



What if Everything was silent?

By Jackie Rollin

What if everything was silent? The sound of waves against the sand, your mother's voice, or a secret, whispered from your best friend as you lay curled in sleeping bags on the bedroom floor—what if all of that were drowned in silence and the world was quiet to your ears?

On our first day in Mexico with the Starkey Hearing Foundation, we walked into a room full of hundreds of people who lived in that world. They clutched small plastic bags with specially made ear molds in their warm brown hands, all of them peering at us with a mixture of fear and doubt and hope as they waited.

The ten of us from Upland Hills stood to the side, shifting nervously, first to one foot then the other, as we received instructions from a tall,

energetic man, bouncing slightly on the balls of his feet. We were to help fit each person with the appropriate hearing aide and adjust the volume until it was comfortable. Then, we were to explain how the hearing aides worked and address any concerns they might have—in Spanish. It took a little practice, he said, but we would get the hang of it in no time.

I felt a small panic rise up in the pit of my stomach as Ayla and I stepped forward to do our first fitting. I cursed my four years of high school French and wondered fervently why I hadn't ever sat down with my Grandma and asked her to explain her hearing aides.

The woman who came forward was short, with dignified white hair and a cane. She gave me a small shy nod and sat down heavily in the chair, her hands folded quietly in her lap. I felt clumsy and awkward as I pushed the ear mold in and attached the hearing aide. I turned the small switch at the back and spoke gently into the receiver the way I had seen others do. The woman remained motionless in her chair, and I was momentarily disappointed. I turned the volume up one notch and tried again. This time, her head turned quickly in my direction so that we faced each other.

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Editorial Note: The theme of this Spring issue of Connections is Service. What is service? How does it connect us and nourish the world we live in? It has been an extraordinary year of service at Upland Hills School, as you will discover when you read the stories within this newsletter. Hopefully it will inspire you in your own efforts to make

Actions Speak Louder...

By Linda Bowers

Part of the flow of daily life at school is the exchange of kindly acts between individuals, and interactions with the environment. Extending a helping hand, listening deeply to another, and stewarding the land are just some of the ways that the students and staff of Upland Hills School embody our shared value of service to one another and the world.

If you read through the Upland Hills School Guiding Principles on the next page, you'll notice words like *relationship, friendship, cooperation, consensus, mutual, community and connect*. These words, these actions, these ways of being create a culture of interdependence and interconnections of which service is the fruit.

Did you know that just this year:

Students in Holly and Jean's Groups created a quilt of comfort and love for a young family who had lost their mother. Although they didn't know the circumstance, they freely offered their drawings and words of love.

Students from Ted's Group participated in both the Detroit and Mexico Starkey Hearing Foundation Missions, helping to give the gift of hearing to hundreds of disadvantaged children.

Over \$1000 was raised by Jan's Group for the Kigutu Community Health Center in Burundi. The funds raised by apple and bake sales will support the center as it provides primary care especially for children and women.

Jan's Group also raised over \$320 for UNICEF in the Fall.

Kathy's Group has embarked on a "Finger Knitting for Peace" project that may result in them being listed in the Guinness Book of World Records.

David's Community Service class has worked intently as stewards of the school, discovering that service can be fun and meaningful.

The Green Team has been leading the charge in increasing the level of conservation and sustainability at school.

The Community Connectors, past and current parents, have been identifying opportunities to connect resources to needs for many of the events at school this year.

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Upland Hills School

Mission Statement

Upland Hills School, founded in 1971, is an independent school community whose purpose is to educate pre-high school children. Our aim is to discover and respect the uniqueness of every child.

Guiding Principles

Upland Hills School holds the following principles as our core values and seeks to create an environment that:

- Protects, nurtures and defends the innocence of childhood
- Encourages a relationship between children and the natural world
- Empowers teachers and staff
- Fosters cooperation and consensus in decision-making
- Promotes mutual respect and trust that encourages our community to form authentic relationships
- Teaches us to think comprehensively
- Builds friendships that connect us with others around the world

Upland Hills School encourages children to know themselves and to connect with their environment as responsible world citizens. We provide a full academic program that emphasizes mastery of skills and creative growth. Our vision is that through the alignment and commitment of parents and teachers, children will come to see themselves as having extraordinary learning potential and access to the greatest miracle or tool in human experience, love.

