising events to support two annual scholarships it awards to graduating seniors and the annual Terry Fox Run. The Terry Fox

Run is a cooperative charity event that takes place around the globe to raise money for cancer research. LAS held its first Terry Fox Run in 2002.

www.nhs.us | www.terryfox.org

Project St. Raymond

Founded by two former LAS students and supported by many, PSR provides much needed support for St. Raymond Health Centre in the Democratic Republic of Congo. PSR was the charity of choice for the Belle Époque Girls dorm in 2012/2013.

www.facebook.com/projectstraymond

Royal British Legion

A British charity that provides financial, social and emotional support to members of the British Armed Forces, veterans and their dependents. Spearheaded each year by Ms. Dixon, LAS community members are offered the opportunity to participate in the annual Poppy Appeal in advance of Remembrance Sunday. In return for their donation, they receive a Red Poppy to wear.

www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved



Student Businesses

A great tradition at LAS that has included everything from sandwich making to ski tuning. Last year’s businesses centered on satisfying our students’ never ending appetites through beef jerky and baked goods sales and organized delivery service in the dormitories. Each business contributed at least 30% of its proceeds to the LAS Scholarship Fund.

Lavender Ladies

A charitable organization in Leysin consisting of LAS staff and Leysin residents that manage an ongoing clothing drive and twice yearly sale of high quality clothing. Proceeds from the sales support the Breast Cancer Society of Canton Vaud. The unsold clothing is then donated to the local Leysin refugees, TEXAID, and Sethule Orphans Trust.

www.lavenderladies.wordpress.com



StuCo

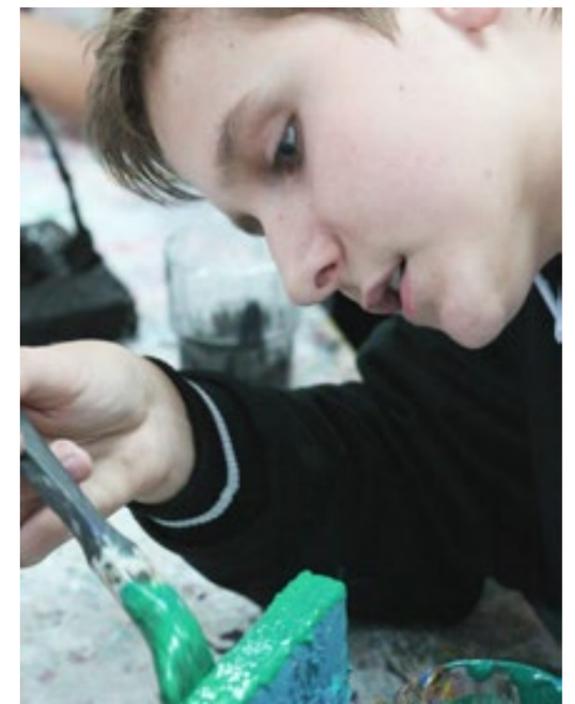
Otherwise known as the LAS Student Council, is an elected group of student leaders that represent the entire student body at LAS. StuCo conducts numerous fundraisers annually including the Dodgeball Tournament and Valentine’s Day Rose Sale for the benefit of the other LAS support charitable organizations. ♦



LAS 2D/3D Art

Inspired by Alberto Giacometti

Swiss artist, Alberto Giacometti, perhaps best known as the face on the 100 CHF bank note, is the inspiration for the work on display in the LAS Savoy campus. 2D/3D LAS student artists created these painted plaster sculptures in the style of this world renowned sculptor. Tall and sparse of detail, these figures inhabit a world of their own as they walk, tumble and recline with a gesture, charm and ambiance all their own.



From the Alumni Desk

>>> Fred Sharp
ALUMNI COORDINATOR

This year brought a new dimension to the nature of alumni events in Leysin and many visitors, both alumni and former faculty. A group of alumni had organized their own New Year reunion from December 29, 2012 to January 3 2013. That event was covered in the last Panorama. The idea, however, was picked up by another group – the Class of 2003. Inspired by a picture that I posted on Facebook, Tina Mamukashvili '03 in Georgia and Simon Wade '03 in Verbier, planned a 10-year reunion of the Class of 2003 in Leysin. An impressive group of alumni gathered in Leysin for the weekend just after graduation.

Dr. Steven & Mrs. Doris Ott and I met the early arrivals at the recently renovated Top Pub on the Saturday evening. The main group attended a drinks reception in the Trustees' Room at the Belle Époque early on Sunday evening – followed by a brief tour of the building – before heading down to the Fromagerie, where they were joined by even more of their classmates. This event was such a success, and was widely covered via social media, that **Marc Cousins '04** plans to inspire the Class of 2004 to celebrate their 10th year with a similar event here in Leysin. Marc is based in South Africa, but plans a business trip to Europe in February and plans to spend a few days in Leysin.

