

the diaspora potrzebie

Alumni Newsletter of the American Community School of Beirut, Lebanon

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December 2008

The New AUB President

Interview by John Jeha '09

Beirut October 21st, 2008

AUB President's Office

Dr. Peter Dorman '66, a Beirut-born Egyptologist and ACS alumnus, was appointed President of the American University of Beirut in March, 2008. He is the University's 15th President, taking up the post after Dr. John Waterbury's 10-year tenure. Dorman attended ACS from kindergarten through the 9th grade in the late 1950's and early 1960's, and is the great-great-grandson of AUB's founder, Daniel Bliss. His siblings also attended ACS.

His ACS memories are with him to this day, as he recalls events such as the now-extinct *Sadie Hawkins Dance* and *Slave Day*. *Slave Day*, he explained, was when students were auctioned off to other students to do things like carry their books, and open doors for them--of course the captain of the basketball team would bring in the highest bids, he explained. . Dorman can even remember insignificant events such as hurting his fingernail on the seesaw at the ACS playground while in elementary school.

ACS was very diverse, with students from many different communities and backgrounds, and this, he says, led to a very lively atmosphere: "Back in those days people were developing different dance moves. I remember, at ACS was the first time I ever saw the twist."

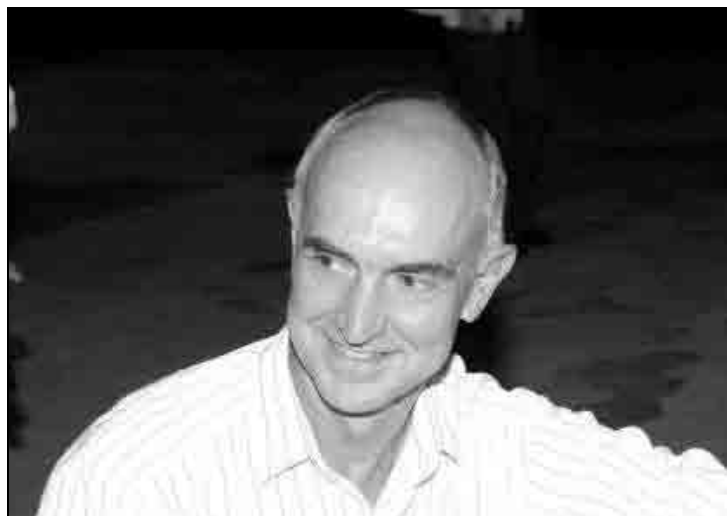
ACS was a very different place in many ways. "The campus was more open, but consisted really of the main building [what we call the high school building], the grounds behind it, and the gym—which was new when we first got there," he recollected. While at ACS, he studied French and picked up some Arabic. He remembers how ACS would organize weekend field trips to various historic and cultural sites, like Byblos, Baalbek, the Cedars and many others.

"It is cultural richness that was inherent at ACS, as well as the diversity of students," he said. Living in Lebanon fostered an environment that would later be part of what led him to Egyptology. He recalls events that would later help guide his interest, "I remember one afternoon we were playing on what used to be the red sand hills by the airport, and we were just digging in the sand and came across a mosaic floor that belonged to a Byzantine church!"

After the 9th grade, Dorman followed family tradition and went off to complete high school in the United States. "The States took some getting used to, I have to say. There was some adjustment."

The new AUB President says that it is not a challenge adjusting to Beirut, though, and considers the city home: "Beirut has changed outwardly in many ways, but the core is still the same," he says. His home back then was a two-story apartment on Makdisi Street, a block from Hamra. "Hamra was a lot more sedate; now it's just crazy," he concluded.

(continued on page 2)



Peter Dorman '66. Photo courtesy of the ACS Staff.

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He noted that the American education model that ACS implements offers a precious opportunity to absorb education on a broader level. With an emphasis on the liberal arts, students have more time to indulge in literature, music, and the arts and also have more exposure for career choices. “The appreciation of multiple approaches is the benefit of not just American colleges, but also high schools like ACS,” he remarked.

Prior to coming back to Beirut this summer, Dr. Dorman was a professor of Egyptology at the Oriental Institute and in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at the University of Chicago. He also was head of epigraphic work at Chicago House in Luxor, Egypt, and worked in curatorial positions in the Department of Egyptian Art at the Metropolitan Museum in New York.

the diaspora potreziebie

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Editor's

Corner

by Jon Stacey '61

We're still begging for articles and photos (did you notice that the December 2007 *Pot* was only eight pages long)?

UPCOMING FEATURES

Alumni Profiles of various **AA/ACS Governors**

From England to America by **Patricia Roberts-Henning '55**

How I Found AA/ACS *compiled by* **Jon Stacey '61**

Diversity Committee Activities by **Connie Scott-Walker '76**

Teaching at ACS by **Marjorie El-Kadi (Fac)**

Reunion News by *the* **AA/ACS Reunion Committee**

Reports from ACS by **The ACS Staff**

Ideas for columns, features, and articles? Call me! Want to write an article? Call me collect! Phone (503) 524-8915 up to 9:00 p.m. Pacific (Oregon) time. The address of our opulent editorial offices is 11935 SW Robbins Drive, Beaverton, Oregon 97008. Fax is (360) 838-2550. Our office's vast network of computers has a hacker-proof email address of <diaspora@teleport.com>

Dorman, for whom residing in Beirut is something of a homecoming, will be the second AUB President since the civil war. ACS wishes its successful alumnus the very best in his new challenging position.

