



Vincent Smith School Alumni Newsletter

February 2006

Volume 1, Issue 2

From the Head of School ~ Arlene Wishnew



Dear Alumni of Vincent Smith School,

At this past alumni reunion, held in October, we were fortunate to have as our guest speaker Gilbert Geoffrion who attended the Vincent Smith School from 1951-1954. After an absence of 50 plus years, Mr. Geoffrion and his brother Arthur (1943-1948) reconnected with our school to find to their delight a flourishing Vincent Smith School still committed to the same founding principles; to provide a small supportive educational setting where students can meet their full potential. Gilbert Geoffrion's closing remarks at the Reunion touched the core of everyone's heart when he said, "The way I was treated and what I learned will always be a reminder of how much devotion Vincent Smith has for each and every student and because of this the school will always remain special to me for a lifetime." I have heard this sentiment from many alumni over the years. Arthur and Gilbert Geoffrion, when donating their Annual Fund gift to VSS stated, "Doing a little something for the school to help perpetuate it seemed like a very natural thing to do. It is with the greatest of pleasure that we give back a little something monetarily to help offset what has been given to us." Please continue to keep Vincent Smith School in your minds and hearts.

Alumni Reunion Brunch

On October 30, 2005 an Alumni Reunion Brunch was held at the School. It was a wonderful fall afternoon of renewing old friendships, greeting former teachers and administrators and getting reacquainted with the School campus. Approximately 55-60 Alumni and their guests attended the Reunion. As the Alumni reconnected with each other there was a lighthearted spirit and genuine elation at the opportunity to catch up with former classmates. There was a fabulous brunch including croissants, pastries and fruit salads and keeping with the spirit of the season, fresh mulled apple cider. There was also a free raffle drawing of beauty products from Bourghese. The raffle winner was Thomas Amato ('95) and his lovely wife Corrine. A good time was had by all. We hope to repeat this well attended event in the fall of 2006 and see even more of our alumni. So, please spread the word to all your alumni friends and encourage them to attend the next reunion. Until then, you can keep in touch with the more than 100 VSS alum at the Classmates.com website. If you would like to help plan the next reunion or would like to become a Class Rep for your class, please contact Ellen Forrest at the School at (516) 365-4900.

Alumni Reunion attendees gather for a group photograph



Mr. Gilbert Geoffrion ('54) addresses VSS Alumni



VSS Past Happenings

Welcome to the second edition of the VSS Alumni Newsletter – a chance for all of you to find out what’s going on at the Vincent Smith School as well as what’s happening with past VSS alumni. To stay in touch with what’s going on at VSS, we encourage you to log on to the School’s website at www.vincentsmithschool.org. You will learn about many of the exciting events that have occurred or will be taking place at the School. Our students have traveled to England and France on a School sponsored trip. We just completed our 17th year of visiting the Rocking Horse Ranch, and explored the Southwestern U.S. Each year we hold a Lecture Series and a Special Education Fair for the community and are currently installing air-conditioning in the High School. Take a look at what else is happening at VSS!



A successful Walk-A-Thon through the town of Port Washington was held in May of 2005. VSS received outstanding proclamations from the Town of Hempstead and Nassau County recognizing Vincent Smith School’s more than 82 years of service to the Long Island Community. VSS honored State Bank of Long Island and Mr. John Kaiman, Supervisor of Town of North Hempstead. Ben’s Kosher Delicatessen of Greenvale continued its tradition of supporting VSS with food and beverages the day of the walk. The Walk-A-Thon raised over \$30,000.

On Sunday, April 3, 2005, Vincent Smith School held its second annual Scholarship Fund Fashion Show & Brunch. Our honorees were Mr. Robert Klein, VSS Principal and Mrs. Lisette Edmonds, VSS Historian and Librarian. The event was held at the beautiful Glen Head Country Club and attended by some 170 guests. \$11,000 was raised for our Scholarship Fund. This year’s Brunch is being held at the Brookville Country Club on April 2, 2006. If you are interested in contributing to the Scholarship Fund or wish to attend contact Mrs. Arlene Wishnew.



After 26 years at VSS, Mr. Robert Klein retired in June of 2005. He truly put his indelible mark on the School and helped it become the special school it is today. He greatly misses VSS but is keeping busy and hopes to visit in the future. Miss Tamara Lombardo, who has over 12 years experience working with students with special education needs, has assumed the responsibilities of VSS Principal.

In May of 2005 the Vincent Smith School held its Sports Dinner at the Swan Club overlooking scenic Roslyn Harbor. Many sports memorabilia items were auctioned off and a fun time was had by all those in attendance. This year’s Sports Dinner will once again be held at the Swan Club on May 11, 2006. If you would like to attend please contact Arlene Wishnew at VSS.



Mr. Robert Klein and wife Manu



Mr. Dreska presents sports trophies

Alumni Class Notes

Did You Know that...

