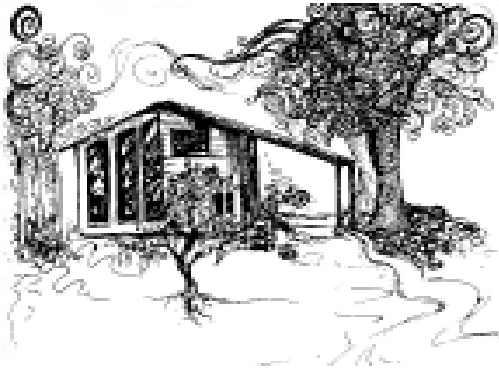


# Wellsprings Friends School

Spring, 2006



## What I've Learned

By Amelia Gilbertson ('06)

I've always been labeled as a "gifted" student. I'm a fast and eager learner and generally do well even in traditional classrooms. However, as I reached high school I found myself disillusioned and unmotivated. The large classes and big crowds made it easy for me to blend in, disappear, and nobody noticed. My grades dropped as I fell further and further behind. I knew this wasn't right for me. After a year at Churchill High School, I started searching for a solution. This is how I came to Wellsprings Friends School, less than a block away from my former high school.

What immediately attracted me to Wellsprings was the genuine honesty and care from the staff. The community-oriented vision of the school and the highly individualized structure made me feel right at home. The small size and the non-violent Quaker philosophy allows each student to thrive and learn at their own pace.

I'm proud to be a part of the Wellsprings community. I've participated in a number of events hosted by the school, all of which reflect my own values: the annual Peace Festival, the Free Sale, benefit dinners, burrito handouts to the homeless, and the annual concert and memorial ManiFest. Through these projects, I can reach out to the greater community and invite them to share with me the Wellsprings experience.

As I am approaching the end of my senior year, I am reflecting on what an incredible place I am soon to leave behind. I hope to carry with me what I have learned into the "real world." I've learned to approach people with an open mind, and that you may need to look deeper to understand someone's actions. Deep down, everyone has a good heart. Critical thinking can be used for both social and academic purposes. It never hurts to help out a little – it could be rewarding! Above all, I've learned that even as adults, we can have laughter in our hearts and still work together to solve our differences, and maybe create just a little more goodness in the world.



*Note: This essay was written as part of Amelia's scholarship application process.*

*The drawings were done by Eartha Forest-Bishop ('06)*





## Focusing on Peace

by Dennis Hoerner

The sixth annual Peace Festival, held on March 18<sup>th</sup>, had the largest attendance ever! Emceeding for the second year in a row was Iana Matthews-Harris, who had to rush over here from speaking to a huge protest rally downtown on the third anniversary of the invasion of Iraq. The Festival opened with teacher Bob Schlichting asking a Question of the Day, one of his very popular classroom activities: all members of the audience were invited to respond to “Who would you appoint to a wisepersons’ World Peace Council?” Next, a panel of three Wellsprings teens and three adults discussed “Strategies of Family Harmony.” Moderat-

ing the panel was Jon Garlinghouse, a well-known counselor and long-time friend of the school. Later on, community activist David Hazen gave a presentation on the proposal for a federal government Department of Peace.

During the day there were songs by students and staff, an open mic, and an abundance of delicious, mostly organic, foods. Several groups, including the Mennonite Church and CALC’s Counter-Military Recruitment, staffed literature tables. *Many* students helped in the preparations beforehand as well as in set-up and clean-up that day, participating in the events and giving their full attention to the day’s proceedings.

The highlight of the day came at the end, in a half-hour presentation about their experiences by our five teen Superheroes. Led by teacher Helena Marcus, the students offered their help during winter break to communities in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi, and New Orleans. Photos and excerpts from their journals are included elsewhere in this newsletter.

Community members in the audience ranged from pre-schoolers to the elderly. All were engaged with the content and the spirit of this positive day.



## Community Free Sale

by Yancey DeYoung

Wellsprings will host our second annual Free Sale on Saturday, May 20. Hundreds of items have been donated from furniture to kitchen spoons and everything in between. Students, staff, Board members and many community members who knew about the event have contributed.

The Free Sale idea originated from the experiences of School Head, Dennis Hoerner. During his college days he was involved with a group who established a Free Store, a storefront that offered items free of charge to anyone who stopped in. Community members donated and community members “shopped”, creating an environment of sharing and giving. In 2005, Wellsprings adopted the idea and offered a one-time a year “sale” to continue the values of giving, sharing and community spirit.

