

RANDOLPH SCHOOL ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

Randolph School
2467 Route 9D
Wappingers Falls, NY 12590

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Phone: (845) 297-5600 E-Mail: jrrandolph@aol.com www.randolphschool.org

Greetings Everyone,

Welcome to Volume 4 of our Alumni Newsletter. Inside you will find a lot of news about what is going on here, some of it completely new, and some from traditions that will never die. We are also overwhelmed with the response from all of you to our request for news. We have included it all, and hope we have not missed anyone. We encourage you to keep writing. In fact, Louis Klepner has generously donated his time to set up an alumni area that will be linked to our website in the next month and a half.

School News

Office & Computer Room

Office and computer room at Randolph? They didn't have that when *I* was at Randolph. Now we do. We have transformed one of the first floor classrooms near the front door into an office. It has become a place for parents and teachers to chat at the start and end of the school day, and a place for parents to leave messages or pizza money, and to pick up notes or lost mittens.

The computer room is upstairs at the back of the main building. Equipped with eight computers and newly painted white, the room fairly gleams with high-tech slickness (in a Randolph School sort of way). We have received a lot of new computer equipment over the past several years from BOCES, which is conducting computer training for all public and private schools in the area. They have given us six computers, a laptop, four ink-jet printers, a laser printer, a fax, two digital cameras, a scanner, and a computer/video projection system.

Sports at Randolph

We've added tennis to our outdoor sports programs. Last year Eric, Ronnie, Chris, and Brad received a grant from the United States Tennis Association to teach our students to play tennis. We received 25 Wilson racquets and teacher instruction. All fall we transported the children to local tennis courts to learn this life-long sport. As the snow began to fall, we once again planned a ski trip to Belleayre Mountain. With two previous years of ski trips, our children are making remarkable progress. Each year they challenge themselves to reach physical goals that directly add to their confidence in all areas of their development. This year, Randolph School rented the Bear Mountain Ice-Skating Rink for a morning. Children, teachers, and parents had a blast enjoying a cold January day together. We moved indoors for some dance fun with a troop of Hip-Hop dancers. Brittany Spears move over-the Randolph kids know the moves!

In February, we installed our very own ice-skating rink among the trees in the lower playground. It is 20' x 50' and just a few inches deep. Everyone is very excited.

In Fond Memory

We were saddened to hear of the death of Jacques Schwartzbach, our friend, volunteer handyman, and grandparent of one of our students. Jacques built our magnificent iguana cage, tended to repairs around the school, taught the children carpentry skills, and told us many wonderful stories. We will miss him.

Internet Fundraising

Remember to use SchoolCash.com when you shop on-line. Randolph School benefits with every purchase.

Aquatic Accouterment

Our wonderful tarpon fish (you know, the one that hung in the downstairs blockroom) is in great need of a sprucing up. We would like to send this big fish off for restoration, but our inquiries about repairs have let us know that this is an expensive venture. Hence, the Fish

Fund. For alumni who have fond memories of the fish...hung with paper chains at the holidays, draped with fall leaves in October, send a memory, send a donation, and help us prepare for the unveiling of our one-time wall companion. This fish was presented to the school by a relative of Ginger Scott in the early days of the school.

The Downstairs

The blockroom continues to be a space filled with exciting energy and fascinating buildings. This year there have been many new additions: beautiful gems and polished stones adorn the structures, ceramic tiles, mini-trains, flashlights for shadow work, and mirrors are placed strategically throughout the fascinating maze of buildings. We are planning a mini-loft in our blockroom corner. This will be the home of a computer and digital camera. We will use this technology to provide documentation for builders and parents.

Ahoy Mateys! Jolly Roger Randolph has dropped anchor somewhere nearby. He's left many clues for our pirate crew. We've had many treasure hunts to find sparkly gems and yummy treats. He always knew what we liked. Our loft area has been transformed into a pirate ship. We've made pirate costumes, telescopes, maps, and clever parrots that actually perch on our shoulders. Our puppet area will be the site for our Kindergarten play-a story of me-hardies, no doubt.

Our dear friend McKelvey moved to California and we have now become pen pals with his Kindergarten class. Our first round of letters was all about the snow. The California kids had many questions that we answered with pictures, write-ups, and digital shots of us sledding in the snow. Our group was fascinated with the idea of sending snow directly to them. So, after a few snow experiments and several large puddles of water, we decided to get a styrofoam ice chest and send some snow overnight express! Unfortunately the logistics were more complicated than we thought and we had to abandon the project.

This year one of our groups is much younger than in past years. Many children are just under three years old. This added an extra sweet feel to our Downstairs group. The older children buddied up with these younger kids and helped them through some struggles. It can be so hard to get out that lunchbox and open containers, or to put on a coat or even to remember school rules. It has been a great addition. There certainly is more of a need for re-direction and reminders, "Remember food stays *on* the table," but hearing them sing, seeing them in action, and feeling their warm hugs that we often get, sure makes it worthwhile. We welcome our young newcomers and are enjoying their energy.

The Upstairs

The Upstairs is filled to the brim with fun learning projects and kids. This is the perfect recipe for an exciting school year. We have 23 children in our first through fifth grade program, and as many of you may recall, this is a full house for Brad and Ronnie. It is so full that we added another teacher, Saba is a recent NYU education graduate. She brings a blend of youthful excitement and a calming presence; the children adore her.

We've integrated this year's theme, "The United States and its Environs," throughout our curriculum. Our youngest group, *The Rainbows*, began the year by creating a 3-D community equipped with houses, stores, roads, and even a swimming pool. The oldest group, *The Wee People*, and the middle group, *The Golden Diamonds*, spent much of the fall engrossed in colonial history. The groups worked on mapping, made hornbooks, calendar sticks, conducted our annual Fair Trade Fair, communicated through pictographs, and culminated their studies with a fascinating trip to Old Sturbridge Village in Massachusetts. The presidential election created constant "teachable moments" as it ran its course. Our oldest group conducted a survey of the Randolph community and graphed the results. We knew the election had taken hold when it was suggested that our piñata this year should be a voting booth! Social studies groups have begun work on a state fair with the children researching a specific state. Our fair will be a Randolph event this spring.

