



EAGLE EYES

Volume 8, Number 3

News From Fall Trimester 2000

EAGLE ROCK MAKES THE NEWS

by Lois Easton, Director of Professional Development

Several articles or book chapters about Eagle Rock have been published during the Fall 2000 Trimester. Authors have included former intern Amanda Paulson, frequent visitor and good friend of Eagle Rock, Mark Phillips of San Francisco State University, and Lois Easton, Director of Professional Development.

Amanda Paulson

Amanda Paulson was an intern at Eagle Rock during the 1998-99 school year. Following a round-the-world sailing trip in 1999-2000, Amanda joined the staff of the Christian Science Monitor. Her writing has focused on educational issues, but she has also written about fathers ("Father Sells Best") and weekends ("Where Did the Weekend Go?") and getting familiar with the internet ("Surf With Style: Just Don't Become a Mouse Potato"). She also writes a regular column called "What's New" a compilation of education stories from the wire services.

Three articles about Eagle Rock were included in the September 12, 2000 edition of the Monitor, some with illustrations and graphics. The first article, "At Eagle Rock, Life and Learning Meet," focused on Presentations of Learning (POLs) and an Eagle Rock student. Here is the beginning of that article:

In an idyllic nook of the Rocky Mountains, a teenager stands before an audience of peers and educators, drawing connections between Gandhi, the Holocaust, biking through the Rockies, and his life. It's hard to believe that just several months ago, Patrick was considered a problem kid and was failing classes in San Francisco. Now a student at Eagle Rock high school, he's giving his Presentation of Learning (POL), a requirement at the end of each trimester.

A second article looked at the purposes of Eagle Rock. Titled "A School-Reform Model in the Rockies," the article explores the mission of the Professional Development Center. Here is how that article begins:

Giving students a sense of purpose and tools for lifelong learning is at the heart of Eagle Rock high school. But

its ultimate mission reaches even further: to change public education so that far fewer kids fall through the cracks each year. Through the school's Professional Development Center, about 2000 people each year visit Eagle Rock in Estes Park, Colorado. While some just stop in for a student-led tour, the center also hosts groups of teachers, education students, policymakers and others.

Paulson's third article had a headline designed to intrigue: "8 = 5 = 10: It All Adds Up to Explicit Values." Paulson addressed the math in the first few lines of her story:

To help create "a culture of hope, a culture of possibility, and a culture of excellence" at Eagle Rock high school, Robert Burkhardt developed an equation: 8 + 5 = 10. It may be bad math, but the head of the school says it's also shorthand for Eagle Rock's value system and serves as the foundation for the curriculum. The equation, which students learn by heart, stands for the eight themes, five expectations, and 10 commitments that members of the community agree to uphold.

Mark Phillips

The Fall 2000 issue of Independent School focused on "The PUBLIC PURPOSE of PRIVATE schools." Asked to write an article about Eagle Rock for this issue, Robert Burkhardt, head of school, and Lois Easton, Director of Professional Development, decided the article would be better written by a visitor to the Professional Development Center. The perfect visitor for the assignment was Mark Phillips, coordinator of teacher training at San Francisco State University. A frequent Eagle Rock visitor and POL panel member, Phillips has also had many Eagle Rock students and graduates address his college classes in San Francisco.

After the Columbine tragedy, Phillips wrote and gave a speech comparing Columbine to Eagle Rock; this speech was printed in the Fall 1999 edition of "Eagle Eyes."

Phillips begins his article with these words:

At first glance, Eagle Rock School, with its gorgeous setting in the Colorado Rockies and its \$17 million facility

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EAGLE ROCK GRADUATES 55th STUDENT

Eagle Rock's 55th graduate, Reynaldo Benally, came to Eagle Rock in ER 16 (Fall 1998) and graduated December 8, 2000. Benally plans to return to his home on the Navajo Reservation and continue learning from the medicine men of his people. He also anticipates getting involved in straw-bale housing on the reservation.

