

Expanding Horizons Through Videoconferencing

Communication, collaboration, and global awareness are essential 21st century skills that we strive to develop at EHS. For our students, the world is literally at their fingertips. Through the medium of videoconferencing we can expand the walls of our classrooms, connect our students to experts in the outside world, and nurture collaboration with students in other parts of Planet Earth. Following are examples of ways that videoconferencing has added a dimension to learning in EHS classrooms:

- 1st Grade chatted with a California Park Ranger at Crystal Cove to learn about tide pools in connection with their oceanography unit.
- 2nd Grade talked with Farmer Doug in Kansas as a tie-in to their nutrition unit to learn more about farming and life on a farm.
- During another 2nd Grade videoconference, our students collaborated on a progressive story project with a 2nd Grade class in Pennsylvania. In the process, they also learned about similarities and differences between life in a rural town and our urban setting.
- 3rd Grade collaborated with a class in South Africa as part of the EHS garden project and shared their experiences growing and eating a pizza garden.
- 4th Graders connected with students in Australia to compare common issues experienced during the Gold Rush in their respective countries.



- 5th Graders gave and received authentic feedback to peers in another school working on a similar video project.
- 6th Graders studying water video-chatted and teleconferenced with various scientists, community leaders and experts in this field.

Technology is an essential tool in preparing EHS students for success in the 21st century and one of its major benefits may be in reinforcing communication, understanding and compassion among the diverse groups who are and will be our partners in today's truly global community.

EHS Teacher and Author Marci Vogel Nominated for Pushcart Prize



Sixth grade teacher Marci Vogel has been nominated for a prestigious Pushcart Prize for her poem "My Father, On the Small Screen," published in *Spillway*. However, this is not the first time her work has been acknowledged. She has twice been nominated for the Associated Writing Programs Intro Journals Award and attended the invitation-only Squaw Valley Community of Writers workshop.

Ms. Vogel has written both fiction and nonfiction pieces for the *Los Angeles Times* and *Culver City News*. She also has poems published in *Colorado Review* and a prose manuscript that is a finalist for a James Jones First Novel Fellowship. "Back to School," Ms. Vogel's touching 9/11 poem, has just been published on Zocalo Public Square (zocalopublicsquare.org/the-public-square/2011/09/12/back-to-school-2001/read/poems/), along with two of her earlier pieces, "My Brother Visits Our Mutual Place of Birth" and "Knock Knock."

This was a busy summer for the talented Ms. Vogel. She received her MFA in poetry from Ashland University in Ohio and was invited to attend the Napa Valley Writers' Conference to study with renowned American poet Jane Hirshfield. As part of her MFA program, Ms. Vogel produced a book-length manuscript of poetry under the mentorship of Pulitzer finalist Angie Estes. (It should be noted that Ms. Vogel has a Masters of Education and a Masters in English as well as her new MFA!)

A native of Los Angeles, Ms. Vogel began teaching 1st grade at EHS 21 years ago. Now, as the 6th grade language arts teacher, she uses both her education and her writing experiences to promote effective writing strategies for EHS students. "Teaching writing through poetry helps students develop a deep sensitivity to language," explains Ms. Vogel. "What makes us respond profoundly to a piece of writing is not always articulated through logic, but through what we experience as readers. Using the poet's tools of concentrated attention, vibrant image, and creative risk are good practices for all forms of writing."

Principal Matters



Ask most any child what his/her favorite part of the school day is and the response will most likely be, or at least include, RECESS! Children innately understand the value of periods of time

when no one is telling them what to do, when they can make their own decisions.

Unstructured time in a safe environment is crucial to the development of inventiveness, creativity and problem solving ability. The playground can be an invaluable laboratory for children, especially at the elementary school age. Children are presented with the opportunity to make a myriad of decisions - what to play, with whom to play, how to resolve differences. It is the time when the social work of schooling takes place. Children share experiences and develop their own rules as members of a community of peers, peers who represent different cultural and ethnic backgrounds as well as different points of view. For children who will

be expected to function productively and responsibly in a democratic society this is a very important part of schooling.

Watch children at play. They use their imaginations to invent games. They develop elaborate and detailed rules for common playground games such as foursquare and handball, complete with specialized vocabulary to describe certain "moves" or "plays." They establish their own mini-societies and, in so doing, learn how people work together.

Yes, arguments erupt and occasionally tears flow due to falls, conflicts and hurtful actions by peers. These occurrences, however, are significant opportunities for learning. Children learn that things do not always go their way, that they can survive disappointments, that resolution is possible. They learn pragmatism and how to compromise. They become stronger, more resilient participants in society.

Recess is one of my favorite parts of schooling as well. Watching children imagine, invent and develop a new way of playing an old game, negotiating from their different

points of view and then reaching agreement on how to work together to reach a common goal is uplifting and leaves me with tremendous optimism for the future.

Paula R. Dashiell - *Head of School*

Alumni Spotlight



Samantha L. (Class of 1998) graduated from Smith College in 2008 with a major in Political Science. While there, she also studied Sustainable Agriculture and Horticulture.

She began making videos and teaching gardening to elementary school kids in Massachusetts. Be sure to watch her impressive video of her inner-city school gardening project, School Sprouts: The Birth of a Garden at www.youtube.com/watch?v=n6qc6y14s0E. Samantha is back home and teaching the Garden Club at Windward, incorporating service learning into the curriculum and reaching out to alumni.

Welcome to Assistant Head of School Martha Schuur

Over the summer, Martha Schuur, our new Assistant Head of School, quickly settled into her office, making it uniquely her own, and began planning for the coming school year.

