

# THE GAVEN STREET GAZETTE

SPRING 2008

## THE TERRY EDELI SPECIAL EDITION

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## CELEBRATING TERRY EDELI

by Terry Gamble Boyer

Terry Edeli has served as the Head of The San Francisco School since 1976. Prior to being Head of School, Terry taught first and second grade for three years.

RIGHT AFTER MAKING the decision to leave The San Francisco School, Terry Edeli almost reconsidered. "I walked through the gate, and my soul caught a whiff of all that I love about the school. But a little ember of change kept glowing in my heart, and I knew now was the time to move on."

Thirty-five years is a long time to take to graduate from The San Francisco School. But for several generations of families, school without Terry will be an adjustment. It's not only his buoyancy, his exuberance, or his contagious optimism that command such loyalty and respect; those who have worked with him remark upon his more subtle gifts for leadership – the ability to hear everyone out, to respect all opinions, to trust the process and the group.

Yet Terry wasn't always destined to become a school head. To hear him tell it, this is an unlikely path that replaced a prior ambition to study low temperature physics. "I wasn't a writer at all," he says. "At Stanford, I took C's in Art History and Public Speak-



ing." But disenchantment with physics ("I took an A+ on a test when I barely understood the material") led him to consider education. Then as now, there was a need for math teachers, so he entered the Stanford Teacher Education Program that eventually led him and his wife Kathie into VISTA where they landed in New Jersey working in the Community Health and Education Project. "That's where I really learned about progressive education," Terry says. "It changed my political views."

After returning to San Francisco, Terry applied to a number of independent schools such as Lick-Wilmerding, Athenian, and, serendipitously, The San Francisco School. "I fell in love with it," says Terry. He was twenty-eight years old.

Says longtime first grade teacher Pamela Myers who originally hired Terry, "When Terry came out to the school to observe and be interviewed to teach first and second grades with me, I was struck by the warmth of his personality, his strong intelligence, his humor and quiet, direct, intuitive way with the children. I knew he was someone the children and I could work well with. (And of course there was the smile and the hair!)"

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The Gaven Street Gazette is published three times annually by the Development Office of The San Francisco School. We always welcome feedback and story ideas through this email address: [cmeade@sfschool.org](mailto:cmeade@sfschool.org).

### Accreditation and Membership

The San Francisco School is accredited by the California Association of Independent Schools (CAIS).

JOIN US

# TERRY'S FAREWELL CELEBRATION PICNIC

at the Pioneer East Meadow  
& Log Cabin picnic area

on Sunday, June 1, 2008

11am to 3pm

Golden Gate Park

For more information, including map,  
directions and parking, go to  
[www.sfschool.org/farewellpicnic](http://www.sfschool.org/farewellpicnic)



## YOU'RE INVITED

for a day of fun, nostalgia and good food as we honor Terry's 32 years as Head of School. We'll mingle, munch and make merry! Please remember to bring lawn chairs and blankets.

## The Farewell Challenge

**Please support the Farewell Challenge!** A school family has made a \$100,000 challenge – which means they will match all gifts by the school community, up to \$100,000. Your support in helping us meet and surpass this goal is greatly appreciated.



## School Launches Updated Website and Newsletter

This month, The San Francisco School is launching a new and improved website that offers features for applying families, current families and others in the community to both gather information about the school and stay up to date regarding what is happening on campus. Check it out at [www.sfschool.org](http://www.sfschool.org).

Besides being the *Terry Edeli Special Edition*, this edition of the *Gaven Street*

*Gazette* also introduces an updated layout of the school's newsletter. The school is excited to be working with Stoller Design Group. A special thanks to parent Carl Gosline who volunteered his talent and time to design the *Gazette* over the past six years. Thanks, Carl!





## My Hopes for the Future

by Terry Edeli

AS I REFLECTED on the thoughts I yearned to share for my recent farewell series of gatherings with school parents, teachers, and alumni families, I came to the realization that my message was a simple one. I felt that I was handing the school over to new Head of School, Steve Morris, and to all of the parents and staff who would be continuing next year; and I was saying, "Here's the place we have nurtured together over the years. Take good care!"