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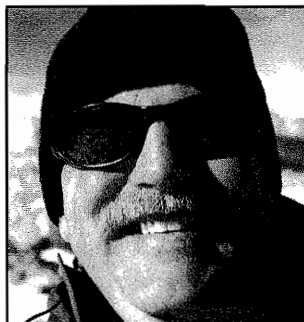
GRATITUDE: THE LENS OF MY INTRODUCTION TO EAGLE ROCK

by Jeff Liddle, Wilderness
Program Director

As I write to introduce myself to you on this, the day before Thanksgiving, I am naturally drawn to share my story through the lens of gratitude. Coming to Eagle Rock and serving as the Wilderness Program Instructional Specialist is the culmination of 19 years of adventure programming and a short lifetime of involvement with the outdoors. My gratefulness at the opportunity to serve Eagle Rock lies at the surface of a much deeper appreciation for the life with which I've been blessed and the role the outdoors has played in it.

Growing up in western Pennsylvania around Thanksgiving meant one thing — whitetail buck deer hunting season. The Monday following Thanksgiving is a holiday in Pennsylvania and signals a time when everything stops for opening day. My weeks leading up to the big day were filled with many jaunts through the woods, scouting for signs of the big buck on the bare back of "Priscilla," the wild, midnight-black pony the neighbors had given me. When I was 15 my scouting paid off, and I shot my first deer. Lessons of death were plentiful as I looked into the lifeless eyes of that deer. I will never forget the conversation I had with my father as the sun set on that day. Never would I have guessed that in three short months his stay on this earth would also end. I am grateful for those early days of romping in the woods, for 15 years with a loving father, and for the lessons of rural living.

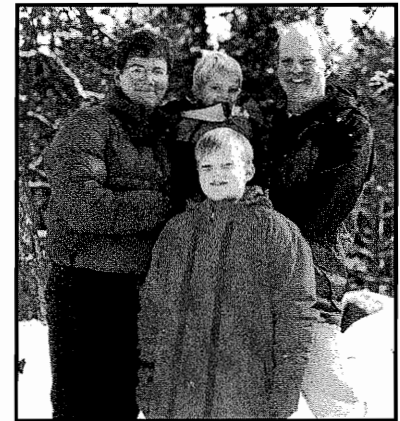
In 1983, Paul Petzoldt, founder of the National Outdoor Leadership School, was visiting my college campus. Having a keen interest in learning about outdoor leadership, I approached Paul and inquired about doing an internship with the Wilderness Education Association (Paul's latest project). He paused and looked me in the eye. While I waited for the grilling about my outdoor skills, I began to sweat. I had never been west of Ohio and had barely carried a backpack. Then it began: "Have you ever driven a tractor? Have you ever filled a barn with hay? Have you ever pulled a calf



Wilderness Instructor Jeff

from a cow during a hard delivery?" And on and on it went. After I answered affirmative to everything, he shook my hand and said, "I think you'll make a fine outdoor leader. Show up in Driggs, Idaho, on June 6."

I learned a lot that summer in the Tetons and have been passionate about wilderness ever since. Among other things, Paul taught me that character, hard work, and good judgment or what he called "horse sense" were far more important than any mountain climbed or piece of gear in one's closet. I am grateful for Paul being in my life.



Nanette, Ben, Jeff & Max Liddle

This morning, I awoke to a dinosaur snorting at my side. Merely three inches from my face stood Ben, my three-year-old! Of course, he refused to be called Ben. Correcting me, he said, "I'm not Ben, I'm a T-Rex." Adventure is in the eyes of the beholder! Thanks to my boys (Max who is eight and Ben), I am reminded over and over again that adventure is around every corner and, though mountains are nice, blankets hung over two chairs provide as many hours of adventure! I am grateful for their spirits. They humble me daily.

The past 15 years have been full of adventure and the one person I've shared most of it with is my life partner, Nannette. We have bicycled across the USA, led wilderness trips together, hiked, climbed and paddled all over the country. The outdoors even brought us together. We met on a wilderness course. Wild country is as necessary for our souls as water is to our bodies. I am grateful for Nannette's spirit, compassion, support and love.