Calendar of Important Events

August

Sat., Aug. 30 th	12-1 PM	New Parent Orientation
Sat., Aug. 30 th	1-4 PM	Welcome In / Welcome Back Picnic

September

Wednesday, Sept. 3rd	First Day of School
Thurs., Sept. 11 th	Curriculum Night
Sat., Sept 20 th	7 PM karenJoy theatre Eugene Friesen

October

Tues., October 14 th	Empty Bowls
Fri. & Sat. Oct. 24 th & 25 th	Quilt Retreat

November

Fri., Nov. 7 th	1 PM karenJoy theatre TPS Fall Play
Sat., Nov. 8 th	2 & 7 PM karenJoy theatre TPS Fall Play
Mon. -Tues., Nov. 24th & 25th	1st Evaluations –NO SCHOOL
TBA	UHS Holiday Book Fair
Wed.-Fri., Nov. 26th – 28th	Thanksgiving Recess –NO SCHOOL

December

Wed., Dec. 19 th	Staff & Students Holiday Celebration
Thurs.-Mon. , Dec. 22nd – Jan 5th	Holiday Break – NO SCHOOL

Websites for a Better World

Here are a few websites to inspire and support our efforts:

www.catalogchoice.org

Choose which catalogues come to your mailbox.

www.common sense media.org

Resources for wholesome media choices.

www.donotcall.gov

Eliminate most phone solicitations.

www.earth911.org

For tips on recycling and reuse.

www.freecycle.org

Give away what you don't need, and get what you're looking for, *for free!*

www.greenovationtv.com

Website under construction. Learn easy ways to make your home more energy efficient, from a couple that greened up their 100 year old farmhouse. Check out the blog, which is up and running and full of great ideas.

www.heifer.org

Help hungry families feed themselves, worldwide.

www.mygreenelectronics.org

Find greener electronics.

www.newdream.org/junkmail/form.php

Steps to eliminate junk mail.

karen joy theatre *5th Anniversary Season* *in Review*

Karen Joy Theatre celebrated an entertaining and successful Fifth Anniversary Season. We welcomed Oxford Bank as a season sponsor and theatre rentals have been steady and strong. Here are some highlights from this past year.



Rob Faust of Faustwork Mask Theatre and his menagerie of "characters" had young and old laughing from beginning to end.



Grammy Award nominated singer/songwriter Karen Taylor-Good delighted us with her music.



UHS Theatre Play Shop presented the whimsical tale of "James & the Giant Peach."

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The UHS Community Showcase featured the musical talents of staff, parents, students, alumni and guests.

Direct from Ghana, The Bernard Woma Ensemble entertained us all with a cultural experience that had everyone dancing in the isles.



A heartfelt thank you to the many volunteers who gave their time and talents and to all who financially supported the Karen Joy Theatre, especially Scott Cameron.

We look forward to a wonderful new season in the fall starting with Grammy Award winning cellist Eugene Friesen who takes the stage on Saturday, September 20th at 7pm for a performance you won't want to miss.

Watch for your season brochure to arrive in the mail in late August. Have a safe and peaceful summer.



Our season finale....UHS Theatre Play Shop put on a show stopping performance of "Annie, Jr."



Starkey Hearing Foundation Mission comes to Detroit!

On May 5, 2008, Upland Hills School partnered with the Starkey Hearing Foundation and University Preparatory Academy to bring the gift of hearing to nearly 100 children.

It was held at University Preparatory High School's beautiful campus in Detroit, and attracted children from southeast Michigan.

In addition to other songs, Ted's Group performed "We Belong to One Another" for the children and their families as they waited for their hearing aid fittings. The students learned to sign and sing the words of this original song written by Ted Strunk.