The Class of 2003 reunion attracted alumni from Mongolia, Japan, USA, UK, Korea, Russia, Georgia, and, of course, Switzerland. Those present were: **Raphael Sznitman, Tory Cyr, Vladimira Tritchkova, Tiko Mamukashvili, Yuno Tsenguun '04, Jasmine Kamber, Kim Latty, Keiko Yoshimura '04, Diana Rashkova, Osamu Horiguchi '04** (who cycled all the way from Geneva airport!), **Yeo Lee '03, Boika Dashdeleg, Simon Wade, Dima Mikhalchuk, Roman Snetkov, Tamara Blickisdorf, and Sebastian Gysi '04**. Partners were also heartily welcomed.

Impromptu London, May 2013

Prior to the Class of 2003 Reunion, there was another impromptu gathering of alumni in London in May. I had gone

to London to see Judi Dench on stage with **Ioana Nedelcu '08** and **Kristen Kesonen '08**, who, I am delighted to say, are regular theatre-goers. After the show, we turned up at the spacious apartment rented by **Jorge Sanchez '08** and **Chelo Hinojosa '09**. They had organized a party. We turned up to find a dozen LAS alumni already gathered. **Jin-Young Kim '09** had flown in from Copenhagen for the weekend to stay with **Valerie Servais '09** and **Martin Barrow '09** joined us for coffee the following day.
[Photo 1 - next page]

London Alumni Event, December 2013

The annual London Alumni Event, more casual this year, was held at a popular Italian restaurant on Shaftesbury Avenue. A significant number of LAS alumni have moved out of London in the past year but we did manage to track down some new alumni. The ever-reliable **Wonny Lee '00**, who has attended every alumni event in London, was there. Unfortunately, for visa reasons, he was preparing to go back to Korea for a while. We hope he will be back soon. He has been working as a paralegal for some years. He came to the dinner with **Lilly Chang**, a new-comer to London. She had recently come to London from Taiwan to further her studies in design. Other regulars were **Kristen Kesonen '08, Ioana Nedelcu '08, and Loris Pitteloud '07. Bettina Barletta '06S**, a first-timer and former fashion/design student, has landed a job at the Victoria

Beckham fashion outfit. She claims that David Beckham pops in on a regular basis. Bettina came with her boyfriend. Others who planned to attend sent messages and phone-calls to explain their inability to join us. **Aliya Saparova '01** is expecting her second child soon and was not feeling well enough to travel. Both **Heidi Beatrice Stanhope** and **Jemima Bush-Benning '96** had babysitting problems and **Cong-Yi Wang '07** had mistaken the date. **Jennifer Smith '96**, who helped plan the evening had to go to Scotland that weekend! Nevertheless we had a wonderful time catching up and planning. Once the restaurant closed, those of us who did not have buses or tubes to catch moved onto a club. To my intense relief it was a quiet place! Sadly, Kristen and Ioana had to rush off to catch their last means of transport before we had thought of taking pictures.
[Photo 2 - next page]

Turkey, Korea and Japan

In addition the above, I made short personal trips to Istanbul, Seoul and Tokyo.

In Istanbul, I stayed with **Kerim Kuyumcuyan '96** and we had a traditional Turkish dinner with **Ela Alyamac '96** and **Emir Erkan '99**. Kerim leases property in Istanbul, Ela is well into the production of her next movie, and Emir has decided to go back to college. Unfortunately, my camera failed to function.

In Seoul, I was looked after superbly by the LAS alumni. **Suk-Keun Song '05**



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rallied the troops and was a marvelous host and guide. He organized a dinner with **Sung-Il Baek '05**, who has just opened his very exclusive barber shop HERR, **Marvin Choi '00**, who is on the verge of opening his Japanese/Korean 'fusion' restaurant, **Min-A Park '06**, who is working in a medical laboratory, **Ming-Kyu Kim '06**, who has recently completed his military service, and **Ji-Young Lim '05**. The next day, I met with **Kook-In Kim '07**, who got married in December, **Ethan Seong**, who finished at Cambridge University, UK, and now is undecided what to do, and **Ming-Kyu Kim '06** again. Day three involved a tour of the Seoul Museum and dinner with **Kyoung-Jun Lee '08** and **Suk-Kuen '05. Kyoung-Jun '08**, in his final year at Bates College, has accepted a job with the financial firm in Boston with which he did an internship.

In Japan, I was delighted to meet up with **Ippei Tanaka '92** again for a three-hour dinner. On day two of my brief visit, **Goro Senzai '94**, whom I had not seen for almost twenty years, flew in from Sapporo to join **Osamu Horiguchi '04, Chika Kanno '01, Miho Yoshida '94S, Keiko Yoshimura '04, Yuko Tsujimoto '01**, and myself for dinner. Goro was delighted to make the acquaintance of LAS alumni who graduated long after he did. We dined well on authentic Japanese cuisine and sake until well past closing time. By my estimate, Japanese alumni number well over 230 – second only to the USA. It could develop into a significant, and mutually beneficial, network. One of the great joys of LAS alumni gatherings is that they never end early! There is always so much to catch up with, so many things to compare, so many experiences to share, so much to reminisce over.



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Min Seok Lee's Wedding

SINGAPORE.