Ronnie has a new Language Arts group, the *Pink Dancing Elephant Book Club* (the name was created by the students). Each Wednesday, the oldest upstairs group gathers in the library for pastries, tea, and insightful discussions with Ronnie and Debbie Stone. The book club has proven to be one of the weekly highlights. We record our discussions, questions, and feelings in a book club journal, and create projects to accompany each story. So far the *Pink Dancing Elephants* have read *Baby: Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing*; *Jeremy Thatcher, Dragon Catcher*; *Julie of the Wolves*; *The Other Side of the Mountain*; *Skellig*; and *Holes*, a very eclectic group of books, and all great reads.

For the second year in a row, one of our upstairs children won the Poughkeepsie Journal's Scary Story Contest. Congratulations to Colleen Gibbons-Brown for her scary dance story. Along with book making, journal writing, phonics, spelling, handwriting, and lots of reading, *The Rainbows* rehearsed and performed the play "The Golden Goose." *The Golden Diamonds* read and enjoyed the classic *My Father's Dragon* series. They are currently at work creating a fairy tale that they will perform as a puppet show. Their fairy tale includes all the ingredients for intrigue: a jester, dragon, unicorn, king, queen, archer, a golden harp, and many problems to solve.

The Carriage House

The theme for this year's Carriage House program is "power." During the first week of school, we brainstormed a long list of types of power, which included horse, electrical, girl, muscle, people, gravity, gas, kid, brain, and solar. Since then, our work and our conversations have often revolved around these topics.

In Language Arts we have been wending our way through the history of man, from early man to the Greeks and Romans and finally the Middle Ages, always focusing on the theme of "power."

We took some hikes along Hunter Creek and the lower Wappingers Creek, investigating earth's natural cycles and the sources of their power, and began to realize how primary a role the sun plays in these cycles: wind patterns, the water cycle, the food web, tides, and the stored energy in petrochemicals from ancient organic matter.

We learned about the consequences of a human energy diet high in fossil fuels, and researched alternative energy sources, including a fascinating tour of the hydroelectric facilities at Wappingers Falls. We went back down to our creek, having learned some simple, handy measurement techniques, and recorded the flow and the head, or elevation change, of different sections. We studied up on electricity, and conducted experiments. We visited the Samuel F. B. Morse estate and museum in Poughkeepsie, where we learned not only about the interesting life of the artist/inventor, but also about his "nineteenth century internet," the telegraph. We de-coded messages sent in Morse code. Trever Lowe created a remarkable wind-powered water pump that inspired us to imagine new possibilities for borrowing some of our creek's water.

We discussed the 180-foot cellular phone tower that was proposed for a site between the school and the wetlands that drain into Hunter Creek. The site is a beautiful, ecologically rich area that several schools use for nature study, and is owned by the town. We learned about the microwaves that carry the cell phone messages between the phones and towers, made electromagnets, and observed the electromagnetic fields they created. We practiced pacing off measurements in our driveway, then hiked to the site and calculated the distance from the school using the Pythagorean theorem. The distance was approximately 1000 feet; town law states that cell towers must be at least 1500 feet from schools. We used new knowledge of geometry to devise height calculators, practiced using them by measuring the height of tall objects on the school grounds, then returned to the site to measure a radio antenna. The cell phone company's engineer had stated that this antenna was "between 100 and 150 feet tall," and had used its presence to support a claim that this site was the only site that already had a similar tower on it, and that would make "co-location" of towers possible, thereby minimizing aesthetic damage. The investigation by our students revealed that the antenna's supporting structure was approximately 80 feet tall, with an approximately 20 foot tall whip-like antenna on top, putting in question whether the radio antenna and the proposed tower together could really be considered co-location. Students were asked to form their own opinion on the proposed tower site; the middle school sentiment could best be summed up in the words of one student: "whose brilliant idea was that, anyway?!" Some of us wrote letters to the town planning board, others actually attended a town planning board meeting at which some of the letters were read, and the results of the students' investigations were reported. Partly as a result of these efforts, the town zoning board has since told the cell phone company that the proposed tower's height and location are unacceptable. (Note: The modified proposal for a tower of 120 to 150 feet in height, at a location several hundred feet farther away from the schools, but still closer than 1500 feet, is still being considered by the town planning board.) In addition to the math and science we learned along the way, the students' participation in the town's decision-making process was a fantastic lesson in the power of the people, particularly kids.

Some students have kept at their goal of improving their skateboarding skills with incredible determination. What began as just another free time diversion at the very end of the last school year has spread to other students, and also into our schoolwork. Last year's spark of interest was strong enough to last into the loco-lympics week of the Randolph summer program, at which some of our skateboarders were present. The skateboard spark had grown into a roaring flame by the beginning of this school year. The kids lobbied the village to build a skateboard park. They devised skateboard ramps and grind rails at home and at school; created a skate park on the computer and made scale drawings of it; Josh Aquino even built an incredible three-dimensional scale model of the park they had created. He also attended a village board meeting at which he and other children showed the 3-D model, a proposal signed by many local kids, and some of the skate equipment that had been built. Although the board expressed concern about insurance liabilities, Josh's confident articulation of the group's vision won many over to their side. The village Parks and Recreation department is looking to use grant money to improve public lands to meet the recreational needs of the residents; they've just completed a public survey, which, thanks to the efforts of our group, includes a question about support for a skate park. Randolph students also made arrangements to visit a half pipe (an enormous U-shaped ramp for executing skateboard tricks) that a high school senior had built in his back yard. He not only demonstrated his talent, but let us try his half pipe, and fired up the idea that they could build their own half pipe if they really wanted to.

