



Wellsprings Friends School

“THE LITTLE SCHOOL WITH THE BIG HEART”

Autumn, 2013

Newsletter No. 22

3590 W. 18th Ave, Eugene, Oregon 97402

541-686-1223

www.wellspringsfriends.org



Wow, what an outpouring of support we had this past school year! The double good news is, first of all, that the \$50,000 challenge match was fully met, and beyond that, more gifts kept coming! **Thank you** to all who contributed: *regular donors* who significantly increased your gifts; *former donors* who responded to our appeals and once again made a gift; and *new donors* who recognized the vital importance of the work we do with young people. In addition, a few very significant *one-time gifts* were made by people who were passionate about helping Wellsprings at a time when it was really needed. We couldn't have ended the year successfully without *all of you*. We look forward to your continued support this year!

TWO DECADES OF SERVICE

The 2013/2014 school year marks the twentieth year Wellsprings has been providing an alternative educational home for teenagers who do not thrive in large traditional settings. The school was started by, and has been sustained by, compassionate individuals who have contributed time and financial support—including many of you reading this newsletter. We—students, teachers, staff, trustees, alumni, parents of alumni and current students—are deeply grateful to everyone who has supported Wellsprings over the years.

One person who has had his ‘shoulder to the wheel’ at Wellsprings from our very beginning is John Etter. John was one of our founding Trustees and has continuously served on the Board. In addition to the usual tasks a Trustee does, John has spent many laborious hours helping to maintain the building and grounds. And he can be counted on to be at all significant Wellsprings events, such as Peace and Justice Festivals, benefit concerts, and the new event begun last year, the Toast-n-Roast.

As John discusses in the interview that follows, he was drawn to become involved with Wellsprings because of our Quaker roots. Although Wellsprings is independent and non-sectarian, not a religious school, our founder is a Quaker, and like John several other members of the Eugene Friends Meeting have been drawn to us not only because of their compassion for the needs of teenagers, but also because of the ways in which Wellsprings manifests values important to them such as community, equality, integrity, and non-violent problem solving.

We thank John for his two decades of service to Wellsprings—which has helped this school offer two decades of service to young people who seek and need an “alternative” educational experience.



Read John's interview on page 2

Interview with John Etter

John, when did you first get involved with Wellsprings?

The year was 1993, when I was invited to join the Board of Trustees as the school was being envisioned by Helen Park of the Eugene Friends Meeting. Helen recruited half a dozen people for the board to organize the school and make some changes to the Eugene Mennonite Church so that it could function as a school. My background working for the City helped in facilitating the permit process, in selecting a modular building for two more classrooms, and in overseeing improvements required by the permit.

Why did you choose to become involved?

I attended a Quaker high school myself – Scattergood, in Iowa – and I have fond memories of that experience. Not only did the sense of community, the variety of learning opportunities, and the relationships with teachers make Scattergood special; it also embodied the Quaker values I've grown to appreciate more and more as the years have passed. I vowed that if there were ever a Quaker school in my vicinity, I would become a supporter in order to help give others a high school experience similar to mine. Wellsprings was that opportunity.

What has kept you involved for two decades and still counting?

It is deeply satisfying to see students who don't find the large public schools to be a good fit come to Wellsprings and find a comfortable, welcoming community. Here they're valued for what makes them unique. They gain confidence. They appreciate classes tailored to their interests. Most important, they discover the satisfaction of being in a caring community. My experiences working with the Board of Trustees and the school head have also been very rewarding.



What are your favorite one or two memories of Wellsprings?

Most important was having my daughter at Wellsprings during the school's first two years. Without Wellsprings she would not have completed high school. Second in importance was getting a replacement modular classroom building [after the original was destroyed by arson] completed to code standards in time for the start of school in 2008.

What does Wellsprings provide to students/community that others don't/can't?

Education at Wellsprings is a more intimate experience than in a large school. With fewer students in their classes, teachers can devote more attention to each student, which sometimes extends beyond education to social and emotional issues. The students "get" this community spirit and do their part in turn to welcome new students. Diversity is accepted and honored.

What does it mean to you that Wellsprings is celebrating its 20th anniversary?

It means that a great many people have put a great many resources into the school – time, sweat, money. We have created an institution that has gained respect both from the community and from outside educators who become acquainted with the school.

What do you see for Wellsprings in its next 20 years?

