



ALL SOULS SCHOOL

PARENTS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2018

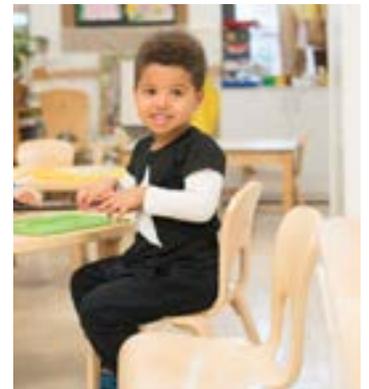
THIS ISSUE'S THEME: TRANSITIONS

Transitions

By Jennifer Vest, Ed.D., Director, All Souls School

After a winter of record snowfalls, we are all eagerly awaiting the arrival of spring! While the hours of daylight are lengthening, the cooler temperatures of winter continue to linger, with the occasional tease of a warmer day raising our hopes that spring has truly arrived. Dressing for the weather has been challenging these past few weeks, as winter coats can't yet be stored away, but a light jacket can be too warm for the afternoon. Mother Nature seems to be reminding us that transitions are never as smooth as we hope they will be.

Just as the seasons are changing, this time of year brings thoughts of other transitions. For our oldest students, it is the transition to a new school, as they prepare to leave All Souls for kindergarten. Families may be anticipating a move, either to a new apartment in the city, or a move away due to a job transfer. Other families may be experiencing the joy of a new baby or the sadness of losing a grandparent. Members of our faculty are anticipating their own transitions, of retirement, working with a different team, starting graduate school, planning weddings, or awaiting the arrival of a baby! The one constant in life is that change is inevitable. How we manage these necessary transitions influence how those changes shape our lives. (Continued on page 2)



SPOTLIGHT:
THE PANCAKE BREAKFAST:
An All Souls School Tradition



Director's essay, continued...

Parents often ask me how to prepare their child for an impending change. While I encourage parents to be thoughtful of the impacts of the change, and consider the change from multiple perspectives, the key to preparing for change is to remember that change is unpredictable. Grant yourself the grace to not be able to anticipate every challenge that may arise, and that you will not have the answer to every question. Transitions can be messy and filled with setbacks, as well as positive forward momentum. When you bring a new baby home, some days your older child will be loving and sweet, sharing a favorite toy or singing a song to the baby. Other days your older child may try to push the baby away so s/he can climb in your lap. Novelty can quickly wear thin, and the new reality can be challenging. Although difficult to work through, these are important life lessons for children to experience.

Our children look to us as to how to make sense of transitions and manage change. If we do our best to remain positive, create stability through routines, highlight the similarities between the prior and current situation, and reassure them that we are available for support and guidance through the change, our children will grow in their understanding of how to navigate a transition. The British philosopher, Alan W. Watts, wrote, "The only way to make sense out of change is to plunge into it, move with it, and join the dance." Sometimes we need to keep our winter coats in the front of the hall closet, while also moving T-shirts to the top of the dresser drawer, so we can be prepared for whichever season Mother Nature has decided to share with us on that day.



CLASS 2A CANDIDS



ALL SOULS

We all learn, grow, and change. See how transition manifests in the classroom.

In 3B, we incorporate transitions into our curriculum in many formal and informal ways. For instance, during Meeting the children discuss our "Plan of the Day" and look over our "Choice Chart" to understand what activities are available. During Meeting, we learn about new activities and learn about the what's happening in each other's lives. For instance, during Meeting the "Plan of the Day" may include "Banjo Bill." Once the "Teacher's Assistant" goes over the "Plan of the Day," children can anticipate the group transition next door. Also, during Meeting we may learn "That _____ is picking me up because _____ is away." In this way, the child can reveal a schedule change in their own lives and share it with the group. Meeting is the formal time to understand what happening in our day.

Elizabeth Gibbons, 3B



A lot of our curriculum is seasonally based in 2A and we definitely talk a lot about transitioning from one season to the next throughout the year in our meeting time discussions, as well as via our art projects, books, songs, science activities, etc. In addition, our recent Finally Four Celebration was indeed an opportunity to reminisce about and emphasize the transition and growth our 2A kids have made starting the year as 3 year olds to now all being finally 4!

