

Celebrating Laura Galvin

Laura has been a shining presence at Pacific Primary since 1996. As Program Facilitator, she helped Belann and the teachers guide the school in new directions through refining and strengthening our educational philosophy and curriculum. Laura also worked as the Gray Whale Co-Lead Teacher this year. Laura will travel in the fall, but will return as a substitute teacher in the new year, so we are thrilled that we do not have to say goodbye. Bon Voyage, Laura and thank you for helping to make Pacific Primary more engaging and connected. Your warmth, humor and intellect will be missed until you return.



the PACIFIC PRIMARY SUN

WWW.PACIFICPRIMARY.ORG

SUMMER 2008-2009

Two Schools, One Dream

By Paul Herman and Vanessa Maren



This is the first annual newsletter published since the opening of the Orange Sun School and the doubling of the student body. In so many ways, it has been a unique year in the history of the school. After 34 years as a one-campus school, we now enjoy the expanded resources of two beautiful school buildings and a staff of more than 50 dedicated and talented educators. As a community, we have worked to balance and blend two separate school sites into one whole, while maintaining the small scale feeling that is most appropriate for young children.

It was important to keep events developmentally appropriate. For this reason, each school kept traditionally child-centered events, such as folk dance, circle games, holiday celebrations and field trips independent.

As a bridge, field trips were taken by all classes, back and forth, to each school, both to classrooms and to play yards.

On a grander scale, family-centered events were combined to foster new friendships and a broader sense of community. These lively occasions for both schools included:

Now that this remarkable year is drawing to a close, it is a fitting time to express our appreciation to those who worked so hard to blend two schools into one fulfilled dream. With the extraordinary generosity of a few alumni families, the trailblazing vision of Fif Ghobadian and the Board of Directors, the intrepid leadership of Belann Giarretto, and the meticulous attention to detail of the Steering Committee, Pacific Primary realized its dream of opening its second site to 75 new families in September 2008. All involved, throughout the entire process, made every decision based on this essential question: "What is best for the children?" As we can observe the children smile, laugh, sing, dance, learn and grow on a daily basis, it is manifestly clear that this lofty goal has been met with profound success.

Careful thought was given to the best ways to blend the communities.

To provide continuity of the school's vibrant culture, returning teachers were mixed with new at both sites. Some alum families who were returning with younger siblings started anew at the Orange Sun School. Familiarity and tradition blended with fresh insights and perspectives to create a revitalizing synergy.

- **A Neighborhood Block Party**
In September, the opening of the Orange Sun School was celebrated, with praise and gratitude overflowing!
- **The Book Fair**
Books were bought for families and classrooms, raffle prizes delighted lucky winners, and much merriment ensued at this November event.
- **The Peace Parade in January**
In January, parents, teachers, and children were an amazing sight, circling the block, toting peace banners and singing proudly!
- **Our Annual Auction**
This March extravaganza was tremendously entertaining while raising much-needed funds for tuition assistance and the school's special programs.
- **Family Picnic**
Even the June weather cooperated in making this a lovely day for all.

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**PACIFIC PRIMARY
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2008-2009**
Sandpipers
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Gray Whales
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Counting Our Blessings

A message from outgoing Board President Fif Ghobadian

I would like to turn the clock back to March 2008 when we were in the midst of construction of the Orange Sun School. Now just because you can never have enough chaos, we decided to also give the Yellow Sun School a major face lift. So, at one point, we had as many construction workers in the two schools as we had kids.

Then, it's August, most of us are on vacation, and Belann is left with the task of hiring 28 new staff, filling up the school with furniture, food, and toys, and getting us licensed. While doing all of that, with a skeleton crew, she also had to assume the accounting role, since we spiced it up a bit and threw in that challenge. So having done all that, Belann is now going on *Survivor* ...

In September, when 154 kids walked into the two schools ----- it all made sense. That was a Proud Moment!!!

BUT

What we are really proud of is all those ordinary moments afterwards. The sight and sound of children climbing, teachers inspiring, and music in the halls, that now permeates both campuses, masking the fact that one school is less than a year old. These daily moments that we enjoy and take for granted, outweigh our growing pains and make us



Martin Luther King Jr. Peace Parade

forget that just last year we had 79 children at our school.

I would like to thank each and every one of the Pacific Primary Staff and Directors. Thank you for making this transition year so seamless and for giving us the gift of those ordinary moments. Thank you for your patience, humor, and wisdom.