My passion for The San Francisco School is rooted in my own early experiences that first year in 1973. I remember my first day well: I was amazed by the self-reliance and independence of the preschoolers and I was enchanted by the imagination of a quirky second grader who eagerly shared his own passion for a whimsical story he was writing in his head. And I remember my first summer as a teacher, where I discovered a refreshing ownership of the curriculum by the faculty, as the four elementary teachers spent a week recreating the math curriculum to assure a deep student understanding of the discipline. I remember too, an early parent-teacher workday, where I discovered the impressive capacity of the parent-teacher collaborative, when an energetic cadre of parents and teachers constructed a dazzling new play structure in a single weekend.

Dipping back into those early memories prompted the present realization; my role at SFS over the past 35 years has been to nurture the best of what our founding teachers and parents had

set in motion back in 1966. And when I think about my hopes for The San Francisco School's future, they are deeply rooted in my own early SFS experiences. I hope our school will always be a place of strong community, where teachers and parents show a deep mutual respect and work collaboratively to assure the present and the future. I hope that teachers are well supported to own and develop the instructional program in a way that invites both engagement and deep understanding by the students, and prepares students, not for our past, but for their future. I hope the school will be a place that is ever richer in the diversity of culture and thought, and where every child is safe bringing their whole self to school. I am confident that children will be learning to reason with evidence and problem solve with rigor. But I also hope the school is always a place where children learn to see both the beauty in the world and the injustice, and where we are generating the awareness, the skills, and the courage in every student so that they are inspired to take action in the interest of multiculturalism, equity, justice, sustainability and peace.

And finally, I hope that the school can become ever more socio-economically diverse, bringing together children and families with a wealth of cultural experiences and worldviews. I awoke in the middle of the night recently with a stunning thought... that building an endowment is a little

like building a school community... and even more like raising a child. Think about the influences on a child growing up! Usually there are a few folks who have the biggest impact, probably parents or guardians, siblings and maybe grandparents or other relatives. And then there are teachers and neighbors and friends. And the chance encounters, too, can have a measurable impact, especially when they are all added together. So for a child to grow strong and confident, he or she needs a few close family members to invest huge amounts of time, but also that same child will benefit even more if everyone exhibits kindness, support and respect. Yes, it does take a village...or in our case...a whole school community...to raise a child well. And in my middle of the night revelation, I saw that it takes a similar constellation to build a school or raise an endowment. For either, it takes the lavish support of a few and the participation of many. For The San Francisco School Endowment, then, it means that it takes more than a few big, huge gifts. And it takes more than many small ones. It actually takes both to raise an endowment...with everyone doing what they are able.

When I am asked by others how they can best honor my time at SFS, my heart and my mind and my love of the school all say the same thing.... Take care of this wonderful school!



## Celebrating Terry Edeli

(continued from page 1)

"In the summer of 1973," Terry recounts, "when I first came to the school, I wanted to have some cubbies built out of crates that I found at the army surplus. Renee Luby who was then Head of School made it clear that if I wanted it done, I had to do it myself. That was a great lesson to me: if you really want something, you have to work on it yourself."

Three years later, he would be hired as the new Head of School.

Terry cites many lessons he's learned from working at the school for over three decades. "I feel like I learned to teach, learned to write, learned to speak in front of groups, and learned to listen. And it is here on Gaven Street that I have learned to lead, to build consensus, foster understanding and inspire teams... build buildings, and endowments, and visions. I have learned from our students, from our amazing

faculty and staff, from parents, and from colleagues in the independent school world."

But we have learned as much or more from Terry. Echoing the enthusiasm of other teachers regarding collaborating with Terry, Pamela Myers remembers their early years co-teaching:

"On Fridays when the kids brought their lunches they would always bring their thermoses, jars, etc. to Terry, the big strong man. He would pretend with great drama to try so hard, but not be able to open them. Then he would hand them to me and I would open them with no problem. We hadn't planned this; he just knew there was a stereotype there to be broken. There is no problem he is not willing to tackle; there is no negative that he can't find a positive for; there is no goal a teacher can set that he can't both expand and support."