Books by ACSers

“The Reckoning”

FORGIVENESS AND REDEMPTION FIND THEIR SOURCE IN THE UNLIKELIEST OF PLACES, EVEN IN THE TORTURE CELLS OF SADDAM HUSSEIN.

In Tanya Parker Mills '73's hard hitting and gritty work, *The Reckoning*, one woman's past comes back to haunt her as she struggles to survive political cruelty and injustice. Journalist Theresa Fuller has epilepsy, but this hasn't slowed her search for stories of injustice to broadcast to the world. When she and her cameraman, Peter Cranston, are captured inside Iraq in August 2002, and imprisoned by the Mukhabarat, Iraq's secret police, she is cut off from her medication. Seizures resume, and dreams and visions of her American childhood in Baghdad begin to trouble her. Tormented by the relentless Colonel Badr, she is forced to focus on her own father's death, years before in a Baghdad prison. The strain of her own captivity, and torture, is relieved only by her growing attraction to Tariq al-Awali, the Iraqi captain who took charge of her capture. The more she learns of him and his family, the clearer her haunting dreams become, and the more puzzling her past. Before the American bombs begin to fall, and all of Iraq is thrown into even darker chaos, Theresa must find a way to escape the cruelty of Colonel Badr, and save those she cares for most.

A finalist in the Marilyn Brown Novel Award competition, *The Reckoning* brings home the horrors of political injustice and the courage that it takes to resist despotism in all its forms. Thought provoking and deeply heartfelt, *The Reckoning* explores the meaning of what's possible when people are called upon to find the best in themselves during the darkest of times.

The book is available from amazon.com, alibris.com, abebooks.com, and booksurge.com

Praise for ACS

by Lynn Zovighian '04

Dr. John Meloy, a very popular History and Civilization Sequence professor told me today: "The ACS students that come to AUB are different. They are more willing to explore and be creative with their decisions. Many choose to not take the typical paths others choose to take." He also mentioned that many of our students that come to AUB are strong performers and are very mature and disciplined.

I was very moved by his words that I wanted to share them with all of you. I'm so happy to see that ACS continues to have the highest standards when it comes to academia and social values. In particular, praise from such a distinguished professor, whom I had the pleasure of taking three classes with, indicates the extent to which the academic elite values ACS' education.

On such a high note, I wish all of you a very pleasant day!

Anonymous Praise

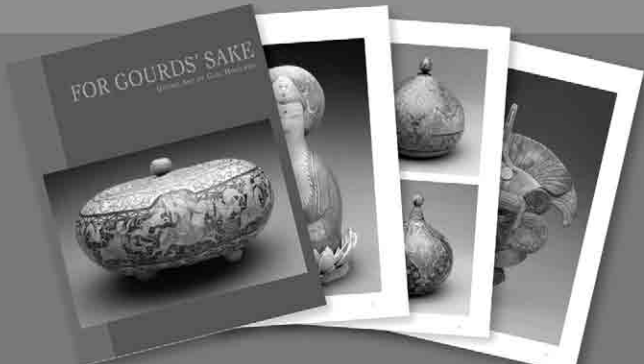
by Anonymous '55

Did you realize that we have a genius amongst us? I recently bought a copy of Gail Hohlweg's book "For Gourds' Sake". It's absolutely incredible.

There are no words to describe it. You must get ahold of a copy. I know that you are aware that she is trying to sell it. The hours and hours she has put into that work runs into years. She would have been famous by now.

[Editor's Note: We have ordered two copies of the book, and endorse the opinion of "Anonymous '55" above.]

★ NEWLY PUBLISHED ★



Simply EXTRA-ORDINARY

This beautiful 10" x 12" 128 page book features full color photographs of the eclectic gourd works by Northern California artist Gail Hohlweg.

Gourds are used as utilitarian items today just as they were several thousand years ago. They also have a beautiful outer surface that has compelled artistic embellishment throughout the ages. Gail Hohlweg was just so inspired and has taken gourd art to a new level with her wide range of design and technique. *For Gourds' Sake* showcases her full collection of work and range of artistic development, from simple elegance to the intricate and complex.

AVAILABLE FOR YOUR COLLECTION NOW

Limited printing, available only by mail

To order: 707.274.5518 - ogrehil@comcast.net - Gail Hohlweg, P.O. Box 248, Lucerne, CA 95458
\$70 plus tax (CA residents only: \$5.08), \$5 postage and handling - Payable by check to Gail - Delivery by US mail

Gail Hohlweg '54 has just published this book.

Letters to the Editor

My compliments to the Opulent Office Of Pot Services (OOOPS), I have received my copy of the *Pot* and am enjoying it as always. I will add my belated thanks for all you do for the ACS alumni. I hope you can add mine to a very large stack of grateful communications.

-- Tony Glockler '53

I think you do a marvelous job with "the diaspora potrezebie". It's always so interesting. I eagerly look forward to receiving my issue... Enough said for now - keep up the brilliant work.

-- Patricia Roberts-Henning '55

Received my copy yesterday. I want to thank you for doing this work for so many years. Best wishes to all.

-- Haig Yeni-Komshian '58

My copy of the *Pot* just arrived. Thank you for your efforts to assemble and distribute the *Pot*. I didn't realize that you had a staff of hundreds helping, but thank you to the staff too. You and they do a nice job. I enjoy reading through, and every so often seeing people that I knew mentioned.