After five amazing years of working together, I would like to thank Belann Giarretto for her guidance, leadership, humor and professionalism. She had the strength to navigate our ship through some turbulent waters with minimal help. We are blessed!

Thank you, Fif, for five incredible years of Board service! Your vision, dedication and energy have been an inspiration to our community.

iBikeNopa

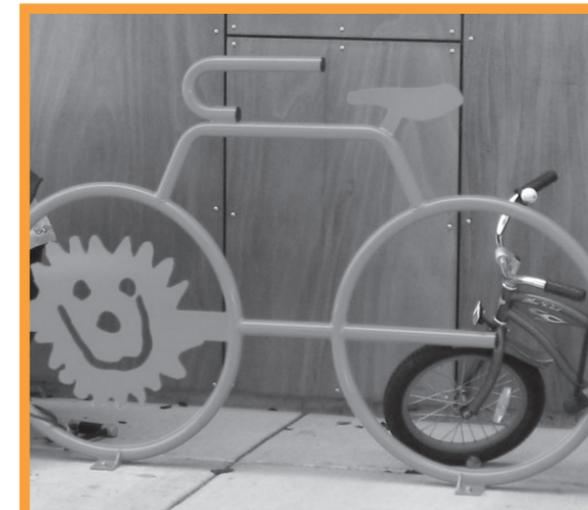
More bicyclists seem to appear in NOPA (North of Panhandle) every day, partly because our streets host so many vital bike routes. Every east-west street in NOPA includes official bike blocks while Masonic and Baker help move north-south bike traffic. No wonder then that BIKE NOPA window signs are cropping up all over the neighborhood: a nice combination of cyclist, livability, and neighborhood pride all together.

Many Pacific Primary parents, students and teachers choose to bike to work and school. We all know it's hard to bike in the city if there's nowhere to park. And who likes settling for trees, parking meters, and street poles for cabling or U-locking? NOPA has a few standard inverted-U bike racks, but none close enough to Pacific Primary at Baker and Grove Streets to benefit teachers, parents, and students who bike. Pacific Primary parents recently designated funds from the 2009 school auction for purchase of customized bike racks (Yes, our smiling sun logo made its way onto the colorful yellow and orange bike racks!)



"Any biker, ped, or motorist who travels Baker or Grove Streets, knows the bright splashes of color on the westside corners of the intersection. Not exactly Victorian and Edwardian hues to match the neighborhood's Painted Ladies, but that's the fun of having the orange, green, and yellow exteriors of Pacific Primary in the center of NOPA. Now a parents group has accessorized the school exterior with bright new bike racks. Norman Rutherford (a Pacific Primary parent) volunteered to install the racks. Norman and his son, Rye Tewksbury, ride 2 1/2 miles to their home in the Mission and especially appreciate the Wiggle for getting across town.

Pacific Primary is a pretty cool school all around. With its brand new building on the southwest corner, the 35 year old school now accommodates 154 students who range from 2 1/2 years to pre-K. The full-day program "celebrates diversity -- ethnic, racial, economic -- and all types of families including adoptive, gay and lesbian, and one or more parent families."



In an effort to get more families biking in San Francisco, Michael Helquest, a NOPA bike lover and activist has raised awareness of bicycling in San Francisco's NOPA neighborhood on his blog www.ibikenopa.blogspot.com. Here's what he had to say about Pacific Primary:



PACIFIC PRIMARY STAFF

ORANGE SUN SCHOOL

PENGUINS
Rebecca Walsh, *Lead*
*Saeda Fuller
Brandie Braxton

PRAIRIE DOGS
*Jocelyn Halili, *Lead*
Tammy Barchas
Roxanne Latif
*Neil Aaron, *Afternoon*

PANDAS
Kelly Fox, *Lead*
*Sean O'Connor
Veronica Lee

POLAR BEARS
*Brian Silveira, *Lead*
*Alyssa Chazen-Richards
Megan Matteoni

Music and Movement Specialist
Kevin Gerzevitz

Expressive Arts Specialist
*Elyse Jacobs

Support Teacher
Amy Fernandez

Sunroom Coordinator
Joan Vigliotta

Chef
Donald Meints

Afternoon Supervisor
Nadia Jaboneta

Afternoon Sunroom Teacher
Chris Krupa

Permanent Substitute
Kali Polk-Mathews

(*returning staff)

