



HUSKY HIGHLIGHTS

FALL 2010

Halloween Parade

By Kevin Yoder, father of Lark and Matthew

It became apparent to the crowd that things weren't quite as they normally should be when a biker chick and a ketchup bottle marched the kindergarten class around St. James' field.

And so we come to the Halloween Parade, our midway point through the first semester of the school year. A fitting thing, this masked parade of the school, since Halloween itself is a study of things not being what they seem, of opposites coming together, the thin veil between this world and the next, the light of the year waning and the dark of the year waxing. It is now a secular holiday that, at the same time, evokes and evolved from ancient religious traditions.

On Halloween, frightening gothic beings march beside superheroes and superstars, princesses are as common as water, and everyday people as rare as fine jewels. It seems so fitting that St. James' nails this conundrum. The kids wear uniforms, but the teachers dress up. Normally staid 5th grade teachers glam it up as Catwoman, and their rocker-type cohorts swan across the field dressed as the uber-romantic Phantom of the Opera. Sometimes interesting paradoxes emerge, like the dental hygienist marching two steps ahead of the tooth fairy.

It's all such a delight. Parents cheer and there are standing ovations for every class. The tiki-masked 2nd graders and the Chumash bedecked 4th graders gamely parade. Intriguingly, the mask sizes shrink as the children grow older, a wonderful visual counterpoint to the way our students themselves grow: as they mature and become more sure of themselves (it takes a confident 5th grader to pull off a Carnivale mask) they show more of their true selves and less of a mask. Bravo!



Class parties finished out the day. Kindergartners bobbed for apples, while upstairs kids mummified their friends. Hollow-cored apples crawling with Day-Glo gummy worms were a true Halloween delight.

The Celts felt that All Hallows Eve was the beginning of the New Year, and brought with it the Dark of the Year. Animals were moved from the summer fields and bonfires were lit to warm the night.

But we know differently. Halloween is the first holiday. It sets us up to remember those who have gone before us, saints and souls alike, before we give thanks for what we have on Thanksgiving and celebrate the wonder of Christmas. Halloween gives us our first opportunity to share. Share our visions in our masks, share our joy and sense of fun, share our streets as we walk our communities and buy one another candy for tricks-or-treats. This dark night brings us closer to the brightness of our year and the best of ourselves. The parade was just the start.



On the Front Lines

Stories from the drop off line

By Tom Norland, 6th Grade

When you get to 6th grade, one of your many responsibilities is helping on the drop off line. We take it in turns to open the car doors, so the kids can get into school quickly and safely. We have to be cheerful, helpful and wish everyone a good day. We also have to be at school super early!

To make things fun, my friend Dorien and I play a friendly game called, "Who gets to open the door of the fanciest and most interesting car?" We both like cars. Last week I got to open the door of a Porsche, which was great, while Dorien only got a Toyota. Then Dorien got to open the door of a Nissan Cube, which is a really fun car, while I only got a Honda.

There's a whole load of different cars that show up in the line. Some people's cars smell different.

continued on page 2



On the front...Continued from page 1

For example, one girl got out of her grandma's car and the smell reminded me of my own grandma. Sometimes people's cars are messy, and sometimes they are very clean and smell of polish. Sometimes not all the parents are especially nice to us. One mom asked me to get her daughter's backpack out in a really snooty manner. Please remember parents, we're doing our best. But mostly everyone's great, and it's kind of fun being out there.

Interview with Mr. Wooden, our Interim Head of School

By Lucy Norland, mother of Tom
and Jack



How long have you been an educator?

Thirty-one years. My first teaching position was in September 1977 at Brewster Academy at Wolfeboro, New Hampshire. I was an English teacher, house advisor and coach. I am originally from Freeport, Maine and Marblehead, Massachusetts.

What have been the highlights of your career?

The highlights in the early years were learning how to reach students in the classroom. If Brewster Academy was about learning how to teach, Chote Rosemary Hall, where I moved onto for 12 years, was about learning how to lead. I graduated from Yale Divinity School in 1996. I wasn't planning to go into the priesthood, but I believe that a divinity school education is a perfect one for heading a school, because you learn about pastoral care, ethical and moral decision making, how to speak in front of large groups of people, and how to head a community of people. After graduating from Yale Divinity School, I wanted to do something of service, and I wanted to take a risk, so Molly and I moved to Albuquerque, New Mexico and helped build a school from scratch – Bosque School. That's where I have just come from. I was there for 14 years.

What will you do after your year is up at St. James'?

I am in seven searches in seven different schools in seven different states.

What do you and Mrs. Wooden do in your spare time?