So now...we are building a half pipe, of course! It has been an incredible project. Not only have we improved at estimating lumber needs and costs, at geometry and scale drawing, at basic carpentry skills, and at measuring and marking off using fractions, but most importantly it has also mobilized some of us who have a hard time working cooperatively to put more effort into working as a team-even when we don't feel like it-in order to accomplish this goal as quickly as possible. The school paid for some of the lumber, but the total cost of the project is more than could be provided. The students got a professional grant writer from within our school community to help with a letter asking for lumber donations for the project, but no local businesses volunteered. Next, the students organized some fundraisers

including a car wash, a maple syrup sale, and a 50/50 raffle. A matching donation by a parent has been especially appreciated, and some students have even contributed. So, although we're always almost out of lumber, progress on the half pipe continues.

Throughout the year, we have asked ourselves, "what is power?" Traditionally we think of a "powerful" country as one that maintains control over others, maybe through conquest. But our study of the holocaust and the story of the Jews showed that power gained by conquest and subjugation is not lasting, and may even become the opposite of real power. Is power the same as freedom? Freedom to have control over your own life, within your own community? To have a say in your health, and in the beauty of your environment? How does acceptance of your limits to total freedom affect your power? What responsibilities come with power? Does altruism give you power?

What gives us power? We've seen in our social studies how cultures seemed to get power from mastery of a technology: an improved spear or arrowhead, a boat with a sail, or a bronze tip for ramming, a hoe or new seed variety that saves time, fluency on the internet, etc. But if we look to the roots of each technology, wasn't it first someone's idea, or vision, or the evolving ideas of people in a culture? We recently watched an excellent documentary, The Greeks, which suggested that the spread and durability of the classical Greek culture was due to their conquest by new ideas and new ways of thinking rather than their conquest by force. One of Eric's famous Friday Note quotes this year came from Victor Hugo: "An invasion of armies may be resisted, but not an idea whose time has come."

Maybe what is most essential to your power is nurturing the ideas and visions that come from unique, creative you, believing in your ability to make them real, and taking responsibility for them in the context of the community. In the Randolph community, we work to really learn this, to live it, and to support each other's power. Because if we succeed, can't we learn and accomplish anything we want? Now *that's* power!

Alumni News

Thank you to everyone who wrote, e-mailed, or phoned in Alumni News. It was wonderful to receive this outpouring of memories and news from all of you. We will definitely do this again next year, and we hope to hear from more of our wonderful alumni.

1960s

Santha Cooke (1963-65) writes: "For two short years, I experienced school as a relaxed, friendly, open place where lots of interesting things happened and I could learn what I was curious about because *I* wanted to. I did my first contra dance-the Virginia Reel-at the Randolph School. In sixth grade I made a study about Ancient Greece, and just two years ago I picked up where I'd left off so many years before when the opportunity arose to travel there. My interest in Neolithic art dates from those years as well. Every time I see one of those beautiful sculptures I am brought back to that upstairs classroom in the Unitarian Fellowship in Poughkeepsie. The book that I first encountered them in is still in the library at the school in Wappingers Falls. I carried the love of learning that I experienced at Randolph with me through the rest of my school years and the sense of possibility I received there sustained me through 20 years of teaching....Now I share that sense of possibility with individual adults in my work as a holistic health counselor and massage therapist....I am pleased and proud that I have been able to give both my daughters the opportunity to spend their growing up years in the nurturing family atmosphere at Randolph. **Elizabeth [Hanka** (1992-98)], now in 9th grade at Oakwood, was at Randolph through the 6th grade. She is prospering, and this past fall had the lead part in "The Diary of Anne Frank," together with **Adam Lerner** (1989-97), another Randolph alumni. Rachel is now in the 4th grade at Randolph, and looks forward to going to school each morning....Meeting **Carol Gordon (now Levine)** (1963-65) at the Oakwood parents opening day picnic was a wonderful surprise....Best wishes to everyone. I remember you all with love."

Out of obligation, and under threat, **Gerrit Stover** (1963-69) sent a lengthy e-mail: "After a stint at Arlington Junior High (and the usual early 70's long-hair pitfalls of greaser harassment and political run-ins with the Vice Principal), and high school at PDS, I wandered off to Wesleyan (Conn. variety) and majored in music. This, for some obscure reason, didn't involve learning to sight-read well or play piano. Instead I got away with doing "sound sculpture," along with dabbling-thanks to RS/PDS catholicity-in subjects from oceanography to Japanese poetry. Then in 1980, with one of my freshman year friends, I moved up to Western Massachusetts, to Northampton as I knew 2 people there, there was a river, and mountains (modest), and a bunch of colleges which promised fertile ground for making music. That I did, from drums to Motown fiddle (the latter being a wide-open field) along with jazz dance and ballet, and hankering after Smith students, for about five years, watching the pastoral valley-which boasts one of the most famous landscapes in American (art) history, as well as some of the most fertile farmland in the world, become dotted with subdivisions and strip malls. Eventually this became too much, as did the string of bands which labored long at rehearsal only to break up a few gigs into performing life; our parents' legacy of environmental conscience and aesthetic awareness won out. I began working with a new regional land conservation organization, with which I'm still involved, which led me to Madison, Wisconsin for a Masters in Land Resources. Now, I still see the landscape being chipped away by people like me and you (who want to live in a new house in the country, and don't realize they are destroying the very thing they want to enjoy)-but I also get to drive by farms, wildlife habitat, and boat launches which our organization has saved. And I get to work with a deeply dedicated (and usually very funny) crew, who give their hearts, souls, and weekends to stemming the tide. Oh, yes-I still buy musical toys, even if I don't get to play with them enough."