PACIFIC PRIMARY STAFF
2008-2009
Director
Belann Giarretto

Associate Director
Lynn Turner

Finance Director
Amie Haiz

Administrative Assistant
Elizabeth Cacal

YELLOW SUN SCHOOL

SANDPIPERS

*Mahroushka Papazian, *Lead*
*Eric Wilson
Shante Jones, *Morning*
Hanna Alenayehu, *Afternoon*

GRAY WHALES

Nadia Jaboneta, *Co-Lead*
*Laura Galvin, *Co-Lead*
Anna Vongvixay
Ida Ahmadpour
Kate Long, *Afternoon*

RAINBOW DOLPHINS

Lori Ann Spooner, *Lead*
*Darby Hillyard
Bianca Di Palma

COYOTES

*Sarah Watkins, *Lead*
Jarrod Fischer
Toni Sousa

Music and Movement Specialist

*Heidi Tzortzis
Melodi Dalton

Expressive Arts Specialist

Rebecca Magill

Support Teacher
*Roxie Jones

Chef

*Betty McMillian

Afternoon Supervisor
Patricia Solis

Afternoon Sunroom Teacher
*Nancy Anderman

(*returning staff)

Welcome, Lynn!

We are delighted to welcome our fourth director, Lynn Turner. Lynn is the Associate Director of the Yellow Sun School. We knew that finding the right director would be a challenging process. We feel incredibly fortunate to have found Lynn and we knew right away that Lynn would be a perfect match for our school. Lynn has extensive experience as a Parent Cooperative Director and Teacher. Her former job was as Assistant to the Head of School at Live Oak.



Lynn brings many strengths to her new position and loves being part of Pacific Primary!

Lynn's passion is horses and she rides every day. This summer, many of the classes went on a bus field trip to the ranch where Lynn works and rides. They were able to see many farm animals, in addition to seeing Lynn ride a magnificent thoroughbred horse that stands 17 hands tall. Lynn is also a cold shoe farrier and she demonstrated the process of shoeing a horse with the Gray Whales.

Financial Highlights

In fiscal year 2008-2009, Pacific Primary anticipates total revenues of \$2,739,400. Tuition and fees account for 88% (or \$2,422,560) of that total.

The 2009 annual auction raised \$130,000.

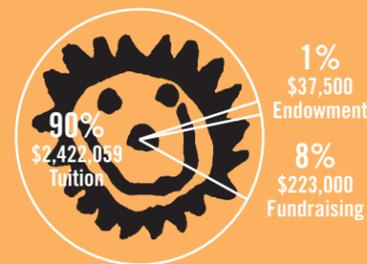
Staff payroll costs comprise 89% of the \$1,779,771 in projected operating expenses for the 2008-2009 school year.

In 2008-2009 Pacific Primary has 49 staff members.

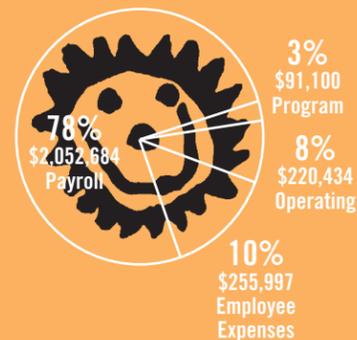
The Tuition Assistance Endowment Fund currently has close to \$700,000. Investment income from this fund pays a portion of our tuition assistance fund each year.

This year, 12% of students received tuition assistance, totaling \$175,000.

School Income



Use of Funds



Replication

A message from Director Belann Giarretto

Over two years ago, the Pacific Primary Board and Staff were pondering the following questions:

Is it possible to replicate a vibrant and successful community? Is there a magical fairy dust over Pacific Primary that can actually be transported to a new school?

We now know the answer to these questions is a resounding YES, as we are living the answer every day. It was not magic, but years of hard work that made the success. The original, classic Yellow Sun School and the new Orange Sun School are both Pacific Primary. New and returning families feel the same connection to their schools as more than three decades of alum feel about Pacific Primary – they feel connected! While each school, just like each classroom, has its own flavor, the essence that makes Pacific Primary so special is vitally present in each school.

