



# THE GALILEO OBSERVER

The Official Newsletter of the  
Galileo Alumni Association



“Communicate and Participate”



**Vol. VIII, No. 1**  
**January 2010**

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## President's Letter

January 1, 2010

*Hello, fellow Lions. We wish you a very healthy and prosperous New Year. We are starting 2010 with expectations of a very productive association.*

*2009 was a trying year for us inasmuch as we were working with a Board of Directors that was not fully staffed. We mourned the passing of charter alumni directors, Frank Clima and Kay Lazzari Michelis. The economy took its toll on membership renewals and new members were tough to come by. Nevertheless, we were still able to participate and contribute to Galileo in a variety of ways. Generous contributions were made to The Celestial Dragon Boat Team and The Pendulum. We actively participated in the dedication of the newly installed sports field, appropriately named George White*

*Field. A contribution for the installation of a memorial plaque in Coach White's honor was made along with a contribution from The Alumni Association Sports Hall Of Fame. We also were honored to be asked to assist and participate in the drama department's production of city acclaimed "Lives In Motion" and to be judges in the 65<sup>th</sup> Annual Song And Yell Contest that again was won by the Senior Class.*

*Moving into the New Year we will enjoy a full board of fifteen directors. We will have a great blend of experienced directors and an influx of new energetic alumni who are dedicated to creating an association that will be a service to all its alumni and a benefit to all aspects of the Galileo Academy. To accomplish the many things we would like to do, we need to have strong alumni. We appreciate your membership renewal for 2010, and we request your participation by attending meetings, communicating with board members with suggestions or requests and by attending social events or fund raisers. Our success is predicated by your involvement to communicate and participate.*

*Lastly, I want to thank outgoing directors, Past President Jim Dresser, Secretary Janet Neilsen and Webmaster Vaughn Spurlin. Each of them has given us several years of meritorious service and pledge to continue to volunteer in other levels of the association.*

*Dennis Eleen*

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## **HAPPY NEW YEAR**

January 2010, a new year, a new decade begins. As time moves forward renewing itself, membership in the G.A.A. must also be renewed. The mission of the Alumni Association of the Galileo Academy of Science and Technology can only be carried out with your yearly donation. We rely on you, our members, to make it possible to produce social events and fund raisers by contributing to and supporting our Alma Mater. A membership renewal of \$25.00 is suggested, but any amount is graciously accepted and is fully tax deductible. Please fill out the attached form or download a form from our website, <http://galileoweb.org/alumni>, and send it in at your earliest convenience. Your contribution and participation are essential for the success of the G.A.A. Our strength is in our alumni; our vitality is in your participation. Thank you on behalf of Galileo Academy.

**G.A.A. Board of Directors  
Dennis M. Eleen ('61)  
President**

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## *A Note from the Editor*

We are constantly striving to improve the look of this newsletter. This issue marks the start of our 8<sup>th</sup> year of publication. You will notice a change in the masthead above. We have replaced the Lion's head with a newer, bolder image. Galileo Galilei was a visionary, and we think this Lion fits better with his tenacity and integrity.

In the future we will make other changes, when necessary, in order to enhance your reading experience. As always, we welcome your comments on the new Lion. --  
SDH

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Fundraiser for the Galileo Academy of Science & Technology  
Senior Class of 2010

### **70's Pop Concert & Carpenters Tribute**

Featuring Colette Ikemi - Singing Karen Carpenter's greatest hits  
&  
Members of The Pulse Band performing music from the 70s



**Saturday, January 30, 2010  
7:30pm – 9:30pm**

Galileo Academy of Science & Technology Auditorium  
1150 Francisco Street  
San Francisco, CA 94109

\*Free Parking available at Fort Mason Center.  
Enter on Franklin and Bay Street\*

**Reservations:** • Advance Pre-Pay \$15.00 • At The Door \$20.00  
Be sure to include your name, # of reservations ordered, e-mail or  
phone number

Make checks payable to: **Galileo Class of 2010**

**Mail to: Galileo Class of 2010**  
**c/o Lauren Choi-Dea**  
**1150 Francisco St.**  
**San Francisco, CA 94109**

Reservations will be held under your name at the door  
This fundraiser is tax deductible, tax ID#: 946000416

