



# Alumni & Friends of the Madeleine

Fall  
• 2014 •

Berkeley's Dominican Elementary School • Since 1937

## The Power of an Arts Education

by Susie Ashworth Bader

Want to boost literacy? Reinforce math? Heighten speaking skills?

The path to that kind of success almost always intersects somewhere in the arts.

The School of the Madeleine has taken that philosophy to heart in its development of a deep and passionate arts program, one that introduces our students to three key tenets of arts education: music, drama and art. After all, the research proves it: arts education improves academic achievement, boosts emotional development and encourages social engagement.

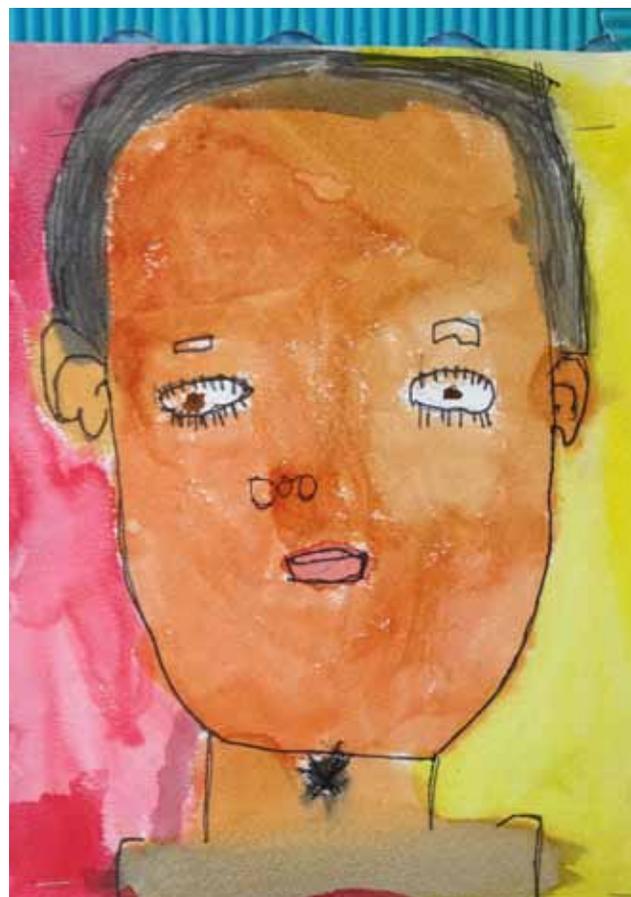
"I'm very passionate on the role of arts education for young people," said drama instructor Elizabeth Carter, pointing to its power to improve concentration, confidence, and teamwork.

The drama program includes classes for different age groups that introduce children to the ideas of improvisation, working cooperatively and expressing themselves. The classes emphasize vocal projection and body movement by encouraging moments of wild goofiness punctuated by periods of stillness in order to teach children about control and power over their selves.

A case in point: in the first few classes of drama this year at the Madeleine, she had the kids pretend to walk through knee-high marshmallow goo

and make letters of the alphabet with their limbs without making a sound. They left class delighted and engaged. "There have been studies that prove

*(continued on p. 5)*



*(above) Art in Action: a second-grader's self-portrait.  
(at left) An exercise in drama; drama instructor Elizabeth Carter; administrator Heather Skinner conducting a choral session.*

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PRINCIPAL'S POST

# Smart Classrooms for the 21st Century

## 2014 CLASSROOM CONSTRUCTION



BEFORE



DURING



FINAL

"They ARE smart classrooms!" said one of our 3rd graders upon seeing the new upgrades in his classroom. "I really like how the ceiling fans and lights go on when you walk into the room."

We did it. With your help and your vision, the Madeleine has begun to transform our 20th Century classrooms into 21st Century learning environments. Over the summer, we completed Phase I, and in August, students returned to energy efficient rooms, sensor-controlled lights, automated blackout and sun shades, and ceiling fans.

The benefits of these 'Smart Classroom' enhancements are already being felt. As the temperature climbs, especially during the fall months, the shades and fans have made a dramatic difference in keeping the air moving and the classrooms cooler.

"We realize that the classroom environment has a direct effect on children's learning ability: their body posture, the color of the light, the temperature of the room," said Jed Daoust, facili-

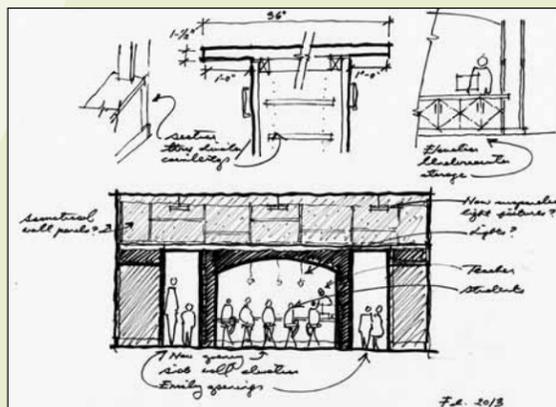


ties chair and project manager. "These are but a few factors that have direct impact on students and their learning."