-- Dick Hellmann '60

The *Pot* has even reached deepest, darkest Ireland, where Thom Moore '61 is delighted to discover that there is a **Tom Murphy '58** resident in County Longford, whom he will attempt to contact immediately...But even more disturbingly wonderful was that interview with **Belle Dorman-Rugh '25**, who has to be some kind of magical exemplar of all that was right with the world and the Americans in it, back before the current (well, post-1948) malaise....

-- Thom Moore '61

I was just looking through the latest issue of the "Pot", and there I was looking back at myself . . . Page 14, bottom photo "ACS Grades 4 - 6 in 1952"). Little Joey Volkmann 1st row, far left (up against the planter wall). I still have my copies of the "Manara" from '52 and '53, which, of course I am now looking through. After looking at the yearbooks, I think the caption on this photo should read "Grades 3 - 6" as I was in the 3rd grade in 1952.

-- Joe Volkmann '61

Ditto what Tony said :-). (He put it so eloquently; why reinvent the wheel???). xo

-- Lisa Moore '72

I just want to say how touched I was by the interview of centenarian **Belle Dorman-Rugh '25**. Thanks! And -- for the *Pot* --a fantastic DC mini reunion -- pleased to finally meet **Yehya Siblini '06**, a very recent alum who braved us old folks at the Lebanese Taverna in Alexandria, VA.

-- Betsy Vandenberg-Toperzer '74

I received my issue of the *Pot* on Saturday!! I especially enjoyed the interview with **Belle Dorman-Rugh '25**. I love reading about early accounts of life in Beirut and Lebanon. Now I must get her books! I have Anne Byerly Moore's book, Lebanon's Child. I "won" it at the silent auction at the Portland reunion. Thank you for all you do to keep us all connected! Take care!

-- Peggy Williams '75

I got my September *Pot* and it's LOVERLY. I understand you owe me 55 piasters. Pay up.

-- Connie Scott-Walker-Lindstrom '76

[Editor's Note: As a bonus for her inimitable chutzpah, a 250-piaster coin was mailed to Connie Scott-Walker-Lindstrom '76.]

Alumni Notes removed at editor's request

Summer in the City (SITC) Celebrations

This multi-city (11 locations) series of mini-reunions was arranged by the AA/ACS Diversity Committee. Good times were had by all, as you'll see in the reports below.

Denver – August 22, 2008

by **Dave Williams '74, Governor of AA/ACS**

We had a total of 18 in attendance for the ACS Denver alumni dinner last night, including 10 alumni:

Walt Beebe '56 and his wife Carol
Bob Sample '56 and his wife Barb
Jerry Berk '58 and his wife Dianne
Kay Linda Grace '64
Cindy Hamilton-Anderson '67 and her husband Jim
Susan Moore '67
Lynn Callow '69
Janice Callow '71
Toi Niemi-Samanant '74
David Williams '74

...and other guest, including: Angel & Ray Thai (guests of the Samples), Diane Callow, and Kay Linda Grace's daughter Alicia.

The most popular menu entree was the Brochette Combination: a combination of beef shish kabob, kefta kabob, chicken kabob and gyros, served over a bed of rice after two previous courses of appetizers: hommus, babaghanouj, falafel, stuffed grape leaves, pita bread and choice of greek salad or tabouli!.

Mohammed Ettachfini, our gracious Moroccan restaurant manger, photographer and drink taker, slipped us some incredible whipped garlic dip that was oh so powerful! Year books were opened from the 60's & 70's to verify our connection to each other. The ACS Matters color newsletter, Diversity Committee pamphlet, and souvenir forms were provided to all and current

alumni data collected upon signing in. Thanks to Cindy Hamilton Anderson '67 for recommending such excellent and authentic cuisine menu provided by the Sahara Restaurant. Bob, Lynn & Janice could often be heard conversing in pretty darn near perfect Arabic with the restaurant servers and "Moe" who really took a liking to my Nikon 200, so much so the battery finally quit after so many flash photo's!

Abu Dhabi/Dubai – August 22, 2008

by **Lynn Zovhikian '04, Governor of AA/ACS**

At first, we (Lynn in the third person) were concerned. The event had begun at 8:00 p.m. and no one had arrived. At 8:30 p.m., four ACSers showed up. At 9:30 p.m. the massive crowd arrived and Lynn was able to breathe a sigh of relief! Three more Lebanese fashionably late leaders arrived at 10:00 p.m. We had one from the class of '94, 5 from the class of '99, 6 from the class of '00, 5 from the class of '01, 4 from the class of '02, and 3 from the class of '04, for a total of 24 attendees.



The Denver group of ACSers lines up for a photo! Note how they even made a sign! Photo courtesy of Dave Williams '74.



The Dubai Group. Photo courtesy of Lynn Zovighian '04.

Boston MA – August 22, 2008

by **Farrah Haidar '94, Governor of AA/ACS**

Twelve ACS Alumni gathered at the Asgard in Cambridge, MA for a great night of dining and reminiscing. Graduation years ranged from 1955 to 1998, with at least three alumni graduating in the 1990s. A lot of old stories were told and updates given on the current situation in Beirut. All in all, it was a very enlightening evening. Attendees included:

Juergen Greineder '55
Lorna McKenzie-Pollack '60
David Holladay '71
M. Robertson '71
Sandy Smith-Bickford '71
Dudley Smith '73
Peter Holladay '74
Nadia Hakim '76
Farrah Haidar '94
Rimah Merhi '94
Fadi Kanaan '98
Bill Jastromb (Fac '63-'65)

In preparation for the event, we sent out one email announcement and a reminder (attached). For those MA alumni who did not have email addresses, we sent out postcards. I have gotten a couple of address corrections which I passed on to Fadwa. Thanks, Fadi, for putting all this together!

