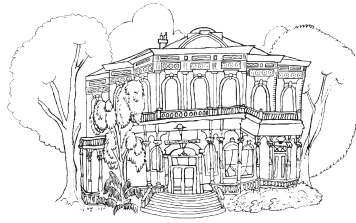


NEWS



NOTES

SPRING 2017

IN THE WORDS OF ALUMNUS RICHARD MERK

WHAT HAPPENS, and what does not happen, at Peninsula School is important to all of us and to our world.

I came to Peninsula in a sort of round-about way. I grew up in a household well aware of, but not (in the mid-fifties, at least) currently involved with Peninsula School. There had been family involvement from the founding when Josephine and Frank Duveneck, my maternal grandparents and five other families, joined to organize and populate the school in the early 1920's. Most of my uncles and aunts had attended Peninsula, as well as various older cousins.

As a young child I attended Las Lomitas School, a small district in great flux under the pressures of the "post war baby boom," of which my classmates and I were the vanguard. With new faces on the school board that wanted everything to be modern and new, Las Lomitas was quickly changing from a Peninsula School type of culture to a "modern, suburban institution" of *au courant* administrative educational ideologies. By the time I hit 7th grade Las Lomitas was instituting a "homeroom" structure with satellite classes in most subjects "to prepare us to better undergo the transition to high school." Without being a "middle school", they were trying to emulate one with strict curricula and lesson plans. I can recall watching the second hand of the classroom clock clicking forward at numbingly slow speed. Each second like a minute, each minute like an hour. When will this be over? When will that bell ring? When will I have a minute of freedom?

I rebelled and refused to cooperate within the system. Already branded a "non-conformist" from 4th or 5th grade, I was, by



Richard Merk, Class of '59, in Antarctica, February 2016.

the nature of my thinking process, an outsider. Nonconformist! Why, that's only one step better than "pinko" in the world of Senator McCarthy and the House Committee on Un-American Activities. That was the climate when, in October of 1957, I joined Ed Cormack's 7th grade group in the upstairs front room of the Big Building.

I did not become a new person by transferring to Peninsula. I brought my issues with me. However, I quickly discovered the freedom that Peninsula offered and I loved it. Too young to understand, much less articulate my situation, in retrospect I can clearly see that Peninsula allowed me to have my own expectations. I was not bound by the expectations of adults who so often had given no

acknowledgement or respect to me as an individual.

Peninsula offered me opportunities to try things outside the mid-fifties cultural envelope into which I had been sealed. I got to weave cloth on a loom with Billie Shaw. I shaped, glazed and fired clay. I pounded out Elvis songs on the old upright piano in the auditorium. I climbed Flat-Top, wrote stories for Ira Sandperl (to whom I owe much gratitude and many thanks), and built cabinets in Isadore Freedman's shop. Learning became fun because I was supported in learning about what interested me. Yes, there was curriculum that had to be learned, but it was not drudgery because of all the good, interesting things around it.

Without the techniques of passive resistance, questioning authority, questioning the *status quo*, looking behind words to actions, and the practice of independent thinking, I doubt that I would have survived high school.

Deeply different, Peninsula did not try to change me. Peninsula allowed me to learn how to be myself and still function in a world of social norms and conformity.

People like Alan Strain, Ed Cormack, June Bonfield, Jo Lancaster, and so many others, gave me the space to absorb and grow in an environment of exemplary models – supporting, nudging, suggesting, offering – but never pushing, pressuring or threatening. I learned that freedom is not free; that service need not be military. I learned that service can manifest in many different forms from helping others, to participation in government, to working with associations of like-minded people.

What a wonderful gift.

Thank you, Peninsula School.

CAN PENINSULA SCHOOL REMAIN “PROGRESSIVE?”

by Jim Benz

IN MY LAST ARTICLE ON *Why America Needs Progressive Schools*, I wrote about the need to teach children how to think critically in order to make decisions and participate in a democratic society. No matter your political allegiance, the national election raised some important questions around the importance of critical thinking in using information to make decisions in our country. It also brought to bear essential issues around change dynamics.

Over the past ten years, there has been a revolution happening in education. Ignited and enabled by technology, new schools have been founded on a model whereby students learn almost entirely on a computer with cursory interactions with peers and teachers. These schools employ software that individualizes lessons to the students' specific learning profile and pace. Seeing this as a trend that won't fade, and as attractive to many parents, numerous established schools have transformed themselves to this “1:1” (computer to student) model as well. Still other schools have adopted models where children participate in virtual classes, where peers and teachers are scattered around the globe.