We discovered that we greatly benefitted from the luxury of being stable for so many years. This allowed us to be able to take the time to reflect and refine our educational philosophy, curriculum, and values and to look at the aspects of the school that met the model school definition. I was able to add new staff positions: Program Facilitator and Support Teacher, so that teachers have extra support weekly for observation and deeper project work and we made time for the teachers to meet weekly. I worked with Program Facilitator Laura Galvin, Senior Lead Teacher Brian Silveira, and Sandpiper Lead Teacher Mahroushka Papazian, along with many other teachers, refining our curriculum and thinking about what makes Pacific Primary a model school. We created a detailed manual, "Overview of Curriculum", that outlines our dynamic program and how it unfolds through each stage of development in each classroom.

When it came time to create the new school, we knew exactly what we needed: excellent, experienced, and professional staff; clear documents that outlined our values and philosophy; committed and dedicated parents; and loads of hard work.

Laura and I started hiring in January 2009, for the September 2009 school year. We found incredible teachers that, on the whole, quickly understood the school's philosophy

and wanted to be a part of our community. One teacher told me that she dreamed of a school like Pacific Primary, but never thought she would find it. New hires signed contracts not knowing what school they would be in, what age they would teach, or who they would work with. Returning teachers were able to request whether they wanted to stay or to move to the new school, and no one was moved who didn't want to make the change. There was one returning teacher in each of the eight classrooms and they have greatly helped by passing on the culture of the school to the new teachers. Trainings were held over the summer and we found many ways to prepare the new teachers for the new school year. However, like most transitions, it takes doing the work to fully realize the challenges. We have had growing pains, but, on the whole, after a few months, we felt that we were years ahead of where we thought we would be.

Key to the success of this endeavor was finding the right director for the original Yellow Sun School. Since the highest number of returning teachers and families were at 1500 Grove, we decided that the new director should be there. Lynn Turner has been the perfect choice. Her experience, expertise and background mirror my own and Lynn's years of teaching and directing have provided strong leadership for the school. Lynn understands and believes in Pacific Primary and has made an incredible transition to her new position. We could not be happier with her performance and feel so fortunate that she is here!

It's been a long journey to this point, filled with surprises, challenges, and joys. We would not be here without the leadership and strong efforts of Board President Fif Gbobadian, the Board of Directors, and the Second Site Steering Committee, led by the amazing team of David Lahar and Molly Dwyer. I could not be prouder of the staff, board, parents, and children as we come closer to the end of this historic school year, the dream of becoming more accessible, keeping families in the City and growing a second, strong and vibrant school have become a reality. We feel very grateful to the founders of this school for their vision that created this unique school and for their help in looking to the future.



Meet our New Music Teachers

By Diana Kapp

We wanted to help the community get to know the newest members of the Pacific Primary music team - Melodi Dalton and Kevin Gerzevitz. Kevin is at the Orange Sun School and Melodi (Yes, that is her real name!) is at the Yellow Sun School. Both have incredible musical talents to share. We asked them to riff on their favorite musicians, best Pacific Primary lunch, what song they like singing best with the kids, and more. Here's what they had to say:

INTERVIEW WITH MELODI

Who is your favorite musician?

Hmmm...Milton Nascimento, a Brazilian singer. His singing makes me weep.

What instruments do you play?

I play the piano and guitar.

What is your background/training in music?

I've been a singer all my life. My grandmother, Virginia, was a major influence because she would play the piano and invite me to sing all kinds of songs with her. She knew dozens of nursery rhymes and had a rich contralto voice. When I graduated from college, and could afford lessons, I began to study voice with a private coach. I still take voice lessons once a week. I have sung in choruses ever since I was in college, and I am currently a professional chorister with the San Francisco Symphony Chorus.

What brought you to SF?

In 1994, I was working for the State of California in Sacramento and I decided to audition with the San Francisco Opera (SFO). I was hired to sing in the Extra Chorus of *Ruslan and Lyudmila*, and, from that experience, I knew I wanted more. The commute from Sacramento to San Francisco

was a problem, so I separated from the State of California, and moved to the City. During the day I was a teaching assistant at the San Francisco School, and in the evenings I rehearsed/performed with the SFO.

What is your favorite thing to do in the City when you aren't working?

When I am not working, I enjoy relaxing at Ocean Beach, Fort Funston, Chrissy Field, or Golden Gate Park.

Where did you grow up?

I was born in Toledo, Ohio, but my family moved to Las Cruces, New Mexico, when I was eight years old. We lived in Las Cruces until I was a senior in high school, and then we moved to Dublin, California. I graduated from Dublin High School.

Who is in your family?

My immediate family includes my partner, Ron Mann, and our 30-year-old parrot, Paco. My five siblings (2 brothers and 3 sisters) also live in California, but my parents are still in Las Cruces.

