



THE GALILEO OBSERVER

A Monthly Newsletter of the
Galileo Alumni Association

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Flower Drum Song

The long-awaited production of *Flower Drum Song*, the 1958 hit Broadway musical by Rodgers and Hammerstein, will be presented this Saturday, January 24th, at 2:00 pm at the Del Valle Theater, 1963 Tice Valley Road, Walnut Creek. The Belasco Theater Company's annual musical event will be a salute to the talent of youth. This special matinee performance is for Galileo students, alumni, their families and friends. Tickets are \$20 each and can be purchased at the door.

A MAN OF VISION

The man behind *Flower Drum Song*, is Ed Belasco, its producer and director. Ed attended Spring Valley School, Marina Junior High, and Galileo High, where he performed often on stage with Danny Bartolozzi and Dino Natali. He later joined The Four Vagabonds and toured the country. He married three times, the first time to singer Fran Jeffries. After many years with the Vagabonds, he formed the group, The Belasco Four.

It was because of his own three kids that Ed formed The Belasco Theater Company, which takes Bay Area young people between 6 and 18 years and gives them the opportunity to sing and dance in musicals that Ed produces twice a year. He has been doing this for the last 23 years, and several of his student performers have moved on to professional singing and dancing careers. Spurred on by his love of youth and encouraged by his 96 year old mother, Josephine, who lives in the same flat on Hyde Street near Jackson where Ed grew up, this man of indomitable spirit and drive marches on toward his dream of giving back to the community and its youth the fruits of his own talent.

Ed Belasco's feats of musical production and direction are all the more remarkable because he is plagued with failing eyesight. But Ed can see with more than his eyes. He sees a future where his young performers will gain confidence, utilize their talent, and accomplish their goals. And that makes Ed Belasco, producer/director *extraordinaire*, a true man of vision.

I Remember Eddie

The year was around 1962. I was in Fresno for a weekend and had a date for Saturday night. That morning I read in the papers that The Four Vagabonds were playing a gig at a large hall in town. So I suggested to my date that we go see The Vagabonds and Eddie Belasco whom I knew from Galileo High School. We got there late and were seated at a table toward the rear of the audience. It was after the first number that Eddie spotted me in the audience (he sure had good eyesight in those days), came down off the stage, took the table in both hands and carried it to the front of the room and sat us down there. My date was impressed, I was grateful, and some people in the audience were astonished. I have never forgotten that incredible act of Eddie's, and I reminded him of it at Spring Valley Grammar School's 150th anniversary reunion last year. And that, ladies and gentlemen, is one reason why Eddie Belasco is a class act.

GAA MAKES CONTRIBUTION TO PENDULUM

The Galileo Alumni Association has made a \$600 contribution to The Pendulum. The sum will go toward helping the school newspaper continue publishing, and it covers the cost of a single issue.

The Pendulum acknowledged receipt of the gift and hopes that others will follow with their contributions.

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Principal Optimistic About Galileo

Principal Margaret Chiu attended the January 8th meeting of the Galileo Alumni Association and spoke about recent developments at the school. Mrs. Chiu said that academic performance has improved by 25 points and that AVID, the college preparatory program, is working well. Galileo is involved in a Health Information Pathway, Academy of Information Technology, and a Biotechnology Program. The current student enrollment is 2,000. She mentioned the need for funds to pay expenses for using the Civic Auditorium for graduation. San Francisco Supervisor Fiona Ma is working on getting the alumni associations as well as PTAs of the four high schools that use the Civic Auditorium to help raise funds. Mrs. Chiu is a positive thinking person, and Galileo is fortunate to have her as its Principal.

