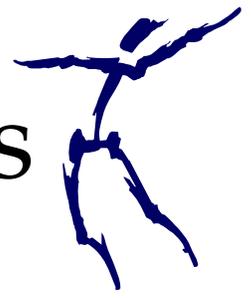




# Wellsprings Friends School



Special Edition

Summer 2008

Celebrating Personal Growth and Academic Achievement

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## GRADUATION AT WELLSPRINGS

### A Day in the Life

by Dennis Hoerner, School Head



“To see what Wellsprings is all about, come to Graduation!” Again and again over the years, we—teacher, Trustee, parent, Head—have said this to people. Not only does Graduation represent the culmination of their high school years for all the graduates, our ceremony itself reflects and expresses what makes Wellsprings, Wellsprings!

Here is what one guest (not related to any of the graduates) wrote this year: “It was the most moving, most joyful graduation event I had ever attended. I found myself crying off and on. I observed true caring and interest in life and learning by all those who spoke and participated.... It was empowering.... Thank you.”

Graduation at

Wellsprings is not an assembly line process. As in everything we do during the year—classes, field trips, community meetings, special events—it is humanized and individualized. Elsewhere you can read through this year’s program, essentially the same every year.

What stands out as you experience the event is the time when one by one, a teacher will talk about an individual student. You can see several snapshots of those moments on these pages.



The other process that makes Graduation so special is that we invite anyone in the audience to speak from their hearts. Parents, siblings, friends, relatives—all get a chance, if they wish, to share their thoughts and feelings.

You might also note in one or two of the photos that there is no uniformity in the style of dress of the graduates. Some are wearing cap and gown, others are dressed in their own special way. Those in gowns look like parts of a rainbow, so many colors are represented! The students choose. After all, it’s *their* day.

# Graduation Eve: Why Alternative Education?



LouAnne graciously agreed to give a public presentation the night before Graduation. About a hundred people turned out, despite only minimal publicity and the hectic graduation season (many local high schools as well as the University of Oregon held their graduations that same weekend). Her talk focused on the many reasons why alternative education, in its great variety of forms, is needed for us to help—as we should—*every* young person find their way in life and get the tools they need for now and the future.



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“Wellsprings was like a second home to him and through the ups and downs he always knew he wanted to stick it out and graduate. He felt so connected to all you teachers and told me so many times.”

-Parent of 2005 Graduate

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Paul comments on Nathan’s chops while introducing him as a 2008 graduate.

## The Program

Processional Elgar: “Pomp and Circumstance”	<i>The Graduates</i>
Welcome	<i>Dennis Hoerner, School Head</i>
Brahms: Waltz in A Flat	<i>Susan Goodyear</i>
Keynote Address	<i>LouAnne Johnson</i>
Presentation of the Graduates	<i>WFS Staff</i>
Meeting for Sharing*	<i>All Present</i>
Awarding of Diplomas	<i>James Fox, Clerk Board of Trustees</i>
Thank You’s	<i>The Graduates</i>
Recessional	<i>The Graduates</i>

\*A meeting for sharing in the manner of Friends (Quakers) begins in silence. Out of the silence, all whose hearts are moved to speak are welcome to stand and share memories, hopes, and loving wishes for the graduates. It is customary to allow for a slight pause between each spoken message.



A graduate’s face filled with the many emotions of the day.

## 2008 Graduation Speaker, LouAnne Johnson



enjoyed her short talk is an understatement. And I'd like to point out that LouAnne faced and spoke to the graduates, sitting on her left, throughout her talk.



In a sidebar, you can see a list of all the speakers at our Graduations. The first was held in 1996, two years after Wellsprings opened its doors. This year, our speaker was not from the local area. LouAnne Johnson lives in New Mexico, and is a nationally-known teacher and author. Her best known book is Dangerous Minds, which was also made into a popular film. To say that people



Besides her thoughtful and humorous comments, encouraging students in their continued growth, LouAnne dramatically assumed for a few moments the persona of Eduardo Corazon, a “delinquent” young man who finds the strength to be himself, to write poetry, to graduate high school. ‘Eddie,’ a character drawn from real students LouAnne has known, appears in her latest book, a novelette entitled *Alternative Ed*. As LouAnne channeled Eddie (see photo) the graduates, and everyone in the audience, were mesmerized.

“Thank you for the dedication you give to our children. My son truly loved going to school there. I don't think he would have graduated without your help.”

-Parent of 2006 Graduate



### Graduation Speakers

2008 LouAnne Johnson

2007 Iana Matthews-Harris

2006 Gayle Sheller

2005 Kent Hunsaker

2004 Miya Shimada and  
James Fox

2003 Bonny Bettman

2002 Alan Siporin

2001 Alan Kapuler

2000 Garth Cheff

1999 Helen Park

1998 Allidees Beckham

1997 Cheney Ryan

1996 Helen Park



## The Only Thing Constant is Change

As everything in life, things come and go. Bob often says, “I am glad we got to share the time we did together.” All those that come into the Well-springs community make it evolve and grow in exciting and new ways. We are sad to say goodbye to James Napoli, who has returned to school himself on the east coast. His contributions will be felt for years to come. We also bid farewell to our modular classroom in the spring from an arson fire.

Looking forward to the new year, we are pleased to have Eva Brill join us as the new science teacher. She is eager to get going after a long spring of interviews and visits to the school. We also welcome Tyler Tjernlund as the fifth full time teacher. He was part of the school last year as Kitchen Coordinator and part time teacher. Lauren Olsen, former supervisor of the Food for Lane County Springfield dinner site will be joining us as the Kitchen Coordinator. Carly Rue is joining us as our new Librarian and we look forward to the contributions we feel she can bring. Dante Zuniga-West will round out our fall schedule with a hip-hop poetry class, Lyricist Lounge.

As for physical replacements, the modular building is waiting patiently to be installed as we go through permits and code updates. We are keeping our fingers crossed that all will be in place early in September. Our sprinkler system is now also complete. Pipes, alarms, lights, and gauges run throughout the building. After a lot of time, and money, we are set to go!

“It was the best graduation I have ever attended!”

-LouAnne Johnson



Personal stories while presenting the graduates is a well-loved tradition, here with Chanci and graduate Ben.



Relaxing after ceremony: graduates Laura and Hunter; future graduate Ryan; staff

Trying to get a sneak peak at what will be said, Tyler and Tyler share the podium.



*Note: All photos reproduced courtesy of Northwest Exposures. Judi Lamb and Joshua Daniels are the talented photographers who took over a hundred great photos for us. Wellsprings has given a photo of each student and the teacher talking about him/her to every graduate. Other photos of Graduation, and LouAnne Johnson’s presentation the night before, are available for ordering by anyone who wishes. Check out this web link: [www.imagequix.com/photog.php?id=P9EKQ9S&ec=wellsprings](http://www.imagequix.com/photog.php?id=P9EKQ9S&ec=wellsprings) The photos are fun to look at, and you are free to browse without ordering anything.*