The first Free Sale was a great success and we eagerly anticipate this year’s event--and beyond!

## The Art of Tea

by James Fox

The Art of Tea by James Fox On Saturday, May 6, at the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art, Wellsprings teacher Miya Shimada and three of her students—Wayne Gandy, Cameron Brown, and Sarah Beechinor—celebrated spring by leading a group of Museum visitors in Chado, the Way of Tea. It was a beautiful and moving afternoon. Miya and her students set up a small tea room in the Museum, complete with tatami mats, a calligraphic scroll, and a flower arrangement. Miya, dressed in a traditional Japanese kimono, showed the audience how to prepare and serve tea. Miya’s movements were graceful and subtle; and Sarah, Wayne, and Cameron were perfect guests! They spoke to Miya in Japanese and drank their tea in the true spirit of Chado. After the tea had been served, Miya, Sarah, Wayne, and Cameron answered questions about the Way of Tea. Each one came forward and spoke eloquently about how tea was a training of their minds and bodies. Sarah told the audience how the tea class had taught her patience. Cameron revealed that tea had shown him how to manifest his true self. Wayne skillfully explained several aspects of the tradition of tea. And Miya, quoting one of her tea masters, said, “Chanoyu, or tea, should be made with the heart, not with the hand. Make it without making it, in the stillness of your mind.”



The outside of a traditional tea house located at the Japanese Gardens in Portland, Oregon



### Paul: Renaissance Man

by Amelia Kimball ('07)

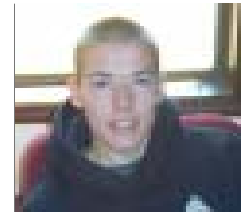
Paul Schroder is nearing the completion of his fifth year teaching at Wellsprings. Paul’s passion for teaching the students about current events shows through in classes such as Government. “I like teaching anything that’s tied to right now, like science in the news and political issues.” A teacher version of the Jack-of-All-Trades, Paul also has taught guitar, world history, ancient civilizations, P.E., science, and Transitions this year.

Paul got his masters degree in Social Studies after practicing law in Virginia for five years. After nights of coming home and voicing dissatisfaction over his career, his wife, Gail, encouraged him to do something he liked. He found that with teaching, and enjoys the perks of having the summers off to indulge his desires to travel. On his law background, Paul compares it to the martial arts classes he took in high school: they gave him skills, but he never had to apply them to what they were made for.

Outside of school, Paul plays guitar in his band, Fortune Cookie, and maintains his five acre property. This year, construction began on expanding his house, and that has kept him very busy.

Paul enjoys Wellsprings because of the chance he gets to be himself and forge relationships with students. “I like teaching here because it’s not just like chapter one, chapter two, chapter three...”

# Congratulations to Class of 2006



(Top left) Andrew Kent, Iana Matthews-Harris, Timothy Hope, Ashley Bass, Wayne Gandy, Tyson Butler, Hannah Finegold, Christopher Miller, Jacob Hartman, Chad Friend, Lena Harding, Regina Sanjines, Amelia Gilbertson, Jimmy Hartman, Trevor Cooley, John Putzier, Colin Brown, Audra Cole, Josh Kimber, Brandon Mayer, Diego Robertson, Eartha Forest-Bishop, Aubree Ridge, Andrew Gerdes (Top right)

## Looking Back and Moving On

by *Carsie Blanton*

I became interested in grant writing in November of 2004, during a visit with my family in Virginia. My mother works as a grant writer, and my interest was sparked by talking with her. I had been working as a dog groomer for a little over a year, and although I loved it, I wanted to do something “bigger”. I loved writing, and had a passion for social activism and alternative education. I wanted to support nonprofit work, and I had begun to notice that the kind of support most nonprofits needed was money!

On a recommendation from my mother, I attended a grantwriting/fundraising workshop in Springfield for nonprofit workers called “Raising More Money.” After the workshop, Wellsprings Trustee Hanna Still came straight up to me and asked me to visit Wellsprings. After seeing the school, I offered to start writing grants for the school as a volunteer.

My appreciation for Wellsprings grew from my own experience with education. I did not attend school as a young person, and to this day I have barely a year of formal schooling under my belt. The atmosphere of choice and individuality at Wellsprings earned my respect, as did the attitudes of individual students and teachers. To me, Wellsprings felt like a real place of learning, where everyone was invited to learn about what they wanted, how they wanted, whether it be science or skateboarding.