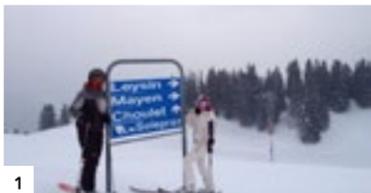
On 29th December, I was a privileged guest at the wedding of **Min-Seok Lee '05** of Korea and **Isabelle Yeo** from Singapore. The marriage took place in Singapore. This event turned out to be another LAS reunion. School friends from LAS arrived from all over the world to celebrate this auspicious occasion with Min-Seok and Isabelle. **Ming-Kyu Kim '06, Suk-Keun Song '05, Dong-Hoon Kim '06** and the newly married **Kook-In Kim '07** and his wife all came from Korea. **Sawako Kanno '04** and **Mariya Sota '05** came from Japan, **Nader Sassani '06** from Iran, **Shantanu Daga '05** and his wife came from India, **Philippe Escarra '05** came from France, **Cong-Yi Wang '07** from the U.K., **Daniel van der Herten '05**

took three days to get to Singapore from the Congo (DRC)! Others came from the USA, Switzerland and Russia. It is a great tribute to the strength of the bonds that are established at LAS that so many alumni travelled so far. **Mariya Sota '05** summed up the experience on Facebook: "I couldn't be more grateful for the bonding and reunions I have had with so many great people on my first trip to Singapore!" It was truly memorable event in many ways, and people were clearly moved when they had to say good-bye.



Visitors to the Magic Mountain

LEYSIN, SWITZERLAND



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Alumni

Jacob Dashaev '96 and two friends came from Russia
Vlatko Gigov '06 came from Geneva
Maria Churkina '07 came from Lugano
Kristin Kesonen '08 and **Ioana Nedelcu '08** came from the UK

[Photo 1]

Laetitia '06 and **Elxia Chalandon '06** came from Paris
Jonathan Tissandier '08 came for one day of skiing in late December.

Aliya Saparova '01 and her daughter were visiting friends in Geneva but she could not resist a quick day-trip to Leysin. The weather was not very kind pleasant, but this did not prevent her and her daughter from visiting a few old haunts and meeting up with **Hiroki Nakajima '99** and me for a snack and a hot drink at the ever popular Farandole, known simply to all LAS students past and present as the 'Croissanterie'. Aliya planned to join us for the London dinner on December 7th, but was not feeling well. She is expecting her second child in early 2014. [Photo 2]

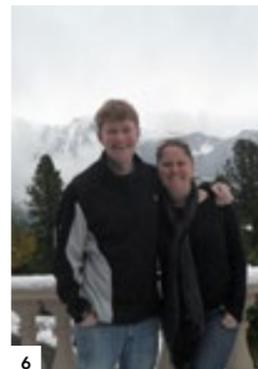
Nick Ang '99 visited Leysin after embarking on a long trip from London, through Europe, Scandinavia, Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Asia on his way to Singapore (traveling mostly by land). His faithful companion is his

young dog, Jack, surely already one of the most travelled and photographed 8 month-old puppies in the world! Jack also spent some time exploring the snow in Leysin with our own Director of Development's dog, Sydney. [Photo 3]

In January of 2013, **Anton Diatlov '00** visited Leysin with his wife and another couple from Russia. They rented a chalet through **Brock Fiedler**. Anton's family business involves the reprocessing of coal slurry. He spent his time in Leysin relaxing and skiing, and visited the school's new facilities in the Belle Époque. [Photo 4]

In early 2013, **Dmitry Novozilov '01** and his wife, Marina, paid us a short visit. They joined **Hiroki Nakajima '99** and myself for a delightful fondue dinner at the Fromagerie. Dmitry could not stay in Leysin for very long because he was due to participate in an BUZA contest in Moscow. He explained that BUZA is a Russian martial art, a kind of bare fist fighting dating back to medieval times. Dmitry, it turns out, is something of an expert. [Photo 5]

In the fall, **Allyson Costa '02**, nee Wright, and husband Anthony paid a brief visit to Leysin. They met when they were both studying Chemistry at Purdue University and married after they had both completed their doctorates. They now live in New York where they are both research chemists. Allyson works for BASF and Anthony is a computational scientist at



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and **Sheila Mikhelson**, who worked at LAS from 1972 to the early '90s and whose son and daughter both attended LAS. Sheila still lives in Leysin and is my neighbour. [Photos 8, 9 & 10]

I never cease to be impressed by the friendship and loyalty and persuades people to travel huge distances and at great expense just to spend a few days with their former classmates at their alma mater.

the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. [Photo 6]

In September, **Catherine Hagner '95**, brother **John Hagner '97** and cousin **Amanda Freund '97** came together for a visit to Leysin and its region. They stayed at the school's guest house and made good use of the car they had rented in Geneva. The pictures on John's Facebook page are a tribute to the thoroughness with which they toured the region, from beautiful cow contests to cheese-making. [Photo 7]

Yukiji Okamura '97 paid a short visit to Leysin with her husband in 2013. At the time, Yukiji was 'in between jobs' but she is now working for KMOOC, which I gather stands for "Japanese Massive Open Online Courses". It is an educational organization that puts people in touch with distinguished professors, mainly in the USA, who present classes online.