Our first love is international travel, especially to Asia – Thailand, Korea, Bali, Vietnam, Cambodia. When we're at home, we love reading and talking about books. Our passion is our two springer spaniels, Shout and Doodle. We have no children, which is one of the reasons we have spent our lives in service to schools. I see it as an ethical responsibility of ours.

What do you love about children?

I love to watch them become enthusiastic about learning. I also love to watch them achieve their potential. A lot of our kids are going to end up in positions of influence and we want them to make good decisions when they find themselves there.

How long have you been married?

27 years. A fun fact to know about Mrs. Wooden is that she is the daughter of a headmaster of an episcopalian school.

What impresses you about St. James'?

Firstly, watching the kids hop out of the car in the morning and wanting to go to school. Secondly, I've known for a very long time that St. James' prepares kids academically very well for whatever challenges they hit in their next set of schools. And thirdly, I can't think of an independent school that has a healthy diversity as St. James'.

If you were stranded on a desert island, and you were allowed three things: a book, a piece of music and an object, what would they be?

The music would be Beethoven's 9th symphony. I'd have to insist on two books – the complete work of Shakespeare and the bible; and perhaps a magic lantern.

Volunteering at School Helps Everyone – But Mostly Your Child

By Clare Richardson, mother of Lily

There's no question that parents volunteering at their child's school is great for the school and the community, but did you know it is also great for your child?

Studies have shown that kids whose parents volunteer in their elementary schools have higher test scores and fewer behavioral problems. Volunteering at your child's school can also be greatly beneficial to your child's confidence.

Helping out in the classroom is a great way for you to get to know your child's teacher and classmates. At St. James' there are always class parties, cooking, art or reading projects that need a little parental expertise. These are the opportunities for your child to see how much you care about them and their day. The simple act of parental involvement breeds self-esteem.

Volunteering beyond the classroom is equally beneficial. It shows that you place value on good citizenship, community and doing what you can. Children learn by example. If they see their parent in a volunteering role in the com-

munity, it fosters a culture of 'giving back' and sharing.

There are many, many opportunities to help around the school. In the art room, Mr. Danenberg is always desperate for helpers. For the Science Fair, Ms. Rodriguez will be needing parents to lay out science projects, and for the Around the World Event, Mr. Duggan will need chefs.

Parents can also celebrate the diversity of the school by volunteering for African-American History Month, Hispanic Heritage Month and the Korean Parent Association.

Every single day—even during the vacations – there is a volunteer slot at the school. And every day that's a chance for your child to learn from.

For volunteering opportunities, check out Parent Support Fellowship information on the SJES Website.



Less Mud This Year At The Pumpkin Patch Field Trip

By Brooke Eastburn, mother of Ava.

Our journey began with several mentions from the teachers of, "The weather was just like this last year (sigh)" and, "You should have seen the mud (grimace)!" But looming rain and muck didn't appear to dampen any spirits as students boarded the buses and kindergartners teamed with their 5th grade buddies.

An hour later, the sprawling pumpkin patch at Cal Poly Pomona came into view, and a chorus of "Woah!", "Awesome", and "No way!" was punctuated by one loud "I was so not expecting THIS many pumpkins!"

Students discussed their "perfect pumpkin" as they clamored off the bus and headed out into the field. "Clean, no dirt, kind of medium-sized and very orange," was 5th grader Song Moon's criteria. "No dents," and "not squished," agreed buddies Michelle Seung and Violet Buescher. "And no bugs," announced kindergartner Ondine Corsmeier.

Several 5th grade girls took a break to huddle over a writhing cluster of roly polys in the mud. Some students were solidly in a separate camp in their pumpkin search. "I like a different pumpkin. Mine's one-of-a-kind—it's unique in it's shape and color," explained 5th

grader Jordan Bedikian.

"My pumpkin isn't perfect but it's perfectly slanted," explained 5th grader Olivia White. "The ugliest ones taste the best," clarified her friend Kiana Conn. "My grandfather says they're sweeter."

Other students took a simple, practical approach. 5th grader Ethan Fabricant made an illuminating point, "It can't be too heavy to carry out of here."

The rain held off until everyone had a chance to explore the corn maze and we gathered in the greenhouse, fragrant with roses, to enjoy lunch.

Big plans are in store for the chosen gourds. 5th grader Tiffany Kim is planning to carve a jack-o-lantern, "With a cute mouth and scary eyes." Kindergartner Willa Jackson will decorate hers with feathers and jewelry; Kindergartner Lily Juda has pumpkin bread in mind, and 5th grader Skylar Andrews is looking forward to baking pumpkin pie with her grandmother. Differing opinions were a big theme of the day but Mr. Kreuger and Mrs. Vermette were in agreement on an important element, "The mud was nothing like last year!", they said.