In closing, I look forward to many years of grist for the gratitude mill here at Eagle Rock. I have great visions for the wilderness program and hope to help provide as much life changing opportunity for students as I've been blessed to experience in my life. And, I can't wait to sit down to that turkey dinner tomorrow!

"News" – Continued

on 650 idyllic acres, appears to be just another great looking independent school. But a closer look reveals a ten-year-old institution reaching out in new and engaging directions in independent education.

How is it different? First of all, Eagle Rock is the brain-child of the American Honda Corporation. While operating independently, the school is funded completely (and quietly) by Honda. All of its students attend tuition-free. Second, while the school's primary focus is on offering an innovative program for ninety at-risk teenagers from across the country, it also serves as a vibrant professional development center for teachers and administrators interested in serving this population. In a given year, 2,000 educators will come to Eagle Rock to observe and take part in the program.

Phillips describes the close relationship between the school and professional development center and then his own visits to the school through the center. He says, "I was also deeply touched by many of the students all of whom expressed a desire to use their time at Eagle Rock to turn their lives around" and describes, in particular, four Eagle Rock students. He profiles head of school Burkhardt, Tom Dean, Executive Director of the American Honda Education Corporation, before turning to the program and describing curriculum and the POLs. One of the most moving parts of his article is his reflection on the character development that is ongoing at Eagle Rock.

On a subsequent visit, Phillips brought a colleague, Reno Taini, former California Teacher of the Year, who directs the Jefferson Community Environmental Education Program in Daly City, CA. Taini and Phillips were POL panelists and also witnessed the graduation POLs. "Back in Daly City this past spring, Reno excitedly introduced POLs for the first time, and he and I also convened a panel on Eagle Rock in our teacher training class."

The National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) which publishes Independent School used an Eagle Rock photo on the cover of this issue. The photo shows student Monique Navarro balancing on the high wire of a ROPES course. The story itself is illustrated with a picture of several younger students being taught by Eagle Rock students in a course called "Touch the Future."

Lois Easton

One of the chapters in Uniquely Gifted: Identifying and Meeting the Needs of Twice-Excep-

tional Students was written by Lois Easton. The book, published by Avocus Publishing, Inc., in 2000, focuses on students who "are brilliant, creative thinkers who haven't made the grades in school. . . these thinkers have disabilities of one kind or another." Kiesa Kay, editor, makes the point that "schools traditionally do not address twice exceptionality successfully for reasons that can vary as much as individual students do. A highly gifted or profoundly gifted learner often looks about average in overall skills when other factors restrict the expression of what that child really knows."

Easton's chapter addressed several "lessons" learned at Eagle Rock about working with students labeled "at risk." One of the lessons learned is the value of smallness — number of students in a school, number of students in a class, so that "each. . . student is known well by at least one adult." While the virtues of smallness are clear — a more personalized learning environment, for example — less obvious are the management decisions that must be made because numbers are too high, decisions that often risk the learning of young people.

The chapter also discusses conditions of time, space and opportunities to learn and demonstrate learning that are usually fixed and absolute. Easton recommends that these become flexible in a number of ways. Easton discusses the advantage that choice-making offers to learners who have not succeeded in other locations. "By offering students choices in the specific content they study, we're signaling to students that they can choose to learn the way they want. We open up the learning even more when we suggest a variety of ways students can go about their learning. . . And, finally, we give students a wide choice in terms of how they show us they've learned."

The third lesson Easton offers is the benefit of operating according to a set of standards, called "8 + 5 = 10" at Eagle Rock. She concludes, "What makes our principles so valuable, then, is that they are known and practiced on campus by everyone, staff and students alike. These reference points remain overt, not hidden. They don't compete with a separate and covert but real set of principles. They bind the community around some core beliefs."

She ends the article with a statement: "The more we teach at Eagle Rock, the more our students teach us about what works in learning and leadership."

If you would like a copy of any of these publications, please contact Easton at 970-586-7109 or leaston@eaglerockschool.org.