What song do PP kids like to sing most?

I think "Peace, Peace, Peace" is their favorite. At the Yellow Sun School we sing this song every Friday before folkdance, and on Wednesdays before circle games. If I ask the children for song requests during a sing-along, someone always asks for this song.

What is the most recent rock concert you've gone to?

This question is too funny! It has been years since I've been to a rock concert. I am more likely to check out a jazz concert at Yoshi's. Recently I saw Earl Klugh perform there. Some of the most memorable performers I have seen live were Weather Report, Peter Gabriel, The Spinners, Aretha Franklin, and Stevie Wonder.

Who is one of your heroes?

California State Representative, Barbara Lee is one. Among other things, I admire her for being the only member of Congress to vote against giving President Bush a blank check to wage war after the September 11th attacks.

What is your favorite lunch that Betty makes?

I'm a spaghetti fanatic, and Betty's is yummy!

Alumni Notes

By Vanessa Maren

Daria Saraf (1978), real estate agent with Sotheby's International Realty, moved from New York where she was an agent with Sotheby's sister company, The Corcoran Group. Daria's son (Shaia Saraf) is a Gray Whale. Here is what Daria had to say about reconnecting with Pacific Primary:

"When I first visited the school with my son, Shaia, I saw Roxie (my teacher from 31 years ago). She noticed Shaia first, and her face distorted, as though she had seen a ghost. Then she saw me. In an instant, she threw her arms around me, "Oh my goodness," she cried. I had remembered how loved I felt by her at school, and I think anything less would have made me wonder if those distant memories were accurate. It is incredible that in the 31 years since I graduated from Pacific Primary, the school has remained true to its values of real respect, real listening (to kids), real food, and, most importantly, real teachers and staff who have a burning desire to mitigate and resolve conflict every minute of the day. Our family moved back to San Francisco from New York so that my son could attend Pacific Primary, and we are thrilled that we did!"

Wade Warren (2001) sang during President Obama's Inauguration on January 20, 2009, as part of the San Francisco Boys' Chorus. The boys sang "America, the Beautiful" in a joint appearance with the San Francisco Girls' Chorus. Wade reports that he had a "mind-blowing experience" singing at the Inauguration, and that he believes all of his hard work over the last seven years really paid off! Wade is now in 7th Grade at The Nueva School.

Philip Rosenberg (1993) is a circus acrobat with the French Circus "Les 7 Doigts de la Main" ("The 7 Fingers of the Hand"). Philip, now 22, is based in Montreal, Canada, and will be traveling around the world with the circus for the next two years. His dad, Larry Rosenberg, has taken the annual class photos for Pacific Primary for the past 17 years.

Nathaniel Bernstein (2000) was awarded the Caroline D. Bradley Scholarship by the Institute for Educational Advancement in 2008. It was one of 16 scholarships awarded nationally, and the only one to be awarded to

an 8th grader in San Francisco. The scholarship covers high school tuition for four years. Nathaniel wrote seven essays for the application. Nathaniel also made a short movie about the use of architecture as symbolism for civic, state, and federal government in San Francisco.

Nathaniel believes that Pacific Primary played a key role in preparing him for this stage of his life by giving him an open-mindedness to embrace new challenges. He says that it was because of Pacific Primary that, when he entered Kindergarten, he (and his Pacific Primary friends) were able to negotiate conflict better than the other kids in the class. His cherished memories of Pacific Primary include Betty's macaroni and cheese (with broccoli, of course!), music with Heidi, learning the Macarena with Gray Whale teacher Timmy, and accidentally flooding the bathroom!

Caroline Harrover (1980) graduated from Columbia University and received a Masters in Environmental Management from Duke University. She has a two-year-old daughter and works as a consultant in Washington, DC.

Max Buenviage-Boyd (2006) is flourishing at the Korean Immersion Program at Claire Lilienthal.

Jacob Russell-Snyder (1984) lives in Korea, where he has taught theater arts and English to Korean elementary school children for the past three years.

JP Reddy (2006) and **Kanishka Reddy** (2007) now live with their family in Seattle, where they enjoyed the surprise of snowstorms.

Philip Dong and William Dong: Philip is a graduate of Tufts University and volunteer English teacher for World Teach in the Marshall Islands; William is a sophomore at Stanford University, majoring in Engineering.