- LouAnn O'Hara, 2A



IN ACTION

The way we prepare our children for the transition from 4A to their next classrooms is by talking about how this classroom is for the youngest children, and when summer is over, a long time from now, they will be ready to go to a classroom for bigger kids. We then talk about how the new children entering 4A will not know anything about school. They will have to learn about being a napkin passer, putting on a smock to paint, where the blocks go, etc. We also spend time looking back. We sing songs learned from the beginning of school and look at photos and see how much everyone has grown. Finally, we always tell the children that they are welcome to come back and visit whenever they want.

-Audrey Matson, 4A



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In 3A, we help our class process the end of the school year in a few ways. We make a countdown chain for the last few weeks and everyone gets a turn to pull a link off. We count the weekdays (one color of links) and weekends (another color) and then count them all up. We have class meetings about ways to stay in touch over the summer and next year. The children always come up with lots of ways to stay connected to their friends. We also make a big list of things to do before school is over (usually activities or projects they want to repeat from earlier) and check them off as we do them. Children who are moving to 2B in All Souls go on a visit to see their new classroom and meet their new teachers, while children who are moving on to kindergarten work together to compile a list of questions to ask former 3Aers (current kindergarteners) who come in as "kindergarten experts" to talk with the class.

Emily Ehmer, 3A

Transitions can be a challenge for children in the early years. In 2B we work with the fives class to smoothly transition from one activity to another. In our classroom, jobs are changed weekly. Each week two children will hold the job of moving around our classroom informing their peers that there are "Five minutes until clean up." The children respond to acknowledge that they heard the announcement, and the two children move to inform the other children around the class.

By conveying to the class that there are five minutes left in their work time, children become accustomed to the amount of time left to complete an aspect of their work. In 2B we encourage children to finish, but if they feel that their project is too long for completion, then we emphasize not to rush their work, but to place it in their saving box, thus promoting the understanding of ongoing personal projects. A child's concept of time is undeveloped at their chronological age; however, implementing a "five-minute" component of the day helps them develop a relative understanding in terms of their classroom day.

At the end of this time period, we often sing "I can see that ----- is helping" as they help to clean up our room. Other transitions are also communicated by singing, such as lining up for the roof and sitting for story.

-Shelagh Naughton, 2B

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CLASS
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ALL SOULS AT HOME

The school year is winding down. What are you up to this summer?

I can't wait to...

I look forward to visiting...

I look forward to eating...

What I look forward to the next school year...



CLASS
3A PM
CANDIDS



ALL SOULS

THE TEACHER SAYS...

An Interview with Audrey Matson, Marjorie Loewi, Caren Zuckerman, and

LouAnn O'Hara

By : Marcell Stile Altman, Charlotte Kehoe, Eloise Cohen, and James Keizner

In this issue, we wanted a chance to hear from each retiring teacher and staff member as she transitions away from life at All Souls School. We hope you enjoy their conversations with some of their students!

Audrey Matson, as interviewed by Marcel Stile Altman (4A)

MSA: Have you been on a steam train and a bullet train?

AM: These are the perfect questions from you! I know how interested you are in trains. I have never been on a steam train or a bullet train.

MSA: What subway train do you take to get to school, the 4,5, or 6 on Lexington Avenue?

AM: I always walk to school, but I am so excited about the Q train. Although its construction was very disruptive to our neighborhood, I am now pleased to have it right near my home.

Marjorie Loewi, as interviewed by Charlotte Kehoe (4A)

CK: Will you miss All Souls?

ML: Yes, I will miss All Souls very much. It was my second home for 30 years. I loved teaching and playing with all the children over those years. Hopefully one day I can come in and substitute or visit your classroom.

CK: What will you do next?

ML: I plan to spend more time with my grandchildren and my friends. I would also like to travel more with my husband.

CK: Will you get a hamster?