Los Angeles, CA – August 23, 2008

by **Pat Hinds '56, Governor of AA/ACS**

Much credit and many thanks go to **Gina Kano-Smith '73** for her help organizing the event, contacting alumni, and in the end, performing the hostess duties because, darn it, I could not attend.

The venue for the LA gathering was the *Burger Continental* in Pasadena, California. The word form Gina is that the restaurant was very hot. But nonetheless with true ACS grit, the group persevered to the end. Do you remember how hot and humid Beirut could be at the beginning of the school year and at the end? For the ACS geezers, think June 1956 in the Boarding Department.

Gina provided the following description of the event. "The gathering in Pasadena on Saturday night was a huge success! All the decades were represented, as we had folks from the 50's, 60's, 70's and even the 80's! It was great for me as I got to see my good friends **Karim Cherif '75**, **Rosanna Alahaidoyan-Eskandarian '74**, and **Cathy Carson-Martin '72**. Cathy came the furthest, as she was visiting from Alberta, Canada with her son Jeff. Rosanna was my sister Nayla's best friend all the way through ACS, and lives in nearby Glendale. There was lots of conversation about the good old days in Beirut, and **J. P. O'Connor '79** had brought his laptop and showed us pictures of his recent trip there. Those of us who have visited recently found the "new Downtown" absolutely amazing, but longed for the "souks" of old where we could buy everything including used blue jeans! It was great to hear the different generations all echo the same wonderful feelings about Beirut. The food was excellent as we had a mezza of Hummos, Baba Ghanoush, Falafel, Shawarma, Tabouli and more. Everything was delicious!" Attending were:

Roger Baty '55 and wife Phebe
Pakrad Kazazian '55

Marilyn Rogers '55
Bill Dimpfl '63
Joanne Markarian-Kubler '68
Ralph Cherchian '69
Cathy Carson '72
Dalol Dhaneus '73
Gina Kano Smith '73
Jon Waterman '73
Rosanna Eskandarian '74
Karim Cherif '75
Nancy Ashley '78
Kip Jones '78 and wife Kathy
JP. O'Conner '79
Zsuzsu Illes '80
Ralph Cardwell '81



L-R: JP OConnor '79, Kathy and Kip Jones '78, Marilyn Rogers '55 at the LA SITC. Photo courtesy of Gina Kano-Smith '73.



Dalal Dhaneus '73, Joanne Markarian-Kubler '68, Bill Dimpfl '63. Right: Zsu Zsu Illes '80, Karim Cherif '75 (blocked), Ralph Cherchian '69, (head to camera), and Randa Cardwell '81. Photo courtesy of Gina Kano-Smith '73.

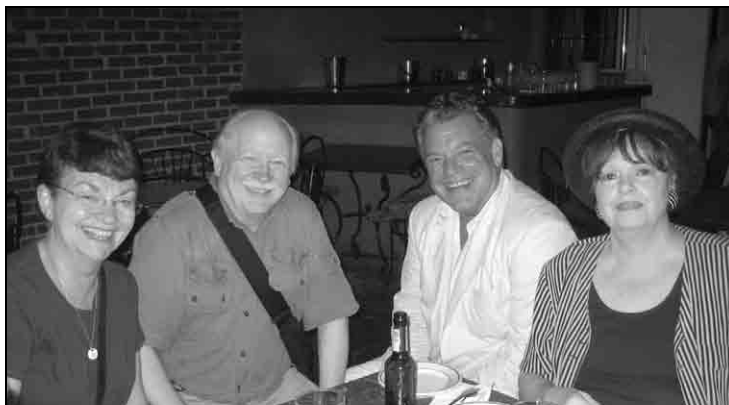
New York, NY – August 23, 2008

by **JoAnn Atwood '72, VP of AA/ACS**

New York's SITC was a well attended affair, with the additional luck of having two "out-of-towners" in attendance! We had 19 alums, and two friend/spouses:

Dotty Emmerson '56
Burke Walker '61
Carol Serventi-Vandenborre '62
George Bennett '63
Peggy Atwood '68

Ellen Porter-Honnet '69 (in from Massachusetts)
Warren Hart '72
Noreen O'Donnell '73
Pat Meyer-Crabtree '75 and her husband Brian
John "Can" Seker '77 and his friend Elizabeth
Sarah Vogwill '77
Christine O'Donnell-Perret '78
Tony Seker '79
Marwan Kreidie '79 (in from Philly)
Julian Cassia '00
Omar Chisidies '00 (co-host extraordinaire!)
Majd Maksad '00
Nick Samara '00



L-R: Carol Vandenborre-Serventi '62, Burke Walker '61, George Bennett '63, Dotty Emmerson '56. Photo courtesy of JoAnn Atwood '72.



Julian Cassia '00, Omar Christidis '00, Majd Maksad '00, Marwan Kreidie '79. Photo courtesy of JoAnn Atwood '72.