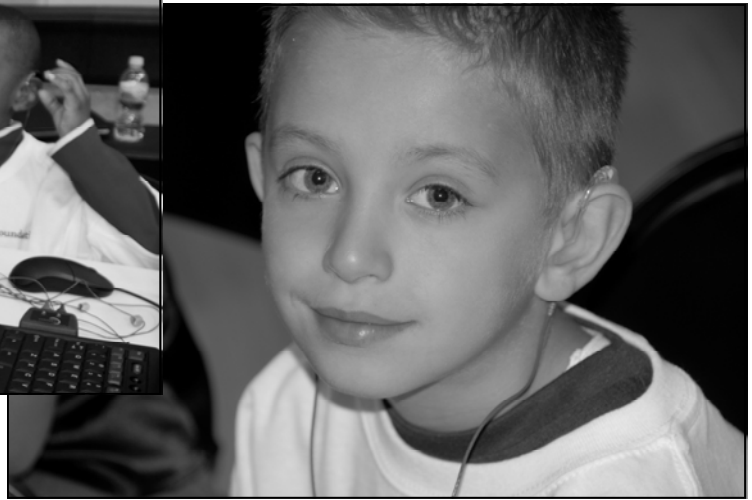


Bill Austin delights in bringing the gift of hearing to children around the world through the Starkey Foundation. Over \$750,000 of hearing equipment was donated by the Foundation to this mission alone.

His commitment and passion go well beyond providing financial backing to the Foundation. Usually the first and last one working at each mission, here he fits a young man for a hearing aid.

You can learn more about the Starkey Hearing Foundation and its work at www.sotheworldmayhear.org. For more information on the Detroit and Mexico missions in which UHS participated, go to our website, www.uplandhills.org and click on the mission button.





Gary Gauthier, representing one of the mission sponsors, Eaton Corporation, and Nancy's Fund, which has benefited from the generosity of the Starkey Foundation, reflected on his experience that day. "On a purely personal level the experience of seeing a person hear for the first time was almost overwhelming. The mix of emotions: anticipation, joy, fulfillment, gratitude, humility, etc., is staggering. It's easy to understand why tears flow when it happens again and again at many of the missions.

The organization, dedication, energy, professionalism, empathy and joyfulness of the Starkey personnel was amazing. They performed their tasks much more as a family responding with heartfelt support than a business performing a service to the community. It's obvious they believe in and love what they are doing and all feel what Bill Austin very openly admits to everyone, that he and they get more out of this than the people they serve."



Our gratitude to the sponsors of this event:

EDS, Alcos, Eaton, TrustInUs, Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Michigan, and Professional Hearing Aid Centers,

and all the individuals and businesses that supported the event:

Crittenton Hospital, Spyder Turner, Fuller Life Water, Archie Clark, Wayne State University Audiology Department, our emcee, John LoVasco, and especially Doug Ross and his staff and students at University Preparatory Academy in Detroit for their open-hearted hospitality.

Life in the Slow Lane

By Jan Butcher

Some of you are already aware that I spent some of my 2007 summer vacation as part of a medical mission team to Belize, Central America. I went with a group of nursing and pharmacy students from Palm Beach Atlantic University where my daughter, Allison, teaches in the Pharmacy School. She was on the mission as one of the sponsoring staff members and I was privileged to be a part of it.

In reflecting about my trip, I find it odd that I never questioned where we would be sleeping and eating before I departed. I questioned the work I would be asked to do. I questioned the clothing I should bring. I even questioned if I should bring gifts or tidbits of Americana to the Belizeans I was sure to meet, but not what I would most normally be worried about- sleeping and eating.

As it turns out, our sleeping arrangements were okay. We were in a hotel in Independence Village that had electricity, clean rooms, a TV that turned itself on at weird times and a window air conditioner, albeit a noisy one. There was no hot water, but after one day in that intense tropical heat, it did not matter. After a couple of days, I also found that the hotel had fresh brewed coffee by 6:15 AM.

Jim and Lois Moore, our wonderful mission hosts, provided our meals. Their home was a 15 minute walk from the hotel. Breakfast was served at 7 AM. Our lunch and dinner times were worked out daily depending on the work of the teams each day. The Moore's are missionaries who have lived and worked in Belize for nine years. With no electricity, they did have a generator but not for such things as coffee makers.

Jim had an old school bus and drove us from and to the Belize City Airport and the various work sites. His mechanical talents kept that old bus on the road. Lois' talent was in preparing daily meals for our group of 18. They are a blessing to the people they serve in Belize. Every day we met local people who simply stopped by the Moore's home for a chat, for some guidance or assistance.