Education has been ripe for a revolution, which has raised important questions: Are these models the new progressive schools? What are essential elements for educating children in today's world? Will schools like Peninsula survive or become anachronisms?

In 1925 Peninsula School itself was revolutionary. Remember that schools at that time were based on a factory model, focused on efficiency and student conformity to prepare them for work as an adult. Peninsula had a vision of education that was, in today's lexicon, disruptive. Peninsula's founders viewed childhood experiences as precious and held that children could learn to think critically, tackle complex ideas, and contribute to important decisions. They believed that children played a critical role in participating in their own learning and that schools had a responsibility to teach kids what living in a democratic society required. Most importantly, Peninsula's founders believed that there are essential life lessons to learn by interacting with others in a diverse community.

As we move forward with a vision of Peninsula's future, we need to ask ourselves: How can we be sensitive to the core values that define Peninsula and resonate with each of us today, yet remain mindful of contemporary issues to ensure we are meeting the needs of children and their futures?

With this essential question in mind, I've developed three principles to guide us as we consider the future of progressive education:

Learning is inherently a social activity.

Schools fulfill a social need.

Schools must be institutions of continual renewal.

1. Psychologist Lev Vygotsky suggested that most learning takes place through interactions students have with their peers, teachers, and others. While some forms of learning can certainly take place while working with others in a virtual environment (i.e. video or some other type of technology), face-to-face discussion,



Head of School Jim Benz on the shores of “Lake Peninsula” in bare feet with the kids.

collaboration, and feedback require following social rules and developing social skills – learning that is irreplaceable and self generating. It is only through this proximity to others who may interpret the world through different cultural and experiential lenses or those who may have different abilities and disabilities that children are forced out of their comfort zones and learn about diversity. Besides, learning with others is more fun!

2. As I wrote in my last article, schools have a responsibility to teach students about participating in a democratic society. However, how do we as a society expect to teach children to be democratically responsible and socially active adults if we don't allow students time and opportunities to practice? Students need to learn about democracy in a school setting where decisions are not virtual but have real impacts and consequences. School environments are uniquely equipped to teach values, empathy and the importance of leading and joining with others to make change.
3. As a progressive school, we need to be perpetually learning and renewing our vision of education and what is best for children today and for their futures. Learning is not static, it is dynamic and must be perpetual. If we want children to learn throughout their lifetime, to be cognitively flexible and to think critically about change, we as parents and teachers must model the same for them.

My hope is that we can use these concepts to guide progressive education and Peninsula School as we prepare young people to assume the mantle of leading and working with others to inhabit this blue marble of a world. While what we know about the future is that change is certain and will continue to be rapid, we want to prepare children for the future with skills and values that serve them today and for decades to come. As Abraham Lincoln once wrote, “As our case is new, we must think anew and act anew.”

UNDER THE OAK TREES

SHARED WITH YOU HERE are snippets from around Peninsula about what has been happening this year, from kids and teachers. They only cover a bit of what goes on, but we hope they give you a feel and remind you of your time at Peninsula.

"This has been a really special year in our younger childcare group because of relationships. What I really like about this group is how much they look forward to seeing their friends from the other nursery in the afternoon. They have gone from verbal greetings, to holding hands, to full hugs as the wagon arrives. The way they care about each other stands out, and of course it is so sweet that they are never ready to go home at pick-up time!"

FAGA MISA, CHILDCARE DIRECTOR

"I like the big yard, the tire swings, the nature, the trees, and all my friends at Peninsula School."

THE KIDS OF NURSERY GREEN, 2017

The Nursery Green teachers asked kids to help them express the highlights of the year.

"Something that stands out for me was that within ten minutes of arriving at school after spring break, a whole group of students was gathered around a bit of dirt totally engrossed with two snails and roly poly bugs. They made the self-named 'Bug Club,' to which everyone was invited, and worked on what these creatures needed and how they could care for them. It struck me what richness our grounds provide at Peninsula for these spontaneous interactions with nature."

GAIL BLACKMARR, TEACHING ASSISTANT

The kindergarten yard is one of many spots where our Peninsula kids get to learn about and care for their environment firsthand.