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Life After Eagle Rock

Alison Trattner
Language and Literature

PARENT NEWSLETTER EXPANDS PARENT CONTACT

by Doug Rutherford, Parent

One of the greatest challenges facing any group or community is the ability to communicate effectively. On the campus of Eagle Rock School (ERS), this has traditionally been accomplished largely by means of group meetings: men's groups, women's groups, house meetings, staff meetings and the community-wide Gatherings. In the case of Gatherings, problems or salient issues affecting the community are addressed and openly discussed with the aim of communal well-being. At the same time, the identity and ethos of an Eagle Rock student is asserted and defined as well as the commitment to respect the values of a safe community.

For the community of parents and sponsors of Eagle Rock students, this ability to establish an identity and ethos is challenged by the demographics of a student body whose homes and families dot the map from coast to coast. We are a community dispersed over 22 states from California to Connecticut. Our "Gatherings," instead of daily each morning on campus, occur twice a year through the auspices of the Family/Sponsor Weekends in the fall and spring trimesters. Any communication that occurs in the interim has been left to the initiative of individual parents/sponsors interested in keeping in touch with each other. The Parent/Sponsor Group has also worked to involve parents/sponsors in the school through various activities and correspondences (see "ERS Parent/Sponsor Group, History and Developments," Secor, *Eagle's Nest*, Volume 1, Number 1, pp. 1 and 10).

Parents/sponsors are, in effect, a community in absentia. The potential for parents/sponsors to function as a group, to organize, support and actively involve ourselves in the lives of our kids while they attend ERS, is encumbered by the same geographic diversity that is part of the uniqueness of the school.

The participation of parents/sponsors plays a vital role in shaping successful students and producing candidates for graduation, a goal of every parent/sponsor for their student. In spite of our separation, we need to feel empowered to involve ourselves in our student's growth and gain ownership as partners of ERS. In an attempt to bridge the geographic gap from one another as a group and form the focus of our communal bond, Eagle Rock School, "Eagle's Nest, A Parent/Sponsor Newsletter" was created and launched in August of this year.

At its heart, "Eagle's Nest" is designed to bring life on campus closer to parents/sponsors and allow them to experience the lives their kids live seven days a week in this remote, mountain community. It is intended to provide an opportunity to learn about current events or changes, read articles by parents/sponsors, students and staff combined with photographs of the campus and

the people who live and work there. It is a forum where parents/sponsors can express their opinions, tell their stories and offer to each other and to the ERS staff a unique perspective that has been shaped by years of experience supporting and nurturing the early lives of ERS students. The newsletter is a way to draw all of us closer together and to put parents/sponsors more in touch with this remarkable school and dedicated staff who are helping to transform our kids into productive adults one day at a time.

In our first issue, articles were written by parents/sponsors about the Parent/Sponsor group, Family/Sponsor Weekend and a personal account about discovering ERS and the experiences that led to a student's acceptance. Our student contributor took us behind the scenes of the summer's theatrical production of *Romeo and Juliet* and reported on the backstage "drama." From the ERS staff, one article walked par-

ents/sponsors through the intricacies of our first line of communication, the campus telephone system, and a second one discussed the transition from two six-week course offerings to the new 10 week program.

In our upcoming issues, staff offerings include the Bonner Scholars Program and scholarship opportunities for graduates, a day in the life of ERS students and staff, the ERS technology program, and an article on service learning, a cornerstone of the ERS curriculum. Presentations of Learning (POLs), the focus of all students at the

end of every trimester, are described from a student's perspective while parents/sponsors discuss participation in the Graduate Fund Workday and offer a profile of an Eagle Rock parent/sponsor.



EAGLE'S NEST

A PARENT/SPONSOR NEWSLETTER

In all, these contributions serve to represent the mix of life and times at Eagle Rock School.

It is our hope that "Eagle's Nest" will be published three times a year to correspond with the trimester breaks. By choosing this time to send home the newsletter, we can help to provide some continuity of focus for parents/sponsors and students during the down time between trimesters. As Eagle Rock School and Professional Development Center has its "Eagle Eyes," and the student body has "From Under the Rock," so the parents/sponsors now have their communal voice in "Eagle's Nest." It is a step along the way of evolving a group identity and shared culture while echoing the slogan that greeted parents, family, friends, and supporters of Eagle Rock students at the last Family/Sponsor Weekend: "Building Families, Building Communities."