ML: No, I do not have any plans to get a hamster. Maybe one day I will have a dog in my life again. I have a pond at my home filled with koi and goldfish. I will miss you and Ollie very much. I enjoyed being your teacher.

Caren Zuckerman, as interviewed by Eloise Cohen (2B)

EC: How has your life been?

CZ: Life is wonderful. My husband and I love living in New York City and enjoying all that the city has to offer.

EC: How is your family doing?

CZ: My family is terrific. Both my son and daughter are married and live very close. My greatest pleasure is spending time with my family.

EC: Where is your next trip?

CZ: I am writing you now from London. After school ends, my husband and I will be traveling to the Champagne and Burgundy regions of France and then ending our travels in our favorite city: Paris.

LouAnn O'Hara, as interviewed by James Keizner (4A)

JK: What do you like to have for dinner?

LAO: It's hard to choose one thing, but I think I'd probably have to say I especially like quesadillas with cheese, beans, and guacamole.

JK: What does your house look like?

LAO: It's made of bricks and it has a chimney, a green door, and 4 windows at the front. My cats love to sit in the windows and look out into the yard.

ALL VOICES

THE SCHOOL DIRECTOR SAYS...

An Interview with Jennifer Vest

By PA President Gretchen Wiker

Transitions are inevitable, from our early years as children throughout the various stages of adulthood. With transitions often comes challenges, excitement and oftentimes, personal growth. Enjoy the interview below with our very own Jennifer Vest who provides insight into navigating transitions, including her own recent experience.

GW: Transitions can be both hard and exciting. What are some ways All Souls teachers guide children through the many transitions during their class day?

JV: First, our teachers set a predictable routine everyday so children know what to expect and when to expect it. The picture schedules posted in the classrooms are a visual reminder for children of the events of the day. Children derive great comfort in knowing what to expect, as they know what they will do and when they will do it. Second, our teachers provide prompts for transitions so children can be prepared for the change in activity. This can include both verbal and visual cues, such as turning off the lights, ringing a bell, clapping three times, or giving a "five more minutes" signal. Providing a prompt before the transition demonstrates the teachers' respect for the work the children are currently engaged in, as well as acknowledging that they need time to either finish or find a stopping point in their work.

GW: Why are transitions such an important part of learning?

JV: Transitions are a part of life. Knowing how to both manage your work within designated chunks of time, as well as learning how to stop and come back to work are lifelong skills that will serve our students well.

GW: What advice would you give parents whose children may be navigating a big transition; maybe a new apartment, a new sibling, or a move to kindergarten?

JV: First, understand that a child's sense of time is much different from an adult's sense of time. Children live very much in the present, and an event that is weeks or months away is not as relevant as an event happening today or tomorrow. Only give information that is absolutely necessary when you need to give it. Also, be aware of the conversations you are having in front of your child. There is a lot of truth in the old saying "little pitchers have big ears". Children often hear and observe much more than adults realize.

GW: What transitions do you see happening at All Souls in the next few years?

JV: We have been very fortunate at All Souls to have such longevity in our teaching staff. As some of our teachers transition to retirement, we will be bringing in new faculty members. Susan Hess and I are working very thoughtfully in shaping our new mentoring program, so that our new faculty both feel welcome and prepared to be active members of the All Souls community. Our focus will be to ensure that the mission and vision of All Souls remains central to our work, while also incorporating new ideas and perspectives from our new faculty members.

GW: You went through a huge transition yourself two years ago, moving from Memphis to New York. What were the hardest, the best, and the most surprising parts of that big change in your life?

JV: The professional aspect of the transition was probably the easiest. Schools tend to operate in distinctive ways, so I understood the work that I would be doing in heading a school. My life outside of school however, is radically different. Downsizing from a house to an apartment, walking and taking public transportation versus driving, were major lifestyle changes. However, by establishing new routines for myself, I found a new rhythm for my new life. I was amazed at how quickly I was able to do so!

ALL SOULS, ALL VOICES



THE CHILD SAYS...

An Interview with JP Metcalf, age 4
By Jack Metcalf (All Souls alum, age 7)

In keeping with past issues, we present an interview between a current All Souls student and his older brother, an alum who was in class 3B in 2016.

