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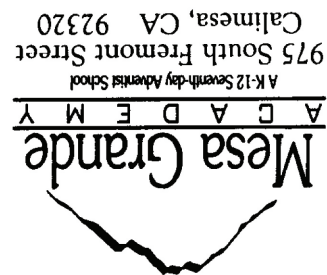
alumni mailbag, cont.

I can't believe it has been 5 years since I left Mesa Grande Academy. I graduated in 2002 and headed up to PUC where I spent 2 years finishing my pre-requisites for entry to the Speech-Language Pathology program at Loma Linda University. While I was at MGA I began dating Nathan Blue ('03). After graduation, he too came to PUC and before transferring, the two of us took a year detour and went to Sagunto, Spain and studied Spanish for a year. After our year abroad, he returned to PUC, and I started my coursework at Loma Linda. This June, we both graduate with Bachelor's degrees. My degree is in Communication Disorders and his is in Spanish. This summer will bring great changes and excitement as we get married at the end of June and have the opportunity to go back to our favorite spots in Europe for our honeymoon. We both will be continuing our academic careers next year at Loma Linda as I begin the MS program in Speech-Language Pathology, and Nathan starts Medical School.

- Cheri Wild ('02)

One of the joys of being a teacher is to meet our alumni each year at graduation, Alumni Weekend or at different churches. It is amazing at all the different directions each of you have taken after your graduation. It is always fun to catch up and discover what each of you have been doing in your lives since leaving our campus. Hopefully some of you will take a few minutes to write a note in our alumni newsletter.

Keep in touch,
Jerry Kopitzke



ATTENTION ALUMNI!

Your classmates and friends would love to hear about you! Send your own "Alumni Mailbag" information to: jyakush@hotmail.com

Submissions may be edited for space & content. Thanks for keeping in touch!

When alumni get together on alumni weekend for their 10th reunion, the school will pay \$10 per person towards food for Saturday night!

If you have contact information or other updates on any alumni, please contact Judie Yakush, Alumni Coordinator, at (909) 795-1112 ext. 252, or email jyakush@hotmail.com.

Thanks for helping keep our alumni in touch with the school and each other!



Alumni News 2007



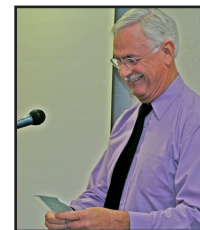
The Mesa Grande Academy Alumni at Alumni Sabbath, September 9, 2006

Hello, to all MGA Alumni! On September 9, 2006, over 70 Mesa Grande alumni returned to campus to reminisce and reconnect with former classmates and teachers. The 10 year Honor Class (1996) was well attended with alumni coming from Ohio, Michigan from Tennessee. It is always good to see everyone and catch up on your lives. Ten years goes by quickly and even though we for the most part can recognize you, there has been some change.

**Plan now to attend Alumni Sabbath this fall
September 8, 2007
Guest Speakers: Kathy Garcia and Bettessue Heid Constanzo**



The 2006 Alumni welcomed Jim Frazier, former MGA 8th grade teacher and Don Dudley, former MGA Principal as the speakers for the morning. Lauryn Wild shared a slide show of her recent mission trip to Thailand and "Fresh Expression" MGA's drama students, shared their talents.



Another school year and another graduation have ended adding 30 alumni to our school. This brings the total number of alumni to 445. We will miss the seniors, but wish them the best as they begin the next phase of life.

The Annual Golf Tournament which was held in March was a big success. Between having 92 golfers (some being alumni) and raising \$14,000 this was indeed our best tournament thus far. The money is split between the varsity program and the Student

Assistance Fund. Hopefully, as the alumni starts to grow the golf tournament will be held on Alumni Weekend so more alumni can participate.

The Academy adopted a 110 unit trailer park as a service to our community. This park has many elderly, disabled and single mother occupants who need help. Each month one class goes out and spends the morning working trying to help keep the residence in compliance

with the park code. The work that the students has done have been appreciated by the residences, managers and owners. It has been a true ministry.