Our success with moving to Phase II depends on you. To accommodate creative, collaborative learning and growing space needs, Phase II opens up the classroom spaces to provide for furniture that allows for flexible configuration. With your help, our 'Smart Classrooms' will get even smarter next summer. The hammer and nails are set to come out, literally, the day after children head off for vacation.

Our classrooms are getting 'smarter,' as they should. After all, we want them to equal to the quality of students we serve. Thank you for making this vision come to life with your generosity and your donations to the MAD Annual Fund.

Sincerely,  
Ken Willers, Principal



SUMMER 2015: Conceptual study of the 21st Century Classroom by Basak Cakici-Adams

## About the Madeleine's Alumni & Friends Newsletter

**Newsletter Staff:** Debbie Dinneen, Advancement Director; Connie Dillon, Editor; Chris Amado, design. **Contributors:** Susie Ashworth Bader, Lisa Ihnken.

If this newsletter is addressed to a daughter or son who no longer lives at your home, please advise us of the correct address by mail, phone (510-526-4744) or email (ddinneen@themadeleine.com). Thank you!

# Welcome, Fr. Kieran Healy!

by Lisa Ihnken

Seventh graders Anna Dillon, Lucy Ihnken and Aidan Jacobs-Walker recently caught up with Father Kieran to ask him a few questions and find out about our new pastor.

**Anna:** What was your life like when you were our age?

**Fr. Kieran:** I grew up in East Oakland and when to St. Cyril School (which closed in 2004 after 77 years). One year I had an old Sister who liked to slap the boys on Fridays. Despite this, she was the kind of teacher who opened up windows. She made sure we had time in our day to read and create art, which I feel is so important.

**Aidan:** What is your favorite sport and why?

**Fr. Kieran:** Basketball is my favorite—but not the professional kind. Today's NBA basketball is corrupted by money; it's too physical; and there's too much one-on-one play.

**Aidan:** Do you have any hobbies?

**Fr. Kieran:** I like to work with glass and wood, and like to garden. Blowing glass was one of the most exciting things I have ever done! I also love animals, especially dogs. Dogs provide so much intimacy and friendship. I used to have a dog here when I

Father Kieran, St. Mary Magdalen's new pastor, chatted with Madeleine 7th graders Lucy Ihnken, Aidan Jacobs-Walker and Anna Dillon.



was pastor years ago, and I also owned one in Seattle. I would love to have a dog again, but it is an enormous amount of work and they really need to be outdoors. Unfortunately it's not possible now.

**Lucy:** What type of new program or group would you like to see started

up at either school or the church?

**Fr. Kieran:** Something that could help address the interests of the students during mass would be very beneficial. We conducted a Kindergarten mass recently and it was wonderful! ■

## Why I Give

Grandmother Carlene Aliferis knows the value of a positive environment in supporting a child's education. With two grandchildren currently enrolled at the Madeleine, she has been a generous, consistent contributor to the MAD Annual Fund. Her granddaughter, 8th grader Lydia Storella, interviewed Carlene to find out what motivated her to give.

**What inspired you to donate?**

I saw the results from the teachers and how they taught their students so many dif-

ferent things. The teachers are kind and cheerful and yet they manage to encourage the children to do their work. Then I realized there was a fund that I could donate money to for extra special events. No doubt some of the money helps promote a learning experience for you.

**Why did you choose the Madeleine when you have other giving opportunities?**

I donate to organizations, churches and schools where I know where the money goes. Mostly I donate locally. The Madeleine is an exception,

but I know where the money is going.

It think it is very worthwhile to support education, and I'm also pleased your parents chose the Madeleine as the school for you and Dominic.



Carlene Aliferis with her grandchildren Lydia & Dominic Storella

Because of the learning environment, children seem happy, they come home from school happy, and they are doing very well academically.

## In Remembrance: Toby Burditt

by Susie Ashworth Bader

It is with a heavy heart that our community learned of the passing of Toby Burditt — a husband, friend, athlete, photographer and parent of two students at the Madeleine.

Toby left an enormous mark on every area he touched, whether he was supporting the school's track and field team or sharing his gift as a professional photographer—an area where his talent was present in every photo he took.