\$25,000 RECEIVED FROM THE STARR FOUNDATION

by Dick Herb, Director of Operations

Congratulations to all donors and volunteers. The gift of \$25,000 from the Staff Foundation is a result of the many contributions — no matter how large or small — you have given. Your gifts give credibility to the idea behind the Graduate Higher Education Fund. The nobility of the fund has been confirmed over the short three-year life of the fund by your contribution of time and/or dollars — which has been significant and representative of our family. Participation by the ERS family is a measure used by foundations and other major donors that, yes, we take the idea of the fund seriously and are willing to put what dollars we can toward attaining our goal. The message was clear — and will be heard again. This generous foundation gift is just the first of more to come. Again, thanks!

| <u>Totals Since Inception (October 1997)</u> | | |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|
| | <u>Dec. 12, 2000</u> | <u>Nov. 30, 1999</u> |
| Gifts | \$209,000 | \$143,000 |
| Awards and Expenses Paid | 11,000 | 6,000 |
| Award Liabilities | 11,000 | 8,000 |
| Invested Balance (Net) | \$252,000 | \$172,000 |

eScrip Opportunity

A new opportunity for funding the Graduate Fund has arisen. If you do business in CA, WA, NV, or HI, vendors like Safeway, Eddie Bauer, Chevron, hotel chains (and many others) will send a percentage (1 to 8%) of purchases charged to a credit card or an ATM debit card to a registered charity. It looks easy and it includes purchases made online.

Cut off the "eScrip Interest Form" on Page 8 and return it to Dick Herb at the school.

Graduate Workday

On October 7, 70 students, staff, and parents went shoulder-to-shoulder again, working for Estes Park employers painting, cleaning yards, and stacking wood for winter — all to benefit the Graduate Higher Education Fund. The effort earned \$3,500 for the Fund.

Some students decided to just contribute their time to one Estes Park elder. The task was a nearly hopeless one for one day of cleaning and hauling to the dump years of accumulated...stuff. There were just aisles through the home between stacks. The kids took it on. They made a small dent in what was an overwhelming task and felt that they just wanted to contribute, rather than receive any remuneration (even if it would go to the Graduate Higher Education Fund!). If you want

to see some great teens — come to Eagle Rock on a Graduate Workday!

Silent Auction

The Silent Auction scheduled for December 7, 2000, was postponed for this year. However, we have next year's date — November 10, 2001 — and are looking forward to the event then. The 2001 event is scheduled to be held in the evening in Estes Park's historic Stanley Hotel, complete with live background music and bites to eat. Artists will include local professionals, student and staff work, plus services and backcountry trips offered by staff and local professionals. Mark it on your calendar. This promises to be a spectacular event.

Golfing Event

Another new event — a Hole-in-One golfing event — is planned to be added as an annual event to raise money for the Graduate Higher Education Fund. It will be held for the first time in Estes Park in the fall of 2001. On each of the nine holes of the Estes Park executive course, a new car, or spa, or travel credit, or a mega savings bond will be available for each hole-in-one. In addition, many closest-to-the-hole prizes will be awarded. The hole-in-one event is a one-shot affair with each entrant taking one shot from a designated par 3 tee on each of the nine holes. On any hole, the closest player wins the closest-to-the-hole prize and, on the first hole-in-one on any hole, the player goes home with the grand prize offered on that hole.

Besides players (the event will be widely advertised), about 40 volunteers will be needed. More later. For now, keep this event in mind. We're hoping you can either play or help out.

Long-Term Goal

Our long-term goal is to build the Graduate Fund to \$3,000,000, with the purpose of supporting Eagle Rock graduates as they pursue higher education. The Fund was established by Board Resolution in October, 1997. The resolution outlined investment management policies and awards. A fund of \$3,000,000 would provide graduates \$2,500 each year they are in college, a total award of \$10,000. With an anticipated 35 to 40 graduates in college at a time, we plan an annual outlay in the range of \$100,000.