L-R: JoAnn Atwood '72, Peggy Atwood '68, Ellen Porter-Honnet '69, Noreen O'Donnell '73. Photo courtesy of JoAnn Atwood '72.

It was held at multi-nationality Arabic restaurant in the East Village called *Moustache*, which had wonderful food, and a very pleasant and well-suited backyard that we basically overran. The weather was perfect, and the moods were high. A number of people reconnected for the first time since their graduations, where as the younger generation just caught up from that last time they'd seen each other. I brought my yearbook, which was a good source of photos for quite a few of us, and a good archeological find for the class of '00 to look at! Majd has just returned from Beirut, and reported on the general mood they're these days, which did not sound very good.

A few people continued on into the evening for a round at a local pub, to catch up some more on current events, and reminisce some about old ones. We were seeking out a hookah-bar, but they've become far too trendy for our meager wallets!

Thanks to Peggy for bringing her camera! Peggy and Pat were probably tied for furthest travel from the "real" NY/NJ group.

Washington, DC – August 23, 2008

by **Valerie Estes-Ragan '76**, Governor of AA/ACS, and **Debra Estes Eason '74**.

When the "Summer in the City" concept was first floated to the BOG, the first thing I did was e-mailed my sister Debra Estes Eason ('74) to say "Can you help??" When she quickly said "Yes!", the Washington DC event was launched. The Lebanese Taverna in Arlington, VA was the scene of the Washington DC "Summer in the City" and a total of 30 people participated. Participants included:

Georgia Clark Sadler '58 and husband Dudley
Haig Yeni-Komshian '58
Christopher Ross '60
Peggy Flynn '60
Charlie Minette Kaplow '62
Deborah Burris '68 and husband Gary
Carolyn Bates Bonner '68 and husband Emmett
Clifton Foster '70
Anne Bruder '70
Barbara Allen '71
Cynthia Fetterolf '72
Karen Lee Fetterolf '73
Debra Estes Eason '74
Jay Bruder '74
Betsy Van den Berg Toperzer '74, husband Michael, daughter Jensen
Laila Wolle '74
Valerie Estes Ragan '76 and husband John
Susan Allgaier Kopa '76 and husband Mike
Karen Hajj '77
Craig Fetterolf '77
Cathy Bruder '77
Lori Schmeige '81
Yehya Siblini '06

We had great food, and lots of fun visiting and getting to meet some new folks. We were fortunate that the Fetterolfs were in the area and were able to join us. Also, we were really pleased to have two new faces! – Lori Schmeige '81 who drove up from Richmond even though she had never attended a previous ACS alumni function and didn't know a soul. Yehya Siblini '06 was our most recent grad to attend and also didn't know anyone, although he had

“met” Elizabeth Topezor '74 through Facebook! Welcome Lori and Yehya! (and thanks Deb!).



SITC-DC: Valerie Estes-Ragan '76 shows the “secret handshake” to Carolyn Bates-Bonner '68. Photo courtesy of Carol Bates-Bonner '68.



Dudley Sadler and Georgia Clark-Sadler '58 at the DC Fest. Photo courtesy of Carol Bates-Bonner '68.



Yehya Siblini '06 - our most recent ACS and (ahem) youthful alum. Photo courtesy of Carol Bates-Bonner '68.

Portland, OR – August 23, 2008

by **Jon Stacey '61, Governor of AA/ACS**

Thirteen Oregonians and two Washingtonians gathered at the fantastic Karam Restaurant in downtown Portland for this event. We had a “set-piece” *prix fixe* menu served family style that I had arranged beforehand with the owner, Tony Karam in order to ease the burden on his wait staff. A plus for the imbibers was Ksara wine and Almaza beer! Our group encompassed 23 graduation years from ACS, with Curt Bell '55 having seniority:

Curt Bell '55 and his wife Linda

Sally Parmelee-Young '58

Jon Stacey '61 (wife **Lisa Ebert '74** was home watching the dog)

Linda Rutan-Lynch '63 and her husband Phillip

Drew (“L.D.”) Smith '65 and his wife Cindy

Pieter deVos '72 and his wife Gaylin

Sue Jacoby '73 and her partner Susan

Carol Kerr-Brem '75

Dolf deVos '78 and his wife Georgiana



Drew Smith '65, his wife Cindy, and Pieter DeVos '72. Photo by the Pot Staff.



Sally Parmelee-Young '58, Sue Jacoby '73, and Georgiana Devos (wife of Dolf '78). Photo by the Pot Staff.

Portland has about 15 Middle Eastern restaurants, but Karam is by far the best, having received numerous awards – I highly recommend that you try it if you are in our area. The food was excellent and the service outstanding. They had set aside the back room, so we had some real privacy, as well as protecting the rest of the guests from Dolfie’s attempts to sing. Tony Karam and his wife Emelin run a fantastic show, helped out by their strikingly beautiful daughter Noel, 17, and younger son Karam (that’s right – his name

is “Karam Karam.”) Noel had just returned from several weeks in Beirut, and gave us a run-down on the current goings-on.



L-R: Tony Karam, Jon Stacey '61, Noel Karam, Emelin Karam, and Karam Karam. Photo by the Carol Kerr-Brem '75

Seattle, WA – August 23, 2008

by **Linda Handschin-Sheppard '68, President of AA/ACS**

Twelve alums and eleven guests dined al fresco on wonderful Lebanese food in downtown Bellevue, formerly a bedroom community and now a bustling metropolis. The wonderful Lebanese food is a bit of a surprise as Seattle doesn't seem to do Mediterranean cuisine without huge infusions of raw garlic.