"Terry is one of the most talented leaders I have met," writes one board chair. "In working with him, I have learned the importance of checking

your ego at the door. For the rest of my life, I will use him as a standard to strive for." Another board chair remembers how Terry conveyed the belief that change touches many veins with the school community and that being successful requires working with various constituencies over a period of time. "I have found that as initiatives arise representing significant change within my organization at work, I can fall back on the retiring SFS Head of School's approach to building support and leading change. Thank you Terry Edeli."

When asked what his hopes for the school are, Terry lights up. "A huge endowment!" he says. "Forty million! We need to continue to be a really diverse community that is a strong collaboration among parents and teachers in the interest of raising kids who have the skills and courage to transform society."

And what would he like to see if he drops by in five years? "I would like to see the school be a stronger member



**“I have learned from our students, from our amazing faculty and staff, from parents, and from colleagues in the independent school world.”**

of the immediate community – as in a more permeable boundary. Older kids working with younger kids; social action and service learning; children in a gymnasium, and the teams playing in a ‘green league’ with other schools within walking distance. I’d like to see our campus be exemplary in sustainable design.” He pauses, and then that wide smile. “Vibrancy! Lots of what we have now. Music! Joy in the schoolyard and in the classroom! Art on the walls! And along with that art, evidence of our diverse academic curriculum.”

In the 1997 Winter Gazette, then-board chair Brian McCaffrey wrote, “When we look at the school, we should see an institution that is both dynamic and robust. It will not collapse or go sour if it is tinkered with, or even if we reconfigure some of the elements.... Most basically we have to have faith in our school, in ourselves, and in one another.”

Terry’s core faith in the school community may be one of the reasons he remains so positive. Before he left the

school for his sabbatical, Terry wrote about how it was both hard and exciting to leave, even for a while, but how the community – the administration, the faculty, the board, the staff, the children, and the parents – were all up to the task. He feels that way now. His confidence in Steve Morris and the new leadership is palpable.

“It’s like that concept of having the right people on the bus,” Terry says. “You always have to trust the people who are here now, to honor their thoughts and perspectives.”

When Terry left for his sabbatical that he described as “a chance for growth and renewal – not just for me, but for the school and many of its’ players,” Pamela Myers who stood in as Acting Head wrote, “Terry, have a great time! Don’t worry about a thing!”

Terry is the first to point out that the school was here when he got here and will be here when he leaves, that he’s had the opportunity and good fortune to steward it for thirty-five years, but

that he hasn’t done so – couldn’t have done so – alone. The outstanding music program, the vibrant art program, the challenging curriculum, exuberant athletics, the magical preschool and elementary, the burgeoning middle school – all like finely tuned instruments in an Orff band.

But there’s been a great conductor. You, Terry. You.

How do we thank you? How do we thank someone who has given thirty-five years of their life, so much energy, wisdom, and vision to our school?

That great laugh. That tall man. Those Jerry Garcia ties. Fast walker, but always time to sit with you. To listen. Give hugs. Incandescent warmth. Curiosity. Insightfulness. Joy. We all want a part of this man to live in our children and in us.

We will continue to learn, and we will always remember.

And in the words of Pamela Myers, we say, Terry, have a great time! Don’t worry about a thing!

## APPRECIATING TERRY

### COLLEAGUES, ALUMNI, PARENTS AND STUDENTS SHARE THEIR ADMIRATION

My personal belief is that it is the optimists of our world who make big social changes, create masterpieces, and dare to explore the unknown. Terry Edeli has always been such a person. His easy smile, kind words, and true excitement for life have always been an inspiration to me. As his student I always loved that incredible enthusiasm, and as an adult still admire his unstoppable, positive spirit. I would follow him anywhere.

**GEOFF WILLIAMS '79**, PARENT AND SFS ALUM

I will miss Terry's very friendly personality and his willingness to help out with our education.