-Judie Yakush



Class of 1996



Class of 2001

alumni mail bag alumni mail bag

After graduation I went to Andrews University, where I got two bachelor degrees. My first, I completed in 1996, is a BT in Graphic/Landscape Design. While studying for that degree I met my husband. After graduation I lived in Colorado for a time, but decided to move back to MI so Chris could finish his degree in Chemistry. So, I enrolled at Andrews a second time in 1998 for a BT of Digital Multimedia with a minor in Photography. That fall Chris and I got married. In 2000 we both finished our degrees. After graduation we moved to Kalamazoo/Portage, MI so Chris could work for Pharmacia (now Pfizer). I started a home based graphic design business. In May 2006, due to cuts by Pfizer we found ourselves looking for new employment and housing. At that point we definately wanted to move to somewhere warmer. California or North Carolina? We weighed our options and decided that our money could do more (for now) in North Carolina. So, we moved to North Carolina where we bought our first home in December. We are definately loving the warmth and having our own house. If any of you are ever in Raleigh, NC we'd love to hear from you! My email is jenwit123@aol.com

- **Jen (Lehmann) Wittum ('92)**

I've been married for 5 years to the girl of my dreams. I met Rhonda while working Loss Prevention for a Department store. She worked as a cosmetic consultant. I was warned to stay away from the cosmetic girls, but I didn't listen. We have a handsome baby boy named Will that is 6 months old and a spitting image of myself. We never left the Inland Empire and reside in Beaumont. Currently I work as a Surveillance Investigative Supervisor at a local casino. I occassionally run into some of you MGA folk around town, you know who you are. Hope to see some of you others around.

- **Chris Allen ('94)**

After graduating from MGA I attended Southern Adventist University for 5 years (1 year was spent as a Student Missionary on the island of Saipan). I graduated with a Bachelors Degree in Family Studies. During my time at Southern I met and married (in 1999) the most wonderful man in the world - Adam Case. We currently live in Sheboygan, WI where my husband is the pastor of 2 churches. In November of 2005, a happy baby boy joined our family. Joshua is almost 2 years old and talks up a storm. He has brought much joy to our lives. My husband recently graduated from Andrews University with his Masters of Divinity degree and is soon to become an ordained minister. I keep busy with Joshua and also trying to finish a Masters Certificate program in Family Life Education from Andrews University. I hope you all are doing well and I look forward to Christ's return and eternity with Him in heaven. My e-mail is: laurellacase@sbcglobal.net. I'd love to hear from you.

- **Laurella (Fillman) Case ('95)**

Hello everybody!! I have kept in touch with most of the people from my classes, but for those of you that I have lost touch with I am sorry! I became an RDA and worked in an orthodontic office in Redlands and then worked in another private practice in Palm Springs, Palm Desert and Yucca Valley. Then I met my wonderful husband of now 7 1/2 years and things changed for me. I now live in Rancho Mirage, CA and we have two lil ones. Natalie who will be six and Giovanni who is three. They are so much fun! I have since left the Orthodontic Office and have followed life to the fast lane-no not like that!! My husband and I have started our own business (John Liveris Used Cars in Desert Hot Springs) and we sell previously Used cars and Any New cars. I am doing the brokering part so if you need a new or quality used car you can look me up or if you just want to visit and we can catch up well then I am game for that too!!!

I thank God for everyday and wish all of you blessings from above.

- **Erin (Brodhagen) Livreri ('95)**

I cannot believe it has been 11 years since I graduated from MGA. It seems so long ago and yet like it was just yesterday sitting in the pit. Attending the 10-year reunion was fun as I got to see people I have not seen since graduation. Alumni Sabbath made me realize how lucky we were to attend such a school and have positive influences in our lives. After graduation I attended Crafton Hills College and then went on to get my Bachelor of Science Degree in Automotive Technology from Walla Walla College. I opened my own business in 2001 and shortly after met my wife, Melissa. We were married in August 2004 and enjoy living in Yucaipa with our Jack Russell terrier, Skeeter. I am currently employed as an automotive instructor at Universal Technical Institute and also continue to run my business, Inland Pony Cars. As if life was not full enough or busy enough, 2007 is my first full season driving in the California Rally Series racing my 1970 Datsun 510 Rally Car. When not racing, working, or building cars, I enjoy spending time with my family and friends.