Every day, we divided into three groups. Since I am a teacher, I was asked to head a group to lead a Vacation Bible School during our stay. So, six of us went to the church every morning. The others were split into groups to either work the medical clinic in Independence or to go out to neighboring villages with no clinic and set up a make-shift clinic at a store, church or in one case, the back of Jim's bus.

My work with the children was challenging and stretched me to the limit. The facility was very small and not stocked with items I often take for granted as a teacher. Luckily, we did purchase four pair of scissors, some glue, tape, crayons and craft items before we left Florida.

On our first day of VBS, 80 children arrived, aged 2 to 14 years old. We started and ended each session with singing, which they loved. We split them into 3 groups and gave each a lesson/story time, a craft time and an outdoor/game time. They must have enjoyed it because by the time we left, it had grown to 200 children.

When VBS finished around noon, my group would walk back to the Moore's house for lunch. In the afternoon my activities varied. One day I helped to paint a room that will be a lending library. Some afternoons I helped Lois with dinner.

A couple of days I enjoyed the hammocks on the porch or enjoyed watching the pharmacists teaching pharmacy students how to compound various medications for use by sick children. They would boil water and sugar on the stove, flavor it with packets of Kool-Aid, use a mortar and pestle to grind the ingredients, then carefully measure antibiotics, Tylenol or multi-vitamins with a suspending agent in order to adequately dose infants and small children. Crude as it may sound, these meds were then poured into empty soft drink or water

Continued from page 8**Donovan, helping us out**

bottles and carefully hand-labeled for use the next day. One boy, Donovan, who hung out at the Moore's a lot, helped with this one afternoon. He was so proud to be helping with such an important task.

These children I met and worked with have so little, but clearly were joyful and thankful for what we offered them. By the 3rd and 4th day, I knew some of them by name. They loved that. While I don't wish for anyone to live in poverty, picking bananas and sleeping in hammocks, there was a joy and sense of freedom in these children I don't see here. They walked to VBS and around the village by themselves. They played in the roads (few people have cars) and those who were old enough and lucky enough had use of a bicycle. Rarely did I see just one on a bike. Usually a friend or sibling was perched on the handlebars and sometimes another was perched on the seat. I didn't see anyone with a helmet. They did not have TVs in their homes or a computer or a gaming system, but they were very trusting, social and caring with one another. They were also very loving and trusting of us.

One day after planning VBS we were invited to Dr. Steve's house. As we approached, a child cried out, "White people are coming" and children ran to us with open arms. I saw many older children caring for younger siblings very responsibly. I lost the case to my camera on one walk and a few hours later, a girl named Gloria came to the Moore's with her younger brother who had found my case and had walked over a mile to return it to me.

On my last day there, another girl, Cindy, came running up to me and gave me a picture of herself and a slightly used notepad with a cartoon lion on it. She insisted she wanted me to have these things. I will treasure them, because they came from her heart. I can't help but wonder if these events would have occurred if there had been a TV at home and it was time for the "Simpsons" to be on. There was definitely an interdependence fostered by their open-air homes, with chickens and goats in the yard, and lack of items that provide indoor solitary entertainment.

While there, I attended services at two different churches and found they have social and religious gatherings every day of the week. They are all well attended by children and adults. I guess this is more like life here in the 1930's and 40's. Life without reruns of "Law and Order" and cell phones and 20 unanswered e-mails. Life without organized games of soccer, rather kids kicking a beat-up ball on the road and making up new rules as they play. Live without CVS or Walgreen's on every other corner, so the doctor gives you your medicine as long as you bring a bottle he/she can fill. I have to say, I saw a lot of "LIFE" in Belize.

Peace of Work!

By Julie LaPorte

I'm not a fan of the word "service". It reminds me of "servitude", which implies a forced situation, which is exactly the opposite of where I believe our contributions need to come from. So, let's begin by shifting from the word *service* to the word *contribution*, or perhaps *offering*, or *gift*.