I believe Wellsprings will grow and be valued even more within the Lane County educational community. The increase in the number of board members reflects the increased community interest and excitement to make this school a great place for students who need special attention. The community's belief in what we are doing will lead to a new physical space designed for us. That will mean new and effective classrooms as well as a meeting space, science lab, art studio, library, and a larger kitchen, improving and enriching the Wellsprings experience for both students and teachers.

What Is That on Your Head?

by Corona the Hat Maker

The late Hanna Still, long-time Wellsprings Trustee, was a storyteller and loved to hear stories as well as to tell them. She would have loved the following anecdote about Hetherington the hatter and the revolutionary birth of top hats.



In January of 1797 a hatter named Hetherington appeared in the streets of London wearing a top hat in the shape of a stovepipe. Within a short time a large crowd had gathered around him. Hetherington was arrested and accused of disturbing public order: “women fainted, children began to cry, and dogs started to bark,” a police officer stated.

The hatter defended himself in court by saying it is the right of every Englishman to place what he wanted on his head. The London Times agreed and wrote the following day: “Hetherington’s hat points to a significant advance in the transformation of dress. Sooner or later, everyone will accept this headwear. We believe that both the court and the police made a mistake here.” The Times was right: top hats were soon all the rage in London and around the world.

I knew Hanna because I was part of her care giving team during the last few months of her life. Hanna did a good job of hanging on to her fun sense of humor and great wisdom through it all, but she was supposed to wear one of those hospital gowns and she wasn’t going for it. So we made her some “new” gowns, out of her favorite mumus, cut up the back, ties added. Hanna was happy with that. The mumus would never be the same though.

About one year after Hanna’s death I was tending my booth at the Oregon Country Fair and into my booth walked Kim Still (Hanna’s daughter-in-law.) She was carrying a huge bag, which she handed to me with a ceremonial air. I reached inside and pulled out a big handful of Hanna’s cut-up mumus! What a treasure! We instantly emptied the bag out onto the rug, danced around a little bit and had a Hanna Moment. But I needed to do something really special with all that fabric...I know! Top hats! And so it went. I am not surprised, but Hanna has managed to inspire me even from the Great Beyond.



This greenish hat with the big orangey-yellow flower, the one that people are wearing and sharing, is the first top hat that I made from that big bag of fabric. Just like Hetherington’s top hats, Hanna Still stood for freedom of expression and the beauty of being out in front of social movements. When you wear it not only are you wearing her mumu on your head, you are carrying with you the spirit of fun and the love that Hanna had for all the people at Wellsprings. Wear it proudly.

Editor’s note: Hanna passed away in July, 2012. To learn more about her, please see our Autumn, 2012 newsletter, which has a biography and a tribute, and our Spring, 2011 issue’s front page article about Hanna’s life-long work in and commitment to activities for social change and justice.

2nd Annual TOAST 'N' ROAST SAVE THE DATE!



SUSAN BAN



TOM EWING

THURSDAY, MARCH 13, 2014 5:30 to 8:30pm

Lane Community College

Center for Meeting & Learning

***Special Gourmet Dinner prepared by Celebrity Chef Ib Hamide (Café Soriah)**

Hosted by the evening's Event Emcee – Matt Templeman (KEZI 9 News)



How Can I Help?

Wellsprings is a community asset. There are many ways you can support our vital mission. Your gifts of financial and volunteer support do make a difference in the lives of teenagers and in our community! For information about how you can help, please visit www.wellspringsfriends.org and click on the “Support/Donate” button. And here’s a new way:

Make the switch to AmazonSmile for your holiday shopping and support Wellsprings!

AmazonSmile is a simple, no-cost way for you to give to Wellsprings every time you shop. When you shop at smile.amazon.com, you’ll find the same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate 0.5% of the purchase price to your favorite charitable organization—Wellsprings, of course. To get started, just follow these five simple steps:

- 1) Go to smile.amazon.com from the web browser on your computer or mobile device.
- 2) Register or login with your existing Amazon.com account.
- 3) Select Wellsprings Friends School as the charitable organization your purchases will support.
- 4) Find eligible products marked “Eligible for AmazonSmile Donation” on their product detail pages.
- 5) Every eligible purchase you make on AmazonSmile will result in a donation to Wellsprings.

Remember, AmazonSmile isn’t just for the holiday season! Bookmark the page, smile.amazon.com, and return year-round for all your online shopping!

Thank you for your support!