"When I think about my classroom and our teacher reunion tea, I think Roots. We are so connected as teachers in this special classroom. The name has changed, but the essence is always there."

JESSICA FOSCO, HEAD TEACHER

There was a unique and very Peninsula gathering deemed the 'Teacher Reunion Tea' including four head teachers and assistants, all of whom have taught in the same classroom over the years.



One student from Jessica's class peacefully sitting under the Big Field trees, sound mapping birds on campus.

"A favorite moment of mine this year was with Jessica's class. We made sound maps and the kids sat outside all around Peninsula on a bright sunny day with clipboards, noting bird sounds."

AARON TINKER, LOWER SCHOOL SCIENCE TEACHER

Our Specialty teachers often do a version of a project across different classes in age-appropriate ways, as was the case with sound mapping, which Science Aaron did with many classes this year.



The kids of Nursery Green & Blue build a train track meeting in the middle and connecting the divide between the yards.

"I loved exploring the campus and being on the other side of the school, with bigger boundaries."

MAX PETRY, AGE 8, ELIZABETH'S CLASS

As the kids grow older and change classrooms, their boundaries grow with them. Changing to the 'big kid' side of school is a rite of passage, and this is about Max's first year on the West Side of Peninsula's campus.

"Throughout our poetry unit it was beautiful how many of the students fell in love with poetry as a way to express themselves. I loved seeing the kids get up and share what they'd written with so much pride"

TONI OURADNIK, HEAD TEACHER

Toni's Class did a poetry unit, culminating in a poetry day across the school, in which Toni's Class hosted a lunchtime poetry reading.

Continued on page 4

UNDER THE OAK TREES

Continued from page 3

“So beautiful to see the trees connected to the children and our curriculum when we harvest the acorns in the fall, dry them all winter long, crack them open and grind them into acorn flour in the spring for our muffins which we bake and bring to eat on our Pt. Reyes camping trip.”

ANDRÉA DE WIT, HEAD TEACHER

The collaboration between classroom teachers and specialists makes for wonderfully rich and connected units in many classrooms. This acorn project is one such example between Andréa and the lower school Science Teacher, Aaron.

“I am enjoying spending time in the little field with Andréa’s kids right now as we prepare for our May Day performance. Between the natural beauty of the season and the energy of the kids there isn’t much else needed to make compelling theater.”

MERRILL GRUVER, DRAMA TEACHER

“We had a lot of fun in the Mobiles Choice this year. Barbie taught it and I made a mobile with a jellyfish.”

SIENNA GERSICK, MARCELLA’S CLASS

“It was cool to be able to be in the same Choice for us as cousins.”

CAMILLA TARAZI, MEL’S CLASS, AND
SIENNA’S COUSIN

There are five Choices offered to the 5th through 8th graders per year, each lasting two to three weeks for about an hour a day. For any one of these units the students have up to twelve mini-courses to choose from, in which they are often with a cross-section of ages.

“Camping was fun! We ate, went on hikes, and got to go swimming. I really like camping.”

JULIAN DE SA, MARCELLA’S CLASS

The length of camping trips increases at Peninsula starting in Toni’s through the 8th grade and students build up skills through the years. Upper school camping is a time-honored tradition, much loved and remembered by the alumni as well as our current students.

“Pizza Day this year was memorable. Our 7th graders really came together to work as a very effective whole. They really did not have to be led, but jumped in themselves. Not only did they do the normal work of cooking the pizza, but they added new aspects too, like the new entryway and welcome and the cashier set up. Witnessing them take what they have learned about working together and doing such a great job was a highlight for us.”

AKASH PANDEY, HEAD TEACHER &
RACHAEL LOPATIN – TEACHING ASSISTANT

Throughout the higher primary grades and upper school, the students engage in fundraisers they put on to earn money for a charity or cause they want to support or to fund their own camping trips, and Pizza Day with english muffin pizzas is a time-honored tradition.



The smiling faces at this year’s impromptu Teacher Reunion Tea.

“I really enjoyed band this year. It is the most fun I’ve had because of the closeness of my class and the years of experience, which make it easier to learn the songs in practice.”

KYLIE CASAL, MEL’S CLASS

The upper school music program has been a staple at Peninsula for well over two decades with kids building their skills as musicians and band members from 4th through 8th grade. It culminates each year in the Rock Concert which is one of our beloved Peninsula traditions.