Chris Scott (1963-1968) e-mailed the following: "In mid-June 2000, I returned to the Hudson River Valley...for a short weekend visit with an old friend and neighbor. I hadn't been back to the general area in many years, but have never forgotten the beauty of my former home. My family (wife, Juanita, and daughters Kristen and Caitlin) and I drove in from the mid-West, crossing the Beacon-Newburgh Bridge on I 84, exiting at Route 9D to head north to Wappingers Falls. We passed the Randolph School, and I explained to my daughters that many years (more years than I care to admit!) ago I went to school there, and that their grandmother, Ginger, taught school there at the same time. It was Saturday morning and the school was closed. ...I have many fond memories of the Randolph School-the education I received, my teachers, classmates, and wonderful friends. I used to ski with **Jason** (1963-1969) and **Eric Tomlins** (1963-1966)! Randolph has always been a special place. I live in Ohio and work as a research engineer, where I contribute to developing better ways to lubricate engines and all kinds of equipment, while reducing emissions that are harmful to the environment."

Gloria Robbins (Parent and Teacher 1967-1975, and current Board Member) sends us the following news about her family: "**Joel Robbins** (1967-1973) is an assistant professor of Anthropology at The University of California in San Diego. Joel is a prolific writer and presenter in his field. Last year he was invited to teach for six weeks at the Sorbonne in Paris. He has been invited this May to teach in Taiwan. He has been married to Elizabeth Waters for the past ten years. Elizabeth is a Biologist who is currently a scientist at Diversa in San Diego. They are expecting their first baby at the end of January. I know Randolph School is in Joel's bones and soul. His teaching style is based on how he was taught in his early years. Already I hear rumblings of how he wants his child to be educated.

"**Michele Robbins Derman** (1970-1975) is an attorney who lives in Tucson. She has been married to Burt for the past five years. Burt grew up in Tucson and is a stockbroker. They have a precious 22-month old daughter, Julia. Michele is a devoted and delightful mother. She is currently working part time as a Pro Tem Judge. For those of you who knew Michele, she continues to be upbeat, bringing much pleasure to her family and friends. Already Julia's education is in good hands as The Randolph School filters into the choices Burt and Michele make for Julia....

"One of my favorite memories is of a student, **Eddie Cohen** (1967-1970), who put a tape recorder down the toilet to record the flush. A brilliant Randolph School learning by doing. Eddie thought this idea up all by himself. Another of my favorite memories is of Joel's first day at Randolph in the first grade-the neighbor children asked Joel what he did, and he proudly showed them his shoebox of wooly bears. Thank you Lee Tomlins.

"Randolph School has profoundly influenced our entire family.... I enjoyed the opportunity to refresh my memory of just how Randolph School is deeply woven into all of our beings."

Liisa Daniels (1970-1971) sent the following message: "What I want to contribute is: My perspective on the Randolph School, its activities and structure, especially its ability to recognize a child for his/her individuality and relation to the "bigger picture" (and importance) to the world (and what that discovery could mean locally and globally). How I will accomplish this is: By relating my experience in 1970, (in whole or part) to how I was "seen" by **Darya Lindsay** (teacher 1970-1971), on what level I was able to express my self, and why.

"It is my personal belief and experience that an individual will reach his or her potential especially if they are fortunate enough to have at least one adult in their life who is able to facilitate their unique expression (typically done through drawings, talking and/or relating.) In my case, my "mirror" was Darya...and believe it or not, the only true link to my "truth" at that time.

"My expression of my self, as expressed through my mandala drawings are a link to my heart...because of the supportive atmosphere I experienced at the Randolph School, these images were able to come forth.

"Consequently, I feel so fortunate (and want other children and parents) to understand and experience the miracle of such an important, safe place at a crucially impressionable, developmental time.

"Your school saved me! This is what I must express to you! You were able to bring forth my unique, true expression!... Something I will always have to reflect back on no matter what I may experience in the world...I always have the recognition of who I really am, and because it come forth naturally, it is genuine, and unchangeable. Wow!"

1970s

Wendy Cohen (1968-1974) e-mails us: "Hi there! Hope all is well at Randolph. Here's news about me for the newsletter.... I'm very excited by the idea of a newsletter. I'd love to find out what my fellow alumni are up to...I reside in beautiful Brooklyn, USA with my boyfriend, Joe, and I'm still doing the filmmaking thing. I finished a short in the spring of '00, which I wrote and directed. It is entitled *Tom Luvs Maeve 4-Ever*. It is a 25 minute long black comedy; "a madcap tale of betrayal and destruction." It has been playing the festival circuit and has won a few awards. This was my own project so of course it only consumed money rather than making any. To make money I've been producing documentaries for The Discovery Channel. I've also assistant directed quite a few independent "art house" type films, which include last year's *Judy Berlin* (which I associate produced as well). I've written five feature screenplays, and I'm trying to raise the money to shoot one of them, so if anyone knows anyone with a couple of million dollars they'd like to invest? My most recent film project was a music video I produced/directed/edited for my brother Joshua's band, "*Fitehouse*." Since it is so difficult to get money for filmmaking, I am currently satisfying my need to express myself by writing a novel. Other than that, my favorite things are to go to the movies, to go hiking, and to read about theoretical particle physics. I am grateful to The Randolph School for being a place that

encouraged my love of science and my creativity, since those are the things I value most about myself. We always did such cool things, like writing stories, doing plays, looking at trees. I have a memory of dissecting a calf's heart, but maybe I hallucinated that one. I also remember trying to learn about exponents with those little colored rods. I think that might not have been so effective. All my favorite memories are of doing fun things; playing "colors," sledding in winter, building leaf forts with people like **Kelly [McGrogan Case (1972-1975)]**, **Robbie [Lipton (1973-1975)]**, **Shanna [Gillen (1971-1977)]**, **Grant [Gillen (1969-1975)]**, **Willie [Outlaw (1970-1977)]**, **Harlan [Roberts (1970-1974)]**, and my brother **Dan**. What do those things have to do with education? All I know is I entered the 5th grade in public school with 11th grade science and social studies skills. My best friend from Randolph, Kelly (whom I met playing in the indoor sandbox when we were eight), and I are still great friends, even though she lives in Portland, Oregon now. This past September I went out there for her wedding. Wow. This is long. I guess you can tell I like to write."