Jack: What is your favorite part about going to All Souls?

JP: I like to play on the roof playground. I always run to the bicycles.

Jack: I used to like playing with the large blue blocks. I would always make a giant ship.

JP: What is your favorite thing to do at St. David's?

Jack: I like music class, and I just started to play the piano. I also like science because we do fun projects like tests and experiments.

JP: What do you want to be when you grow up?

Jack: I want to be a spy.

JP: I want to be an animal catcher and bring animals back home.

Jack: What is your favorite TV show?

JP: Power Rangers. I like the blue Power Ranger because he controls everyone.

Jack: I prefer the iPad. I like the apps Brain Pop Jr. and Go Noodle.

Jack: If you had three wishes, what would they be?

JP: I could talk to a wall.

Jack: Don't be silly, JP!

JP: To ride my bike every day, meet a talking hot dog, and to have robot.

Jack: My wishes would be Grandma and Grandpa would live with us, to play football with Tom Brady, and to travel the world.

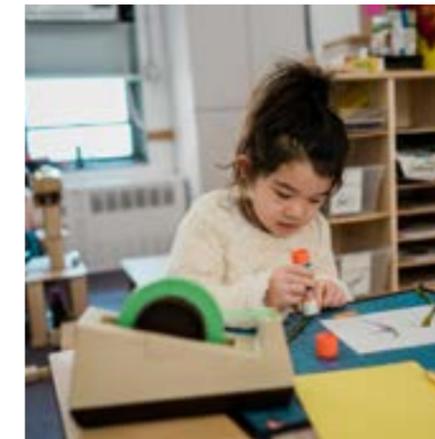
JP: What is the one thing that scares you?

Jack: A zombie

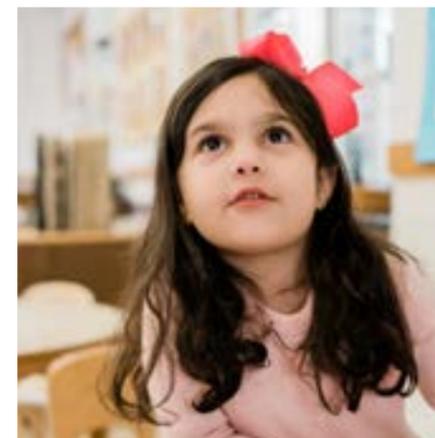
JP: Nothing scares me because I have super powers.

Jack: Superpowers? Really, what are your super powers?

JP: I make magic.



CLASS
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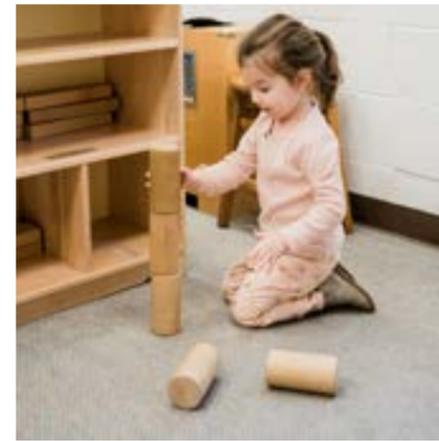




CLASS
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CLASS
4A
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JOKE BREAK:

What building in New York City has the most stories?

The public Library!



CLASS
4A PM
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ALL SOULS IN THE COMMUNITY

TRADITIONS: THE ALL SOULS SCHOOL BOOK FAIR

The annual Book Fair was held March 10th at Books of Wonder on West 18th Street. Author-Illustrator, Dan Salmieri, read to the children and everyone enjoyed snacks and crafts. The All Souls School Library was the recipient of many new donated books. Thank you to everyone who attended, donated books, donated to the Library Fund and volunteered!