We are constantly bombarded with opportunities to help the needy, both in our backyard and around the globe. We all have loved ones who could use a helping hand. Many of us belong to non-profit organizations which require funding and volunteering. And, of course, there are times when we require some assistance ourselves. How much giving is enough? Where can we draw the line and enjoy some pleasures ourselves without guilt? How do we find our own personal "Peace of Work?"

These are age-old questions, surely—I believe that finding "Peace of Work" is linked with the roots of tithing. What a relief, knowing that you can choose to tithe 10% and be at peace with that? I balk not at this concept, and have great respect for those who have chosen this path.

Personally, I have chosen a more ambiguous path, one that is lead by my heart, and gently steered by my brain. I have chosen to own this issue as one of my philosophical life questions. As a young child, I was touched by a movie trailer for the Christian Children's Fund at a birthday celebration of my own. I had \$20 in my pocket, and when the ushers came around with the donation can, I wanted to give it all. My mother held me back for reasons of her own, but from that moment on, I've struggled with this idea of what to offer, what to contribute, to those less fortunate than myself.

In college, I discovered Ayn Rand, whose Fountainhead painted an ugly picture of altruism. Her extreme philosophy was so far from my life experience that I embraced it for a while, trying it on like some radical outfit from the Paris world of fashion. They were uncomfortable clothes to wear, but I did learn quite a bit from visiting that extreme. There were some very important lessons for me to learn which still ring true for me, such as honoring yourself and your needs. Many of us know this intellectually, that our children's needs are best served when not at the cost of our own unbalanced deprivation. But I see it often...parents walking around with slumped shoulders, serving (there's that word again!) their children disproportionately, and suffering themselves as a result. As for Ayn Rand, I still re-read her books often in my oscillation between extremes, but each reading brings new refinement of my own philosophy.

While working on my Master's Degree, I had a class in Medical Ethics. During this class, I had to present a topic to my peers that involved owning up to our lifestyle choices in middle- and upper-class America which adversely affect most of the planet. I was very blunt, accepting responsibility for my own choices' consequences as well, but here I was again, revisiting this concept of disharmony in my level of gift-giving. Could I ever find the Peace?

So, the next leg of my journey led me back to tithing. Maybe this *was* the answer...I could justify living a prosperous life if I gave a set amount back. For, if I gave *all* that I had to give, there wouldn't be much left for the following year, right? The guilty pleasures I enjoyed were fueling the desire for more prosperity, and more prosperity meant more to tithe! So my pleasures and luxuries were serving the greater good through my own greed? Well, that didn't sit right with me either...

Enter a time in my life *when I* had a great need. It was a tumultuous two years filled with too many doctors' appointments, surgeries, worries, and a great lack of sleep. My body rebelled, and I discovered a melanoma on my lower back. Melanoma is extremely deadly when not caught at a very early stage, and I had the haunting memory of a dead grandmother who was taken in her 30's by this cancer. With an ill mother, a husband in night school, great mental duress, and two-year-old twins who were now running (and falling!) and exploring, this was my time of need. I can remember my surgeon telling me no lifting for 6-8 weeks, and just laughing inside. Right—with all those diapers to change everyday, and bodies that needed placing in playpens, saucers, and high chairs? I can remember crying uncontrollably one day as one of the boys inadvertently kicked me right in my incision—yes, this was definitely my time of need. Yet I could not ask for help.

New revelation in my quest to help others! Some people need food. Some need money. Some need an ear. Some needs are physical. Some are mental. Some are emotional. And some people, like myself, need someone else to identify their needs. If someone had approached me at that time and said, "Hey, looks like you're carrying quite a

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Silent, continued from page 1

“Me escuchas?” I asked, “Can you hear me?”

“Si” she replied, her lips splitting apart in a wide grin “yes”. She clasped my hands tightly, nodding her head excitedly. “Si.”

This was the first time, she explained later, she had heard anything since her 12th birthday. She sat for a moment, transfixed, and let the sounds wash over her.

Next came a little boy holding tight to his mother’s skirt. She urged him into the chair and explained to us, though a translator, that he hadn’t been able to hear anything since birth. He hadn’t even heard his own mother’s voice, she said with a small laugh and a tear in her eye.