Sam Mohan Lewin (2005) is in second grade at Claire Lilienthal Elementary School.

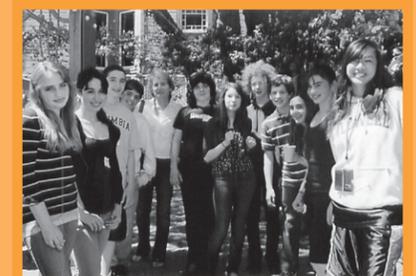
HELP US FIND LOST ALUMNI! Contact Pacific Primary at 415.346.0906 or 415.409.1961, or alumni@pacificprimary.org or write us at 1500 or 1501 Grove Street, San Francisco, CA 94117.



Daria with Shaia and teacher Roxie (who was Daria's teacher 31 years ago!)



Philip Rosenberg (circus acrobat) performing at Pacific Primary in 2008



Class of 2000 Reunion

Two Schools, One Dream

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As we move forward, we will continue to embrace change, diversity and challenges with a spirit of adventure. The children, as always, are the heart of the school. They will continue to dance, sing, create art, express themselves, expand their emotional vocabulary, and, most of all, to solve problems with empathy and understanding.

Thank you to all involved for your participation and support in making the Pacific Primary community so outstanding!



Heidi

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And this was your own business?

It was my own business. And I wanted to make this more of a profession. I took a course that took two years, just once a week in the afternoon, and that is where I was introduced to all kinds of approaches-Dalcroze, Kodaly, Orff-which I thought I was very lucky to do.

When it was finished, I had my certificate to go and work somewhere as Musikalische Erzieherin (Music Educator), because the emphasis was also on education. This is what I am doing here, it's not just that I'm

teaching the basics of music; I educate the children through music.

We lived in Koln for 12 years, then decided to come to America. I taught three years in a private school in the Sunset District, using all my knowledge and talents, and then I looked for another job. Pacific Primary was very clever. They got together with two other schools (Presidio Hill and Children's Day School) to give one music teacher a full-time job. After one year, in 1986, Pacific Primary asked me if I could stay full time.

How fortunate we were that she said yes!



INTERVIEW WITH KEVIN

Who is your favorite musician?

I have many: Keith Jarrett, Miles Davis, Bill Evans, Yo-Yo Ma, John Lennon, Paul McCartney, James Booker, Nat King Cole, Willie Nelson, Johnny Cash, Ray Charles, Tom Waits.

What instruments do you play?

Piano, guitar, accordion, bass, ukulele, banjo, baglama, violin, viola, cello, recorder, drums, keyboards, and didjeridoo.

What is your background/training in music?

My mother took me to performances frequently, typically classical music. I began piano studies at age eight, viola at age 12, and guitar at age 14. I discovered jazz in high school while working as a DJ at a student-run station at the University of Michigan. After high school, I attended the University of Michigan School of Music. I began as a piano performance major but then switched to music theory and German after the first year, while exploring composition and improvisation. I spent my third year studying abroad in Freiburg, a town in southwest Germany. While living there, I began performing in jazz ensembles and teaching piano lessons to children. After finishing my degree, I moved to San Francisco and worked as a pianist for many years, while also playing bass and keyboards with several different bands. I worked as a composer at an audio post-production facility, producing music for commercial products and independent films. I began my training in Orff-Schulwerk at Mills College in 2003, and became certified in 2005.

What brought you to SF?

I wanted to live in a larger metropolis, to develop my career as a musician. I wanted to be in the profound natural landscape that is California - the ocean, the mountains, the redwoods. I was attracted to San Francisco for its social and cultural diversity, artistic hipness, and great food.

What is your favorite thing to do at home in Marin when you aren't working?

Relax with my family.

Where did you grow up?

I grew up in Ann Arbor, Michigan, a supportive community for the performing and visual arts.

Who is in your family?

My wife, Amanda, who is a music teacher and flutist, my 10-year-old son, Benjamin, who works on becoming a professional skateboarder, and our lovely cat.



What is the song PP kids like to sing most?

I think it's Mango Mango, written by friend James K.

What is the most recent rock concert you've gone to?

The Unauthorized Rolling Stones at our school auction was pretty rockin'. But as far as bigger shows, it would be Michael Franti and Spearhead at the Power to the Peaceful Festival in Golden Gate Park.

Who is one of your heroes?

Stephen Colbert

What is your favorite lunch that Donald makes?