ALL SOULS ONLINE

Please visit the All Souls website to check the school calendar, your class page, view many more photos, and download an array of articles and forms. 1000 thank yous to the parents, teachers, students, and administrators who contributed to this issue of the All Souls School Newsletter

THE NEWSLETTER TEAM

Erin Welling: Co-Chair & Editor Erin Bays: Co-Chair & Designer
Elizabeth Keizner: Co-Chair & Editor Katasha Harley: Co-Chair & Editor
Kailuo Wang & Julianne Diaz: Photography Co-Chairs & Photographers

ALL SOULS, ALL HEART



The South at Sotheby's

THANK YOU to all the volunteers who made the All Souls School Benefit a wonderful and successful evening! Enjoy some photos from a night in The South!



ALL SOULS, ALL GROWN UP

WHAT WE DO WITH WHAT WE LEARN HERE

In this section, we feature alumni who have pursued careers related to our issue's theme, in this case **transitions**. Meet two very awesome All Souls grads.

Matt Malone (1997-2000)

The transition periods of my life have been the scariest and most transformative. Even moving from 3A to 4B at All Souls, I remember being nervous about the potential for a socially-threatening consequence of navigating a new classroom ("What if I can't find the Play-Doh bin?"). But transitions gift a new perspective, and therefore, a fuller outlook on life. Having lived in the city my entire life, I'll start a new chapter when I begin my studies in England this Fall. I'm very excited for the novelty and discomfort that come alongside moving, only because I know one day they will be useful to me.

Rose South (2017-2018)

Move from Singapore to New York City: Singapore is a lot smaller than New York. New York is humungous! It was more fun than I expected because I met a lot of new friends, and I liked gym class where we had obstacle courses.

From All Souls to Kindergarten: I was sad to leave All Souls, but I still see my friends. I was nervous to make new friends, but now I have lots of new friends. It was tiring to go from a half day to a full day, but I like all my new classes and love working on computers! Every day at school gets better.

Rose's recommendations for a smooth transition when changing schools:

- 1) Make sure you get lots of sleep -- you will be tired!
- 2) I felt nervous at first, but it was all fine in the end!

WHAT WE DO WITH WHAT YOU GIVE

Want to know where your donations go?

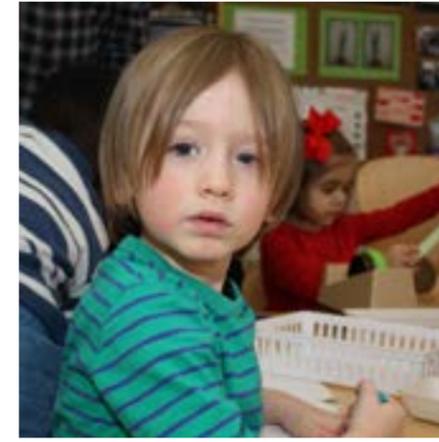
Here's a quick hit list of the funds that support our school.

The Gunnar Johannsen/Kefalidis Tuition Assistance Fund Fully supported by contributions from parents and friends, as well as the proceeds of the Annual Benefit, scholarships are awarded on the basis of need by a non-parent committee of the Board of Trustees.

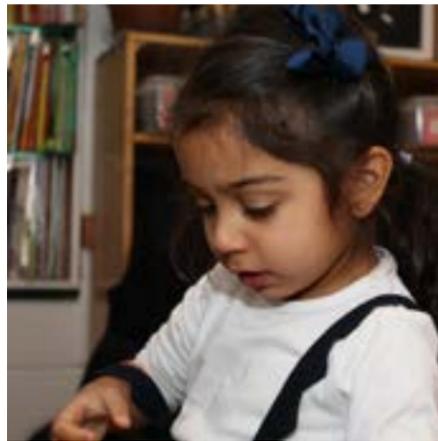
The Dr. Jean Mandelbaum Teachers' Enrichment Fund This fund allows teachers to attend professional conferences, pursue educational interests, and receive short-term, no-interest loans.

The Director's Fund for Children's Special Needs Started with a large donation from a school family, this fund: helps provide consultants (such as speech therapists, psychologists, and social workers) to the staff; adds materials or personnel to the classroom when special circumstances arise; and provides the Director with the ability to meet unexpected needs appropriately and promptly.