- **Jon Rea ('96)**

I met my wife Amy at WWC and we were married in the summer of 2001. I went to work briefly in the medical industry before finding my way to my current employer. I am working as a project manager developing a high performance diesel engine for the marine industry. Amy taught 4th grade at RAA until last June when our son Ethan was born. It's been an amazing year since, and we can't imagine life without him.

- **Matt Hill ('96)**

Time has flown by fast wouldn't you say! After graduating from MGA I went off to PUC. I graduated in 2001 with a BS in Commercial Fitness Management and Physical Education. In 2003 I received my Elementary education credentials from Southern Adventist University. A few months later I was hired on as a First Grade Teacher at Loma Linda Academy (our rivals, the principals laughingly used to joke around about it that I went to MGA). I was there at Loma Linda for 2 1/2 wonderful years. I loved teaching the little ones! In September of 2006 I got married to the most amazing man. His name is Josh Allen and he's a youth pastor in Michigan where we now live. God has guided me along the way and will always be my best friend. I look forward to seeing you all in September hope everyone is doing well!

- **Robyn (Hebert) Allen ('97)**

My husband, Darren ('95), and I have finally worked our way back to So Cal after six years out of the area. While Fresno was a great experience, we were anxious to move closer to our family after the birth of our son Devan, in March of 2006. Darren accepted a job teaching choral music at Redlands Adventist Academy. In August 2006 I accepted a temporary job at La Sierra Academy. My assignment was to open a brand new K-1 classroom. This was a huge undertaking for me as my experience to this point has been in 7-10th grade. I made it through the year and rather enjoyed myself, but am glad that there is an opening in 6th grade for me next year. Darren and I just bought and re-modeled a place in Grand Terrace near my parents and pretty much right in-between our two schools. Devan loves spending days with his grandma!! He is nearly 15 months old and on the go all they time. He loves to be with people and already conducts choirs like his daddy! We are looking forward to seeing many of you at Alumni Sabbath this year!! May the Lord bless you!!

- **Tami (Snyder) Belleau ('97)**

Since graduating from Mesa Grande I have ridden my bicycle across the US, graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, lived and studied in Russia, and worked in NY. Currently I am attending Brooklyn Law School, and hope to work in the field of International Law upon graduation. I am interning this summer at a Federal District Court in the US Virgin Islands. Through everything, I look back on my time at MGA with very fond memories.

- **Bradley Brunken ('98)**

My wife, Sharla, and I met while attending Walla Walla. We both graduated with a Civil Engineering degree and have been working as engineers ever since. We currently live in Apple Valley, CA and have recently moved into a new home that we built. We are very adventurous and often go camping, boating, snow boarding and motorcycle riding. The most exciting thing for us right now is the arrival of our first baby. Little Derek is due in July, and we have been quite busy preparing for him. MGA has been a positive part of my life and I am very glad I had the opportunity to attend. We wish everyone well.

- **Jason Carlson ('98)**

Life has been full for me since I have graduated from MGA. Three years ago, at the end of my graduating year in college, I was diagnosed with a brain tumor in my brain stem. I am now doing well after under going surgery and radiation and have check-ups every six months. Since then I've graduated from college with a BA in psychology and am now a substitute teacher. I have also decided to persue a career in medicine so I am going back to college and taking pre-med classes. Mesa Grande was a wonderful time in my life and I have made my closest and most lasting friendships on that tiny campus. I feel blessed that I had the privelege of having Christian education.

- **Elizabeth Bernal ('99)**

After graduating from MGA, I went to Walla Walla College and got my BS in Elementary Education. While at WWC, I met Steve Moor and we have now been happily married for almost 5 years. In October of 2005 Steve and I moved to Thailand to teach. We have lived in two major cities in Thailand, Chiang Mai and Bangkok. This June we will be returning to the Walla Walla, WA, where we will both be working towards our Master's degrees in Education.

