

Ruffing—Yesterday & Today



The Alumni Newsletter of Ruffing Montessori School

December 2008

Ruffing Montessori School 3380 Fairmount Boulevard Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44118 216-321-7571

Hello from Ruffing

I have some exciting news to share with you. As you know, we have completed our redevelopment of the campus and are now enjoying a facility that was designed with many green features. We have submitted extensive documentation describing the school's sustainable features to the US Green Building Council (USGBC), the agency that grants LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) status to buildings that meet strict green construction ratings. Which honor we will receive - Certified, Silver, Gold or Platinum - is not yet determined. The award level is based on points assigned to each green feature, above a specified minimum.

As an extension of this, we are integrating a "green curriculum" into the Montessori pedagogy that will permit each level of our school - Toddler Community through Middle School - to understand, appreciate and research green technology and sustainable architecture, ranging from composting to geothermal energy. Curriculum projects in the lower school - 18 months through nine years - are fully realized, and we will have the materials and time lines completed in our upper school, grades four to eight, by year's end.

When you visit Ruffing, please ask to see these new, one-of-a-kind complements to Montessori. We are engaged, as Dr. Montessori would say, in adapting to our time, place and culture in ways that enhance "education as an aid to life."

Gordon L. Maas
Head of School

Alumni News Wanted

Keep the Alumni Office in the loop as you change addresses, names, email and employment information. Much of our communication is sent by email - for both the cost and the environmental impact - but once an email to you comes back as undeliverable, we have lost you.

Check out the new Ruffing Web site www.ruffingmontessori.net: it lets you know what is going on in the school and is an easy way to inform us of the changes in your contact information or provide us with any NEWS items we can share in the alumni newsletter.

Call me at 216-321-7571, extension 330, or carolp@ruffingmontessori.net if I can help you.

~ Carol Provan

Class Notes

1977

Amy Eugene is Director of Knowledge Management at Cuyahoga Community College and has a son who attends Ruffing.

1981

Matt Maras wrote to say that he lives in Cincinnati and is a chemist at MASI Environmental Laboratories. “I currently have two kids at the Xavier University Montessori Lab School and I often reminisce about my years at Ruffing whenever I am in the classroom there. By the way, it comes off as pretty impressive to other Montessori parents when I say that I was a Montessori kid in the 1970s.”



1984

Karen Connelly Rice is a feature writer for a number of Cleveland-based magazines.

Katie McMenammin Sabo lives in New York City, where she, along with her sister **Kelly McMenammin Wang '87**, operate a non-traditional organizing service. Their business plan is based upon the Myers Briggs Type Indicator, which they use to determine the most effective means of individualizing service for each client. Katie@pixiesdidit.com.

Matthew Strauss is living in France and working as a cabinetmaker. He and his wife, Catherine, just had their second child and first daughter, Catherine, in June 2008.

1985

Idris Syed – who may be more recognized as Kabir – is married to Shannon Christen and

their son, Kieran Nirvan, was born in March 2008. He is a full-time instructor of Pan-African Studies at Kent State University, as well as a Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor in private practice and working on a PhD in counseling at Cleveland State University.

1986

Andy Osenar and his wife welcomed twins, Samuel and Charlotte, in March 2008. They live in Portland, OR.

Chris Curto lives in Irvine, CA, where he is a disk jockey and runs a DJ company.

Pam Provan Barragate and her husband, Bryan, welcomed Brooke Fiona on August 1, 2008. Pam works for AmTrust Bank as manager of the technology project managers and lives in Shaker Heights.

1987

Kelly McMenammin Wang gave birth to a son on August 16. His name is Ted. Kelly and her husband, Fred, live in New York City.

Kristin McAlister-Young – who was Kristin Narten at Ruffing – graduated from Brown University and has a MA in Urban Education from King's College of the University of London and AMI (Association Montessori Internationale) certification from the Maria Montessori Institute in the UK. She lives in San Mateo, CA, where she is a Children's House teacher at Centennial Montessori School.

Anya Bailis is married and lives in Baltimore, MD. She gave birth to her first child, Gretchen Analiese Brandle, in May 2008. She is completing a fellowship in maternal-fetal medicine at Johns

Hopkins Hospital.