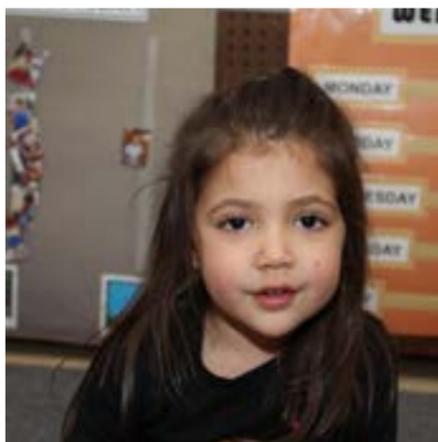
Unrestricted Needs Fund As a not-for-profit institution, the school depends on donations to this fund to help support operating activities.



CLASS
4B AM
CANDIDS



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NOTES FROM THE RAMP
Running up and down the All Souls ramp at the end of the school day serves as a much needed transition for many students as they say goodbye to their friends and teachers until tomorrow and begin their journey home.

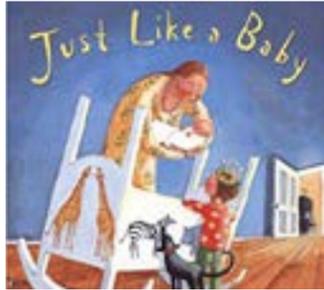
ALL SOULS

STRAIGHT FROM THE ALL SOULS EXPERTS:

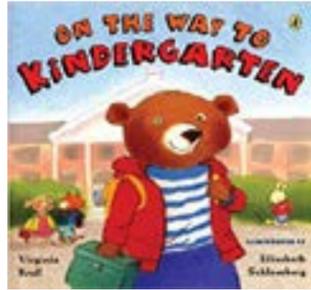
The best book and music selections to help us navigate transitions

from library guru Mari Schermeyer...

Mari's book selections from the All Souls School Library contemplate the transitions many students at All Souls School may face during their preschool and early adolescent years: a new sibling, a new school, or a move to a new home. These books will surely help our students and parents work through these common transitions.



Just Like A Baby by **Rebecca Bond** describes how a family prepares for a new baby. Each member adds to the endeavor: Father builds the cradle, Grandfather paints it, Grandmother sews a quilt for it, Brother cuts out a mobile to hang overhead, and Mother sets it near the window. A cumulative refrain marks the completion of each person's task; one family member after another takes a turn climbing into the cradle and is gently rocked to sleep. The story conveys the idea that each of the individuals is part of a loving unit preparing for the arrival of the new baby.



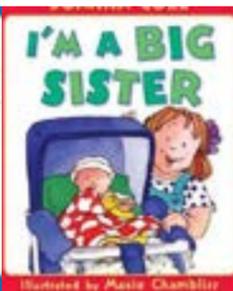
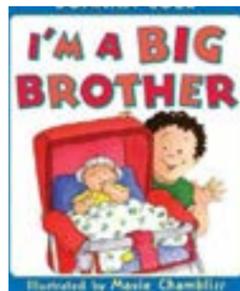
On the Way to Kindergarten by **Virginia Kroll and Elisabeth Schlossberg** is a fun, celebratory story for any child waiting to go to school. The book starts when Bear is a newborn and describes the milestones the cub has completed until "NOW," which is age five, when the number of things the cub can do expands exponentially. Readers may not do all of the things this capable youngster can do, but they will certainly identify with the joy and pride that are a part of accomplishing something new.



Sophie and the New Baby by **Catherine Anholt and Laurence Anholt** is about Sophie, who is excited to hear about the baby and notifies her toys "someone important is coming soon." With the birth of her brother, Sophie learns he wants a lot and he wants it "all right now." Tired of his attention absorption, Sophie asks her Mom, "When will he be going back again?" She is shocked to hear the baby is a permanent fixture, frustrated she must wait to play with him, and then infuriated. "I don't want that baby anymore!" Parental understanding and time help Sophie move to affectionate acceptance.



