So much depends upon the red wheelbarrow glazed with rain water beside the white chickens.

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS
Any member of the Marin Academy community could likely tell you that our mission statement encourages students to “think, question, and create.” Many overlook the last part of that charge, though, which “challenges each person to accept the responsibilities posed by education in a democratic society.” It is that charge that inspires the Marin Academy Conference on Democracy, which recently concluded its seventh annual session. The Conference’s origins were modest: a lunch-line conversation between two teachers sparked the idea of integrating the school’s mission more deeply into our daily intellectual and social practices. The Conference has become an eagerly anticipated annual event since its inception in 2004. As its statement of purpose, written by Maxwell Hayman ’04 explains, the Conference on Democracy “provides a wide array of perspectives on political, social, economic, and environmental issues that our communities face locally, nationally, and globally.”

During its first six years, the Conference attracted an array of national and global luminaries to share their professional perspectives and personal experiences with the community. Whether it was Professor Ronald Takaki elaborating his vision of a 21st-century curriculum, Dr. Samantha Nutt describing dodging bullets while working with child soldiers and war orphans in Somalia, Justice Thelton Henderson recounting living through a riot in his fact-finding tour of Pelican Bay Prison, or Eric Schlosser imploring students to read the world around them more critically, keynote speakers and other distinguished guests have captivated MA audiences while challenging us to engage more deeply in civic life. Well-balanced panels debated hot-button topics such as immigration policy, election integrity, and in a particularly memorable session on the eve of the 2008 election organized by MA Human Development teacher and Dean of Multicultural Life Sanjai Moses, the morality and constitutionality of California’s Proposition 8.

In the last three years, the Conference has fueled curricular innovation and community engagement, with both teachers and students planning and presenting sessions. In 2008, Liz Gottlieb and her AP Environmental Science students researched the environmental policies of presidential candidates John McCain and Barack Obama and debated their merits in the first student-only presentation. In 2009, Pilar Gongora’s Spanish V/VI classes concluded eight weeks of bilingual research into working conditions for Latinos with a highly informative Conference session, and this year, Chris Alexander’s English III/IV class...
continued the trend toward a more student-centered program with their session on ethics and democracy.

In many ways, the Conference is helping MA fulfill the vision captured in our Strategic Plan, including key steps such as ‘ensuring that civic engagement is woven throughout Marin Academy’s curricular and co-curricular programs,’ and ‘connecting the curriculum to global and multicultural perspectives and concerns.’

The Conference on Democracy is a unique program that earned national recognition for Marin Academy four years ago when the National Association of Independent Schools named MA a Leading Edge School in the category of Equity and Justice. According to Orville Schell, keynote speaker at the 2008 Conference and former Dean of the Graduate School of Journalism at UC Berkeley, ‘Marin Academy’s Conference on Democracy is a wonderful and intelligent convocation that comes at precisely the time in their young students’ lives when all the formative intellectual and political muscle of their future lives is being formed. If this country is to help engender real citizens out of the next generation, there is surely no better way to do it than this.’

According to author and political activist Norman Solomon, who has participated in three conferences, ‘When I’ve participated in the Conference on Democracy, I’ve been struck by the great value of aiming high with students—respecting and affirming their capacities to grapple with complexities and urgencies in our midst. With vitality, the Conference helps to build out the meaning of education—and democracy—while bringing down walls that tend to compartmentalize and limit our understanding of context in our own lives and in the world.’

With more sessions tying directly into courses, the Conference on Democracy will continue to bring our mission and the goals of our Strategic Plan into the everyday life of the school in a meaningful and tangible fashion. And thanks to a generous gift from a Marin Academy family, we have begun an endowment fund that will eventually cover all operating expenses of the Conference and ensure its financial viability into the future.

Big plans lie ahead. The next frontier for the Conference on Democracy will be to forge deeper connections beyond MA’s campus. Every session is currently podcast and made available through our website; in the coming years, we will look to stream the Conference on the internet in real time so that students around the country and the world can participate directly. With that kind of outreach, the Conference could be a base for lasting relationships with schools on every continent, enriching our curriculum and the lives of our students with perspectives from across the globe. As Marin Academy evolves and finds new ways to help students think, question, and create, the Conference on Democracy will continue to explore how our students can deepen their engagement with democracy at every level.
How MA Alumni Are Leaving Their Mark on the Wine Industry

Wine Country. These two simple words evoke powerful images of verdant landscapes, sprawling vineyards, and a romantic lifestyle second to none. Whether one's interest is international or domestic, there is something ethereal about wine and the land from which it comes. Wine is more refined than other spirits and demands a reverence for the craftsmanship that goes into its production.

These days, though, with viticulture degrees being bestowed on more graduates than ever before, the wine industry is a hot and intentional destination for many people. The lifestyle is a magnet for people from all walks of life, but for a few of MA's own, the journey to wine country was also a journey to preserve family history.

Macauley Vineyard

For Macauley Watson ‘92, the call to wine came early. He lived with his mom during the 1980s in St. Helena, California, while she was working on the original Macauley label. While he learned about some of the facets of winemaking back then, it wasn’t until a memorable family trip that wine’s influence on Mac’s life really took hold.

“My family went on a cruise and one of the places we went to was Bordeaux, [France]. My dad mentioned that we had the opportunity to taste at a famous winery, Chateau Lafite Rothschild. The name didn’t mean anything to me, but it sounded interesting,” said Mac. “The last [wine] we tasted was a 1961, an incredibly famous wine. And I remember going back to the first one and thinking it tasted awful. That was the beginning of my passion for wine and realizing what wine could be. That stayed with me over the years.”