A glimpse at the acorn process, showing the grinding by three of Andréa’s students.

“Spice Masters was one of my favorite Choices to teach because the kids walked away with real-world skills. After learning about a variety of spices, kids cooked potatoes, rice, and cookies. After each cooking project, they were able to guess the spices their classmates used with really great accuracy.”

MEL CARVALHO, HEAD TEACHER

Learning how to learn, how to love to learn, and how to apply what they learn is part of what has made Peninsula’s philosophy fit for students throughout nine decades. Teachers who can teach to their passions make these skills more accessible to the kids.



The same class that innovated Pizza Day are shown here working with Merrill Gruver to perform Romeo & Juliet set in the 1960’s.

THIS YEAR'S AUCTION – A LOVELY AFFAIR

by Sue Eldredge

We are grateful to the entire Peninsula community for making this year's auction a successful fundraiser *and* an amazingly fun evening celebrating our school with parents, teachers, staff and the alumni community. We had a tremendous turnout and were thrilled to have so many of our alumni community and former staff attending. We hope it will be a continuing tradition that the alumni community joins our current Peninsula families at the auction as a touch point to stay connected with Peninsula.



Parents of alumni Sid Miller and Rocio Herbert visit with alumni Noah Miller and Patrick Pelegri-O'Day at the 2017 Auction.



From current parents and PALS, to current and former staff, everyone made it to the dance floor this year to have a great time. Photos by Mira Zazlove



Current parents gathered for a wonderful evening of community.

This year we changed things up. The auction was held off campus at the beautiful College of San Mateo's Bayview Room that had a heated patio and stunning panoramic views of the Bay and the foothills. We redesigned the evening to provide more time for socializing, dancing, and celebrating our Peninsula community, in balance with more focused fundraising. Some traditions remain the same – our lovely 8th grade class was on hand to provide fabulous entertainment, contribute beautiful scarves to the Live Auction, and help throughout the evening.

We are ever grateful for the generosity of our community, both in volunteering their time and treasures, and for the generous financial donations made. This year's auction raised \$120,000, a 31% increase over last year's auction. And thanks to everyone for "raising their paddle," we will be replacing the school's aging water delivery system and adding new purchases to upper school technology over the summer. Many, many thanks to you all.

We hope to see even more of you at next year's Peninsula Community Celebration and Auction.

ALUMNI UPDATES



Nicholas Fenselau

Nicholas Fenselau '13

Peninsula has most definitely guided me in my creative endeavors and life decisions. I'm grateful for the teachers who supported me throughout my years at Peninsula and it's a memory I will never forget. I recently committed to study Product Design at College for Creative Studies (CCS), Detroit. It was an extremely hard decision between CCS and Rhode Island School of Design (RISD). My experience at Peninsula helped me with this decision because my teachers and their support helped me to know myself better. I realized that CCS is a more supportive environment for me and fits my personality and skills better. I knew that I would fit in and thrive there. I don't know where I would be if I didn't go to Peninsula and I'm very fortunate to have that once in a lifetime experience. Thank you to all those who supported and cared for me!

Harry Justus '10

I am sharing a photo from a recent performance at my school, Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio. The student radio station put together a student band music festival, and a band I'm in called *Motown* performed. I'm in my Junior year, majoring in Psychology and minoring in Neuroscience. I do a lot of music on the side – I've been in a few different bands in college, and I'm also in an a cappella group that performs arrangements of popular songs.



Harry Justus playing at his college radio station's festival.

Kendall Dubroff '06

I've gone back to school, currently at Santa Barbara City College studying Early Childhood Education with plans to be a kindergarten teacher as amazing as Winston and Josie!! I am taking an Early Childhood Education class this semester for which I am

writing my term paper, a reflection on my own socialization. This class has really been bringing to my attention how much Peninsula has impacted who I am today, in values, beliefs, and everything. I just wanted to reach out to Peninsula and all the teachers I had and say thank you.



Kendall Dubroff

Buck Greenwald '07

I have published a six-book YA (young adult) series called "The Big Bet" under the pen name Owen B Greenwald, and am working on a seventh book with another Peninsula alum, Paul Kivelson.