Matthew Abuelo ('94) resides in Washington, DC and is a political writer and activist...**Thomas Amato** ('95) resides here on Long Island and is in the construction business...**Douglas Best** ('02) is currently attending Lynn University and has become a Class Rep for the VSS Class of 2002...**Nora Bowles** ('90-'94) is a nursery school Teacher Assistant and is also a VSS Class Rep for the Class of 1994...**Steven Bukowski** ('95) is a 10 year veteran of the U.S. Postal Service and recently attended the VSS Alumni Reunion Brunch...**Sara Crescas** ('89-'93) works at the Nassau County Jail and is involved in a local theater club...**Lawrence Davis** ('74-'77) resides locally and would like to reconnect with some former classmates...**Jon Despagni** ('96) received a degree from SUNY Farmingdale in Plant Science and owns a landscaping business...**Arthur Geoffrion** ('43-'48) is recently retired after a 40 career as a UCLA Professor and has multiple websites dedicated to VSS history and nostalgia...**Gilbert Geoffrion** ('51-'54) is semi-retired but has held many interesting vocations such as a jeweler, a communications expert, and a special consultant on projects for the US Dept. of Defense...**Michelle Greenberg-Bornemann** ('83-'87) is a stay-at-home Mom with 2 children and very involved in the PTA and Cub Scouts...**James Grimes** ('83-'86) served in the US Navy and is currently in the Real Estate business...**Jeanette Haffner-Turnbull** ('58-'63) resides in Philadelphia with her husband and son and enjoys gardening and spending time with her dogs and horses...**Thomas Henig** ('74-'75) works as a computer operator and enjoys social dancing and working out...**Alex Himel** ('88-'94) holds a Fine Arts degree from CW Post, enjoys graphic design and is also a certified dog trainer...**Ben Jackson** ('97-'99) is currently a Theatre and Accounting Major at Queens College...**Anthony James** ('98) lives locally and has a certificate from FedCap Career Design...**Susan Johnson** ('70-'77) is married with 4 children, living in AZ and has many fond memories of VSS... **Michelle Jorge** ('94-'98) has a retail degree and is employed as a Cosmetics Beauty Advisor...**Jonathan Kaplan** ('92) spent 5 years in the Marines and graduated Summa Cum Laude from SUNY Geneseo. He would love to catch up with some classmates from the Class of 1992...**Laurie Katz** ('91) graduated from the University of Hartford, recently wed, and would love to catch up with former classmates...

Aaron Lurie ('97) resides in FL, married his H.S. sweetheart in 2004, **Vanessa Leff** ('02) and they just had their first child, Merissa Mora...**Timothy Kliphuis** ('76-'80) owns his own business, is married with 3 children and has a show horse. He is VSS Class Rep for the Class of 1980...**Shira Levey** ('84-'87) has a Master's degree from NYU and works as a Supervising Activity Therapist for a Nursing Facility...**Barry Mear** ('01) is currently attending Culinary Arts School...**Kevin Murphy** ('99) holds a Master's Degree in Education and is our new 1999 Class Rep...**Stephen Muth** ('92-'96) interests lie in politics and media... **Ashleigh Ouziel-DiGianni** ('89-'91) is married, has 3 children and is manager of a retail watch store...**Louis Pegno** ('69) owns a satellite and antenna installation service and has many fond memories of VSS...**Jennifer Perosi** ('99) owns a party service and attends Nassau Community College...**Kathryn Pustay** ('97) divides her time between NY and PA and is currently studying to become a teacher...**Jon Racanello** ('95) is self employed, married and has a 20 month old son...**Joe Sarno** ('01) works in DC, has 2 internships and is the new 2001 Class Rep...**Victor Schwartz** ('83-'84) holds a Bachelor of Sociology and is self-employed...**Sara Sochalski** ('95) is working on a Master's Degree in International Relations and plans to earn her PhD...**Mitch Seitz** ('78) works for a staffing firm in IA and would love to get in touch with Dawn W., Rick D. and Tim M...**Linda Tamayo** ('02) is currently attending Nassau Community College and is the new 2002 Class Rep...**Victoria Vitelli-Routt** ('52) has been married for over 30 years and has 3 children and 1 grandchild, with her 2nd grandchild on the way...**Kimberly Wade** ('91) volunteers at a local elementary school library and likes to play golf...**Darren Walla** ('87) is active in the laborer's union and constructs high-rise buildings...**Kristina Wilhelm** ('82-'89) owns several Newsday routes, is married and has a son...**Kimberley Wolk** ('94) holds an Associates degree in Applied Science with a major in Veterinary Technology...**Garrett Zucker** ('83) is a Marketing Director for a large landscaping design firm in AZ and is married with 3 beautiful daughters.

What have you been up to?

We would love to hear what you have been doing since you left VSS. If you would like to be included in our next Newsletter please log on to our website, link to our Alumni page, and submit your update to us online. We look forward to hearing from you!

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GET INVOLVED with VSS!

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cash Donation• Corporate Matching Gifts• Appreciated Securities• Memorial and Honoring Gifts• Bequests and Other Planned Gifts• Donate Goods or Services (for use as raffle prizes - such as TVs, autos, hotel weekends, airline or theater tickets) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Volunteer to Serve on the Special Events, Development or Alumni Committee• Donate free advertising for VSS through your media contacts• Through your celebrity contacts help VSS with special fundraising events• Join the Alumni Association or become a Class Rep |
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The Mission of the Vincent Smith School is to provide a small, supportive, educational setting for reluctant learners and students with special education needs where they can achieve academic success and learn valuable life skills in order to become participating members of society. The school is committed to providing a well-integrated program of studies and activities necessary for social adjustment, individual development and sound academic learning.