Even though Mac’s passion for wine began when he was young, his course back to Napa Valley was a bit circuitous. He attended the University of Colorado at Boulder and earned a psychology degree. He toyed with the idea of distributing unrepresented U.S. wines. He thought about creating an import/export company to foster his love of travel and food. Those plans and ideas were scrapped once Mac got his hands dirty in the industry.

“I decided to work the harvest of 2000. [I thought] let’s get a harvest job and I can take that wine-production knowledge into some other sort of work,” said Mac. “So I got a job at Rudd Estate in Oakville [in Napa Valley]. About a week into production I thought—forget about the import/export idea; I want to start up the Macauley label again,” said Mac. “Macauley was my mom’s maiden name, so I felt awkward that this was called Macauley and this was my wine. But the only reason I was making the wine was because of my mom and her winemaking before she died. It’s my way to pay homage to her. So I recreated the label in 2001.”

Mac sources grapes from vineyards all over Napa Valley to create his Cabernet Sauvignon, Zinfandel, late harvest Sauvignon Blanc, Sauvignon Vert, and Cabernet Sauvignon Beckstoffer To Kalon. The latter’s 2014 vintage received 90 points out of 100 from Wine Spectator magazine. To Kalon is one of the most famous and sought-after vineyards in Napa, and Andy Beckstoffer, owner of the vineyard, is the largest grower in the valley.

D’Anneo Vineyard

For fellow alum Allan D’Anneo ’77, wine was always a part of his and his family’s life. In 1972, Allan’s father purchased 25 planted acres just outside of Calistoga, and sold the old vine Zinfandel grapes to local winemakers. Growing grapes and making wine was Allan’s father’s dream, but for Allan, working in the industry was an unexpected path.

“I went to Chico State to study geology. I had solid language skills in French and a little bit of Italian, but I had some wine knowledge from being around my dad. I got a job at a liquor store that had an active wine section, and I took over the tasting bar,” said Allan. “A distributor came in and recruited me to go into sales with them. I thought—I love wine, but I never thought I could make a living at it.” After 12 years in wine sales and a number of years away from the industry altogether, Allan returned to his family label and began selling the family’s wine along with other wines from small-batch vineyards.

“In 2009 we decided to bottle the 2007 grapes. Winemaker Scott Harvey bought our grapes and made wine, but then the economy took a turn for the worse,” said Allan. “I’m not sure of the fact that the wine is very good, it’s not expensive. He gave us an option to buy the wine from him and bottle it. I was looking to get back into the wine business, and it was something we all agreed we could do.”

Similar to Mac, Allan finds himself staying in the wine business not just because of his passion for wine, but also because of the connection it has to his family and the heritage it will leave behind.

“Right now I’m focused on making [our wine] a legacy for the family. I want to keep the property in the family, keep it going through to the next generation. That’s really where my passion lies right now. Maybe even keep it going to my 11-year-old son. Maybe he’ll learn to love wine like I did,” said Allan. “The D’Anneos’ most recent release is a 2007 Zinfandel.”

Arbor Crest Wine Cellars

Like D’Anneo, Kristina Mielke-van Löben Sels ’88 (known as Tina Mielke when she was at MA) became interested in the wine industry because of her parents’ involvement. In 1982 her parents and her uncle started Arbor Crest Wine Cellars in Spokane, Washington.

“I was 12 when this all started, and my parents were so excited. They talked so much about the winery that I couldn’t help but want to get involved,” Kristina said. She pursued a degree in fermentation science at UC Davis. At the time, there were only 30 students in the program and Kristina spent seven years in Sonoma’s Dry Creek Valley at Ferrari-Carano Vineyards and Winery as the associate winemaker. But then she got a call that changed everything.

“My uncle was running the facility, and he was ready to retire. He said, ‘You’re going to have to come up now.’ That was in May of 1999, but I thought he could wait a year. He said no. I either had to come then or he was going to sell the place,” said Kristina. “My husband and I had

Pictured from the top as:
Macauley Watson ‘92
Kristina Mielke-van Löben Sels ’88
and Zack Scott ‘99
just bought our first home, but six months later we moved up here. We haven’t looked back.”

When Kristina arrived in Spokane, she took over the role of winemaker, and saw the opportunity to combine her love of science and art. “I’ve always been a bit more science oriented, but now I can throw the art into winemaking and get my creative sides going. That’s the fun part, that’s what I enjoy a lot and I can’t imagine doing anything different.” Arbor Crest sources its grapes from growers in south central Washington, and its flagship wine is Sauvignon Blanc (which earned 95 out of 100 points from Wine Spectator), but the winery also bottles a wide variety of award-winning white and red wines. Kristina’s newest creation: Dionysus, a red meritage. This fall, Kristina will also be launching a new label under Arbor Crest called van Loben Sels. This label will focus on Cabernet, Chardonnay, and Pinot Noir.

Scott Laboratories

While Mac, Allan, and Kristina were drawn to the production side of wine making, Zack Scott ’99 ultimately saw the work in cellar supplies at Scott Laboratories as a place for him to settle. Scott Labs is the largest supplier of yeast, corks, and other cellar needs in North America, and traces its origins back to the UC Berkeley Yeast Laboratory when Berkeley, not Davis, was the big agricultural school in the state. Zack’s grandfather purchased the laboratory in 1964. At MA I had no idea I would ever follow this career path. In fact, I thought I would be going into hospitality. I just accidentally fell into working here,” said Zack.