Former Faculty & Staff

Alumni were not the only visitors to Leysin. I was able to meet with the following former faculty:

Alyssa Uecker, now living in Lugano, **Suzanne DuRee**, now teaching in Singapore, **Grant Fiedler**, former Headmaster, **Jenny Fiedler**, former Head of Math, **Kyle Redshaw**, former Sports Director at LAS and frequent visitor,

The Ott family and Development Office was happy to welcome the following other visitors to Leysin in 2013: **Judy Wilson Vanderhorst '63**, **Richard Penniman '66**, **Charlie & Carol Fallon '67**, **Rita Brooks '67**, **Arthur Menendez '68**, **Bill Carney '69**, **Janet (Tanguay) O'Hara '73S**, **Brad Wyman '80S** and former faculty, **Kerri Anderson Sparks '88**, **Jason Cheung '91**, **Songmi (Huff) Keating '94**, **Sarah (White) Lauerman '94**, **Miho Yoshida '94S**, **Toshiyaki Fukuzawa '95**, **Jill Hodges '95**, **Jacqueline Enyart '96**, **Benoit Schumacher '02**, **Katherine Gaylord '03**, **Jasmine Kamber '03**, **Julia Rosenbach**, **Laura Harder '04**, **Eriko Tanaka '04**, **Faris Al-Jarboa '05**, **Anton Georgiev '05**, **Sepand Kiani '09**, **Jakub Mardusinski '10**, **Claudia Chudzik '10S**, **Anely Bekbergenova '11**, **Jan Droge '11**, **Christian Ehret '11**, **Abla Lamrani-Karim '11**, **Greg Marks '11**, **Kerman Arriola Zugaza '11**.

**Please accept our apologies if we forgot to include you.*

LAS Chairman & Administrative Directress visit India

>>> Dr. K. Steven Ott | CHAIRMAN
>>> Doris Ott | ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTRESS



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January started off on a busy note. Steven and Doris were in Delhi where LAS hosted an Afternoon High Tea for some of Delhi's movers and shakers. The event was to brand and promote LAS. From the number of people attending and their response, this event was a success.

Mr. Martin Strub, Chargé d'Affaires, Embassy of Switzerland, India, was the guest of honor. Mr. Strub gave a speech talking about the ties India has with Switzerland and how our secondary education is a premium product that many in India are not aware of but, he said: "With LAS hosting such a high profile event that perception will follow." Steven gave a speech on "The Future of Education: How Each Child can Reach Their Full Potential" and

the role that LAS plays in nurturing its students' development.

This event would not have been possible without the dedicated hard work of **Angad Sandhu '01**, who is India's "LAS Ambassador". Angad stated: "LAS made me discover talents that I never knew I had, such as in the performing arts, besides receiving a top secondary education through the LAS IB Programme." This prepared him well for his engineering studies at UC Santa Barbara. Another highlight speech was given by alumnus, **Rajat Kochhar '03**. For him, LAS stands for "Love - Accomplishment - Success".

After Delhi Steven and Doris headed off to Mumbai where they, along with Mr. and Mrs. Werner E Nievergelt, the Consul General of Switzerland, hosted a dinner for LAS alumni, parents of students, education partners and prospective families. Angad came from Delhi to assist at the event.

LAS alumni attended to reminisce and renew friendships.

Nitasha Silesh '12, attended with her parents and grandmother who traveled from Coimbatore in South India. Nitasha is currently pursuing her bachelor degree in Mumbai. Steven and Doris also met with **Abhinav Vohra '02** and **Aakash Chander '04**.

Doris summarized: "It is wonderful to see our Indian graduates doing well in life and remembering their years at LAS as being formative and memorable."

Ashwin Merchant '06P, Deputy Director of the Swiss Business Hub India and father of our alumnus, **Faraz Merchant '06**, summed up the evening perfectly "Through our son we could witness the impact of all that LAS stands for and more." ♦



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PHOTOS

1. Doris, Steven, Mr. Strub and Angad Sandhu
2. Doris and Steven with Ramola Bachchan, one of Delhi's leading Socialites. Her children went to SIS many years ago. There is her connection to LAS.
3. Angad Sandhu '01 and Rajat Kochur '03, reminiscing about their times at LAS.
4. Firozi and Ashwin Merchant '06P
5. Aakash Chander '04 and Abhinav Vohra '02
6. Steven, Mr. Nievergelt and Leevin Johnson



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Johan Groneman '88

PILOT. LOYAL ALUMNUS. SUPER DAD.

Johan passed away peacefully at his home in Saline, Michigan on 28th May, 2013.

Early in 2010, Johan was diagnosed with Stage 4 Renal Carcinoma. He is survived by his wife, Stephanie Martin '90, and their two children, Isabelle and Jack, and step-children Emma and Max. Johan's parents, Hans and Truus, brother Jan '89, and sister Carolien also flew from Delft to be with him at the end.

On receiving the terrible diagnosis and of being given only a matter of months to live, Johan and Stephanie visited Leysin as a place of quiet meditation. They said that Leysin had been a place of solace and happiness for them, and they spent their brief stay here revisiting old haunts, and planning a course of action. Johan had decided that he was going to fight! He would not go quietly. This determination, and the love and support of so many, extended his life from the matter of months to almost three and a half years!