GALILEO SPORTS HALL OF FAME

On Saturday, May 8th, the Galileo Sports Hall of Fame will honor this year's inductees at a dinner at the Italian Athletic Club. There are currently 188 members of the Hall of Fame. There is still time to get your nominations in to the Selection Committee. A nomination form can be found at the end of this newsletter. Every month we will publish a portion of the list of current members in alphabetical order. Here is the first group. John Aguirre, Rod Andrews, Steve Aronson, Rich Baptista, Dave Barni, Roy Barni, Von Babe Barsotti, Wayne Beasley, Dan Begovich, Mike Bellanca, Gene Birsinger, Ken Blue, Joe Borg, Joe Bortoli, Ray Bower, Don Bragg, Keith Bridwell, Gaither Brooks, Bob Brown, Tracy Brown, Bill Burke, John Bussanick, Ray Canepa, Ray Carmassi, Robert Chadwick, Harry Chellini, Ken Chellini, Frank Chiu, Albert Chu, Gino Cimoli, Fred Cirimele, Jack Cochran, Joe Conti, Markey Crane, Ann Curtis Cuneo, Gordon Cuneo, Lawrence Lordi Damato, Reno DeBenedetti, George DeLuca, Thomas DeNike (coach), Ian Dea, Larry Dee, Mike Delgado, Bill Densor, Sam DeVito, Orrin DeVoto, Angelo Dillon, Dominic DiMaggio, Art Dito, Robert Domergue, Oscar Donahue, Anne Dougherty, Joe Drake, Mickey Duzdevich, John Dyson, Harland Eastwood, Harold Ebright, Jack Ertola, Ron Ertola.

Bocce Anyone?

Beginning in March, a group of Galileo alumni will be playing Bocce (pronounced bah-chee) at Albert Park in San Rafael. On any given day there is an AM league and an evening league. All alumni, family and friends are welcome to sign up to play. Please make a team of at least four players. For further information contact the Marin Bocce Federation, 550 B Street, San Rafael, CA 94941, telephone 415-485-5583.

GALS PLAN LUNCHEON

Guys aren't the only ones having luncheons these days although they had quite a few the last part of 2003. Nina Clima is planning a luncheon for ladies raised in the Marina and North Beach for Saturday, March 27th. Notices will be sent out in February. This will be the 3rd annual luncheon and takes in all age groups and is not limited to Galileo alumni. Anyone interested in attending contact Nina at 415-566-4782.

EXCLUSIVE!

On December 17 "The Four Meatballs" + 2 had their annual reunion dinner at The Buckeye Roadhouse in Mill Valley. The Four Meatballs, at best a mediocre group of wannabe singers and fun-seekers, who on occasion

entertained Galileo assembly audiences in 1950-51, are Ben Dito, Paul Lamphere, Jim Dresser, and Art Leones. The 2 are Cliff Righetti (Washington High) and your Editor. This fun dinner has been taking place each December for a few years now and is always marked by stories of shenanigans and mayhem the group recalls from its high school days. Occasionally other friends drop in to join the dinner group, and on lucky occasions, a celebrity is encountered, but that's another story.

LETTERS

What a small world! Gee, we went all through school together, Spring Valley, Marina and Galileo. I retired here in Columbia, California, and love being here. We moved here in 1998 after I retired from my employer of 29 years. I had come to Sonoma in the 70s, 80s and 90s while working with my sales reps in commercial insurance. I was a sales manager and covered the entire state of California. Since my crew led the company in sales nationwide for over 20 years, we decided to retire here. Our company sold business insurance to small and medium sized retail stores – hardware, sporting goods, general stores and auto dealers. Our company is still in business, it's now well over 100 years old. 1444 Jackson Street, Apt. #4, was right across the street from Spring Valley School's front gates. Sure wish we had known about the 150th birthday {celebration}, we would have been there for sure. Bill Dito said my picture was up on the wall with you guys. Hope all is well.

Jim Steinberg jimnkd@mlode.com

Jack Fischer went to Galileo (class of 1950?). He was well liked and went to Korea where he is still listed as MIA, although it is believed he was killed. Carla (Fischer), who is Jack's sister, lives in the Russian River area (Guerneville), and she and her husband, Clare Harris, own Johnson's Beach on the River. Each year they have the Russian River Blues & Jazz Festival. This year they are going to have a Big Band Festival. I thought this might be a good fundraiser for the GAA.

Mel Chiarenza (Class of 1953)

Ed. Note: Carla Fischer (Class of 1952?) was a popular student at Galileo and excelled in swimming and diving.

The Galileo Observer invites your letters, memories, inquiries and suggestions. All submissions are subject to editing. Send them by email to: editorgalileoobserver@yahoo.com, or by postal mail to: Galileo Observer, care of Galileo Alumni Association, 1150 Francisco Street, San Francisco, CA 94109.

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**FOR THE LATEST INFORMATION, VISIT THE GALILEO ALUMNI ASSOCIATION WEBSITE,
WWW.GALILEOALUMNI.ORG.**

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Comments? Contact the [Galileo Alumni webmaster](#)

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