The Mysterious Box

A true story by Eleanor
Hammond, 6th grade

It all started when my dad, my dog, Mogy, and my brother John and I were hiking in Griffith Park, Los Angeles, California. It was raining and there was mist in the air. We were climbing up big hills – exhausting!

As we were walking, my brother and I, at the same time, spotted a red toolbox sitting between two branches of a tree. We heard some crows squawking extremely loud above in the tree. Maybe it was a warning not to go near the box – or maybe, and most importantly, not to open it! I said, "Look!" and I pointed to the box.

My brother ran up to it. He saw the words OPEN painted in white on the lid of the metal box. The red toolbox had a black handle with some twine tied around it. I ran up to my dad and told him about the mysterious box. John wanted to open it – probably because he was so curious or because my dad kept warning us, saying, "That box could contain any out-of-the-blue items. There could be anything inside, even a bomb!"

A bomb!?!

John and I both exchanged strange looks. We were surprised and frustrated. Maybe the box contained a mysterious note saying where something was? Or a map! And why was it in the tree?

Maybe it had a note about something or someone to find!

John and I wanted to open it very badly – again, my dad said not to. He also said, "It's probably a practical joke."

John took it down with dad's help and decided to look through the cracks on the lid of the box. He said that he didn't see anything in the box, it was empty. But what about the lid?

I mean the OPEN sign on the box seemed a bit fishy. Whoever put the toolbox there must have really wanted you to open it.

Well, that leaves us with a cliffhanger. What was in that toolbox? And who put it in the tree? I wonder.



Astrocamp

by Eva Hilton,
6th Grade

In 6th grade, there is a field trip to Astrocamp, located in Idyllwild. There, you get to do amazing things and fantastic experiments. I happen to be in 6th grade and I got to take this wonderful trip, learning about planets, stars, the atmosphere and astronomy. I had never really liked astronomy before this trip, but now I love it. This was a trip that I know I will remember for all of my life.

There are a lot of fun things to do in Astrocamp, but one of my favorites was zip-lining. I had never done it before. At first, it was really scary, but as soon as I stepped off those steps, 50 feet above the ground, I had a very fun time. If you ever get the chance to do it, absolutely say 'yes!' One of the scariest things was the sky coaster. This is where you are 30 feet above the ground and then you drop and start swinging really high, back and forth. It is really fun once you start swinging, but it is SO scary when you prepare for it. At first, I was only a little bit nervous. This was when we were putting the harness on. Then I started to get more scared as the instructor explained to us how to jump.



I went first which made it even scarier, and as I was being pulled up, I was thinking to myself "I will be okay, I will be okay." I had to pull a rope, attached to my harness. Suddenly I was dropping at full speed, and then swinging back and forth really high. I had the time of my life doing this activity.

One of our classes at Astrocamp, wait.... when you hear "classes" you probably think, "Oh those must not be fun if they are called classes." Well you are wrong! This class was called Atmosphere and Gases, and we learned how things react in space. There was a small glass container that had no air in it and was considered "space". We put a balloon in it, and it inflated so much that it popped and shredded into millions of tiny pieces. We also learned about some different kinds of gases and their chemical properties - we learned that hydrogen explodes if you set fire to it and that dry ice is frozen carbon dioxide.

If someone asked me to judge Astrocamp, I would give it an A+. It was the best school trip I have ever taken. Even if you ask me about it when I am 40, I will still remember how great it was.

Roxy Cowan

By Julie Hite, mother of Riley
and Matthew

Many of you may not know that SJS has a budding newspaper publisher, editor, journalist and reporter in its student body. It's 4th grader Roxanne Cowan, also known as "Roxy."

Roxy started writing and publishing her own newspaper in the 1st grade. "Initially I was interviewing friends and listening to their stories," explains Roxy, who is in Mr. Duggan's class. "Those stories turned into articles that created *The First Grade Post*. I wanted to include something for everyone to read, so I put in stories about upcoming dates, birthdays and other fun things".

Fast forward to 2010 and the paper is now called *The 4th Grade Post*. *The Post* has changed as Roxy has grown up. "The newspaper is now more informational," says Roxy. "It contains movie reviews, school information, community events, and newsworthy hints and facts. I generally try to write about things that matter to me and might help the world."

Roxy's dad Rob helps with the typing, and photos have been added so it looks like a true newspaper and reads like one too. "I love researching and writing the articles. My favorite part of the paper is the movie review column," she says.