The tenth anniversary of the existence of Eagle Rock School and Professional Development Center will be upon us September 2002. A thought comes to us that maybe having the first \$1,000,000 of our goal to help celebrate the tenth could be within reach.

FULBRIGHT TAKES ALISON TO SENEGAL

*E-mail Excerpts From Alison Trattner,
Fulbright Scholar, French and English/
Language Arts Instructional Specialist*

September 17, 2000

It is 3 AM. Sweat is streaming down my neck. The same burning smell I know well from Central America thickens and drifts all night through my mosquito netting. At this hour, the BBC has three favorite stories: excited Australians, French trucker strikes, and the cricket scores from Bombay.

They have us coming and going. I haven't even unpacked. Three hours of Wolof every afternoon at the Baobab Center, among many other projects. Slowly the instructors are unraveling the extraordinary complexity of Muslim ethnicities and sects. My Fulbright partner Alice from New Jersey spent four days out of her first week before I got here in the hospital. Something she ate. She is fine now and very brave. I am healthy so far but it can be hard work.

I have already met extraordinary, gorgeous young people here, all of whom — and I am not kidding — sing. I happened to be out in the bush (they took us to a Christian monastery) this weekend where the local YMCA was training their counselors (moniteurs) for next summer. They included us in all their final rites of passage, and we were invited to see them receive their diplomas. The head instructor, who reminded me a lot of Dave Hoskins, led them in song — which did not remind me of Dave — after every award. The official from the Centre National des Sports and Loisirs addressed the young men and women.

Three giant cucarachas are gallivanting in my kitchen. I let them party. It has become too difficult to mash their unyielding carcasses nightly. Two more weeks of orientation before I begin teaching. Would someone at ERS be willing to help assemble a box (no more than 40 centimeters high) of American cultural artifacts, anything — magazines, post cards of different states, stuffed animals, candy, cds, even baseball caps, baseball paraphernalia, posters. I will need this for my classes and would love it to be the first connection/involvement from ERS. I need someone to really take charge and see that it gets done — a student. It could be a Gathering where everyone brings something, explains why, and then, that day, it gets boxed up and sent to me.

This is hard. I hope I can live up to the challenge.

September 20, 2000

I won't be emailing more than once every 10 days or so after this. Already I have sat on a tile floor in a courtyard under a clothesline with Ousman and Jean-Paul and witnessed the

FULBRIGHT BRINGS DIAO TO EAGLE ROCK

*by Diao Anne Sarr, Fulbright Scholar,
French and English/Language Arts Instructor
Crossing Cultures In Teaching Abroad*

Some families are known for doing the same job. So is the case of my own family and teaching. My dad was a teacher and a headmaster before becoming a member of parliament and the mayor of our native town. Almost all my siblings are teachers, some in elementary schools, my younger brother and me in high schools, and our elder brother at university; he's the president of the Second University of Senegal. So, I can say that I'm from a teachers' family.

I've been teaching since December 1976, just after I got my first university certificate. I was reading English as a major and Spanish as a second language. In 1978 I passed some tests at Dakar University and was admitted as a French assistant at Lucton Girls' School in East London. I stayed there for 12 months studying at the same time and passed my degree (B.A.) at Kensington University. I returned to Senegal and went back to my old school.

Two years later, I was appointed to another school in downtown Dakar. In

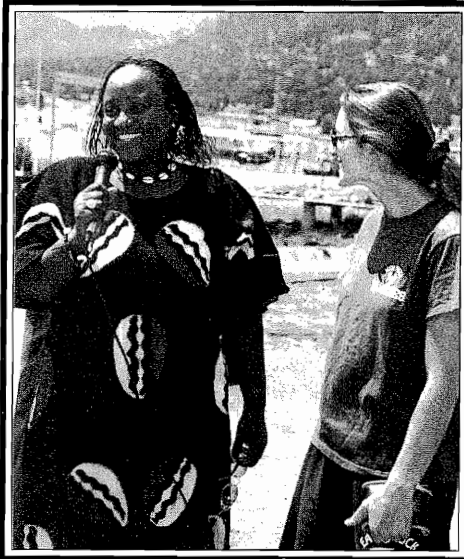
1982, I went to the National Teacher Training School and got my high school teaching diploma. The year after, I was appointed to the John F. Kennedy High School for Girls where I used to be a student for three years. It was the first time I taught in a girls school. Before, I always taught in mixed ones.