"A quick note from the kid formerly known as 'Danny.'..." **[Dan Cohen (1969-76)]**. "Well, it's been a good 26 years...Oh my where has the time gone? I turned 35 yesterday and I don't feel a day over 34. I graduated from Rensselaer in 1988 with a degree in Electrical Engineering. I believe that the career choice was in part influenced by my days at the electric scrap bench with **Harlan [Roberts (1970-74)]** and others. I still remember making a bell ring and getting a radio to receive by putting a wire on the antennae. After that I worked at IBM in Kingston, NY for 6 years and got a Master's in Manufacturing along the way. In 1994 I left IBM and went to work for Atmel in Maryland where I am currently a Principal Design Engineer and team leader doing computer chip design. I never did anything with the Masters. Perhaps it built character. In April of 1998 my brother **Josh [Cohen (1973-78)]** and **Gabe Gilligan (1973-75)** were working in New Orleans for a week and they invited me to take a much needed break from work and use their hotel as a base for a long weekend. With no intention to do anything but read for four days, I accepted the offer. It was here that I met my future bride Jodie who happened to be spending four days in the Big Easy at the conclusion of her tour of America. She moved to the US in April '99 and we were married in March 2000 in Adelaide, South Australia. We presently reside in Baltimore, Maryland. I'm fairly certain I've done other things in the past 26 years, so consider the above to be just highlights. Hope all is well with you and the Randolph School."

We received a brochure from **Andrea Grumbine** (our art teacher from 1971-1975), describing her new art therapy practice in New Paltz.

Lisa Harrington-Verb (1971-1977) writes: "I am married to Marcus and living in Clifton Park, NY. We have two children, Marissa 4 1/2 and Sawyer 2 1/2. I keep very busy as an at-home mother, although I am not home much! I am on the Board of Directors of Marissa's Montessori preschool and am serving as the registrar. It is a small school but we love the teacher/director and Marissa is doing very well. Sawyer will join her there next year.

"I am a La Leche League Leader and the organization has been very important to me and my family. Both of my kids still nurse and I love the support network the group has given me. I love being able to help women breastfeed successfully and I love to make them feel better when they are frustrated or meeting opposition to meeting their baby's needs. The philosophy and group have made parenting so much more rewarding.

"I am still singing and have a paid church position in Saratoga Springs. We do very challenging music and it is nice to be able to sing every week, but my first love is still musical theater. I am so busy that I haven't been able to audition for any shows lately, but I keep looking. I am very involved with one company here, Schenectady Light Opera Company and recently served on the show selection committee for next year.

"I have my own home-based business as well, selling Longaberger baskets and home décor products. I have collected them as a hobby for several years and started my business two years ago. I am doing very well with sales and recruiting and have won many awards already. I love the product, getting out and meeting people and helping people decorate and organize their homes.

"My husband, Marcus, works for General Electric, which is difficult for me spiritually, especially lately with the dredging controversy. We are members of Clearwater, but General Electric pays our bills! He likes his job and recently took a new position with about 40 direct reports.

"I think about Randolph often, especially now as we are trying to decide where our children's education will take us. We are planning on moving to a larger house next year, so we are looking hard at schooling options. We wish we could clone Randolph and drop it in the Capital Region! Maybe we will choose the public school route if we end up in a good school district, maybe we will pursue private or Jewish education or maybe we will home school. I am most worried about lost opportunity and wasted time. Marissa is reading already and to make her sit still in a class full of kindergartners who don't know their letters yet seems such a shame.

"I feel so lucky to have gone to Randolph and to have taught there. It instilled in me a love of learning (I guess my parents had something to do with that too!) and it has given me the confidence to know I can make a good educational experience for my children myself or in addition to what they are getting somewhere else. Thank you all!

"I hope life is good with all of you and your families. Maybe we will come visit sometime."

We received a card from **Dave Bergeron** (1974-1980) and his wife Joanna, announcing the birth of their first child, Ema Louise Bergeron in August 2000. Dave is currently living in Seattle and working at Microsoft. For more on Dave and Ema go to www.research.microsoft.com/users/davemb/ema/ema.htm.

[davemb/ema/ema.htm](http://www.research.microsoft.com/users/davemb/ema/ema.htm).

Sarah Verb Manning (1976-79) wrote: "Just wanted to send a quick note about what is going on in my life right now. I live in Oxford, CT with my husband Kevin. Oxford is about an hour away from Wappingers. We just had our first baby on December 1, 2000. We had a girl named Alice Rose Manning. I have been married for three and a half years and we have lived in CT for three. I have my Masters in Teaching English as a Second Language. I specialize in teaching adults. I was working in New Haven at the adult education center, but I have given that up to be a mom. I will be working just two nights a week at a local community college reaching reading and writing to ESL students. This will be my fifth semester there. I love teaching and the ESL population is great. They are so eager to learn, very appreciative, and so interesting. I was actually just thinking about Randolph School the other day. I was wondering if there is such a place nearby, and then I thought that an hour commute to Wappingers to take Alice to school wouldn't be that bad. I have a while before Alice is ready for school, but I am sure that it will fly by. I must get back to my daughter. I am sure that she will need to nurse, or have a diaper changed soon. I hope all is well."