Keith Watenpaugh '57 and wife Joyne
Sherry Brown-Schmidt '58 and daughter Donna Cole
Jane Peterson '59 and guest Bob Coeely
Martha Bassett-DuHamel '64
Kim Henry '68 and husband Nick Niccolls
Linda Handschin-Sheppard '68 and husband, Ken
Sally Brough '69 and her husband Dave
Jan Strong '69 and friend Mariam
Nancy Muller '70, daughter Fiona and son Roman
Sally Gowing '71
Hilary Henry-Neff '72 and son Jordan
Cynthia Soghikian-Wolfe '72



L-R: AA/ACS President Linda Handschin-Sheppard '68 and ???. Photo courtesy of Jane Peterson '59.

There were a number of small world stories to share -- three alums with current connections to Armenia; the Watenpaughs are moving just blocks from my school; and Janet Strong '69 joined us for the first time from her hermitage, named Beit Mary in Eastern



L-R: ???, Cynthia Soghikian-Wolfe '72 and ???. Photo courtesy of Jane Peterson '59.



L-R ??? and Martha Bassett DuHamel '64. Photo courtesy of Jane Peterson '59.

Washington. The three from the class of 1968 members all work or live in Bellevue. We plan lunch soon.

High on my list of successes, I sold a bunch of souvenirs. I can't thank Fadi enough for taking the lead on this grand event. I hope we repeat it.

Summary

Oldest Class Represented: 1955 (at several venues)
 Youngest Class Represented: 2006 (Washington, DC)
 Highest Attendance: Washington, DC
 Class Years Spanned (all SITC's): 51



SITC for the Seattle Contingent. Photo courtesy of Jane Peterson '59.

How the ACS was Born

by Rev. Dr. Daniel Bliss Leavitt '40

The seeds of what became ACS were sown in 1902 when the Board of Trustees of the Syrian Protestant College in Beirut elected its second president, the Rev. Howard S. Bliss, son of its founding president, Daniel Bliss and Abby Bliss, a member of Emily Dickinson's "inner circle". Howard had been born in Suk-al-Gharb and grew up on the campus of the College, which later became the American University of Beirut.

At the time, Howard was pastor of the Union Congregational Church in Upper Montclair, NJ. With his wife Amy, he sailed for Beirut with their four children, Mary, Margaret, Alice and Dan, with their fifth, Hunt, being born shortly thereafter.

The demands of a new position and a growing family persuaded them that they would need a governess. At a stopover in London they were introduced to a competent and caring woman, Miss Winifred Thornton, and it was soon apparent that she was the one they were seeking. Before long she was a part of the family and moved with them to Marquand House, the president's residence where she began home-schooling the children.

Like ripples on a pond, the idea spread and it was not long before children of other families were invited to enroll. By 1905 the group had grown to become The Faculty School and it was chartered as the American Community School. Although the student body was not limited to Americans, it was made clear that its purpose was to prepare students for the rigors and high educational standards of American colleges and universities.

Over the years the student body has grown greatly while holding to the high standards of its earlier years. It has endured through two World Wars, local civil wars, crises and political conflicts.

It is not likely that the beloved governess Miss Thornton could have foreseen what home-schooling five young Bliss children might someday lead to. But if she could appear today, out of the blue, like some 21st century Mary Poppins, she would probably

have only one word to describe the modern American Community School of Beirut: "Supercalifragilisticexpialidoshus!!"

President's Message

by Linda Handschin-Sheppard '68

Thanks to so many:

- A special thanks to **Fadi Kanaan '98** for organizing Summer in the City International. We hope this will become a signature event for the Alumni Association during years when no triennial reunion is held. Recaps from around the world are included in this issue of the Pot.
- Thanks to **Jon Stacey '61** for compiling reports from all eleven hosts of the Summer in the City events into a how-to manual for anyone who'd like to host one of these in their area. It is easier than you would think.
- Thanks to **Sam Constan '53 (Trus)** for not only being instrumental in the early years of the AA/ACS but for his sixteen years of faithful service to the ACS Board of Trustees.
- Thanks in advance to the Austin Reunion 2010 Committee who is hard at work planning an event to host alums from around the world and showcase their city too.
- Unbeknownst to most alums, Lina Safa in the Development and Alumni Affairs Office in Beirut has been taking good care of the alumni database since its transfer to the school in 2007. Thanks, Lina.
- We owe **Jeff Hutchins '65** some kudos for finding the Board of Governors a new carrier for our conference calls.
- Finally, thanks to all fifteen members of the board for their devotion to this volunteer organization. They dial in to the conference calls, step forward and volunteer time and again and keep a prudent eye on the finances.

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Maids and Houseboys (A Compendium)

Many of us had servants while living overseas – an oddity at first to most of us, as only the very rich in the U.S. could afford servants. The vignettes below show how they were part of our lives

Our "houseboy", who was a man in his forties, got full room and board, lived in an air-conditioned bed/sitting room with a full bath, and had full kitchen privileges. Often he and his friends sat outside in our side yard and had tea. He always got a paid week for the Haj as well as a paid vacation whenever he wanted to go visit his family in the Sudan. The fear of not getting back into Saudi led to fewer visits than he wished, I think. We paid him only \$100.00 a month, but his was four times what most USGS paid their staff -- indeed my mother got yelled at by some of the other women for "inflating " the salaries. We also bought all his clothes for him.