**OWEN**, 8TH GRADER

Terry inspires me with his inclusiveness and total commitment to looking at an issue from all perspectives. He inspires me whenever we have our annual goal setting talks, asking questions and making observations that both further my goals and support them. He inspires all of us with his willingness to tackle any problem with a completely positive attitude and keen, thoughtful, far-seeing intelligence.

**PAMELA MYERS**, FIRST GRADE TEACHER

Terry Edeli has been a mentor, friend and an on-going inspiration for over 20 years. When I first became the Director of Park Day School in 1986, Terry was one of the few school Directors who reached out to welcome me into the community of school administrators. Later, I had the pleasure of attending the Klingenstein Visiting Heads Program with Terry, and we spent hours together trolling the streets of New York City's upper west side. I have always counted on Terry for his wise counsel and abiding good will. Among heads of school, Terry is one of our "deans." His irrepressible spirit, creativity and intelligence are a rare combination that we will sorely miss. I wish him and Kathie the best of good fortune as they enter the next wonderful phase of their lives.

**TOM LITTLE**, DIRECTOR, PARK DAY SCHOOL

Terry has worked hard over the last six years to help the Bay Area Teacher Training Institute (BATTI) get launched, attending important early planning meetings and serving as treasurer on our board. Many obstacles stood in our path – finding a university partner, corraling a group of independent schools very used to their independence and not so used to collaborating, and

convincing many people who didn't see how private schools would be a good place to train new teachers and help them get a California credential. But Terry's optimism, honesty, big-heartedness, fantastic writing skills, and contagious enthusiasm helped us sweep aside all the obstacles and create our new program, which will graduate its 100th new teacher next year!

**BOB HOUGHTELING**, DIRECTOR, BAY AREA TEACHER TRAINING INSTITUTE

I like when he talks to the school. I am going to miss him when he leaves.

**EMMA**, KINDERGARTENER

Terry's big laugh and his positive comments have been the most inspiring to me. When I walk around the campus and I hear Terry laughing and talking to people, it makes me feel joyous and I want to be here surrounded in that positive energy. When I have talked through my ideas and inspirations with Terry, I have been met with questions, curiosity, and the kind of thinking that makes me feel that my work can take off. This inspires me to develop my ideas and deepen my thinking. I take great pride and ownership in my work at SFS and I think this has some to do with me, but a lot to do with Terry.

**ERIKA LIEDTKE**, 6TH GRADE HUMANITIES TEACHER

Terry Edeli first inspired me at a prospective parent tour in 1990 - he showed us with passion and enthusiasm what children experience at The SF School. After the tour my husband and I wanted this for our children too. Little did I know then that I would get the privilege of working closely with this man, a man who has the energy, intelligence and inspiration of ten.

**CORRINE OLAGUE**, ASSISTANT TO THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

As a preschooler, Terry inspired me to be curious and find joy in my world, which back then was not much bigger than the North Classroom and yard. Thirty-something years later, as a pre-school parent, Terry continues to amaze me with his limitless energy and optimism as he inspires today's students to ask questions and seek answers about their environment, society and the larger world. And what child or parent would not be uplifted by that cheerful smile!

**ALANA RAMIREZ '85**, PARENT AND SFS ALUM

Terry embodies BIG. Big heart, big voice, big actions, big vision. He's inspiration in action... everywhere at once, managing and overseeing, but also willing to jump in and get dirty, always with a big smile. In quieter, more thoughtful moments as an educational mentor, Terry has helped me

craft projects, lessons and activities, always cycling me back to the question, "What is it that you really want the kids to learn?" With children and their understanding at the center, he's been hugely inspirational in helping me see the big picture and figuring out how to get there.

**KAREN GOODKIN,**  
ELEMENTARY ART TEACHER

Two images of Terry from his last work day – carrying heaving boxes out to recycling and down on his knees pulling out tiny weeds. Both speak eloquently of his legacy – shouldering the heavy beams that frame the school's large vision and also tending to the tiny details that most people don't ever see. And doing both with equal care, with boundless energy, with relentless long-term dedication, with an ancestral Italian gusto. That's a worthy model for all of us, whatever our work may be.