Again, we fit the mold and turned up the volume. The woman kneeled down in front of her son. “Angel?” she asked hesitantly. The corners of the boy’s mouth curved up in a secret smile and his hands went to his ears. “Angel?” she asked again. The boy cupped one hearing aide in each hand, wrinkled his nose, and laughed loudly as he looked intently at his mother’s face. “Can you hear me?” she asked quietly. He nodded and bobbed up and down in his seat, his mouth pinched tight in a proud grin.

“Thank you,” she said softly, in English, and finally a tear ran down her cheek.

Ayla and I looked at each other and then looked out over the crowd of patiently waiting people, our eyes bright. We had five days, but we already knew we never wanted to leave.

By the time we left, we had seen at least a thousand smiles and heard a thousand stories. Instead of silence, there was conversation. In broken Spanish, English, and Sign Language we told stories, exchanged names, and said goodbye.

By the time we left, we had been thanked at least a thousand times, but as we boarded the plane back home, the words on our lips were not “You’re welcome.” The words we said were “Thank you.” And our gratitude, at having been a part of something so unique, so life-changing, matched, or perhaps surpassed, that of those we had helped.

Peace, continued from page 10

burden there, how can I help?” my response would’ve been “Oh, no, I’m doing great, thanks anyway!” Seriously! This is what so many of us do!

Then two years after a cancer diagnosis, I get an MS diagnosis—an auto-immune disease. My body decides to turn against itself. I wasn’t paying enough attention to it! Not honoring myself! The “abort” switch was flipped! Why did I push myself so hard? Sure, hindsight is 20-20, so it’s easy to say now that I needed some help. It wasn’t so easy in the thick of it...

So this is where I’m at now in my journey for “Peace of Work”. There are a variety of different needs out there, and we all have our gifts. I feel that my gift is to help identify needs, and connect people to solutions. I resonate with this offering because I see that I needed it so badly in my personal life. It works for me.

I now am applying this to my business, looking at food systems and identifying areas of weakness, working to rebuild.

It applies to my personal life as well; I recently had a friend pass away, leaving a premature baby with no mother’s milk. I identified what I felt was the most pertinent need: to find breast milk for this beautiful child. I found people who had the gift of milk to give. Some had gifts of money, which helped pay for material needs and medical bills. Some had the gift of time, and they held that baby in the hospital. Some gave gifts of love, or gifts of prayer. Some created their gifts with their hands, making objects which will inspire for a lifetime.

What is your gift? When you find it, the desire to help flows naturally, and you’ll see that no piece is more important than another. This is the heart of community, my friends.

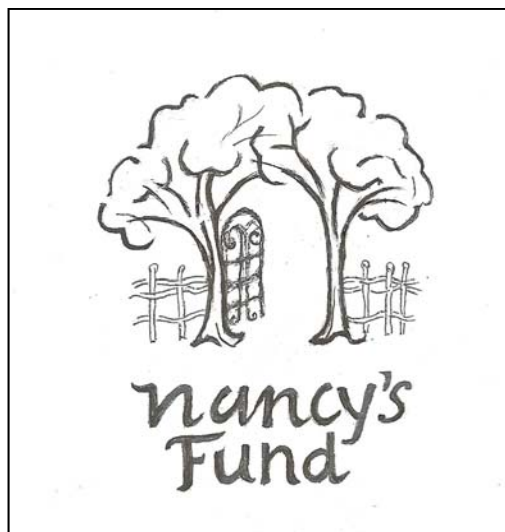
We are all unique. What gifts can you offer your community, your planet?

Nancy's Fund Update

It has been a fruitful season for Nancy's Fund. Thanks to the artistry of UHS friend and artist, Deanne Bednar, and the support of Gary Gauthier, Nancy's Fund has a new logo, shown at right. Symbolic of the gate in Farmer MacGregor's garden, from the Peter Rabbit series, it symbolizes the opening door of learning.

Another special moment occurred during the Traditions and Transitions Auction 2008, when over \$10,000 was raised through "Buy a Day at Upland Hills" and several Live Auction items. This generosity will benefit students and families in the coming school year.

Thanks to all who have supported Nancy's Fund this year and in the past!



Next Issue: Exploring the Essence of Upland Hills School

What makes UHS unique for you?

Submit comments and articles to development@uplandhills.org

by Sept. 1



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