I knew Johan well as his teacher and Dorm Head from 1986-1988. He was a loyal visitor to Leysin during the years following his graduation

I visited Johan several times during his illness, both in Delft and in Saline, and was always quite overcome by his composure and courage. He never felt the slightest bit

sorry for himself and determined to put up a fight. Even though he was ill and often in pain, he was utterly selfless.

Nothing could dissuade him from picking people up at the airport, taking them for dinner, or inviting them to dinner. My experience of spending time with him reflects what so many others have said and written – Johan had the knack of making you feel that you were a very important person in his life. He was generous and kind to a fault, and he is one of the few people I know who finally did attain his childhood dream – to become a pilot.

Johan worked as a pilot for KLM before his illness struck. He would tell you far more than you really wanted to know about flying and aircraft, while drawing you into asking question after question. I never ceased to be amazed by his knowledge of technical aspects of



flying.

From the tributes that have flooded in, it is clear that Johan's loyalty inspired many people. Classmates and colleagues heap praise on him and have raised funds for his family.

The greatest tribute of all comes from Johan to Leysin. It is his wish that some of his ashes be scattered round his beloved Leysin. Stephanie will wait until

the children are old enough to appreciate the significance of this, and will then bring them to Leysin. Those in Leysin who know him will look forward to this

day.

Our hearts go out to whole family, to Stephanie and Jack and Isabelle in particular, and yet there has been nothing morose about Johan's funeral and memorial services, both in Delft and in Saline. It was his life that everybody celebrated. As many have said – Johan is gone, but not forgotten.

Johan wanted no part in grief and tears. He was positive and defiant to the end. He had achieved his childhood ambition, and had known the undiluted love and affection of wife, children, family, colleagues and friends. He envied no man. Rest in Peace. ♦

>>> Fred Sharp
ALUMNI COORDINATOR

Sister Catherine Thoeni

COUNSELOR. TEACHER. FRIEND.

In November, we received the sad news that Sister Catherine Thoeni, College Counsellor and AP English teacher at LAS from 1984 to 1991 had passed away. She had been living for the past few years in a nursing home in Los Gatos, California.

Probably the last of her LAS colleagues to visit Sister before her passing was Ms. Suzanne DuRee. (French teacher at LAS from 1988 to 2000). She supplied the photograph, taken a year or so ago.

Ms. DuRee writes: "Sister (everybody, but everybody called her 'Sister') was very happy to be living amidst beautiful scenery in her beloved California. She was very sprightly and quick-witted and seemed a good deal younger than her 91 years!"

According to Suzanne Sister will be remembered for her high expectations, for her wry sense of humour, and for the home-cooked treats that were available at her occasional Bible study meetings. Her contribution to the academic, social and spiritual life of LAS made us all the richer for having known her as mentor, colleague and friend.

From some former students:

Mario Salazar '90: "Rest in peace, Sister Catherine, and many thanks for the help and encouragement a quarter of a century ago!"

Tiffany Broussard '88: "Many teachers leave a lasting impression on their students. Sister Catherine did so for me; not only academically but for my faith as well. Thank you Sister Catherine. Rest in Peace."

Adam Loghides '89: "I will say this for Sister Catherine, she really pushed me as a teacher and made me try much harder than I really wanted to! I became a better

student for it. On a lighter note, outside class she always managed to make me laugh and smile."

Beatriz Montserrat '87: "I will miss you so much. You were with me 25 years ago at LAS. You always gave us such great advice and such love. I really admired you. You were even chatting with me and a few others on Facebook just a month ago! Rest in peace, Sister. I know you are in a better place. Love Bea."

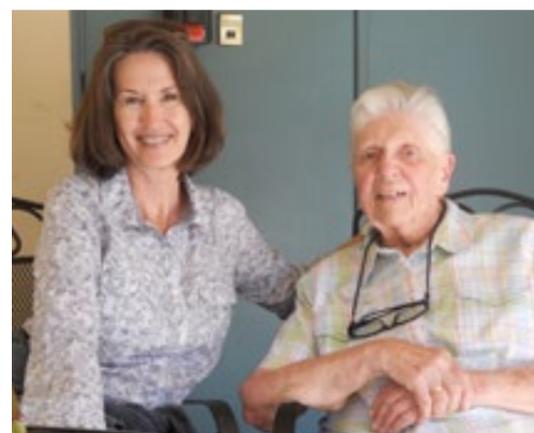
I personally recall many discussions with Sister, especially regarding her favorite literature. She loved to teach Golding's, *Pincher Martin*, and T.S.Eliot's, *Murder in the Cathedral*, and she introduced me to a much deeper appreciation of the works of her favorite poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins.

Her greatest passion, however, was reserved for Shakespeare's *Richard III*. She had an instinctive curiosity about the truth behind the "facts" of this king's life and crimes. In connection with the play, she taught Josephine Tey's book, *The Daughter of Time*, in which a modern-day detective looks at the evidence for the brutal murders which Richard III is generally thought to have committed or ordered.