In 1987 I went to Brighton (England) for a five-week summer course. In December 1999, I went through tests and interviews and was admitted to the Fulbright Exchange Program which led me to this lovely state of Colorado.

Being an exchange teacher can be more than positive for one's career. It highlights how teaching can be relative and dependent upon the background and social vision of the milieu. As far as delivering a knowledge to students is concerned, one can say that the principle may be the same. Differences appear more in the behavior between teachers and students in the class, in the material and equipment available, and how the team of teacher and student works to do well.

In an African school in general, and in a Senegalese one in particular, the teacher is in a more difficult situation and in quite tough conditions, because of dealing with too large classes and without any materials at all. Only creativeness and students' eagerness to learn and know can make things work well; fortunately, these two factors do exist there.

In an American school, more precisely the one I'm lucky enough to be in, things are quite different. There are highly and



Diao Anne Sarr & Alison Trattner

Alison" – Continued

extraordinary art of brewing sweet tea in three stages. I watched it being poured back and forth between two shot glasses to stir up just the right amount of foam (purit). I have sat on lavish mats — always depicting Mecca — elbow to elbow in a circle with Fatou, Maii, Seneba, Ismael, Abdoulaye, Mass and Alice and been bidden by Aba — Ismael's wife — to eat from the communal bowl in the center. I have been handed a large metal spoon and dipped it into the portion of the bowl in front of me: steaming red stock, spicy, crammed with hunks of yam, cabbage, okra, garlic, either fish or humongous bones spilling their meat. Everything always served on a bottomless bed of highly seasoned rice, more like cous-cous.

I have sat in a red dirt courtyard with flowering grapefruit trees and chatted and sung and danced deep into the night with a group of young African men and women training to be camp counselors at YMCAs all over Senegal. I even was asked to help in the presentation of their diplomas. I have learned that seemingly everyone in Senegal sings beautifully, joining in perfectly in four-voice harmony

whenever someone even so much as begins to hum. At least this was true in the country this weekend. We walked under the high sun on a long road, alongside other families in their best Sunday boobos (dresses). Whoops! The electricity just went off. Blackout. It is 2 AM in Dakar. Goodnight, everybody.

November 1, 2000

I rehearsed three hours with my choir last night and just came from All Saints Mass early this morning. I am temporarily Catholic in order to have this experience. Wouldn't you know that my choir is rehearsing to sing for the President of Senegal! So, fortunately for you, a short note today. Welcome to words that cannot describe the exhilaration I feel at last to be surrounded by adolescents, thousands of them, Senegalese girls in pink smocks, teeming across sandy stretches of open spaces, swarming up and down the open air stairwells, collecting in tight animated groups, leaning into shade trees in extravagant poses of nonchalance, chattering excitedly, convulsing in laughter.

In the early morning, my eyes picked them out miles from the school in the backstreets and byways and avenues,

paused at intersections, hopping from a Car Rapide, flitting in and out of the masses of rush-hour throngs like pink fireflies, picking their way in and out of the masses of wheels and garbage and black oily diesel fumes, little pink peonies, long stemmed roses — elegant, vibrant, coquettes, eager, naive, earnest, respectful, highly disciplined — future hopes of Dakar. I know that was corny, but I am in love with each and everyone of them, at least today.

I have close to 150 altogether at the moment; classes are still growing. There are 45 in my 7th grade. Tomorrow and the next day I will haul into my various classes a giant green pumpkin that looks more like a zucchini, to be carved by the little boys downstairs, and to be lit in my classes. My 7th graders are going to dress up next Monday, after an hour of possessive adjectives and practicing verbs in the continuous present, God help them.