"Hello Randolph School! This is **Martha [Levine]** (teacher 1977-1981) in Ithaca, NY. I was delighted to get your postcard asking for news for the Alumni Newsletter. Randolph remains a piece of who I am. The years I spent teaching and learning there helped define who I have become both as a teacher and a person. It is where I found my teaching self and reached deep inside me to find who I am as a person. The love and support of both teachers and students helped to guide me. I am forever grateful.

"I left Randolph to marry Marty, live and teach in Ithaca and start a family. For the past 15 or so years, I have been able to teach and job share. This means I teach half a day and my partner teaches the other half of the day. It's given me the best of both worlds. I can teach and still have time for my family. I started off in kindergarten, moved to third grade and now teach second grade. Ithaca is a fairly progressive town and I have felt comfortable in the public schools here. Depending on where you are, the schools can feel "Randolph-ish" to some degree. My daughter, Leah, is approaching 17 (yikes! How did that happen?) and my son, David, is 9. Leah recently got her driver's license and is beginning to look at colleges. Any suggestions out there from parents who have been through this college thing? She's interested in the Boston area. Cornell is right here but she very much wants to feel her wings and experience a different part of the country. She is very socially conscious. We went to the Million Mom March together last spring. She has ridden her bike 100 miles around Cayuga Lake to participate in fund raising to fight AIDS. She also volunteers at the local soup kitchen. David is my rough and tumble boy who is passionate about sports. I can tell you the statistics for any athlete you care to know or imitate a particular baseball player's stance. He loves tackle football and wrestling with his friends. He is actually quite big for his age which amazes Marty and me since neither one of us is a particularly big person. David is a rabid Mets fan and we agonized over their season last year. I am quite elevated in his eyes because I went to high school with the Mets manager, Bobby Valentine. Eric-remember the baseball game we went to in New York?

"Marty teaches fourth grade and is a free lance writer. He recently published a book about athletes who have overcome some kind of adversity in their life. It's called *Uncommon Champions*. You can see it on Amazon.com! It makes it feel very official. Marty took a sabbatical this past semester to promote the book. He spoke at schools, on the radio and even had some TV interviews. It has been a time of personal growth for him.

"So where are all my Randolph School buddies, both kids and teachers? Eric, Diane-where are you in your lives? **Abbie Nelson** (teacher 1979-1984), are you still in Vermont? I would love to hear from any former students who were there when I was. You can e-mail me at lak@twcny.rr.com. Where have your lives taken you? I hope everyone is well."

From Germany, **Eike Dorff** (1978-1980) sent the following: "Thanks for the card to remind me of keeping in touch with you. I enjoyed my visit in 1998 and I hope to make it over to you once again soon. Here is some news about the family: Ulrike **[Dorff]** (1978-1980) (she's now 27) has finished her education early 2000. She became a physiotherapist and works now in a hospital in Northern Germany. She lives together with her boyfriend in Gaslar, near the Harz Mountains. I (28) have finished my studies of Mechanical Engineering in 1996 and since then I work for Whirlpool, an international company in the home appliance business. I spend most of my time travelling through Europe and Asia training people in quality techniques. I live near Stuttgart in Germany, but I see my apartment only on the weekends. Right now I plan to start another education; I want to do an MBA course in England. Whenever I have the chance to travel to the US I will of course spend some days in Randolph School. My parents are still living in Kuppingen, Germany (near Stuttgart as well). My Dad has taken up on an offer for early retirement from IBM and is now working for a socially focussed company in the recycling business. Both my mother and father are involved in the church community in Kuppingen. My litter brother Carsten (18) is now in the 12th grade, that means he will finish school mid 2002. He lives with my parents. So, that's all for now. I hope to see you again soon!"

We heard about **Susanna & Emily Reith** (1978-1981) in an e-mail from their Dad, Tim, and a copy of their lengthy Holiday 2000 letter. Excerpts follow: "Susanna and Emily are doing great...Jacquie and I still think about Randolph and the great and loving environment that you had, and I'm sure still have. I have an ancient 8x10 photo of the whole class-upstairs and down-framed and hanging on the wall. I

think it must have been taken around 1978-79. It was just after the "new" climbing equipment (rope ladders, etc.) was erected in the front yard, and the picture shows all the children on it.

"I am convinced that our two daughters (now aged 27 and 24) are happy and finding their places in the world in good measure because of the start they received from Randolph. You must be proud and gratified by the lives of "your children."

From the Holiday 2000 letter: "Tim and Jacquie finally sold their house in Morgan Hill in 1999... We have rented a one-bedroom apartment only about five miles from IBM in San Jose. Tim spends most of his time there with frequent visits to Susanna and Jacquie in Tucson. Tim is trying to convince himself that he actually lives in Tucson and commutes to the Bay Area to work. Hopefully this is a fairly short and temporary arrangement, dependent upon Tim's retirement from IBM.... Jacquie has transferred full-time to IBM Tucson where she continues to do pretty much the same job she had been doing in San Jose-Webmaster (Webmistress?) for the IBM divisional intranet home pages.... Susanna resigned her job at the La Paloma Resort in Tucson in the spring of 1999 and started back full time at the University of Arizona to study for her MBA. We have never seen her work so hard, and she loves it.... She will receive her MBA this coming spring and will move to Kansas City sometime in July... having accepted a very attractive full-time job offer from Hallmark. She will be in a one-year career development program leading to a full-time position in marketing/product management.... Not being immediately ready for graduate school, Emily worked at IBM in San Jose from February, 1999, until March, 2000. She did Auger electron spectroscopy in the Materials Lab... Although she found much of the work routine, she learned a tremendous amount of physics and chemistry, not to mention ion gun repair and UHV vacuum science.... Emily began hiking the Pacific Crest Trail, which runs all the way from Mexico to the Canadian border, in April, 2000. She hiked from Campo, California to Tuolumne Meadows in Yosemite-about 950 miles in eight weeks. She accepted an offer to attend graduate school at the University of Colorado, Boulder... She is half-way through her first year and will begin her research in earnest next semester. Her Ph.D. will be in physical chemistry, but her research will be in biophysics-a new and exciting area of interest for her and her advisor. This effort will take her about five years."