Buck Greenwald

Meg Smithson '98

I am currently getting my Masters in Social Work at NYU. Through the program, I am interning at the LGBT Center and working with LGBT immigrants, specifically people seeking asylum in the U.S. because of homophobic and transphobic violence in their home countries. Next year I will be working with a legal organization that works with immigrants in detention or deportation proceedings to keep them in the country. After I graduate, I plan to continue working with immigrant communities. From an early age, Peninsula School fos-

tered in me a strong sense of community and acceptance. Peninsula taught me to be inclusive, not exclusive, to be empathetic and non-judgmental. There is no doubt Peninsula steered me toward the path I am on now and I see the value of my time spent there every day. Thank you all so much!

Lydia Meraz '98

In 2010 I finished my Masters in Counseling Psychology with an emphasis in Somatics at CIIS. I then moved to Mexico and had a baby. I now live in Tijuana with my five year old daughter Ixchel.



Meg Smithson & Lydia Meraz met in 1989 at Peninsula and are still the best of friends, with Lydia's daughter Ixchel.

Erin Dorn '92

I live in Sacramento and am the Adult Education Coordinator at the Crocker Art Museum where I design and implement public programs to help people enjoy and engage with art. I credit Peninsula with instilling in me a love and appreciation for art from an early age!



Erin Dorn

Emile Bruneau '86

I just finished teaching the last class of my first semester at Penn called "Putting science to work for peace". I'm a professor here now, and starting to build my lab (the Peace and Conflict Neuroscience Lab), which has me trying to better understand how our brains drive us to conflict, and what we can do about it. This also means that I recently relocated to Philadelphia with my family: wife (Stephanie), daughter (Clara, 5) and son (Atticus, 3). Our house is bigger than we need, so a first job was to create a 'rumpus room', which now has a cargo net along the roof, lofts, and a suspended reading nook. Chicken coop in the backyard was next. Backyard play fort is the current project. In both my professional life and my home life, Peninsula is always on my

mind – I remember climbing up to the tree house when I was in kindergarten as it was being built, and the rumpus room and play house are designed to pass that feeling on; and I remember my times navigating conflict during PE, both as a kid, and as the PE teacher for a couple of years. Not so far off from the types of processes that drive conflicts between adults! So happy that we have found a school out here (Miquon) that shares the Peninsula philosophy (though, alas, not a single tree house... I'll see what I can do about that).



Emile's children, Clara and Atticus, in the 'rumpus room.'

Alex McClure '83

I live and work in San Francisco. I am married, with two kids (a boy and a girl ages 10 and 12) who attend Peninsula Summer School every summer. After many years as a Federal Public Defender, I now have my own law practice, specializing in criminal defense. Recently, the class of '83 has been organizing more reunions and connecting over FB. We have a very special bond and it has been incredible to reconnect with such a wonderful group of dear friends.



Alex McClure and her daughter Amelia rock climbing at Joshua Tree.

IN MEMORIAM

Peter V. Lee

Peninsula alumnus, Peter V. Lee, Class of '36, passed away on July 26, 2016 at the age of 93. Coming from a long-time Peninsula family, Pete was the second eldest son of Dr. Russel V.A. Lee, preceded by Richard, then his younger siblings Philip (Class of '37), Hewey (Class of '39), and his sister Margo (Class of '40). He was the uncle to our current weaving teacher, Barbie Paulsen, (Class of '71), and great uncle to Phillip Lee (Class of '08), Russel Lee (Class of '05), Brian Smaalders (Class of '03) and Alison Smaalders (Class of '04).

Pete attended Peninsula School from 1930 to 1936 when he graduated. He went on to become a doctor. While he did work briefly at the Palo Alto Medical Clinic founded by his father Russel, he chose to work most of his life in Los Angeles and raise his family in Pasadena. He taught pharmacology at USC for most of his career, switching to Family Practice, which involved studying and becoming certified in a whole new branch of medicine, at an age when many of his colleagues were thinking about retiring. Professor Emeritus Peter V. Lee, MD, was the former Chair of the USC Department of Family Medicine.

"Dr. Lee exemplified what a physician should be," said Laura Mosqueda, MD, the current chair of the USC Department of Family Medicine. "The reason our department is so focused on the nexus of medical care and social justice traces directly back to Dr. Lee's influence and his commitment to the underserved." Peter V. Lee is survived by his wife, Belinda Fischer, four children – Martha, Susan, Catherine and Peter – two grandchildren, and one great grandson.