“I was at UCLA studying Spanish and international economics, and I wrote down a list of things I wanted to do, which included travel, using my languages, and working in an industry where people enjoyed what they did on a daily basis. That’s when I realized my family had a business that offered me all that.”

Zack spent the latter two years of college preparing to join the company. He picked up Italian to add to his conversational Spanish, and ended up opting out of the fall quarter of his senior year to work in a small factory in Italy to get some concrete experience in the business. All of this came as a surprise even to Zack himself. “I never grew up thinking I would work here. It was never impressed upon me that I needed to or should work in this company. It was something that just came naturally and was just really fun to do,” said Zack. He does not find it surprising that kids who are uninterested in wine grow up, “and then all of a sudden they learn about it and they love it.”

Those sprawling vineyards and verdant landscapes carry stories and adventures that will linger for generations, and as Mac, Allan, Kristina, and Zack continue to leave their mark on the wine industry, they’re preserving a legacy not only of their family history but also of wine country itself. They’re also helping weave MA into the story of the land and the lifestyle.

Eleventh Annual James F. Thacher Lecture

Azar Nafisi, author of the bestseller Reading Lolita in Tehran, delivered the 11th Annual James F. Thacher Lecture on April 20, 2010. The Times of London named Reading Lolita in Tehran one of the “100 Best Books of the Decade.” It has been translated into 32 languages. The book deals with some of the themes that Nafisi brought up in her lecture: the effects on a population when the government attempts to decree everything from what the governed must wear to what they may read.

Dr. Nafisi noted that the revolution in Iran and the resulting Islamist regime “made me realize how fragile were the rights and voices I had come to take for granted. Suddenly a new regime had established itself, taking hold of my country, my religion, my traditions, and claiming that the way I looked, the way I acted—what I believed in and desired as a human being, as a woman, a writer, and teacher—were all alien. I was told that I did not belong, that I was a figment of Western imperialists’ imaginations.”

As ordinary citizens were jailed for wearing nail polish or “indecent” clothing, Nafisi met with seven women in a “traditional” setting, where they read works of Western literature. She helped her students keep imagination and beauty alive, to fire a burning desire for universal and a desire for shared humanity.
Mill Valley Film Festival at MA

Marin Academy hosted a special screening of The Most Dangerous Man in America: Daniel Ellsberg and the Pentagon Papers on October 15, 2009. The film was named Favorite Documentary at the 33rd Mill Valley Film Festival, and garnered many awards, including a 2010 Academy Award nomination for Best Documentary Feature. In attendance were filmmaker Judith Ehrlich and Rick Goldsmith as well as activist and legend Daniel Ellsberg. The Mill Valley Film Festival at MA is made possible with the help of Mark Fishkin, executive director of the California Film Institute and father of Lindsay Fishkin ’07.

E.E. Ford Fellows Kevin Rees and John Hicks

The E.E. Ford Fellowship enables faculty members to undertake an in-depth project that they wouldn’t be able to engage in during the academic year. Over the summer of 2010, science teacher John Hicks pursued under-water photography and math teacher Kevin Rees added to his knowledge of statistics and statisticians.

Statistics can help illuminate subjects such as biology, physics, anatomy, economics, and psychology, and Kevin has analyzed data generated by other classes at MA. Kevin expanded his knowledge of statistics by visiting the birthplace of statistical theory and application in England, and he met with a genetics professor at Cambridge University.

Kevin’s research into the careers of the founders of statistics, Karl Pearson and R.A. Fisher, who were both top scientists in the areas of mathematics and biology, also revealed their involvement with eugenics, a 19th-century movement that advocated for the improvement of the human race through selective breeding and even through sterilization of “ unfit” members of society. “I am still wrestling with how two brilliant people could have supported a movement like eugenesics,” Kevin wrote in an email. “I have some answers to this question, but not all are satisfying to someone who lives 100 years after the fact.” Kevin’s research into this portion of the history of statistics may eventually lead to a unit in Statistical Ethics as part of the Statistics class Kevin teaches at MA.

For 31 of his 32 years at Marin Academy, John Hicks has led SCUBA outings for MA students. John pursued underwater photography in Fiji, which has some of the most spectacular soft corals in the world. John decided to “add photography to my diving resume to show students at MA the underwater world that is at their back door.” John gained understanding of F-stops, depth of field, aperture, megapixels, and other aspects of photography through classes and labs prepared for the challenges of underwater photography when he embarked on his trip.

John and his wife, Karen, also had the opportunity to experience the culture of Fiji thanks to their connection with a family in Fiji. MA
Organized by Jim Baldwin, Trixie Sabundayo, and the MA English Department, the 18th annual Literary Festival brought bestselling authors to campus, including Alexandra Fuller, top left, author of Don’t Let’s Go to the Dogs Tonight. She told students at an all-school assembly, “You can be compassionate and honest at the same time... It is possible to tell the truth and still be kind.”

Michael Ondaatje, celebrated author of The English Patient, has published fiction, poetry, memoir, and criticism. His many awards include the Booker Prize, one of the most prestigious awards for a novel in English. About his writing process he said, “I keep editing, editing, and editing, until I can’t do it anymore.” Besides an afternoon session, Ondaatje addressed the Marin Academy community at an evening event in the Marin Academy Theater.

Daniel Mason, left, author of The Piano Tuner, read from a work in progress. He is pictured with his wife, Sara Houghteling, MA faculty member and author of Pictures at an Exhibition. Sara read an excerpt from a historical novel she is working on.

Marin Academy students and faculty listened intently as Sara Houghteling read from a new work. Workshops and readings were offered by many MA faculty members, including Eugenie Chan, Trevor Calvert, Annie Elias, Derek Anderson, and Chris Alexander.