Donald is a great chef. My favorite so far is his Tortilla Soup!

A Salute to the Irrepressible, Irreplaceable Heidi Upon Her Retirement

After careful thought, Heidi Tzortzis, Music and Movement Specialist at Pacific Primary, announced her retirement after 23 years at the school. Heidi's magic has helped make our school what it is through her sparkling energy and tremendous talent. Our curriculum has been enriched in so many ways by her creativity! She has helped inspire and support a love of music and movement in

each of our graduates. Last year, Heidi helped recruit, interview and train two new Orff-trained teachers, ensuring that future generations of students will flourish by experiencing music in this unique, hands-on way. Heidi will always be a part of Pacific Primary and we can't wait until her first visit!

ing, exciting, and fulfilling such a process can be. The Orff-Schulwerk approach is the right tool to waken in these young children the love for music, movement, and language such as rhymes, poems, and stories. The Orff approach encourages us to go deep and deeper in whatever we teach and to use all our creativity and fantasy to convey it to the students.

My secret for all these years, and suggestion to all of you: Learn from the children, explore again that natural hunger and interest for knowledge, feel again that wonder.

I feel privileged for taking part in all the growth. Many a child inspired me to dig deep and deeper, to find new ways of enhancing this process of blooming and unfolding. You all know that my goal was not only to teach the basics of music in a "fun" and child-appropriate way, but to teach RESPECT and PEACE, to grow peacemakers for this challenging world.

Well, like a gardener, we music teachers have good and "less good" days and have more success with one plant than with the other, but the process of planting and watching the growth in all is absolutely thrilling and often moving. This keeps our life and our growth exciting and worthwhile.

For me, this privilege comes to an end now. As you may know, the situation with my husband's disease does not get better. But I feel very happy and thankful to know that

by Joan Vigliotta, Kevin Gerzevitz and Heidi herself.

Melodi will take over full-time. I had the extraordinary opportunity to introduce her, and also Kevin in the Orange Sun School, to our program. I'm positive that Melodi and Kevin will use our guidelines, forged over 23 years, and continue to offer your children an excellent music and movement program, adding their own touch and ideas.

It's not easy to give up my work, which was always a big part of my life, with still lots of energy left. The joyful challenges will shift...but challenges I love!

So, with a thankful heart, I will leave this special school where I was given the opportunity for 23 years to sow seeds and watch them grow and, daily, inspired by your children, worked on my own growth.

I would like to thank all of you, especially Belann and Lynn, but also all the teachers, substitutes, parents, and children for your steady support and I ask you to continue to give that support to Melodi and Kevin.

Reflections on Heidi by Kevin Gerzevitz, Orange Sun School Music Specialist: Kevin delved deeper into Heidi's background, and wrote a fascinating article for "Playnotes," a

newsletter of the Orff community. We are grateful for the permission to reprint portions here:

I am so fortunate to have the opportunity to mentor with Heidi. I am charmed by her "Swinglish" (influenced by her native tongue of Swiss German) and inspired by

her loving kindness. Heidi is someone who gives, and gives, and gives.



Q: What did you do before teaching?

I was an occupational therapist; I already used music. Whatever I did, I sang. My voice is not beautiful, but I always incorporated music and stories in whatever I did.

Q: Do you think that your instinct to use music came from growing up in Switzerland?

I had a grandmother who was a good, fun person who entertained everybody wherever she was. My mother was also a good leader of girls' groups. It's just the nature of me - being positive and having fun. That's a gift that I got in my life. So when we had to move from Brussels to Germany, and I was expecting my first child, I started a private kindergarten in our little village of 32 houses. I had 10 to 18 children, all by myself, and did handicrafts, which I always loved. I also did a lot of singing, gave recorder lessons and danced.

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Reflections on Heidi by Joan Vigliotta, alum parent and current Orange Sun School Sunroom Coordinator:

How to explain the phenomenon that is Heidi Tzortzis?

For seventeen years, I have marveled at this human dynamo! She sings with gusto, dances with joy, tells stories with dramatic flair, creates beautiful handiwork of all kinds, sews amazing costumes, and infuses our children's minds and lives with a refined cultural aesthetic. She radiates calm and personifies peace.

Heidi shared her thoughts about her work in her May newsletter, excerpted here:

Early in my career here at this school, I summed up my vision for Early Childhood Education in the short phrase: "Plant A Seed and Watch It Grow." You never can imagine how all-encompassing, challeng-