Frances Riley

Peninsula teacher and parent of alumni students, Frances Riley, passed away at the age of 86 in March of 2016. She taught in various ways at Peninsula for a decade between 1962 and 1972, culminating in 3 years as a co-head teacher with Woody Nichols. They were a beloved duo. Fran also tutored Peninsula students in reading over the years, and she will be remembered and missed by her former students

Fran was a Modern Hard Edge artist as well as a teacher and displayed and sold her art locally. She and her husband Charles remained Peninsula neighbors for 53 years, living in Menlo Oaks, and created ties to current Peninsula families as was made clear by Sheri Basta, a current Peninsula parent. *"We had an instant connection (as so many Peninsula families do) and became fast friends with Fran and Charles. They shared stories of their children growing up and going to Peninsula. Fran still had a library collection of treasured kids books for my three girls to borrow and always wanted to read with and help them learn. They were the best neighbors and adoptive grandparents. Fran was also an amazing artist and a great knitter- knitting hats to donate to the children's hospital and cancer center. She was such a strong woman with an active mind well into her final year."*

Fran, and Charles who passed away only two months after Fran, are survived by their children, all of whom attended Peninsula until middle school – Charles (Class of '68), Robin (Class of '71), Mary and Frances (both class of '73), as well as seven grandchildren and four great grandchildren. Fran Riley was a loving, creative, intelligent, giving person, and a fierce child advocate – and she was truly loved.

Happy Trails

A FOND GOODBYE TO CHYERL HOSHIDA

After a long and fruitful career at Peninsula School, Chyerl Hoshida has decided to move on. Chyerl started at Peninsula as a parent in 1989 and her daughter Nikki graduated with the class of '98. She joined the staff in 1993 and has been a treasured and dedicated nursery teacher during that time, touching the hearts and enriching the minds of scores of children. Parents and children alike have appreciated Chyerl's warm nature, her generous heart, her gentle guidance, and her genuine affection for each and every child in her care.

Chyerl will be deeply missed by everyone at Peninsula. We thank her for her contributions to the school, to parents, and, most importantly, to the children during her years here. We wish her the best of luck and success in her adventures.

SCOTT MCCRACKEN

After teaching in the upper school for seven years – as an assistant, then 5th grade Head Teacher, and finally the Swing Teacher – Scott McCracken is off to teach math at Crystal Springs middle school. Scott has enjoyed many aspects of Peninsula, mentioning that his highlights are the relationships with people. *“Scott is a phenomenal teacher but he is an even better friend. I always liked playing basketball with him and hanging out during lunch,”* said Andries de Wit Castellano, Class of 2017.

“Scott has always been an incredibly supportive teacher and has always been there for his students,” shared Camille Thrall, Class of 2015. For Scott the

students are paramount, and he has loved working with the kids, but the whole community of parents, colleagues, and students stands out as unique and strong. *“I love that the Peninsula community values time more than other places, which really allows us to get to know each other.”* Scott also felt that working on committees is a nice way for parents and staff to meet while getting important work done. He devoted time to the Staff Diversity Committee and diversity work outside of the classroom through his Peninsula tenure. Scott and his family will remain close to Peninsula and intend to stay involved in our community for years to come.

LIVY SIEGEL

We will miss having Livy Siegel as our teacher in the 5th grade. She first worked as a teaching assistant and was inspired to get her Masters in education and a teaching credential. Livy returned to teach in the upper school. She enjoyed coming back to the community where she grew up to maintain the magic that happened for her and her classmates through building relationships with their teachers. Karina Sanchez, Class of 2018, shows Livy was successful, sharing, *“Livy is a great teacher in many ways; she inspires confidence, creativity, and compassion in each class. She manages to create a stress-free environment while still maintaining the necessary boundaries, which I think is a great skill to have. Over the past few years, Livy has been an inspiration to me and someone who I look up to. She has made a big impact on my class and me, and her presence will be missed.”*

Livy also gave her time to the Board and its Strategic Planning Committee because she felt the work was really valuable, and it broadened her perspective showing many different aspects of Peninsula. However, what she will miss most are the campus and the kids. She knows how

special they are, and the ability to have the students engaged outside in a regular way is a strength of Peninsula's educational world she really believes in. Peninsula is connected to Livy's life in so many ways; she knows this is not goodbye but “see you around!” We wish Livy well on her next adventure.