Green Report

of human impact on the environment is widespread at Marin Academy and an educational and cultural shift is taking place within the school.

“We want our graduates to understand and appreciate why it is important to move to more environmentally sustainable practices, and to develop the skills to engage in those practices,” says biology teacher and H.D. Thoreau Chair Mark Stefanski.

In alignment with MA’s Strategic Plan, which emphasizes sustainability and environmental stewardship, Marin Academy conducted a comprehensive energy audit in 2009. “The results from the audit have been the basis for many projects completed over the last school year,” says Director of Operations Michael Morris. “We strive to find products and materials that seamlessly provide reductions in our utility use while not negatively impacting campus use.

For example, we’ve reduced our water consumption by 300,000 gallons per year, and the new light fixtures in the

Shortly before world powers held a summit on climate change in Copenhagen, Marin Academy students gathered on the athletic field to spell out “350” with human figures. Three hundred fifty parts per million is considered the safe upper limit of the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. The current concentration, about 390 parts per million, is implicated in global warming.

The first solar panels on campus began generating electricity for lighting on the access road west of Foster Hall. David Gutierrez, member of MA’s buildings and grounds staff, installs panels.
MA Athletic Center use 50 percent less energy and will last ten times as long as the old fixtures." Michael continues to research new products and takes note of anything with an educational component. "One of the projects Operations worked on with the Science Department was the installation of an energy monitoring device in Thacher Hall called TED," Michael explains. "TED (The Energy Detective) is a Google-supported device that allows instantaneous monitoring of electrical consumption. The web-based software allows faculty and students to view energy consumption in real-time. Using TED, the Environmental Science classes focused on educating the community about the results of the audit, striving to understand how energy is used at MA and in the everyday life of students and their families. Students became aware of the impact of energy production and consumption on the environment and society and the need for energy conservation.

The MA garden is thriving. Students are learning botany and horticulture through the Garden Stewardship class, and the garden is used as a classroom for freshmen Biology, AP Environmental Science projects, and Advanced Biology projects. Art, English, World Languages, and other classes also take advantage of the garden as an outdoor classroom. The garden now has its own blog: http://bacteriasmurf.wordpress.com.

MA's composting system, led by student "composting angels," creates a cycle from the kitchen in the MA Café to the MA garden and back. Three hives of bees are helping pollinate the garden and are producing honey. Irrigation in the garden is supplemented by a graywater system. According to Mark Stefanski, "Our goal is to have students graduate from MA with the knowledge, desire, and skills to implement sustainable technologies and behaviors in their homes, future schools, and the places where they work and play."

Retiring Staff

Every year inevitably we witness integral members of our community moving on: freshmen become sophomores, and sophomores, juniors; every year, we say goodbye to our seniors and even to some faculty and staff members. And, although we all know that this annual transition is inevitable, a natural part of our growth, every June we take pause to marvel and mourn at these changes. This year we did it again, but unlike most years, this was an extraordinary year: we had to say goodbye to two extra extraordinary members of our community, Susan Adams and Bill Henley.

Bill Henley by Derek Anderson, Library Director

I walked into the low-ceilinged ballroom and scanned the room. Both the mauve and orange patterned carpet and the beat of the Donna Summer song were way too loud, and the permeating smell of buttered popcorn made me slightly nauseous. I got a drink anyway and casually strolled counterclockwise around the room, quickly realizing that I didn’t really know anyone there. My natural instinct was to flee, but as a young college counselor representing an up-and-coming Marin Academy at the national college counselors’ conference in 1990, I also felt that I had an obligation to try to get to know all of those deans and directors of admission who were gathered in that oppressive ballroom. After a few hours of cold shoulders and superficial smiles, I met Bill Henley, who was then the director of admission at the University of San Francisco. Seemingly unlike everyone else in the ballroom that night, Bill was immediately supportive, obviously genuine and naturally inclusive. He intuitively understood both the awkwardness and the pressure I felt, and he spent the rest of the night introducing me to dozens of people. What began as a horrible evening, became a wonderful one thanks to Bill’s personal generosity and keen observational skills.

Bill’s ability to anticipate both the personal and educational needs of others made him an outstanding director of admission, where he changed the lives of literally tens of thousands of students at three different universities. In crossing over to the high school side in 2003, Bill proved even more adept at connecting with students and meeting their individual needs. Able to soothe those awash in a turbulent sea of emotions, able to empower good decision making, and able to separate hype from reality, Bill lessened the pressure of the demanding college admission process for hundreds of appreciative MA students.

I will miss Bill’s hearty laugh, his close attention to detail, and his intense commitment to the importance of multiculturalism in a democracy. He is someone who can look back over his 35 years in education knowing that he always did his very best to provide young people with the opportunities they deserve. By teaching us all that life is about inclusivity rather than exclusivity, he easily helped make the world a better place, both with his actions and his demeanor, and for that, 1, and so many others, will always be grateful.

Susan Adams by Trieu Saburdo, MA English Faculty

For all her many talents and gifts, Susan Adams has made deep, deep impressions on all of us, and I’d like to think with all agree that she is indeed an extra extraordinary member of our MA community. Over her 17 years at MA, she has extended some of the most far-reaching arms, and so it’s hard to capture Susan in only 400 words or so, however, I will say that there is one word that might aptly and succinctly describe Susan: superhero. Many would agree, Susan is, in some ways, just like a superhero.

1. Susan can turn into anything MA needs her to be. We have seen Susan in many exquisite forms: as veteran French teacher, a beloved dean to both the senior and freshman classes, and invaluable learning specialist to our entire student body.