In June of 2005, I became an “official” Wellsprings staff member as a part-time grantwriter. Throughout my work with the school, I have had many opportunities to better understand Wellsprings’ work and vision. Several times I have been moved to tears by the insight, care, and responsibility demonstrated by Wellsprings students and staff. I am so grateful for the knowledge that Wellsprings exists, and offers a real community for students who, not surprisingly, do not feel at home in the impersonal environment provided by most traditional schools.

I have been lucky to bring some success to the school with my grant writing. In November and December of 2005, Wellsprings was awarded two grants for the “Green Bus Project”. This success has helped the school to purchase a 14-passenger activity bus, which is to be used for school trips. A grant of \$10,000 was generously awarded by the Cow Creek Umpqua Indian Foundation for the purchase of a bus, and another of \$6,000 was awarded by the Braemar Charitable Trust for fuel, insurance, and other related expenses. Local business SeQuential Biofuels has offered discounted fuel for one year, so that the bus can be run on renewable biodiesel fuel. We also received \$1,000 from the Juan Young Trust, and \$1,600 from the McKenzie River Gathering and Bankoff Blanchet Family Foundation for other projects.

I will be leaving Eugene, and Wellsprings, to relocate in Philadelphia this July. My work with the school has been a blessing in many ways. Besides being able to help Wellsprings, I have been given an opportunity to continue my own education, and have learned a lot about nonprofit work, Quakerism, biodiesel fuel, alternative schooling, and grant writing! I thank the students, staff and board members for this opportunity, and wish Wellsprings Friends School continued success.

### **Money Matters**

by *Hanna Still, treasurer*

This year’s budget includes a goal of \$39,000 to be raised by the end of our fiscal year, June 30<sup>th</sup>. At the Peace Festival, an anonymous donor offered to match \$5,000 in contributions, and that amount has already been raised! More good news is that long-time supporter Connie Brown has just offered a \$2,000 matching grant! Even meeting that however will leave us with several thousand dollars more to go—and only about a month left. Any amount you or any friends of yours who cherish Wellsprings could send would be deeply appreciated. We set ourselves a high goal of \$39,000 to raise. We are close. Every gift gives bank account and heart a boost.

## Journal Entry – December 30, 2005

*The Shining Knight a.k.a. Stephen 'Stretch' Barkley*

My volunteer experience here has been one of the most important experiences in my life that I shall take with me to my grave. They shall be sources of happiness, sorrow, sadness and joy and love. All in all I will cherish these moments forever and never forget them. I only wish that I could stay just a bit longer to help people in need as a solemn superhero duty. I want everyone to be as super as they can be because everyone is a superhero. Just because you don't have a cape or a flashy costume doesn't mean you can't be super. Remember that, people, always be true to yourself and let your emotions flourish and enjoy. Those emotions that make you uncomfortable they can help you.



## Journal Entry – December 30, 2005

*Intergalactic Love Lady a.k.a. Rachel Wolfe-Goldsmith*

This journey has been so eye opening, and astoundingly but beautifully heart breaking. I have spent the last 2 and a half weeks in a ghosttown of destruction and despair, but seen two very different sides to it. There are people working through this time in grief and down-heartedness. And there are people constantly finding the silver lining. They know things are [screwed] up now, but have faith that things will get better. Neither of these views are right or wrong...just different. The way i see it (as an outsider) is that this is an amazing time to reach out to one another and re-build and grow. A chance for the racial divide to fade a little bit, as well as the class divide. This is a time for social change, to make clear the government's neglect for the poorer black neighborhoods. This is our chance to help one another in the most humane way possible, without the b.s. of materialism and money. It has beautiful potential.

In this journey, i have seen people come together in the form of a protest, to stand behind a man they had never met and defend his possessions after he was illegally evicted from his home and robbed.

I've seen a drunk man lying face down in the road, bleeding from his nose, mouth, and head. I sat with that man in the road and held his hand, while the EMT's...the people helping him...barely treated him as an equal human being.

I have seen one of the largest [housing] projects in the U.S. completely deserted.

I've seen a dead cow's carcass hanging from a tree...three months old, left as a reminder of the hurricane. I've seen people gawk and laugh at it...not knowing how to respond to death.

I have seen an armadillo for the first time in my life, and I saw Dr. Dharma chase it.

I saw an entire community come together in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi, to build a playground and pick up rubble in the first attempts at re-building. I saw a congregation of blacks, whites, catholics, agnostics, jews, atheists, youth, elders...all coming together at church for an amazing service, and an attempt to re-build community.

I have seen hearts open, minds open, spirits brighten, souls freed, people come together, searching, sadness, and love. Most importantly, LOVE.