AKASH PANDEY

Akash Pandey, who is moving on, joined Peninsula in 2011 and has been the 7th grade teacher for the past two years. He is a gifted teacher who took a personal interest in his students' development, growth and care. In particular, he has enjoyed the freedom and opportunity Peninsula affords its teachers to create and build units allowing him to teach and share what he is passionate about. He was also very active in diversity work at Peninsula, both with the staff and in his classroom. He felt it was important to have the conversations that are often ignored in our society and was sure they would improve our community.

Akash will miss his students and the camping trips most as he heads to his next adventure. He reflected that with the level of responsibilities the students take on and the free time provided on camping trips, *“the kids grow and develop right in front of your eyes.”* Most of all he cherishes the fun and memories with the kids. *“Some of my favorite memories with Akash are definitely the hip hop freestyle choice he offered when I was in 7th grade and our two week camping trip in 8th grade. Akash was a great teacher because he was all from the heart and he was never afraid to incorporate what he liked into his curriculum. That's what I loved about him,”* said Santiago Ruiz, Class of 2013. He will be greatly missed, but we will still see him around from time to time.

Thank You for Your Generosity

We extend our heartfelt thanks to so many generous donors who have given to Peninsula School this past school year – current parents and parents of alumni, board and staff members, alumni, grandparents, friends, former staff, community partners and employer matching programs. Together you help us carry on our rich tradition of progressive education and allow us to focus on creating a joyous place to learn and grow, where students can come into themselves and give back to their world.

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We are so appreciative of our Peninsula community near and far who gave with exceptional generosity to this year's Annual Giving Campaign. Together you helped us exceed our AGC goal of \$400,000 (our highest ever), and provided almost \$5,000 to the Peninsula Tuition Assistance Fund that extends tuition assistance by 1%, allowing more young people to have the opportunity of a life-shaping Peninsula education.

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The Class of 2007 had a big 10th reunion, hearing from every member of the class, and all but four made it to the Fair.

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RAISE YOUR PADDLE – NEW WATER DELIVERY SYSTEM & CLASSROOM TECHNOLOGY

We gratefully thank all of the families in the school community who together contributed over \$90,000 to replace our aging water delivery system and assist with upper school technology. This year's Raise Your Paddle was the second largest ever!

Mary Lyons Mesirov

In memory of Evan Rauch
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In memory of Joe Starr
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THAT'S MY PENINSULA KID

Do you ever find yourself thinking with affection “Yep, That’s My Peninsula Kid!” Would you share the story? Martha Rock did just that at our Peninsula School Community Celebration and Auction this year and invited others to do the same. Several parents of alumni students (PALS, as we like to call you) have expressed interest in sharing their stories in this dedicated corner of News Notes. There are many reasons you might see Peninsula in your grown child, some funny and some heartening. We are hoping to gather and hear these stories, so please feel free to get approval from your son or daughter and send it off to us at newsnotes@peninsulaschool.org. Here is our first story of a truly Peninsula kid.

ZOE ROSE
By Julie Kriegler

Zoe Rose is a double major, in Theater (with a playwriting emphasis) and English (with a creative writing emphasis) at Smith College. She was the first person from Sequoia High School to attend Smith. Her “strong work ethic,” as it was labeled in her 8th grade parent meeting, and her full engagement in participatory learning has continued unabated at Smith.

Along with her full course load she has been an RA to the Chair of the Theatre Department, has been the Assistant Artistic Director, and now Artistic Director of the Smith Theatre Committee. There she is devising, writing, directing and producing Smith student theatre throughout the year and working to earn the money for her books, supplies and extracurriculars. She has written and directed a full-length play that won a



Five-College Award and is now writing a play on Alzheimer’s as an honors thesis which also helps facilitate her grieving of her Grandma who died in her first year. In between the productions and studies, she has continued to be committed to her community. She is a member of her

House Leadership group and a caring support to her friends on their journeys through this time of their lives. We, her parents, have often encouraged her to do less, but her care and passion for, interest in and creative expression of the world and people around her – which began in Nursery Green – seemingly cannot be slowed. She is our ‘Peninsula Kid.’

Please contact Andromeda at newsnotes@peninsulaschool.org for more information about the articles, if you need additional copies of News Notes, hope to add someone to the mailing list, or no longer wish to receive future mailings from us.

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