2. Susan has the ability to seemingly teleport herself. We’ll see her at the rock concert, the spring play production, and the lacrosse play-off game—all in the same day.

3. Susan has an infallible institutional memory and an uncanny skill to recall details. Year after year, we’ll witness Susan wield her mysterious power of knowing everything about each and every one of our kids, including all of our kids’ names, 400 of them.

4. Susan has the ability to remain impartial in the most volatile moments. She remains a steady presence for all of us. We’ll seek Susan out, not just for her utter confidence and trust, but also for her unique perspicacity and wise, selfless advice.

So how do we say goodbye to Susan? In her poem ‘Black Water Woods,’ Mary Oliver writes about the cyclical transitions of loss and life. She closes her poem by saying, ‘To live in this world you must be able to do three things: to love what is mortal; to hold it against your bones knowing your own life depends on it; to love what is mortal; to hold it against your bones, knowing the wind’s direction; and when the time comes to let it go, to let it go.’ There is so much we love about Susan: her unmatched wisdom, her unconditional ability to listen, her unrelenting spunk and positivity, her humility and her compassion. And, there is so much we hold dear about her: her profound connection to our kids, her commitment to what is right, her deep institutional devotion, her sincerity, and her friendship. We will truly miss Susan’s superhuman presence on campus. But, rather than mourn Susan’s departure, we will love and hold Susan close because we know—just as Mary Oliver says—‘when the time comes to let go, to let [her] go.”
Marin Academy earned the Elmer Brown Memorial Award of Excellence for athletic and scholastic success for the 2009–2010 school year, rising from eighth the year before to first. The Elmer Brown Award is given by the North Coast Section (NCS) of the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) to the school whose athletes show the greatest overall success in both athletics and academics. Schools earn points in athletic competitions and for team scholastic achievement. On September 17, 2010, Gil Lemmon, NCS Commissioner, presented Marin Academy with a banner that is now hanging in the MA Athletic Center. Jared Huffman, who represents Marin County in the California State Assembly, attended the ceremony and presented MA with a Certificate of Recognition from the State Assembly.

Josh Frechette, MA’s Athletic Director, was also in the headlines as he was named the 2010 NorCal Lacrosse Secondary School Coach of the Year by U.S. Lacrosse. Greg Angilly, the Urban School’s Director of Athletics, nominated Josh for the award, and Josh was then voted Coach of the Year by his Northern California coaching peers. MA’s Boys’ Lacrosse team, coached by Josh, was the league’s most improved team of the year, with an undefeated regular season. Under Josh’s leadership, the Wildcats have progressed from upstart team to league contenders.

Boys’ Water Polo made huge strides in 2009, winning the league championship and competing in the NCS tournament for the first time within memory. Girls’ Water Polo also had a strong team, ending the season as runner-up in the league. Josh Frechette noted the steady progress of the girls’ water polo players in the class of 2010, and how much they had benefitted from the coaching of Jaime and Mary Collie, who started with them in 2007.

The Boys’ and Girls’ Cross Country teams both competed in the NCS Meet of Champions. The girls finished in third place, led by Lucy McCullough ‘11, who won her third straight NCS Championship. The girls’ team went on to compete at the CIF State Meet, where Lucy won the Division V (D-V) state championship, becoming the first girl from Marin County to win the title in the 20 years since the state cross country meet was established. The boys finished eighth out of 22 teams, just missing a trip to the CIF state meet by 15 points.

Boys’ Soccer was undefeated in the league, winning the Bay Counties League (BCL) West Championship for the second consecutive year, and Girls’ Soccer won the BCL West championship with a 1-0 victory over Lick-Wilmerding.

Girls’ Volleyball had an outstanding year, making NCS finals, and with team member Savanah Leaf ‘11, Most Valuable Player in BCL West, making the D-V all-state volleyball team.

Boys’ Tennis claimed the league championship with their second consecutive undefeated season, and the Girls’ Tennis team played in the NCS semi-finals, losing a close match to first-place Marin Catholic. League champions Boys’ Golf qualified for the NCS tournament for the first time as a team.

Boys’ and Girls’ Swimming teams gave stellar performances at the BCL West high school finals. The girls won the BCL West championship and came in second in the combined league meet, and the boys took champion titles in the BCL West and combined league meets with six first-place finishes.

All in all it was a great year for MA coaches, teams, and scholar-athletes.
The band geek is alive and well. We’re at the Berklee College of Music High School Jazz Festival and the Boston rain is torrential, relentless, Biblical. The buses pull up to the front door of the Hynes Convention Center in Back Bay and out pour the horn and guitar cases, and the “well-dressed” kids in purple cummerbunds and sparkling bow ties, most schools in matched sets just like the ones in the catalogs I throw away.

We’re different, in coats and ties with jeans, no matches to be found. We’re one of 217 bands from nearly as many schools, and this year we have traveled the farthest to be here. We do so at the personal invitation of Berklee president Roger Brown, who knows about Marin Academy due to the outstanding students we continually send to the Berklee undergraduate program and the five-week summer program for high schoolers. We’re here thanks to the generous support of our administration and their respect for Berklee’s reputation as the world’s finest school for jazz and popular music. I am especially proud to be with this very special Marin Academy Jazz Quintet—Sturdy Adams, Bryn Bliska, Lila Frisher, Matt Kerslake, and Lawrence McDonald—and to show them off at my alma mater. The composition of the quintet is unusual—two keyboards (Bryn and Sturdy), guitar and bass guitar (Matt), saxophone (Lila), and percussion (Lawrence).