If you would like to receive a copy of *The 4th Grade Post*, feel free to stop Roxy on the playground and ask for a copy, or, if you're interested in "being green" you can email her at filmpov@aol.com - she will email you a copy each month - to save paper.



A Day in The Life of a Yard Staff Supervisor

By Chris Zapata

6:45 a.m. My alarm goes off. I regard St. James' as my home. This is my 8th year at the school. Before I worked at St. James, I was a banker and I'd work in a stuffy old vault. Now I'm out in the sunshine working with kids every day. Who could not love that?

7:30 a.m. I'm out on the curb with a cup of coffee usually in hand. Byron Zapata and I switch between yard and curb duty. It's more stressful on the curb because we have to worry about the kid's safety. This morning, one parent decided to let her kid out of the car on the opposite side of the street, so I had to stop the traffic in the street because I was frightened for the kid's safety.

Parents - if you are reading this - please wait in the car pool line and don't let your kids out until we're there to help.

8:15 a.m. I help out in the art room. Mr. Danenberg always needs extra pairs of hands. There's always so much to do, cutting plaster strips, setting up for class and washing brushes. This month I've been cutting lots of wooden rods for each child's mask for the Halloween parade.

10:15 a.m. Recess begins and I'm on yard duty.



Recess time is staggered, so usually the only time we get all 340 kids in the yard at once is after school. We know all the kids by name and their personalities. But even when there's only a few of them out there, we need eyes like hawks to watch all of them.

Arguments can break out any time and we like to resolve disputes before they escalate. I follow the 'three strikes, you're out' routine. Anyone causing trouble is pulled aside and I talk to him or her. The second time, they're up for some time on the bench. The third time, I talk to Mr. Cordero or the parents.

11:40 a.m. Lunches begin. One thing I hate to see is a bored kid, so I try to make any time the kids spend in the yard fun. Every day we have a sport going on. A lot of the kids love basketball, baseball and kickball.

2:45 p.m. I'm back on curb duty for dismissal.

4:30 p.m. I'm officially off duty, but often I'm still there at 5:30. If the school needs me, I'm there. If a kid asks me to do something, I'm not going to say "Sorry, I'm off duty now." No, I love the kids. They make me laugh.



An Unforgettable Memory: Field Day

By Lynn Kim, 6th Grade

Saturday, September 25, 2010 was a day to remember at St. James'. From face painting to dunking a teacher, Field Day was a huge success. Despite the very hot weather, everyone enjoyed themselves. There were potato sack races, tug of war, freeze dance and much more.

This year we had a dunk tank. Everyone gathered around the tank to watch the teachers splash down into the water. The preschoolers came too, and they also tried to get a teacher dunked.

"This year's Field Day was great, despite the fact that it was extremely hot. The students seemed to like the idea of getting one of their teachers dunked," said Mrs. Brown.

The activities were set up by Mrs. Brown, Mr. DiPasquale, some of the parents and the 6th Graders. The 6th graders came up with a lot of the new ideas for Field Day. We suggested Frisbee golf, scooter races and friendship bracelets.

The face painting was very popular. As a 6th grader, I got the chance to face paint many people. It was hard at first, but after doing it a few times, I got the hang of it. In fact, my favorite activity was helping with this booth.

St. James' Hall was mostly dedicated to musical activities, such as musical chairs, freeze dance and musical fun with Mr. Beeson. There was also a new activity called Zenergy. It was a yoga program that had Superhero themed activities.

The food was wonderful. A taco truck came, and there was cold fruit punch.

As usual the water balloon toss was a hit. The cooling water that splashed us was just what we wanted on such a hot day.

Thanks to the hardwork of everyone, it was a really great day.



Family Weekend

By Todd Beeson

Todd Beeson has been the campfire song leader at Family Weekend for the last six years. His guitar playing and tuneful voice are legendary.

Family Weekend is always a magical trip for me. I love watching the kids be free, gaining a better sense of community through adventure, and, of course, sharing music together!

When I was in elementary school in Moorhead, MN, I biked around all summer. My brother and I took care of getting ourselves to our baseball games. We were out until the sun went down, so getting to see St. James' kids so free makes me feel happy.

I also love getting to know the families in a different forum from school – an environment where we're not all busy with work or other duties.

And, hey...there is music too! It is always a real joy as a musician to have people sing along with your songs. I am glad I can be a conduit to guiding the musical adventure.

When I inherited the campfire leader gig, I was given a book, but it was a bit too folksy for me. I am a rocker – I felt more connected to the Beatles, U2 and Tom Petty.