Earlier in 2013, I relayed to Sister via Facebook – yes, she had a Facebook account – the details of the recent discovery of the remains of said king beneath a car park in Leicester, and the subsequent re-assessment of Richard as a king. Most scholars now accept that he was the victim of vicious Tudor propaganda that blackened his name and reputation to this day. Sister was delighted that the "truth" had come out in her lifetime! We also shared a love of music – and a birthday. We are both Taureans, both born on May 13th. ♦

“No wonder of it; sheer plod makes plough down sillion Shine, and blue-bleak embers, ah, my dear, Fall, gall themselves, and gash gold-vermilion.”

From Sister's favorite poem, 'The Windhover'
Sub-titled 'To Christ, our Lord'.



>>> Fred Sharp
ALUMNI COORDINATOR

Theodore "Ted" Groom Scholarship

TEACHER. MENTOR. FRIEND.



In late February 2013, the LAS community was deeply saddened by the loss of Theodore "Ted" Groom. Ted represented many different things to all who knew him – colleague, dorm parent, friend, mentor, and teacher.

In looking for a way to recognizing Ted's many years of commitment and service to LAS and its students, his love of the outdoors, spirit of adventure, commitment to service, and enthusiastic pursuit of knowledge shown through as the common thread between the relationships we all had with him.

As such, a fundraising effort was launched to establish a scholarship in Ted's name for a deserving student(s) who demonstrates these traits. We are proud to announce that we have surpassed our original goal of \$25,000. As of December 31st, over \$30,000 had been raised. We look forward to naming the first recipient at this year's Awards Banquet.

If you would like to make a contribution to the Theodore "Ted" Groom Scholarship Fund, please contact Director of Development, Benjamin Smith by email at development@las.ch. US taxpayer gifts made to the US Foundation are tax deductible. ♦

Thank you to all of our generous donors:

- Mustapha Abubakar '13
 - Gulnara Birmanova '13P
 - Jean Boyd Molly
 - Brisance Faculty Family
 - Campus wide donations - students, faculty & staff
 - Patricia Cooper
 - Aaron & Katy Deupree
 - Alex Flynn-Padick – "No Shave November" fundraiser on behalf of:
 - Danilo Bertazzo '14
 - Mike Brinkmeyer
 - Karlo Jelaca '15
 - Eric Illick '14
 - Mike Zhou '14
 - Fall 2013 Faculty v. Students Basketball Game – students & faculty
 - Cindy & Bill Hansen
 - Mark & Hattie Fryer
 - Grad. Week 2013 Rock School Event – graduates, parents & staff
 - Ted & Beverly Groom
 - Daryl Hitchcock
 - Jim & Cathy Kleemen
 - Meyskens Family
 - Christoph & Gosia Ott
 - Savoy Dormitory
 - Ben & Anastasia Smith
 - Jennifer & John Squire
 - Dottie Steward
- *LAS Matching Funds from Ott Family & the Swiss Foundation



PHOTOS: GRAYDON HAZENBERG

{ UP THE MOUNTAIN }

Every August, the Berneuse Challenge marks the beginning of another school year. Each student tightens up their hiking shoes and makes the journey to the top. With snacks along the way of course!



M G REPARATION - SERVICES - DEPANNAGE **M G** VENTE EN ELECTROMENAGER

MONNIER-GASSER
 Denis Woefray
 1920 Martigny

Avenue du Gd St-Bernard 63
 027 722 22 50
 info@monnierelectromenager.ch

L'ENTREPRISE NOS PRODUITS NOS SERVICES INFORMATIONS CONTACTS

Monnier-Gasser
 Denis Woefray
 Avenue du Grd-St-Bernard 63
 1920 Martigny

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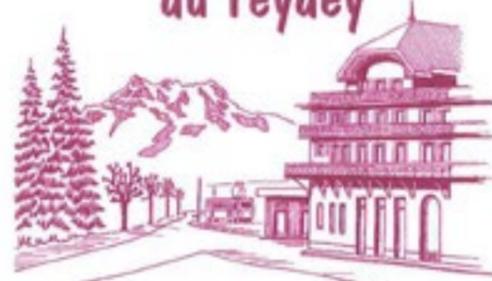


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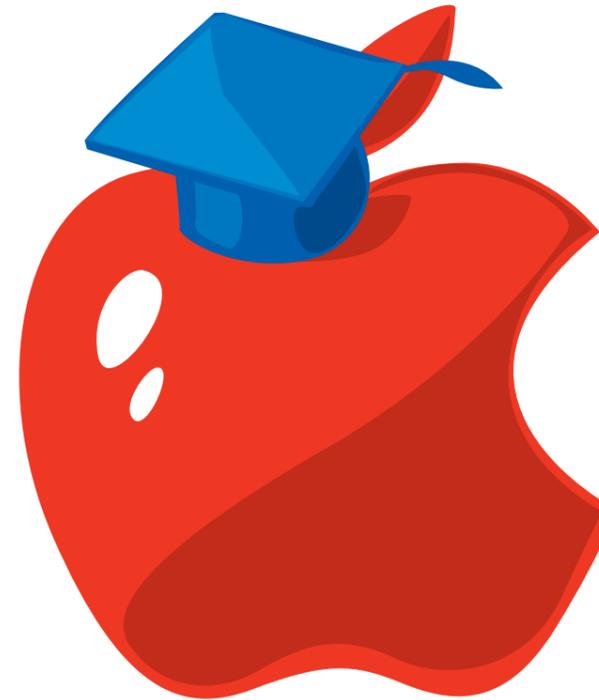
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Innovation at LAS

Moving towards student-centered learning

>>> Dr. K. Steven Ott | CHAIRMAN

Discussions, articles, books,

CNN, and editorials are more and more about education. Are we finally at the threshold of some fundamental changes?