And he took many of them: he was a talented professional with an internationally recognized list of clients, and at the Madeleine, he volunteered his expertise by catching candid shots of kids at school and photographing coming-of-age rituals like the 8th grade dance.

His photos were a reflection of Toby himself—personal, thoughtful, clever, always-present.

“He was the most generous person I have ever worked with,” said Sister Mary Brennan, the former development director for the Madeleine, who worked alongside Toby for several years. “Whatever I needed, he would provide, without any problem at all. He was so gracious, almost like I was doing him a favor [by asking him to take photographs].”

He was generous with his time; he was generous with his talents. And once Toby had an idea, he would wrestle and focus on the plan until it was mastered.

Just take the time that Toby was asked to photograph the CEO of Twitter. What did he do? He built himself an aviary, filled it up with birds, and convinced the CEO to pose inside it during their shoot.

“The shot was absolutely magnificent,” said his colleague Leah Levine. “But, when it was all over, Toby realized he now owned all these birds. He would get so excited and caught up in the moment. That’s what made him such a great artist. He was always game to do anything to get the right shot. He had an amazingly creative eye and thought way outside the box.”



Toby borrows the crown after photographing Miss America.



The School of the Madeleine is mourning the loss of Toby as an artist, parent and dear friend. The entire community extends condolences to Toby’s wife, Amy, and his young sons, Henry and Grady.

Alumni wishing to remember Toby are welcome to donate to a fund remembering Toby and his remarkable life.

In Memory of Toby Burditt Fund  
830 Arlington Avenue  
Oakland, California 94608

## Teacher Spotlight: Gisele Teixeira

Pictures may be worth a thousand words, but it’s hard to pinpoint Gisele Teixeira’s captivating photographs with even one: Are they whimsical? Intriguing? Joyful? Whatever the right moniker, her compelling photographs captured the eye of one of the nation’s most prestigious publications, National Geographic Magazine, which published one of her self-portraits earlier this year. When she’s not busy inspiring her third grade students (or keeping up with her two sons, kindergartener, Caio, and second grader, Diego), this avid shutterbug can often be found behind a camera. Visit the National Geographic “Your Shot” blog to see more of her photos and learn more: <http://bit.ly/1dWoDVw>.

### > Visions Your Shot

THIS PAGE FEATURES TWO PHOTOGRAPHS: ONE CHOSEN BY OUR EDITORS AND ONE CHOSEN BY OUR READERS VIA ONLINE VOTING.

SUBMIT YOUR OWN PHOTOGRAPHS



EDITORS' CHOICE Gisele Teixeira  
RICHMOND, CALIFORNIA



READERS' CHOICE Bridgena Barnard  
CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

While cleaning her house, Teixeira, a third-grade teacher, came across an old pin-box toy. Lying on her bed, she envisioned a creative self-portrait. As she held her breath for each take, she experimented to find the best distance and angle at which to hold the camera.

## The Power of an Arts Education (continued from cover)

that theatre intersects [to improve] so many different skills—focus, literary skills, body movements, awareness, the ability to be 'in the moment',” Elizabeth said. “It integrates all of these skills that you don’t get anywhere else.”

Like a wheel with many spokes, the Madeleine’s art program includes drama as well as art, chorus and band. The school’s art program, run by teacher Janice Bettiga, incorporates the nationally renowned Art in Action program, a K–8

curriculum that touches on painting, drawing and sculpture.

Our arts education program extends to music as well, with an after-class chorus program led by administrator Heather Skinner, parent Joan Bell and music director Andy Canepa.

In addition, the school offers an after-school educational Shakespeare program run by Kitty Thompson known as Shakespeareience. That program empowers and supports students as they dip into Shakespeare’s

most popular works.

Madeleine’s music program comprises both vocal and instrumental instruction. The music program, run by teacher Jeanne Honoré with the assistance of Christina Simpson, teaches rhythm, ukulele and vocal performance.

A companion band program, run by teacher Jennifer Ashworth, offers after-school instruction to more than 80 children on instruments ranging from flute to trombones to drums to trumpet. Boosted by a

parent-sponsored scholarship program and an instrument rental program, the MAD Band plays at school events, marches in local parades and performs as a pep-band at Madeleine sporting events.

“I believe that one half of the brain communicates better with the other half when you get music involved,” Jennifer said. “Arts education teaches kids poise, it teaches them self discipline, it teaches them consistency. It teaches them that if they work hard at something, you get results.” ■

SOFIA FABBRIZIO

"Over the course of my eight wonderful years at the Madeleine, I had numerous memorable experiences and always loved participating in all the valued traditions. Although, two specific traditions that stand out the most for me are yelling the school motto with the whole student body every morning and Spirit Week. Saying the motto, "Let's Be Good To One Another" every morning for eight consecutive years brought the community together and reminded each of us of the importance of respecting each other. Spirit Week is also a very joyful tradition at the Madeleine, where students and faculty have a week to dress up together in styles from wacky to sporty to pajamas and just have fun."