I started the 2009–2010 school year, my twentieth at MA, with a pledge to publicize the music program we have built. Part of that outreach was to welcome a number of Berklee officials in fall visits to MA, including Vice President David Mash, a legendary figure in the world of technology in music education. David was so impressed by what he saw and heard that I found myself invited to a “Berklee in San Francisco” reception that included board members, donors, and music lovers. It is in front of this illustrious crowd that Berklee’s president acknowledges the accomplishments and forward-thinking of our little program, though Roger and I have yet to meet. A nice moment, to be sure.

From the beginning, MA was a special place to me, a place full of opportunity. I was hired in April of 1990 to teach in Open Door, a summer school program not unlike Crossroads. I had just finished the Professional Music major at Berklee, relocated to Northern California, and gotten married. I taught music, computers, and tennis that first summer. I was terrible. The classroom was much harder than the one-on-one teaching I had been doing, but in a triple irony, the regular music teacher quit, my incompetence was ignored, and I was hired for the “regular” school year. The next summer, I was put in charge of Open Door. There must have been a shortage of qualified people.

My first class at MA was called Jazz/Rock. It met in what is now “the annex.” There were 23 students in the class; I was supposed to audition them and keep the best. But of course I kept ’em all, in what would become a self-destructive pattern. Rock Band was an Activity one day a week. This, along with ten terrified freshmen girls in black skirts and white blouses (aka The Chorus), led by the more traditional Mrs. Johnston, and a small beginning guitar class taught by outings director Greg Smith, was the entire Music Program. Their first concert was about three and a half hours long. In their last rehearsal, I yelled at my class of 25 like there...
was no tomorrow (I have since given up such extremes), but they knew, without a doubt, that I loved them.

By the second year, I was teaching four music classes, and soon ‘led’ (as opposed to actually ‘taught’) the Chamber Music class in an attempt to build it. Julie Feldman mercifully took it over from me after a few years. Julie has instructed and encouraged scores of classical musicians in her years at MA.

We experimented with our first Foundations of Music class and the entire program continued to grow and become more well-rounded—more jazz, the addition of world music, new structures for offering advanced rock, soul, and acoustic music ensembles, more great kids, and eventually the addition of Dartanyan Brown and the American Roots class. (Dartanyan is a long-time musical hero of mine, now known to the students as ‘a beast on the bass.’) The constant? Input from the students, and a dedication to using their drive in a positive and directed way.

Celebrity endorsements have come in waves—Phil Lesh of the Grateful Dead came to a rock concert and said we have a ‘great scene’ here. Huey Lewis loved the show. Guitarist Roy Rogers and Doobie Brother Tom Johnston are both partial to our emphasis on the Blues. Dana Carvey was amazed at the levels of our freshman and sophomore groups. Our main jazz coach, Mel Martin, played with Dizzy Gillespie for two years, and marvels at the talent of our quartet. I lead a minicourse with MA alum Jim Rettel ‘85, who cues up his latest work with Santana as an example to the students, while praising their songwriting and musical skills.

It’s fun to tell the folks back home about all this, but the support we get from the administration, parents, students, and faculty means even more. All the music alums come back and say to the current students, ‘Enjoy it. You will never have it this good again.’

What is special about music education at MA? What works? Here are a few things I have learned over the years.

MINICORSE: To begin with, a little context. We have, first and foremost, a music performance program. Virtually all our work is hands-on and experiential. Our parents are a big deal in the school community, and they are a driving force in everything we do. I differentiate between work I require for the learning process and pieces that become part of, as a student put it, “how we present ourselves to the community.”

TEACH LIKE YOU WISH YOU HAD BEEN TAUGHT: My high school music experience? We thrived outside of the music room, finding no adult the least bit tuned into our world. We had private lessons, or at least help with our instruments, but no one of experience to help us find cohesiveness, no coach or umpire. What would have been helpful? Honest, informed feedback, words of encouragement, a place to play, someone to tell us to check out Muddy Waters and Big Mama Thornton—and of course the yet-to-be-invented electronic tuner.

RHYTHM RHYTHM RHYTHM: It’s the common link, the heartbeat, the most fun, playful, and tribal aspect of music. We do ensemble drumming, rhythm section work, vocal loops and chanting, vocalized drum rhythms, traditional patterns, made-up patterns, loops of all kinds, jamming on a groove, etc. I like to find alternatives because some kids will always be turned off by the volume and repetition of a drum circle while others will have to be forced to go to their next class when it’s time.

“MUSIC IS EASY, IT’S THE PEOPLE THAT ARE HARD”. These are often-repeated words of an advanced student seven or eight years ago. The kind of music we love here is played in a groove. Most of our students will go on to careers outside of music, but they will all continue to work with people. They practice concepts like give and take, compromise, showing up, inclusion, and listening (listening?) every time they crank up an amp in their band. And we are in the Leadership Development business, where ‘love works so much better than hate,’ as another student innocently said.

USE YOUR HIERARCHY IN AN EFFECTIVE WAY: Our older kids are a constant source of inspiration to the younger, and they keep setting the standards higher and higher.

GET OUTSIDE THE AMERICAN MAINSTREAM, TEACH THEM ABOUT THE GREATS . . . And while all these things above are important, there is one driving force that is by far the most important lesson I have learned.

THE ONE THING: Magic happens when the students take full ownership (and I’m in this for the magic). Someone else came to the same conclusion independently: Daniel Pink. He calls it ‘Motivation 3.0.’ A student in one of our advanced ensembles just wrote, “The best thing about this music program is that we’re forced to go away and work it out for ourselves.” Our structure is simple: The adults work the most with the least-experienced.