On August 12, 2008, Christopher and **Sarah Haberman Lewis** had a son, Andrew David, their third child, joining big sisters Julia and Caroline.

Whit Ryan – who was Elissa Whitlow at Ruffing – wrote to request John Long’s address. Reading a newspaper story about a Florida kindergarten teacher using humiliation as a form of discipline reminded her of discipline at Ruffing, particularly an incident where John Long handled playground bullying in a way that taught a positive and lasting lesson. (John is Head of School at Post Oak Montessori in Houston, TX.) Whit is Executive Director and Production Manager of Louder Than Words Dancetheater in Denver.

1988

Hans Kramer: “Heather and I had our first child on October 25, 2008, Zaia (like Maya) Bee Kramer, 7 lbs. 1 oz, 21 inches. She and Heather are doing very well. Zaia’s already growing quite a bit and very alert. We’re not getting too much sleep, but we’re loving it. Heather’s at home for the foreseeable future and I’m working as a civil/environmental engineer in Emeryville, CA. We live in Berkeley, so I bike to work and that makes me very happy. My sister, **Jordyn ’91**, now Aunt Jordyn, is living out here, about 20 minutes away, as well.”

Jahnel Jeter works as a consultant for Ernst & Young and is executive director of ABSolutions LLC. She has a BS in Electrical Engineering, along with IT Project Management and Risk Management Certificates from Georgia Tech.



After a number of years in Atlanta, she and her son now live in Cleveland.

Teresa Curto gave birth to a daughter, Cadence, on May 22, 2008. Teresa works as a Research Scientist at New England Research Institutes (NERI) and she and her husband Micheal Leavey live in Watertown, MA.

1990

Tyler Katz gave birth to a daughter, Adler Indiana Chefitz, on September 15, 2008. Adler is her husband, Josh’s, mother’s maiden name and Indiana honors her parents, Jan and Lew Katz, and their loyalty to IU. Tyler is an MD specializing in gynecology and obstetrics, practicing at Marymount Hospital in Cleveland.

Amanda Lawrence, who spent most of a year working to set up a school in northern Himalayan Pakistan, continues to devote time and energy to this project. She is currently helping find sponsorships for each student. A gift of \$500 covers all costs for a year – books, food, supplies, transport – and sponsors receive updates on the child’s progress. “The school is offering a top-notch, English-language curriculum to students who would otherwise not have any school at all, given the fact that the 2005 earthquake destroyed them all, along with most of the children attending school that day.” Amanda, who practices law in New Haven, CT, can be reached at lancelover1976@gmail.com.

Peter Liu went to CWRU and earned a BS summa cum laude in Chemical Engineering in 1998, and then attended CWRU School of

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Alumni Activities

Dear Alumni,

The 2008 Alumni Wine and Cheese Party for alumni from the classes of 1977 to 2002 will be held on Friday (note the change of day from previous years), December 26, from 5 to 7 p.m. in the Middle School. Invitations have been mailed. There is no charge for this event. This year's party will include some new features: live music and a video of Ruffing photos dating back to the beginning. Drop in and say hello to old friends and former teachers.

We are discussing some changes in this party, possibly alternating every few years, to the night before Thanksgiving – to give the out-of-town alumni who never come to Cleveland in December a chance to gather. We would like your feedback on that idea, as well as any suggestions you might like to make.

This issue begins our twice-a-year publication schedule. I believe that more alumni will send news more often, once the arrival schedule becomes more predictable. I am also including a news submission form to remind you to send in a news item. Tell us what you have been doing since Ruffing — school, work, family, hobbies, interests, awards, travel, babies, etc.

For those of you who return to Cleveland, but not in the snowy months, please stop in. We can give you a tour of this much-heralded stop on the green education tour. We have visitors all the time, so believe me when I say that it is a whole new Ruffing.

Remember, the Development and Alumni Office is designed to help you: Looking for a Montessori school in the state where you live? Call us. Trying to find an old friend? I will do my best to help you. Want to show your old school to your children? Come on in.