They are dying to have pen-pals among you, so I have a BIG IDEA hatching. I miss you all. Thanks to all those who have e-mailed me and love to each and every one of you.

FIRST ACIS ANNUAL CHOIR FESTIVAL HELD —

*by Lois Easton, Director of
Professional Development*

They were singing and dancing, singing and learning, and singing and getting to know each other. The first ACIS (Association of Colorado Independent Schools) Annual Choir Festival organized by Eagle Rock School's music director Karolee McLaughlin, brought together students and staff from other Colorado independent schools to learn and perform music on October 27 through 29. McLaughlin's purpose in organizing this annual event was to foster a passion for music by connecting the ACIS schools. "It's a wonderful opportunity to make friends and share music, for staff and students alike," she commented.

The learning part featured Rick Roberts, music professor at the University of San Francisco and director of Eagle Rock and other musicals and music theater

throughout the western U.S. Roberts is director of the Associated Students Performing Arts Program at USF and conducts the University Choir, the jazz vocal ensemble and both the men's and women's vocal ensemble. He offered a Vocal Production Workshop and conducted the full and sectional rehearsals.

Also on the Festival Faculty was Suzanne Garramone, pianist. Described as "one of those wacky professional musicians you hear about from San Francisco," Garramone by day is a classical pianist playing chamber music, accompanying soloists and ensembles and playing musicals. By night, she is an accordionist in Those Darn Accordions, a six-piece rock group that has been on the American Music Awards, Penn & Teller, and the Donny and Marie show.

Students and staff from Eagle Rock, the Denver Academy, and Saint Scholastica School in Canon City, CO, prepared for the Music Festival by practicing a variety of music. After social time and orientation the first night, students

woke early and had a full rehearsal and then workshops and sectional rehearsals. A dance completed their second day at Eagle Rock. The next day, after a group photo and another full rehearsal, the students and staff from all three schools performed a free concert for Estes Park.

The concert featured staff and student singers and instrumentalists (recorders, percussion instruments, guitars, brass, and piano) from all three schools; some numbers were choreographed. The program included "Dona Nobis Pacem," "Praise the Lord" (from Cameroon, with singers coming down the aisles of the theater), "Now is the Month of Maying," "Gloria," "Lion Sleeps Tonight," "Shenandoah," "Shut De Do," and "What a Wonderful World." In addition, a Showcase Choir performed the Manhattan Transfer's hit "Operator," with soloist Tasha Pean; tenor horn, Robert Burkhardt; trumpet, Fernando Hernandez; guitar, Abe Neas; bass, Steven Layne; and percussion, Matt Mulloy.

"Diao" – Continued

modernly well equipped schools with very correct numbers of students in the classes, sometimes even below the normal. In American schools, fortunately, there are always some students who are aware of what they go to school for and are hard working but, to me, many students here don't profit from the chance they have. The problem of discipline and respect is a real concern in American schools.

There is culture shock, felt both by the foreign teacher and the native student. No side is to blame. The way of doing reflects the social background and the values of each society. Only mutual understanding can overcome this culture shock, which is part of the deal. Kids are the same everywhere; only the education, and the social and cultural backgrounds make them

different. In Africa, the respect of the elders is sacred; no matter if you're a parent, a relative or a teacher, youngsters generally owe respect to all elders even if these latter have no direct relations with them.

So, when we're an exchange teacher we always face culture shock and we can provoke it as well. Adaptation, adjustment and flexibility are highly required.

"What strikes me the most upon the whole is the total difference of manners between them and us from the greatest objects to the least. There is not the smallest similitude in the twenty-four hours. It is obvious in every trifle." Horace Walpole, "Letters"

So, let's be adapted, adjusted, comprehensive, and flexible, but not WEAK!

If you would like to make a gift that would help the fund move toward this goal, please make your check payable to the Eagle Rock Graduate Fund and mail to Eagle Rock School Graduate Fund, P. O. Box 1770, Estes Park, CO 80517-1770. All gifts are tax deductible and donors will receive a letter of thanks and a gift receipt.

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