As the first EHS Assistant Head of School, Mrs. Schuur will assume responsibility for curriculum coordination and oversight and faculty support. With a Masters in Education and an MBA from Pepperdine University, coupled with 11 years' experience at Marlborough School as both teacher and Dean of Faculty, her background positions her well for this new challenge.

At home you can find her tending her vegetable and flower gardens (when she's not collecting chicken eggs from her henhouse!). Mrs. Schuur is fully in accord with EHS' commitment to eco-literacy and is pleased to shepherd our established sustainability initiatives. "Having so enjoyed being immersed in the foundation and growth of the green initiatives at Marlborough, I found myself



thrilled to discover that EHS' community shares my passion and commitment to sustainability," she confirmed.

She describes herself as an "experienced educator with a global perspective," which speaks directly to EHS' focus on an appreciation for diversity and the importance of global awareness. In her travels, Mrs. Schuur has visited Honduras and Ecuador to study indigenous cultures; traveled to Tanzania to work with WEECE (micro-lending for women in rural Moshe); and participated in the Saudi Aramco Teacher Program in Saudi Arabia.

Mrs. Schuur brings a wealth of experience, a solid grounding in current educational best practices and a warm and welcoming personality that are sure to benefit our faculty, our students, and our entire community. Reflecting this sentiment, Head of School Paula Dashiell states, "I am very pleased and excited to welcome Martha to our school community. Her expertise and prior experiences will complement our program well."

We have Two Gifts to Give our Children One is Roots, the Other, Wings.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Echo Horizon School is to educate hearing, deaf and hard of hearing children in an inclusive environment in which independence, self-reliance and mutual respect are valued and encouraged with a curriculum designed to be challenging and developmentally appropriate for each learner.

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CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2011

We will watch with pride as the Class of 2011 moves forward at their chosen schools:

Archer, Campbell Hall, Crossroads, Harvard-Westlake, Immaculate Heart, Marlborough, Milken Community, Oakwood, Pilgrim, St. Brendan, St. Matthew's, St. Timothy, Turningpoint, Wildwood and Windward Schools.

The Class of 2005 is Off to College

Congratulations also to the Class of 2005 who will now venture out to schools across the United States to pursue their dreams at the following institutions:



American University
Barnard College
Boston College
Cal State Northridge
Carlton College
Columbia University
Dartmouth College
Elon University
Emory University
Harvey Mudd
Indiana University
Lehigh University
Loyola Marymount University
NYU Gallatin Program
Pomona College

Roger Williams University
Tulane University
UC Berkeley
UCLA
University of Alabama
University of Iowa
University of Michigan
University of Oregon
University of Redlands
University of San Francisco
University of Southern California
University of Wisconsin
Washington University



The EHS Class of 2001 Graduates from College

To learn more about what these young men and women, who started their educational journey as children at Echo Horizon School, plan to do with their lives, read the July 2011 issue of Alumni News on our website (www.echohorizon.org/Page/236).

The Class of 2011 Leaves Its Mark

Thanks to the Class of 2011's Graduation Gift, our families were greeted with fresh surroundings at the start of the 2011-12 school year. The school's foyer and front office spaces received a handsome facelift over the summer, including freshly painted walls and enlarged display areas to the right and left of the auditorium doors. The new tack wall, made of an eco-friendly linoleum cork product, provides more space to display our students' work. Parents Jacque Kleinberg (interior designer) and Alice Hricak (architect) worked with EHS Facilities Manager Tami Rubin on this project.

The redesigned alcove on the right as you enter the building recognizes our founders, Kent Landsberg and Carol Proctor Landsberg, and highlights the history of EHS. A second phase of the renovation will focus on the alcove on the left, which will house a flat screen monitor that will emphasize school programs and provide current information.



Our classic school building was originally constructed in 1925 and, in 1991, was designated a Culver City "Historical Structure." This year's changes were sensitively considered to maintain the atmosphere that lends such charm and warmth to Echo Horizon School. "The changes are subtle but they add such freshness and offer a very pleasant welcome to our community and guests," said Head of School Paula Dashiell. "Many parents note that the EHS environment reminds them of their own elementary school experiences, which should come as no surprise since the building has served in that capacity for over 85 years," she added.

What's New with Summer School (or How I Spent my Summer Vacation)

When she was named Summer School Director, Cathleen Wolff (EHS Arts Education Coordinator) worked with Paula Dashiell and Jenny Boone to review and revitalize Echo Horizon School's summer program to ensure that it was meeting the needs of families looking for summer options for their children.

The result was *EHS Does Summer*. While the existing *Here Comes Kindergarten* program for incoming EHS Kindergartners remained essentially the same (two three-week sessions), programs for older children were redesigned to maximize learning and fun – and add great options for parents. *EHS Does Summer* (EHS Does Summer) for incoming 1st to 4th graders and *Tween Adventure* for incoming 5th to 8th graders were offered in six one-week thematic sessions. Families could easily pick individual or multiple sessions to complement other summer plans.

With age-appropriate activities that included outdoor games and sports, arts and crafts, science, skits, camp songs, games and lots of humor, children participated in favorite pursuits and discovered new enjoyment and expertise in other areas. Attendees built teamwork skills during group activities while having opportunities to explore other offerings independently.

The result? Happy children - and happy parents. According to Ms. Wolff, "The shift from summer school to summer camp allowed us to open many doors previously closed to us. Our current program is steeped in outdoor summer play, experiences in the arts and sciences, and all things camp. Remember camp songs from 40 years ago? We sang 'em! Remember lying in the grass gazing up at the summer sky? We've done it! Remember Capture the Chicken? We played it! We did all things summer and all things fun!"



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