He was like a second father to me, and actually saved my mother's life when she got dangerously ill when my father was out in the desert. I have a silver framed photo of Ali Hassan Ali in our dining room and he will always be in my heart. He worked 10 years for us.

The saddest thing about leaving Saudi was knowing that we were moving back to a country where a black African would be treated so poorly that we couldn't even think of bringing him here to work, even though he really wanted to. He had such dignity, his soul would have died.

-- Liz Brown '72

Our "houseboy" was also in his forties and we paid him very well as well. I was once told not to disclose how much we paid him because there was so much pressure from the other Americans to keep wages low.

He did spend a great deal of time with us cooking all the meals and having political discussions with my mother and me. He would translate the Arabic newspapers. His photo was on the mantel of my parent's home until my mother died. I do not know what happened to that photo.

My mother thought of him as a dear friend.

-- Monroe Pastermack '53

Yes, a similar story to Uthman A., from Sudan. He was in Dhahran with us from 54 through 60. I will never forget him, wonder how and where he is, (he'd probably be in his late 70s now), and still have his photo with me. He influenced the entire rest of my life, and my family probably influenced his.... though God only knows how.

-- Kim Henry '68

We had a cook (Goitum) and a mail (Askedet) when we live in Asmara, Eritrea. Askedet used to make beadwork for our mother as a gift, and wove several baskets for the family, always refusing payment. Unfortunately, Goitum didn't like her so Mom had to let her go.

When we arrived in Lebanon in 1955, we had a very pretty young maid named Noura. She did a great job, and I really liked her personality and good looks. However, my brother **Fred '64**, who was nine years old at the time, complained about her kissing him good-bye when we set off on our walk to ACS. Mom let her go, and it took me years to forgive my brother!

-- Jon Stacey '61

Exclusively From the Fifties

by **Linda Bell**

An ACS Mini Reunion Weekend was hosted in Portland, Oregon by **Curt Bell '55**, his wife Linda McKim-Bell and **Pakrad Kazazian '55**. On July 27 they had a Lebanese dinner, where classmates and friends of ACS shared photos, yearbooks and memories of ACS. A breakfast the next day offered more time to chat, reflect and reconnect with classmates. A big thank you to Fadwa Ghanoum, of the Development Office at ACS for the lovely ACS Newsletters, Development brochures, and Literary Magazines that helped us remember how much ACS means to us.



Standing, L-R: Dave Engen '54, Bill Tracy '53, Shirley Harcourt, Hugh Harcourt (Trus), Sally Parmelee-Young '58, Paul Schmidbauer '55, Judy Webster-Bauer '55, Dale Bauer, Gloria Tuma and Kasia Quillinan. Kneeling, L-R: Curtis Bell '55 and Pakrad Kazazian '55. Photo courtesy of Sally Parmelee-Young '58.

I am sending the additional photo below because it includes Linda who, not being an ACS graduate, doesn't always get in the ACS group photos, but was a major force in the reunion.

-- Sally Parmelee-Young '58



Hosts Linda and Curt Bell '55 in their beautiful back yard. Photo courtesy of Sally Parmelee-Young '58.

Even MORE Pictures from the '50s & '60s



Pat Hills '57 is raised above the dunk tank at the May Carnival by a straining Leroy Crane '56. Photo courtesy of Pat Hills-Finlayson '57.



Ralph Englesby (Fac) at the International School of Rawalpindi in 1968. Photo courtesy of Dana Sanderson '74.



Dana Sanderson '74 is the boy in the front row, and next to him with his chin in hand is Drew Curtiss '75). Behind them, the blond girl at the end of the row is Ava Lilll '74, and the girl in glasses next to her is Delinda Curtiss '73. Photo courtesy of Dana Sanderson '74.



Ki Hennig '57, Pat Hills '57, Bette Beebe '57, and Carolyn Holm '57 in 1955. Photo courtesy of Pat Hills-Finlayson '57.



Christmas Prom 1954. Photo courtesy of Pat Hills-Finlayson '57.

The Last Five Years

[Following is a listing of the articles we've printed in the *Pot* during the last five years. Our thanks to the many contributors.]