This brings me back to the Jazz Quintet and the way they represent MA on this rainy weekend in Boston. Too many other bands these days—especially those with bandleaders—have lost their stripes. Their directors dress them, and their music reflects that. Our kids are fresh. They own their set. They are thrilled to be here, full of gratitude. They play far beyond their young years. Afterward, festival director Larry Bethune writes that “we all feel your band was one of the real highlights of the day,” inviting us to return next year as a “featured performer.”

It’s a long way to Boston, and we may or may not make it next year. But if you have come to a concert at MA you know what I know—there will be no cummerbunds or sparking bow ties. They will dress themselves. They will own the music. MA
College Choices for the Class of 2010

Boston University (2)
Brown University (2)
California College of the Arts
California Polytechnic, San Luis Obispo
Carleton College
Clark University
Colgate University
Colorado College (2)
Connecticut College
Cornell University
Dartmouth College (2)
Emerson College
Emory University
Griinnell College (2)
Hamilton College (2)
Johns Hopkins University
Kenyon College (2)
Lehigh & Clark College (3)
Loyola Marymount University
Macalester College
McGill University
Middlebury College
New York University (4)
Northwestern University
Oberlin College (2)
Oberlin Conservatory of Music
Oregon State University
Pitzer College
Reed College
Saint Mary’s College, CA
Santa Clara University
Sarah Lawrence College
Skidmore College (4)
Sonoma State University
Stanford University (3)
Tufts University (3)
UC Berkeley (5)
UC Davis (2)
UC Irvine
UC Los Angeles (5)
UC Riverside (2)
UC San Diego (3)
UC Santa Barbara
UC Santa Cruz (2)
University of Chicago
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
University of Oregon
University of Pennsylvania
University of Southern California (5)
University of Washington (2)
University of Wisconsin, Madison
Wesleyan University (4)
Whitman College

Cum Laude Society

Twenty seniors were inducted into the Cum Laude Society on May 25, 2010. A national and international honor society, Cum Laude recognizes scholastic achievement and excellence at the high school level.

Robyn Allen ’03 addressed the new inductees and their guests. Robyn’s photo and a biographical note appear in the class notes section of this magazine.

Headmaster’s Cup

The 2010 Headmaster’s Cup was awarded to Bryn Bliska. Best known in the MA community for her music, Bryn is a passionate and highly respected keyboardist, arranger, and music director. She brought the same leadership and dedication to Eco Council and the cross country team. A student representative on MA’s Academic Affairs committee and a 2010 National Merit Finalist, Bryn is also an academic standout whose mind and love of learning were universally praised by the faculty. Bryn spent the summer as a camp counselor in Washington state, and is currently a first year student at Brown University.

Morehead-Cain Scholarship

Cora Went ’10 has been selected as one of just 64 Morehead-Cain Scholars, chosen from more than 1,700 applicants. The Morehead-Cain program is considered the most prestigious merit scholarship program in the United States. In addition to four years at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, the Morehead-Cain Scholarship funds summer enrichment programs and a “gap year” before the first year of studies at UNC. Morehead-Cain also offers scholars a world-wide network of alumni and peers.

This past summer, Cora took a 30-day backpacking trip in Alaska with the National Outdoor Leadership School. She will spend her gap year in Nepal, Kenya, and Argentina. Cora writes that she intends “to take advantage of the opportunities that I am given to the fullest extent, and to use them to have an impact upon my school and upon the world.”

Cora is the second MA student to receive the Morehead-Cain Scholarship. Spencer Schratt ’07 is currently a junior at UNC. Cora plans to major in Environmental Science.
Alumni News & Events

Upcoming Events

Wednesday, November 24, 2010

HOLIDAY ASSEMBLY
11:00 am in the new gym
All Alumni are invited for the traditional Holiday Assembly

Young Alumni Reunion
2:00 pm in the old cafe
Classes 2007 through 2010
Lunch with friends following the Holiday Assembly

Friday, November 26, 2010

Alumnae vs. Girls Varsity Basketball Game at 5:30 pm
Alumni vs. Boys Varsity Basketball Game at 6:30 pm

Thursday, December 16, 2010 at 7:00 pm
Alumni Holiday Party
Location TBA
An evening with MA friends for our annual holiday celebration
Friday March 18, 2011 at 6:00 pm
Market Night
Spring Fundraiser
A chance to get together with fellow alumni during a festive evening of food, wine, performances, a lively silent auction, and dancing.
Thursday, March 3, 2011 at 7:00 pm
Los Angeles Regional Reunion
Location TBA
Mingle with alumni from all class years.

Save the Date!

Reunion 2011
Friday October 14 & Saturday, October 15, 2011
Attention graduating classes ending in 6 and 11: Your class reunion is coming up in October 2011 and we are looking for volunteers to help plan these events. If you are interested in helping make your reunion great, please contact the Alumni Office.