CLASS OF 2011

KINJI STEIMETZ

Kinji Steimetz graduated from Berkeley High in 2014. He is admitted to USC's Marshall School of Business and begins his studies in Spring 2015. Meanwhile, through a USC affiliated program, he is spending his first semester in Paris, France. He is studying French Literature, Art History, and European History where the streets and museums of Paris serve as his classroom. If you are heading to Paris, reach out to Kinji.

CLASS OF 2010

ELIZABETH CARR

"The Mad really prepared me for high school, which helped me do well there, which got me into the college of my choice, which led to my first job. Even though we didn't have a pet, I really liked the Blessing of the Animals. The whole tradition of St. Francis is a beautiful one. My favorite Madeleine memory, though, is Caritas. I loved going there, bonding with my classmates and feeling empowered by the ropes course."

CLASS OF 1997

JIM GEIST

Jim Geist is living in Sonoma County with his wife, Jacqueline, and three boys Ben, Joshua and Noah (10, 7 and 5 years old). The kids fill their days with homework, soccer, basketball and baseball. Jim would love to reconnect with anyone from the class of '85.

CLASS OF 1985



GO PANTHERS!

LET'S BE GOOD TO ONE ANOTHER ... AND PASS IT ON!

Join Email your updates to ddinneen@themadeleine.com



LINDA MAZZUCCHI HAGEY

"It's been one great, fun ride, especially during the last year. On October 12, 2013, our daughter Kristen became the bride of Shane Reza. The newlyweds are happy as clams and have recently purchased their first home. Daughter Erin keeps very busy teaching K-3 students with autism in Dixon, living in Sacramento and socializing and traveling as time permits. I retired from 13 years as an Office Specialist with the City of Fairfield in June 2014. Don and I have since enjoyed trips to Reno, Lake Tahoe and a "big trip" for the year on a cruise to Alaska. If you haven't been, I highly recommend putting it on your list! We enjoyed meeting new people, socializing and especially the excursion trips and the pure beauty of that state. Fond regards to the Madeleine community! Keep up the Live, Love and Laugh!"

CLASS OF 1967

EARL JACOBS

At the mere age of 87, long-time parishioner and MAD graduate, is hanging up his hat as overseer of the Poor and Homeless Dinner, food purchasers and volunteers. Earl has been a "Jack of all trades", since it's inception in the early 1980's, starting with making sandwiches, the job evolved into coordinating Costco runs, Semi Freddi pick-ups, waiting for Sysco deliveries AND repairing multiple kitchen appliances. Earl is still involved, as a lector, with his grandsons, collection counter and continues to shepherd his grandchildren to Norton Hall for donuts after mass. We thank him for his dedication to service.

CLASS OF 1940

CALLING ALL



MAD GRADS!

Hard to believe this year is our 40th anniversary! Where's the reunion?! It's about time to see who's interested in getting together, or at least in staying in touch. And it just so happens that I am managing the Madeleine alumni database, so it would be great to get updated contact info on all our classmates over the years. Please contact me with your and any other classmate's email, address, phone number, whatever you got, and we'll see where it goes! And let me know if you are interested in helping find the missing persons or in planning a 41st reunion (better late than never), or both! Some folks are already on board (Annette Zavala, Ann McWalters, Rita Hanlon to name a few). It would be great to see everyone again! You can email at advancement@themadeleine.com, or my personal email at pachuga1@aol.com. Spread the word, and pass it on!

—Janet Mazzucchi James, '74 ■

LET'S BE GOOD TO ONE ANOTHER ... AND PASS IT ON!

Join Email your updates to ddinneen@themadeleine.com





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If this newsletter is addressed to a daughter or son who no longer lives at your home, please help us stay connected. Please mail, e-mail, or phone in the correct address.

Thank you!

**Email:** [ddinneen@themadeleine.com](mailto:ddinneen@themadeleine.com)  
**Phone:** (510) 526-4744

## Events at the Madeleine 2015

January 9, 2015      School of the Madeleine Alumni & Friends Reunion  
January 23, 2015      Grandparents' Tea

January 25, 2015      School of the Madeleine Open House  
January 31, 2015      Crab Feed

February 20, 2015      MAD Dominican Donor Reception

April 25, 2015      The Roaring '20s School Auction

May 17, 2015      12th Grade College Send-off Mass and Brunch

**You are cordially invited — Please join us!**  
**For more info, please call (510) 526-4744.**



Berkeley's Dominican  
Elementary School  
since 1937