A Kiss Goodbye by **Audrey Penn and Barbara Leonard Gibson** is about Chester, the endearing raccoon, who is having a difficult time because he has to move from the security of the home he knows and loves, his familiar friends, and school. What makes this book so powerful and beautiful for children is the way that Chester shows children his coping skills by expressing his feelings of sadness and loss, his fears about moving and his ways to literally carry pieces of his home and room with him to his new house.



I'm a Big Brother and **I'm a Big Sister** by **Joanna Cole and Maxie Chambliss** are identical stories. Mommy and Daddy empower their first-time older sibling by explaining his/her new role: helper. Older siblings are taught how to make the baby feel warm and cozy and explain why babies cry and what to do, which empowers them with concrete knowledge. Mommy and Daddy reassure the older sibling that he/she is loved and "the only me in the whole world!" On the last page, A NOTE TO PARENTS describes "What a BIG BROTHER/BIG SISTER Needs."

STORY + SONG

...and music specialist Bill Gordh

Banjo Bill's Songs of Transition: Traditional Folksongs (and Guthrie tunes) and some stories too!

Transitions can be tricky for young children (and everyone else for that matter) as they are not sure what's on the other side. Singing songs can make a transition more of an adventure.

*We're on the homeward trail
We're on the homeward trail
Singing, singing, everybody singing
As we go.*

When I was a kid, we used to sing this song on the long car ride from my grandparent's home in Georgia to ours in Roanoke, Virginia. We did not have a radio in the car and it was a long drive for a family of six. We sang it over and over again, each time replacing the "We're" with one of our names or that of a friend. A time of transition from place to place filled with song.



You are My Sunshine (Davis/Mitchell) needs no introduction, but you may wonder why I include it with the theme of Transition. Often transitions produce anxiety for all involved. Talking through the scenarios, offering reassurances, supporting and celebrating strengths are all helpful strategies for helping a child through a tricky change. In the midst of it all, singing an old favorite like *You are My Sunshine* reminds your child that no matter what, you are there for them.



What Shall We Do When We All Go Out? is an old folksong from North Carolina and one of the favorites in our Sing at school. The chorus asks the title's question and the children supply the answers. As soon as the song begins, the children start waving their hands, hoping to be chosen to offer something exciting to do. We often choose two – one to say where we will go and the other to describe what we will do when we get there. Then we sing the ideas followed by another chorus with the question and more answers follow. The enthusiasm for this song suggests that when a child is given the opportunity to name, suggest, or influence what is coming, they become excited about the future. The song would lose its power for the children if I supplied the verses.

The Garden Song (Dave Mallet) is a wonderful song we sing on occasion.

*Inch by Inch, row by row
Gonna make this garden grow
All it takes is a rake and hoe
And a piece of fertile ground.*

This song is beautiful and reassuring, suggesting that if we take care of things as we go, the result will be something we like – in this case a garden.

THE BACK PAGE

Happy Retirement to LouAnn O'Hara, Caren Zuckerman, Marjorie Loewi, and Audrey Matson!

All Souls School is all the better because of you. There are no words that can truly express the depth of our gratitude and admiration for your service to our community over the years. We bid you adieu and can't wait to here about what's next.



In their own words:

As (Paul) "Simon Says" regarding his upcoming retirement, "I've often wondered what it would feel like to reach the point where I'd consider bringing my career to a natural end. Now I know: it feels a little unsettling, a touch exhilarating, and something of a relief."

We couldn't have said it better ourselves. With our combined 133 years at All Souls coming to an end, naturally we feel bittersweet. However, truth be told, we are also looking forward to unstructured free time that we can fill with many of the things we love, among them:

- doing the NY Times crossword puzzle with morning coffee
- playing Mah jongg
- taking extra yoga classes
- reading, reading, reading
- vacationing in the fall
- spending more time with our families and friends

When September rolls around, there is no doubt that we will be thinking of All Souls with only the warmest of memories. We will long cherish having been a part of this special community.

Our love and best wishes to all.
~LouAnn, Audrey, Marge, and Caren



Audrey and LouAnn, 1983
All Souls School's very first Staff Development day
at Lake Tiorati in Harriman State Park.