- **Allison (Schmidt) Moor ('99)**

After MGA, I attended La Sierra for four years graduating with my bachelors in elementary education and minor in history. I did my student teaching at Fontana and MGA, then ended up getting a job a Loma Linda Academy. I just completed my second year teaching 6th grade. Currently, I am also taking my Master's in Administration and Leadership at LSU. I'll be graduating in 2008 or 2009 and then hopefully having some decrease in stress. Between teaching full-time and being a student, I miss my carefree academy days.

- **Melissa Meert ('00)**

I finished my Early Childhood Development degree in 2004, and then about 2 years ago I moved to Bellevue, WA where I teach in the Early Childhood Department at Bellevue Community College. I have my own classroom of fourteen 2-3 year olds, set up into many different developmental learning centers. We do developmental profiles on each child and daily reports that we give to the parents as well. They are so precious, but very challenging. I could go on forever about funny/

challenging stories that happen each day! I also have different student teachers that go to the college. I enjoy doing this too... It gives me a chance to teach at another level, and I've always wanted to do that. I have been with my boyfriend Jeff for 4 years now! He finished dental school at Loma Linda, and has a practice in Redmond, WA, about 10 min. from Bellevue. I am still getting used to the weather here, but summer is coming!! We had a very hard winter this year. There was so much snow, and the wind storms were crazy! Have you ever walked into a grocery store with a flashlight? All of the cities around me were without power. I have never been through anything like that before. They declared it a national disaster for the state of Washington. You couldn't even get gas, unless you drove to the other side of Seattle. I miss my family and the CA heat, but I would move all over again for Jeff. He has my heart forever, and he is my best friend...and that is worth moving for. :) Take care...

- **Sarah Richards ('00)**

To Lauren, life is one big adventure. Having graduated from Canadian University College in 05 with a BA in Outward Pursuits (an outdoor leadership degree), she has found many exciting things to occupy her time. This summer she will work as a canoe guide in upstate New York. She fell in love with canoeing last summer when she joined a group of seven other adventurers to brave the wilds of Canada in a three month canoe trip. 84 days straight of paddling was certainly enough to fill Lauren with every emotion known to man. Her favorite aspect of the trip was the definitely the wildlife. As if that wasn't enough excitement for the year, Lauren proposed to her fun-loving boyfriend, Michael Gregory, while they were on that canoe trip. This may seem surprising, but it was actually a re-engagement after some much needed time for the two to think things through after Michael had proposed the year before and they had decided to put things off for a bit. They got married on December 27, 2006 and enjoyed honeymooning in Big Bear and backpacking in Joshua Tree National Park. Lauren and Michael have been living in an adorable little house in St. Helena, CA and working locally doing construction (Michael), house cleaning, yard work, and babysitting (Lauren) for family and friends. While the work has been well for them, they are both thrilled to be heading out to spend another summer in God's amazing creation. They are certainly happy to let everyone know that there is indeed wilderness in NY and can't wait to be there, sharing that with others. Next fall? Well, we'll see what God has planned for them. No doubt another amazing adventure!

- **Lauren (Wright) Gregory ('01)**

In June 2006 I graduated from LLUSD with my BS in Dental Hygiene and am working as a full time temp. This January, Judson Howe proposed to me in the snow in 15° temperatures in Mammoth and we are getting married locally on October 7, 2007. I'm currently living in Loma Linda and busy preparing for the wedding. Judd and I have just recently signed up for salsa lessons at Kerry Emerson's new dance studio in Redlands where Mr. Bennie and Mr. Camacho are in the same class.

- **Diana Komora ('01)**

I am now a registered nurse and will be starting work in August at LLU Medical Center as a Neonatal Intensive Care nurse. I am finishing up my Bachelor's degree at Loma Linda University and will than go on to start the Nurse Practitioner program. I am excited about the journey ahead of me and where life might take me.

- **Sarah Owen ('02)**
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