Ed Nicol '35, **Small World**, 3/08
Frank Stewart '35, **Games We Played in Beirut**, 6/07
Albert Allen '49, **The Verbalized Landscapes of Richard Harding Davis**, 9/04
Albert Allen '49, **Kahlil Gibran: Burroughs's Lebanese Counterpart**, 9/07
Sheila Acton-Newman '50, **Recollections I**, 6/08
Joan Bliss-Wilson '50, Margit Bliss-Orange '53, and Alice Bliss-Studebaker '55, **ACSer Celebrates 100th Birthday**, 12/03
Samuel Constan '53 (Trus), **Creating the ACS Alumni Database**, 6/06
Tony Glockler '53, **Glockler Gallivants over the Levant**, 11/05
William Tracy '53, **On the Turquoise Coast: Memories of a Ras Tanura Boyhood**, 9/04
William Tracy '53, **Bill & Marjorie's Big Adventure**, 9/08
Rolf Christophersen '56, **Stalin's Silver**, 3/04
Patrick Hinds '56, **ACS Mini-Reunion in Nevada City, CA**, 6/04
Patrick Hinds '56, **A Reunion of Friends**, 9/08
Barbara Lucher-Graham '56, **ACS – A School That Changes Lives**, 12/03
Donald K. Emmerson '57, **America the Fearful**, 7/05
Charles Gordon '58, **Student Revolution in 1958**, 12/04
Sally Parmelee-Young '58 & Steve Pierce '58, **Remembering Robin Young**, 6/06
Carol Glessner-Haeussner '59, **A Sentimental Journey**, 12/06
John Nelson '59, **Remembering Dr. George Za'rour**, 9/07
Tom Dinney '61, **Dues Deadbeat**, 3/04
Tom Dinney '61, **The First ACS Reunion**, 3/06
Thom Moore '61, **Dr. Zarour was The Man!**, 11/05
Diane Showalter-Hooley '61, **ACS – A School That Changes Lives**, 3/04
Jon Stacey '61, **My First Job**, 3/04
Jon Stacey '61, **Class of '61 Mini-Reunion in Florida**, 6/07
Jon Stacey '61, **The Rope Ladder**, 12/07
Jon Stacey '61, **Acculturation**, 3/08
Lyn Hussong-Grinstein '62, **Memories & Flashbacks**, 9/04
Pat Smith-Ley '62, **Recollections II**, 6/08
Nick Boke '63, **Coming Home**, 6/07
George Hermann '63, **Reunion in Bangkok**, 3/06
Lorna Plant-Chammas '64, **Evacuation during the 2006 War**, 9/07
Ricky Ryan '64, George Herrmann '63, & Thom Moore '61, **Memories of Chuck Wallach '64**, 6/06
Michael Davenport '65, **History vs. Memories: Some Observations**, 7/05
Michael Davenport '65, **Washington Report**, 12/07
Steve Davies '65, **Trip to North Lebanon in 1963**, 12/06
Jan Singer-Quinn '65, **Travelogue**, 3/08
Rich Thomas '66, **At the Barbershop**, 4/05
Linda Handschin-Sheppard '68, **ACSers Connected**, 6/08
Joy Martin '68, **Chasing the Eclipse**, 9/06
John Foster '69, **Yet Even More Memories of Don Corsette (Fac)**, 6/07
Becky Sibley '70, **Beirut Nostalgia**, 7/05
Barbara Deines-Martin '71, **Speaking of ACS and Motorcycles...** 6/06
Alice Trembour '71, **Bittersweet**, 9/08
Scott Williams '71, **Return to Beirut**, 4/05
Susan Fields-Potter '72 & Kathy Sligh-Boyce '69, **ACS - The Greek Years**, 4/05
Dana Johnston '72, **More Memories of Don Corsette (Fac)**, 3/07
Cynthia Soghikian-Wolfe M.D. '72, **Interview with an Astronaut**, 6/08
William Webster-Garman '72, **A Concise Centennial History of ACS**, 6/04
John Ragland '74, **Remembering Don Corsette (Fac)**, 9/06
Sophia Severino '77, **The Fruits of Lebanon**, 3/08
Steven Barnes '81, **My Son's Poem**, 6/08
David Bailey '84, **Reflections of an Teenage Evacuee**, 12/06
Amanda DeFelice-Fonda '85, **ACS -- A School that Changes Lives**, 9/04
Fadi Kanaan '98, **ACS Mini-Reunion in Boston**, 3/04
Shereen Halbaoui '04, **A Tribute to Fairuz Night**, 6/04
Mohamad Moukallati '07, **Beach Clean-Up**, 3/06
Raya '10 (last name withheld), **We Have a "Situation"**, 3/08
Paul Bisson (Fac), **A Brief Remembrance**, 12/06
Fran Copeland-Stickles (Fac), **ACS in the Early 1950's**, 3/06
Bill Jastromb (Fac), **A Teacher's Remembrance of Life at ACS -- August, 1963 to June, 1965**, 9/06
Ray Ruehl (Fac), **Evacuation During the 1967 War**, 9/07
John Shiber (Fac), **From AUB to ACS**, 6/07
Sue Standish-Brown (Fac), **Remembering Coach Brown**, 11/05

Lebanese Special Olympics

by Gail Chandler-Hawkins '63

Two Special Olympics athletes from Lebanon came to Boise, Idaho in February, 2008, to participate in the *2008 Special Olympics Invitational Games*. Rabah Knio and Ali Maadarani competed in alpine skiing and snowshoeing, respectively, at Bogus Basin ski area just 45-minutes from Boise, and in Sun Valley. **Gail Chandler-Hawkins, '63**, served as the Delegation Assistant Liaison to Lebanon, hosting the delegation during its stay in Idaho. Her brother, **Blaine Chandler '76**, who also lives in Boise, was able to watch Rabah make his alpine skiing run and gave him tips on how to go faster. The enthusiasm and skill of the athletes was compelling and heart-warming. Gail recently joined the *2009 Special Olympics World Winter Games* Organizing Committee as Guest Services Manager, responsible for hosting donors, sponsors, government and sports program officials, and celebrities during the world-wide Games in February 2009. 3,000 athletes from over 100 countries will compete in seven sports. Lebanon plans to send an alpine skier and a snowshoer, and their cheering section is eagerly waiting for them.



L-R are: Ali Maadarani, Rabah Knio, Fouad Marroush (coach), and Blaine Chandler '76, standing; Gail Chandler-Hawkins '64 and Blaine's wife, Lin, are sitting. Photo courtesy of Gail Chandler-Hawkins '63.

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