Stay in touch!
Please share your updated email address by sending an email to alumni@ma.org. For updates about events and other activities, please visit www.ma.org/alumni or contact Elissa Van Deursen, Director of Alumni Relations at 415.482.3271 or evandeursen@ma.org.
Kurt Gronowski
by Mark Battaia ’79

This past May, Marin Academy lost one of its most vibrant supporters, former Trustee Kurt Gronowski. Kurt’s introduction to MA began in the fall of 1975 when his son Stephen entered as a freshman. Shortly afterward, Kurt became a member of the Board of Trustees, a position he held on and off for more than 25 years. In many ways, Kurt was one of the major architects who steered the Board to focus on the future. “Kurt liked to be the one who asked the uncomfortable question that needed to be asked,” recalled John Girms, former MA Board President. The freedom and ability to ask such a question would have been unimaginable early on in Kurt’s life. Born in Germany in the early 1920s, Kurt escaped Nazi Germany in the late 1930s, going first to Shanghai before immigrating to the United States and settling in San Francisco. As John Girms commented, “Whatever came before the MA Board, no matter how important or urgent it might have seemed, somehow found new—and more realistic—dimensions when one looked across the table and reflected on Kurt’s life.”

Bodie Brindzinski recalled her first meeting with the Board, when she was a candidate for the position of Head of School. Kurt, a fellow Gemini, asked her “If you get the job would you take it . . . and what sign are you?”

I was a member of the Board then, and when it came time for Kurt to express his opinion, his words sealed the deal: “Catch her before someone else does.”

“Kurt was always a champion of others,” Bodie said, “always looking around, reading the room, and making sure that every voice and idea was heard, even the ones he disagreed with.”

Above the school and Kurt’s other philanthropic and professional endeavors came his family. Kurt worshipped the ground that his wife, Barbara, walked on. Together they raised their sons David and Stephen in a close, warm family environment that grew stronger as the boys grew up and married, and started their own families. Kurt was extraordinary close to all his family members, especially his late brother, Hans, who was his business partner for more than 50 years. Kurt is survived by his wife, his sons, daughters-in-law, and four grandchildren.

Kurt’s Mission Statement would sum up Kurt at his best: “to think, question and create in an environment of encouragement and compassion.”

2010–2011 Board of Trustees

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Santh Balmer, Finance

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Mitch Cohen
Mary Collins
Jefferson Coombs ’85
Kathy Dell
M. Kathleen Klein
Ann Mathison
Bradion More ’91
Rosamerlyn Morgan
Emilie Morgan Ogden
Michael Parish
Nancy Saemann
Paul Simpson ’97
Nicole Stanton
Rebecca Nelson Sylva ’81
Eric Temple
Eric Warner
Barbara Westman
Adam Willner

New Board Members

Marin Academy alumnus Mario Wilson Bennett ’79, parent of Rosalia ’12, is serving a one-year term on the Board in her capacity as MAFA President. A resident of San Anselmo, she is an active community volunteer. Maria earned her undergraduate degree in Physiology from UC Berkeley, her MA in Tropical Public Health from the Harvard School of Public Health, and her PhD in Cell Biology from Harvard University.

LY ME teacher and water polo coach Mary Collie lives in Marin with her husband, Jamie, who is also a teacher and water polo coach at MA. They have been at the School for four years. Mary is the faculty advisor for MA’s student newspaper, the steele, and is actively involved in the Study Coach program. She earned her BFA in journalism from Southern Connecticut State University and her MA from Middlebury College’s Breadloaf School of English. When not at school, Mary can be found running, biking, or baking.

Kathy Dell, a resident of Tiburon, and mother of Beth ’12 and Bari ’14, has focused on MA’s development efforts, most recently in the role of Sophomore Class Champion for MA’s Annual Fund. Kathy is Managing Director of KO Ventures, LLC, an investment fund focusing on early-stage medical device companies that she founded after holding several executive positions at GE Medical Systems. She earned her BBA in mathematics from the University of Vermont and MBA from Marquette University.

Kris Klein, parent of Kelly O’Connor ’13, lives in San Rafael and has served on MA’s Audit Committee for the past four years. Kris is a Managing Director of Credit Suisse in the Investment Banking Division. She earned her BBA in Psychology from Duke University and her MBA from Harvard Business School.

Eric Temple began his seventh year as Head of the Carney School this year. He is on the Board of Trustees of Archbishop Riordan High School in San Francisco and the California Association of Independent Schools. He was the Assistant Head at Crystal Springs Uplands School in Hillsborough for 13 years, where he also taught English. Eric holds a Master of Education degree from Columbia University, an MA from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and a BA in English from Boston College.

Eric Warner, parent of Annie ‘13, has served on the Board of others, school, is active in a coach of various sports, and is a former school teacher. Eric is a resident of San Anselmo and works at Dodge & Cox Investment Managers in San Francisco. He earned his undergraduate degree from the University of Delaware and his MBA from the J.L. Kellogg Graduate School of Management at Northwestern University.

Adam Willner, parent of Annie Willner ’13, lives in Mill Valley and is an active community volunteer. He is the founder of ZaZou Noodle Bar, a chain of Pan-Asian noodle restaurants in the Bay Area and Pacific Northwest. Adam earned his BA in Government with a concentration in International Relations from Wesleyan University.

Pam Keen Retires from Board Chair Position

As an exceptionally dedicated trustee for six years, serving four years as Board Chair, Pam Keen has given so much to Marin Academy. Her passion for MA and inevaluable drive to support its continued success are evident by her many contributions to the School. During her years on the Board and under her leadership, MA completed a successful head search and transition, finalized a comprehensive governance audit, adopted its current strategic plan, and launched the school’s first ever school-wide campus master planning process—and that is just the short list. Pam’s excellent work will benefit MA for many years to come, and the school community will forever be grateful to her.

We also wish to thank retiring board members Gray Boyce, Stuart Dunn, Phil Dianghai, and Vicky Salam. They have contributed much to MA’s success.

Rebecca Nelson Sylva ’81

Save the date! Alumni Reunion Weekend 2011
Friday, October 14 and Saturday, October 15, 2011