I can also report that the letter from Alumni Annual Fund Co-Chairs L.T. Slater '87 and Jennifer Rozsa '00 is generating gifts from alumni who have not been Annual Fund donors before. For this, we are very grateful. The goal is 80 alumni donors – 40 new ones. I am impressed by the fondness for Ruffing that is out there and look forward to responses from more of you. To that end, we will be holding an Alumni Phonathon in late January/early February. Want an opportunity to call your Ruffing friends for free? Volunteer to call. Last year's Phonathon was a fun time. Remember, no gift is insignificant; we are trying to build participation.

Thank you,

Carol Provan

Director of Alumni and Development



Class Notes

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Medicine for an MD in 2002. He served an internship at Riverside Hospital in Columbus, and a medical residency at the University of Pennsylvania, followed by a fellowship in the Radiology Department at the University of Michigan. He is currently a teaching faculty member in the Radiology Department at the University of Michigan.

1991

Dagan Karp is living in San Francisco and is married to Legier Bierderman. He has a BS in Math and Physics from Tulane, a MS in Math from Tulane and a PhD in Mathematics from the University of British Columbia. “Just finishing a Math postdoc at Berkeley. Moving to LA to begin as a professor of Mathematics at Harvey Mudd. My professional interests are algebraic geometry, theoretical physics and the intersection of civil rights and mathematics. My most passionate hobby hasn’t changed since my days at Ruffing: skateboarding.”

Heather Connelly, living in Chicago, is engaged to marry Jason Adams in 2009.

1993

Peter Carfagna and his bride, Joanna, who were married September 6, 2008, are living in Cleveland Heights.

Elizabeth Kahn married Jim Summers on August 30, 2008. “We now live in Raleigh, NC, and are having fun discovering new places.” Before marriage, Liz, who has degrees from Mercyhurst College and CWRU Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences, worked as a Clinical Social Worker in Erie, PA.



Adam Lake is in grad school at the University of Oregon, getting a PhD in geography, with plans to teach at the university level. He attended Lawrence University for undergrad, then the University of Oregon for an MS in community and regional planning and an MA in geography.

Sarah Hauser Kostura lives in Watertown, NY. She is an attorney, currently staying home with a daughter and expecting a son in February, married to a U.S. Army attorney. They are looking into moving back to northeast Ohio in 2009.

Ariana Gunn established and administers a popular Facebook page: Kids That Went to Ruffing in the '80s and '90s.

1994

Jeff Pacini and his wife, Megan, moved back to Cleveland in 2007 and welcomed their first child, Olivia Grace, on June 30, 2008. Jeff (Marketing Manager for the Cavaliers) took her to her first basketball game in October, and Megan (a music therapist and school counselor) makes music part of her daily life. Olivia has a strong foot and pretty good (soccer) kick already; she also has long slender fingers and loves (musical) sounds. Her family thinks she is guaranteed a sports and music oriented future!

Benjamin Krembs graduated from Fenn College of Engineering, magna cum laude – BSME. He works for First Energy as a fossil power plant engineer. “Currently single, living in the Pittsburgh area, planning to move back to Ohio in July of 2009.”

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Class Notes

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Cara Segelin Roll and Todd had their first baby, a boy named Dylan Matthew Roll, on September 9, 2008. “We welcomed him with love.”

1995

Tim Prestel is working in Manama, Bahrain.

Erin Ellis Spencer is married and has a son. A Beaumont and Grove City College grad, she works at Beaumont School as Assistant to the President.

1996

Julia Morgenstern-Hefner and spouse, Jeremy “Red” Hefner, live in “Beautiful southwestern Colorado. I was married in June 2006 and we had our first child, Wyatt Alexander, on April 15, 2008.”

Ben Irie completed his PhD in Music at Indiana University and is teaching music at Olney Friends School in Barnesville, OH, a boarding school midway between Columbus and Pittsburgh.

Lily Skove is the creator of a Columbus dance company, Skoveworks. A young company, its work has been showcased in Europe and was a “critic’s pick” in the *New York Times* for a performance at The Chocolate Factory Theater in New York City. Skoveworks is supported by The Field, a non-profit serving performing arts companies and the entity through which contributions earmarked for Skoveworks may be directed.