1980s

We received a note and a glamorous photo from **Rachael Robbins** (1979-1983): "Here's a quick update for your alumni newsletter! I have been living in New York City for the last three years, working as an actress. I am getting ready to make the big move to Los Angeles...it's time to start playing with the big boys! So far my career has gone quite well. I have done a number of feature films (some of which were at the Cannes Film Festival), commercials, videos, and various other little goodies in the entertainment industry.

"Do I have a favorite memory of Randolph? Well, I have so many! But they all exist in my mind more as a feeling than any particular memory. In retrospect I have an intense appreciation for Randolph. My years there were the only time in my life that I experienced being in an environment that was completely non-judgmental, and truly encouraged creativity and individuality. Being blessed with that during my formative years laid the foundation for me to have the guts to be what I am today."

Dave Pascarella (1979-1983) writes: "Hello! Wow! Info on me and memories about Randolph. I could write volumes on the latter. Hi "Ic" and Diane. How are you guys? I'm pretty well. I'm currently living in Buffalo attending the University at Buffalo's Masters of Social Work program. I just finished my first semester. Three more to go. I'm considering a Ph.D. in counseling as that is what I really want to do. I mainly want to work with children and families. I went to SUNY Fredonia for my undergrad (Psych/Soc dual major) and then took some time off.

"What have I made? I've made some music! I had a few bands in Fredonia. I play guitar and sing. I have some acoustic stuff that I've written, which will be on the mp3.com website soon. Currently there are two songs from my old band Co-Chan there. The site is www.mp3.com/chan if you want to check it out. Unfortunately grad school did not afford me the time to put another band together or really work on solo stuff, but I hope to make more time for it in the future.

"Some memories from/of Randolph: 1. Making a movie where I was a green monster who was sent home everyday on the bus with leftover green make-up. 2. When **Jed Gillen** (1975-1982) and I would put a blanket over ourselves and go around the school singing, "We're a camel, aaannhh." 3. The bonfire after raking leaves. 4. Sleigh riding! That was the best.

"I can go on with that stuff. The most important thing, though, isn't what I remember. It's what I now realize: that the Randolph School afforded me so many opportunities to explore all the creative and analytic sides of my young self. I went there because I didn't fit into the mold of public school and being there truly helped me become the person I am today. I take those memories with me and reflect on them often.

"My internship and my part-time job involves working with children. One of the things I see with them in both their personal and educational lives is that they don't seem to have the opportunities to be kids the way all of us at Randolph did. It breaks my heart, but kids are pretty resilient and I use what I've learned to help them feel that they can be kids around me and I think that will help me throughout my life and profession.

"That's it in a nutshell. Feel free to contact me anytime and I'd love to know how things are going there and how Eric, Diane, and anyone else that I may have known are! Take care."

Megan Pascarella (1982-1985) "Greetings Randolph Friends! I am writing to you from Daphe, Alabama, where I am spending Christmas with Dave and my parents. All is well with the Pascarella clan: Mom (Sue) is teaching French at the local high school; Dad (Mike) is the Facilities Supervisor at the UOP plant in Chickasaw, Alabama. Dave is attending the University at Buffalo working toward his Masters in Social Work, and I'm a Compliance Officer at Prime Financial Services, in Poughkeepsie.

"I spend most of my time in the office or traveling on business. This year I was in Arizona, Washington, D.C., New Mexico, Ohio, and Kentucky. In January I'm off to Las Vegas, then to NJ, Long Island, and a week in Florida. Other than that work, I haven't been doing too much.

"The holidays always remind me of the Holiday Party at Randolph: Latke eating contests, talent show, the piñata. I remember the year we were supposed to make a piñata that was a chick coming out of an egg, but it ended up being E.T. in a hot air balloon or something to that effect. And who can forget shaking the cream in those little Tupperware containers until it turned into butter?!"

"Ah, the good old days. I'd love to know what some of my old cronies are up to: **Sara Vallese** (1978-1985), **Jordan Miller** (1980-1985), all of the **Pecks**. I haven't heard anything of them in quite a while. Also, I'd love to know where **Cathy Riley** (Teacher 1981-1988, Parent 1991-1993) is these days. I really have managed to lose touch with everyone. It was great to see **Alisa Algava** (Student 1977-1983, Teacher 1996-1997, current Board Member) at the Carriage House opening (was that 2 summers ago, now?).

"Hope everyone there is doing well. Hello to Mark and Diane and Noah, and Eric, Cath and Owen, and everyone else!"

Louis Klepner (1982-1987) Hey Guys-My parents just gave me a postcard you sent out, asking alumni to touch base. So here I am! Ummm...let's see, what do I have to say. Not too much-life has been good. I live in Beacon, I own a new media consulting/design/development company called Expressive Imaging, (www.expressiveimaging.com)...I have three cats, and look forward to doing some sailing this spring/summer. (Oh-I was given a sailboat by someone, sort of a long story, but nonetheless, I have a 22' sailboat now.)

"I credit Randolph for a lot of the positive things in my life. I could write a short essay on this, but I've only got a few minutes this morning so I'd better keep it short: I feel as though my developmental years at Randolph have given me the courage to pursue my interests, and make the most out of life. Not bad for a rough draft. At some point in time I would like to write a short review of my years at Randolph... I'll let you know when I get around to it.