The Beatles' tunes seem to be the most magical. It's as if the entire universe has been spoon-fed their joy since birth. Their songs connect with the youngsters and older folks alike. *Yellow Submarine* and *Eight Days A Week* always register well with the little ones, while us old guys remember those sweet candy melodies that are so easy and fun to sing.

Don Mclean's *American Pie* is perhaps the most quintessential campfire song. People always want to sing it, and it goes on forever. Rather like the memories of freedom at El Capitan!

Little Barbara Hicks

by HMorrell, mother of John and Eleanor Hammond

Little Barbara Hicks can do so many tricks, she can juggle fourteen gum balls while dancing on a brick! I've seen her slurp down a polar popcycle in eleven juicy licks, and swim across Sapphire lake with only twelve long kicks!

I never knew a girl like little Barbara Hicks; she built that dog house there using only thirty-eight sticks! and she strums her guitar using three bamboo picks! Everything she touches just seems to hit and click, and besides all that, she's funny... and has a weird brother named Nick.

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Kindergarten Thanksgiving Soup Recipe

On Thanksgiving, every kindergartner brings a vegetable to school to make the annual Kindergarten Thanksgiving Soup. It is such a fun event, that the soup has become part of St. James' tradition. The kindergartners also churn butter, and their 5th grade buddies come with bread to share the meal.

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------------|
| 3 onions (chopped) | 2 cups peas |
| 4 ribs of celery | 2 corn on the cob |
| 2 carrots | Salt, pepper and Mrs. Dash |
| 2 potatoes | 3 cans chicken stock |
| 2 zucchinis | 2 cans split pea soup |
| Green beans | 4 chicken bouillon cubes |
| 1 cabbage | Water, butter. |
| 1 cauliflower | |

Sautee the onions, celery and carrot in butter in a large saucepan. Cook for 5 minutes. Peel and chop the other vegetables.

Add the soup base ingredients, and then other vegetables. Simmer for two to three hours. Delicious! (Serves 20-30)

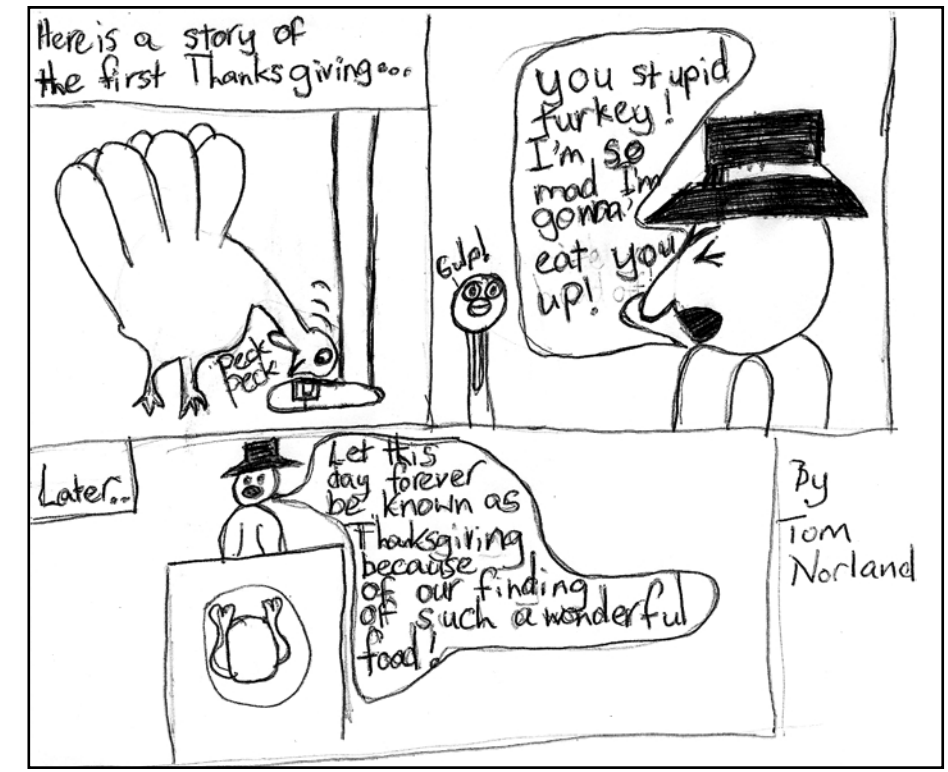


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Around St. James'



Husky Highlights is a St. James' Episcopal School PSF Publication
Editor: Lucy Norland, mother of 6th grader Tom and 1st grader Jack.
Designer: Zoë Proser



St. James' Episcopal School, 625 S. St. Andrews Place, Los Angeles, CA 90005