Those of us who went to school prior to the year 2000 were educated in the traditional manner that goes back to the Industrial Revolution of the mid 19th century. During those years, changes in society required governments to introduce an education system that was open to all. National curricula evolved, often based on models that were successful in industry, namely educating interchangeable members of the newly evolved industrial society and 'good citizens' of the nation. Learning took place in a teacher-centered environment focusing on memorization, self-discipline and obedience to the state.

In history, for example, we learned the facts of an era or a person, but much less so about the causality and deeper motivations. Literature was chosen based on the political outlook of the country so as to reinforce the concept of good citizenship. Foreign languages were indeed 'foreign' with instruction often stressing the differences between cultures. To take care of learning for disabled students or late bloomers, Europeans, for example, opened new tracks catering to special needs. This simply meant that the concept of 'interchangeability' had been adjusted to include subgroups – it may remind you of Aldous Huxley's, *A Brave New World*, where there were alpha, beta and epsilon humans.

Today, we need innovative people who can rapidly adjust to our ever-changing world. We no longer need people who can remember the birthday of Napoleon – for that we have Wikipedia.

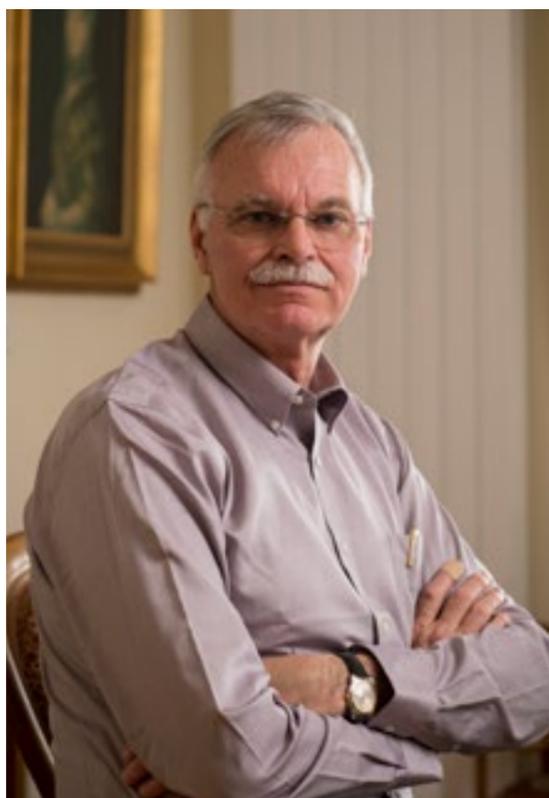
To educate our young people to be innovative, we need a rigorous and challenging curriculum, ambitious students wishing to learn and dedicated student-oriented teachers – all assisted by

modern technology and the results of the last decades of educational research.

Set the bar high and kids will rise to it; set it low and they will not go beyond – this is a truism. Students must be challenged by a rigorous curriculum that permits them strive for knowledge. They must understand that insufficient effort will lead to failure. If they fail, they must learn to get up and walk again. We, at LAS, help students to cope with academic failure in preparation for the tough competitive world that will be their career environment later in life.

Students become ambitious when they experience success after putting in a great effort or when they experience failure and start anew. They must learn that success must be earned and that competition with others is part of being a member of modern society. Students must measure themselves against those who they consider smarter and more accomplished and place expectations for themselves high. Comparing their own accomplishments with others who did worse than they did is not the way of becoming a success in life.

In the future, teachers need to be coaches and guides to learning. The time when teachers only transmit information is over. Coaches seek to discover the strength and weaknesses of each of their students. They seek to individualize learning and



in this manner permit students to reach their potential. They need to discern when students are not working hard from when they are challenged by the curriculum. End-of-year examinations need no longer take place at the end of an academic year but when a student has completed the curriculum. All this can only take place with well-prepared teachers who feel sufficiently empowered to empower students.

Research has shown that technology by itself does not make for better schools or for students who can think more creatively. The internet and sophisticated software may be a tool for better teaching and for students to learn more successfully. There are many ways to implement individualized instruction that can provide

a platform that will permit students to reach their personal potential.

This past year, Samsung sponsored testing and research of their Smart School software at LAS. The software permitted teachers to view their students' tablet screens while interacting directly with those same students during class time. It was a first step towards technology-assisted individualized instruction. Our teachers learned a valuable lesson: software does not lead to better learning. With the Samsung partnership complete and our intellectual curiosity piqued, LAS recently established the LAS Educational Research Center ("LASER"). LASER will explore multiple approaches in individualized instruction in the hope of identifying the best approach(es) and developing best practices.