"It would be nice if there was a slightly non-public web page with all the alumni's email addresses. I'd like to touch base with the other people in my "class," and find out what they are up to, perhaps even meet up with them sometime. Just a thought, I gotta run now-"

We hear that **Brooke Lovell** (1983-1989) is living in Brooklyn and studying acting, while waiting tables at Pravda in SoHo.

Maria Dubois, mother of **Hannah Dubois** (1986-1990), sent in the following news: "Hannah is living in Cortland, NY. She is attending Tompkins Cortland Community College. In June she'll have completed high school and her first year in college. She is happily committed to her education (since out of public high school). She is enrolled in an honors program and pursuing general studies currently. She has excelled in philosophy. She is interested in massage, business, interior design, fashion, and international business. She lives independently by herself off campus. She thinks we need a revolution politically and economically. She often speaks of when she and **[Caitlyn Patch (?)]** (1988-1991) ran away. She often speaks of **Gilad Levin** (1988-1990), being his translator/English teacher. She wonders about **Rosie Loiacono** (1985-1988).

"I got through graduate school and am now a family nurse practitioner (what a privilege!) I think we need a revolution also. Still studying mysticism and spirituality. Favorite memory-watching kids listen to Clotell Coles talk of growing up in the south and picking cotton, etc., and the field trip to Olana."

Jesse Schniedewind (1987-1988) writes, "Right now I'm a senior at New Paltz High School. I'm president of the Film Production Club. We're working on a film called "Accountants of the Corn" that should be coming out in February or March. It's a sketch film in the style of Saturday Night Live. With any luck, we'll have it on local access cable networks so everyone can see it."

Paulie Sequeira (1988-1991) called from Redmond, Washington, to say that he is now working at Microsoft writing "security code," and skydiving.

Courtney Gerteis (1988-1991) sent in the following news: "I am now 21 years old, and graduating from Dutchess Community College this year with a Biology major (thanks to Brad and his wonderful way of teaching Science). I've always loved his classes; they were fun and exciting, especially the trips to the stream, and the freaky little creatures that **Ross [Pizzuti]** (1987-1992), **Paul [Sequiera]** (1988-

1991)], and **Owen [Tomlins (1982-1991)]** always found! Eric was great at Language Arts, and because of that, I write a lot of poetry and short stories. I think I got that from circle time in the morning!

"The farm also gave me the chance to fulfill my love for animals, and that's why I'm becoming a Marine Biologist. Though there weren't any whales and dolphins at the farm, but there were animals! And I will never forget the goats that butted me every time I fed them or just went down to play with them. I myself have 2 dogs, 3 cats, and 4 goldfish. I got that idea from the fish we always had in the science room.

"My favorite thing at Randolph was the camp out and rocket launch at the end of the year. Once again, thanks to Brad. I've continued to build rockets and set them off in my back yard. I still enjoy camping as well! Oh, and we can't forget the tree tapping to make syrup for the huge pancake breakfast! Randolph was such a great school. The environment was pleasant, and the teachers were great!

"I also remember Rosemary's wedding that **Laura Hughes (1985-1990)** and I attended. The pond where there were pretty water lilies, and of course the snakes that scared me half to death! But besides the fact, it was a beautiful setting for a wedding. Oh, and I can't forget the snakes that people caught and kept in the classroom at the end of the hall, just before the stairs. Then you never wondered why I never went in that room!

"All is well here and I look forward to hearing from you guys soon. Like I said, Randolph was such a great school, and I hope that it lasts for a while so I can send my children there so they can experience the wonderful times at Randolph."

We ran into **Calem Black (1982-1985)** recently who regaled us with tales of high-end electrical jobs and his current work in mechanics. He also reported his brother **Kyle Black (1983-1985)** is doing well and working at Valvoline.

1990s

Seth Graham (1988-1992) says, "Hello from Dallas, Texas...I have been doing great this past year here. I have come and gone through some jobs recently, but I am still doing ok, and I have been trying to get myself set up into being an actor. So, Eric, if **Owen** needs any people for any movies coming up, you have somebody here to work as an actor. I was, in fact, up in New York last summer for 2 weeks. It is a shame I could not stop by and visit. I know that I had seen **Carlin [Kosowski (1988-1989)]** the night after she just graduated from Beacon High School, which I graduated from in 1999. Other than that I have been keeping myself busy with helping out with my sister's two boys. Again, Owen, if you need an actor for any of your movies or want to plan on shooting here in Dallas, I will give you my number in my next message to help you out."

Christina Gambino (1991-1996), "Hello, my name is Christina Gambino. I am eleven years old and attend St. Mary's school in Fishkill. I am in the sixth grade. Every week, I take four dance classes and a piano class. When I attended the Randolph School from preschool through first grade, we used to go to the creek in the spring and sled in the winter on the big hill in back. Do the kids still do that? I also remember being stuck with the part of the farmer in a play about crows. I say stuck because I was absent when we picked our parts. Even though I didn't want to be the farmer, I had fun. I remember my friends and all the good times we had together at the Randolph School. I hope if any of my old friends or teachers wants to send me an e-mail please send to Cris914@aol.com. I hope all my teachers are doing well."

Kathy Odums (1996-1999), "Hi, Eric and Brad. How are ya doing? I'm doing fine. My family's doing fine...Tell Diane, Ronnie, Joey, **Jamila [White (1998-2000)]**, **Heather [Bentley (1995-2000)]** that I said "Hi" and whoever I forgot. I just wrote because I talk about you guys all the time...I should be by to visit sometime or come by the Carriage House. It will be a surprise."

Kiran Nandi (1997-1999) through his mother, Shobitha, tells us, "Kiran is now in second grade at the Brinckerhoff Elementary School in Fishkill. He is very good at reading and is into his 3rd Harry Potter. He loves math and is always trying to teach his brother, AJ. Kiran wants to become a basketball player like Michael Jordan. Kiran always enjoys himself when he attends functions and summer camp at the Randolph School."