Laura Snow is the Coordinator of the Institute on Aging at the Jewish Home for the Elderly in Fairfield, CT.

Rebecca Splain, who attended Ruffing from grades 1 to 7, and then moved to Vermont, graduated from Hobart and William Smith Colleges in 2004 and is getting a PhD in organic chemistry at the University of Wisconsin.

1997

Brendan Knoblauch completed five years in the Marine Corps as an electronics technician with service in Okinawa, Japan; CA; NC; and Iraq. He is currently majoring in economics and philosophy at John Carroll University.

Becky Hauser is planning a May 2009 wedding. She lives in Chicago and is a registered dietitian in Lake County, IL.



1999

Anna DePalma is living in New York City and attends the School of Visual Arts, studying Photography. In May, she had a Ruffing reunion in NYC with four classmates.

2000

Aaron Babb graduated with honors from John Carroll University in May 2008 with a degree in economics. After summer employment at the law firm Buckley King in Cleveland, this fall, he entered the CWRU four-year combined JD/MBA program.

Ariel Roblin – was Amara Narten at Ruffing – is the General Sales Manager for KRCR-TV/KAFF-TV in Redding, CA, and has fond memories of Ruffing. She has two sons, aged 3 and 7, who attend Montessori school.

2004

Middle School Graduating Class of 2004 college enrollment:

Bryn Adams	University of Chicago
Colleen Bartman	College of Wooster
Ben Broer	Stanford University
Sarah Catheline	University of Rochester
Chris Chung	University of Notre Dame
Stacey Fong	Xavier University (Cincinnati)
Evan Hillyer	Rhodes College
Chris Irvine	New England Conservatory of Music
Evan Kauffman	Bucknell University
Krista Parran	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Marisa Pensky	Washington and Lee University
Mark Rizzo	High Point University
Katy Sadowski	Cornell University
Sam Skove	Oberlin College
Lauren Vandevier	Pratt Institute of Design
Justin Wedell	Grinnell College

Sam Skove is having fun at Oberlin and has joined an improv troupe.

Ellie Shorey, goalie on the state champion Hathaway Brown soccer team, attends Skidmore College and plays on the soccer team.

Kameko Roshan Edgecombe, whose family moved to Colorado when she was in Susan Gray's class, graduated from Smoky Hill School in Denver.

2008

Joe Eyerman and his family chronicled their three-week cross-country car trip from Cleveland to Oregon over the summer for the *Plain Dealer*, describing stops at historical, scenic and spectacular points all along the way.



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Middle School Graduating Class of 2008
High School Choices:

Ian Adams	Shaker Heights
Lauren Blumenthal	Beaumont
Jasmine Carter	home school
Joseph Eyerman	Padua Franciscan
Emma Freer	Laurel
Timothy Hawkins Hodgson	St. Ignatius
Hannah Irvine	Montessori High School
Seth Mendel	Hawken
Veronica Natale	St. Andrew (Austin, TX)
Ian Round	Shaker Heights
Kathleen Russell	Beaumont
Rachel Schreiber	Orange
Abigail Star	Laurel
Grace Teeter	Laurel
Erik Thiem	Cleveland Heights
Natalie Trotta	Montessori High School
Elinor van Heeckeren	Montessori High School

Alumni News

Contact Information: Is your information on Ruffing's database complete?

Name	
Street Address	
City ST ZIP Code	
Home Phone	
Work Phone	
E-Mail Address	

Basics

Let us know what you have been doing: school, work, family, awards, interests, travel, etc.

News Item for the Alumni Newsletter:

Next issue is scheduled for Spring 2009.

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Classes of 1977-2002 Alumni Party

You and a guest are invited to an Alumni Gathering at Ruffing — a wine and cheese party in the Middle School on Friday, December 26, from 5 to 7 p.m.

Catch up with classmates, old friends and former teachers — with live music, a video of Ruffing students from the beginning and tours of the redeveloped green campus.

Be sure to let us know that you are coming so that we'll have enough refreshments.
RSVP: carolp@ruffingmontessori.net or 216-321-7571, extension 330.