The first type of instruction that LASER is planning to explore is the

"flipped classroom" model. Consider the following example:

Billy is in grade eleven taking the challenging IB Higher Level Physics class. His teacher, Mr. Jones, has chosen to have students study course content during study hall using the Udacity Physics Course, taught by Andy Brown, a 2009 MIT Physics graduate. The

"To educate our young people to be innovative, we need a rigorous and challenging curriculum, ambitious students wishing to learn and dedicated student-oriented teachers"

course includes short test questions after each lecture, as well a special review of relevant mathematics. Billy has just studied parabolic motion, the standard artillery problem. The next day, Mr. Jones is able to obtain information from the internet cloud on how much time and which sections Billy studied, as well as the results of the short test questions. He then determines Billy's lesson plan for

the day: fifteen minutes of homework with some individual one-on-one help, twenty minutes of group project work with computer simulated experiments in parabolic motion, and finally a short lecture for the whole class in preparation of the next main subject. In summary, Billy will be able to advance on his own in mastering the required topics in Physics

by optimally focusing on resolving areas where he is experiencing difficulty.

An exciting future lies ahead. The new tools offered to teachers, schools and parents through technology will certainly require much study and discussion to determine efficacy and effectiveness. I am optimistic that all students will become more innovative and life-long learners as a result. ♦



New Year's Resolution: where alumni relations goes from here.

>>> Fred Sharp
ALUMNI COORDINATOR

Over the past few years alumni-related activities have grown enormously. Now is the time, perhaps, take a step back and try to get an overall view of what has been achieved and how we can best plan ahead to achieve even more.

As I see it, we should make a clearer distinction between three kinds of event:

- 1) School-sponsored events, such as recruiting, marketing, fund-raising which involve the attendance of members of the staff and which are organized from the relevant school offices. Meetings with alumni should be included, of course, but are not the prime purpose.
- 2) School-sponsored events which employ the expertise and assistance of alumni, who have local and cultural knowledge and insights that could hugely benefit the work of the LAS representatives in their country. This is already working very well with help from **Angad Sandhu '02** in India and **Chika Kanno '01** in Japan, to name but two.
- 3) Alumni-sponsored events which are not planned by LAS, but to which LAS should give all possible assistance and encouragement.

It is this last category that I believe is the greatest growth area. Over the past few years, **Takeshi Fujikawa '99** organized a post-tsunami 'solidarity' reunion in Tokyo, **Adriana White '00** and friends organized the New Year's Reunion in Leysin last year. **Tina Mamukashvili '03** organized a 10-year Class Reunion in Leysin in June. For these reunions alumni travelled vast distances. This inspired **Marc Cousins '04** to suggest a similar reunion for the Class of 2004 in Leysin. **Sergei Dneprov '00** has already started planning what he calls a 'mega' reunion in Moscow in 2014. In Leysin, LAS contributes to these events by offering accommodation in the school guest house, putting on receptions, and, of course, inviting all visitors to eat at the school canteen.

Over the coming year I resolve to concentrate my efforts on the following:

- 1) Tracking down as many lost alumni as I can. I have successfully located about half a dozen 'lost' room-mates, but there are others that are proving to be every elusive. Who knows where **Ziad Nahra '87** or **Abe Wildrick '97** are?
- 2) Constructing a list of cities where alumni are most

concentrated. In this connection, I am trying to re-activate the contribution of 'class secretary'. It would be very helpful to have a volunteer from each class who could do much of the spade-work involved in tracking people down.

3) Trawling through the formidable amount of information available via social media. We need to organize this information in ways that are of interest to alumni. This daunting mass of information, however, is not static so there needs to be regular checks to keep LAS's already considerable alumni database up to date.

4) Keeping a record of weddings. Over the past few years, I have attended four LAS weddings and I have been astounded how such events attract LAS friends from all over the world. The LAS bond is extremely strong. Many such weddings are in effect LAS reunions. Also, I believe we should recognize that there have been at least 16 LAS/LAS weddings, to my knowledge, in the past 20-odd years!

5) Establishing a register of alumni by profession. I personally feel disappointed that I do not have full details of my former students who have actually seen military service in many parts of the world. Maybe the fact that my own great-nephew at the age of 19 has already seen action in Afghanistan heightens my awareness. Several of our alumni have actually done two stints in Iraq and Afghanistan. In fact, LAS alumni have made significant contributions in many fields. I think we should recognize them: the Military, Medicine, the Arts: Photography, Music, Writing, Design, & Theatre, Architecture, Hospitality, IT, Management Consultancy, Banking and Finance, Real Estate, Education, Philanthropy, Etc.

7) Honoring those who have passed away. I feel that the alumni office should take a lead in honoring the memories of LAS faculty and alumni who have passed away. Sixteen students whom I knew personally have passed away since I arrived at the school. I suggest a place of remembrance, for a roll of honor, etc. Maybe a place of 'meditation' could be created for visiting alumni?

Like most people's New Year's resolutions, many of these will fall short – but – we shall see...

My thanks to alumni far and wide who have helped LAS, and indeed myself, over many years. Your loyalty and kindnesses are much appreciated. ♦

Belle Époque Magique

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Thursday, February 13, 2014

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