**DOUG GOODKIN,**  
MUSIC TEACHER

He's really funny.

**MAYA,** SECOND GRADER

When I pop my head into his office, Terry might be seated at his desk, checking his latest emails, but the moment he hears, "Terry?," he turns his head, pulls his fingers off the keys, and smiles big and wide. "Come in!" Terry brings his best and whole self to every interaction he has whether he is kneeling

down to talk with my shy preschooler or addressing a packed room on the first day of school. With every part of his being he is saying that you matter, your contributions, ideas and feelings matter. And we are going to do this together.

**CHRIS YIN,** PARENT

I have strong admiration for Terry's patience, his genuine kindness and his ability to step back and search for better understanding and insight, whatever the situation.

**LYNNE WOODFORD,**  
PRESCHOOL TEACHER

Terry totally shares my interest and love of food – eating, cooking and entertaining. We talk shop all the time. I will never forget years ago, 25 years I think, I was contemplating purchasing a deep freezer for my home. Terry said, "why would you want that? Then you will always have a lot of old frozen food. Isn't it better to buy it fresh more often?!" ... always ahead of his time.

**PATTY CORWIN,** SCHOOL COOK

For me, Terry Edeli represents the best that independent school leadership has to offer, and that is said having worked with hundreds of school leaders over two decades. Why? Because Terry is a sincere, giving, skilled, visionary and he follows through. Terry's ability to nurture potential (mine and others), and to

use his patience to see out his vision, may be his greatest skills...he has taught me that understanding yourself and giving support to others makes your dream come true.

**ORPHEUS CRUTCHFIELD,**  
PRESIDENT, STRATÉGENIUS

I have admired and been inspired by Terry throughout my twenty years at Lick; first as a highly-esteemed colleague, next as a devoted parent of two wonderful L-W sons, then as a Lick trustee, and more recently as chair of our Board's Public Purpose Committee. Terry is one of the most thoughtful, strategic and visionary leaders I have ever known. These qualities,

combined with his deep convictions related to the promise and the dignity of every child, as well as the sanctity of justice, equity and fairness, make Terry a school leader we would all like to emulate. Self-effacing in the extreme, Terry elevates and ennobles all who have the good fortune of working with him and, indeed, all who are lucky enough to find themselves within his orbit. His imprint on The San Francisco School and the independent school world at large is both profound and indelible. Thank you, Terry, for ALL you have done, and are doing, to make the world a better place!

**AL ADAMS,** HEADMASTER,  
LICK-WILMERDING HIGH SCHOOL





The  
**San Francisco School**

300 Gaven Street  
San Francisco, CA 94134  
Tel 415.239.5065  
Fax 415.239.4833  
[www.sfschool.org](http://www.sfschool.org)

### MISSION STATEMENT

The San Francisco School cultivates and celebrates the intellectual, imaginative and humanitarian promise of each student in a community that practices mutual respect, embraces diversity and inspires a passion for learning.

### OVERVIEW OF SCHOOL

Founded in 1966, The San Francisco School is a Pre-K through eighth independent, coeducational day school. The school is an established, vibrant educational community with a multicultural enrollment of 270 students, an experienced and dedicated faculty, and supportive and involved parents. The preschool program centers on the ideas of Maria Montessori. The elementary and middle school program reflects the ideals of a progressive, student-centered approach. The school also includes an extended care program, parent education opportunities, and summer recreational activities. Suitably characterized by a parent as "an urban school with a village atmosphere," the school embraces San Francisco's ethnic, cultural, and economic diversity. Our progressive approach to education encourages children to develop self-reliance, solid academic skills, integrity, and a sense of social values. The school is respected for our strong academics, our vibrant community, our personal attention to students, and our dynamic arts program. Our students graduate academically prepared, inquisitive, compassionate, and eager for the challenges ahead.

THANK YOU  
**TERRY!**