If you have any questions, please contact us at [purchasetributetickets@yahoo.com](mailto:purchasetributetickets@yahoo.com)

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## Through The Telescope. . .



by Sisvan Der Harootunian

It was good to see Mario Lechuga ('50) after 58 years. He is the newest member of the GAA board. Other newly- elected directors are Toni Alessandra ('64), Charlene Fachner Mori ('66), Jesse E. Figueroa ('60), Lance Hughston ('66), Barbara LaRocca ('69), and Lenore LaRocca ('64). For a list of all board directors, officers and chairpersons go to <http://galileoweb.org/alumni/contact>. Lance flew out from Florida in November in order to vote at the board meeting, then flew right back. Now, that's dedication!

Eight years ago Ron Sligar ('52) attended his 50<sup>th</sup> class reunion. There he met his high school sweetheart, Janet San Fillippo, and they got married. Now, that's love!

At the annual luncheon in December at Pompei's Grotto, Joe Martino ('50) issued a challenge to all Galileans. He told me he has been married since graduation to Pola Massoni ('50), who was Student Body Vice President while he was President. Are there any other couples out there with a similar record? Now, that's lifetime love!

Elise and Ralph Kazanjian live in the Fontana on Northpoint. From one side of their condo they see San Francisco Bay, the other side Galileo Academy. Now, that's a view!

Beach Blanket Babylon is unquestionably San Francisco's own greatest show. Another more recent attraction that has very long lines is the California Academy of Sciences in Golden Gate Park. See the Planetarium and 3D shows. They will engage your mind and imagination.

"You would prosper in the field of medicine." -- message in a fortune cookie at Golden Horse restaurant, on the former site of (Joe) Scafidi's Market. How did they know I was pre-med in college?

Two trivia questions: 1) Where is Wyatt Earp buried? 2) Where is Orson Welles buried? (answers at the end of this column).

Quote of the sports season: "You can't turn fame on and off." -- Jim Rome (referring to Tiger Woods). And, wouldn't you know it, 2010 is the Chinese Year of the Tiger.

As if noise pollution weren't enough, now Muni buses announce senior/handicapped seating in three languages!

How far we've come: Postal mail was to the Pony Express as email is to postal mail.

Generation gap: Recently I asked a 20 something person for some information. When she gave it, I said "Thanks for the dope." She thought I was thanking her for drugs.

Coincidences: My late best friend Ben Dito ('51) and I used to play a game called coincidences back in the 40s. Once I lost the tiny knob of my wristwatch on Filbert Street. We re-traced our steps up the street, and I found the knob in a crack on the sidewalk -- a needle in a haystack. Recently on a drizzly evening I went to dinner at 1550 Hyde (that's the name of the restaurant. It's a few doors down from Ed Belasco's ('50) boyhood flat). Searching for a parking spot, the only space I found was directly (I mean *directly*) in front of 1720 Hyde Street, where I lived during my Galileo years. Now, that's a coincidence.

My heart goes out to the people of Haiti who have suffered horribly during the 7.0 earthquake a few days ago.

When I was in Port-au-Prince 40 years ago, I stayed at the Villa Creole, a hotel so spic and span you could fry an egg on the floor. Just outside, however, was the most abject poverty I had ever seen -- children wandering about completely naked without even shoes or sandals. A few hundred yards away lived Dictator "Papa Doc" Duvalier in utter splendor.

Frank Clima ('51) was honored posthumously as the San Francisco Italian Athletic Club's 2009 Man of the Year at a dinner on November 14<sup>th</sup>. He was certainly that.

Gone but not forgotten: Frank Clima Ray Piccinini, Kay Lazzari Michelis. We wrote our tribute to Frank in the October issue. Ray entertained us at assemblies and shows in high school. He was the Easter Bunny for hundreds of hospitalized kids. For his obituary, go to <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/sfgate/obituary-print.aspx?n=raymond-a-piccinini&pid=134039676>. Kay was an active GAA board member who contributed much to the organization. She loved dining out, especially in North Beach restaurants. Her obituary can be found by going to <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/sfgate/obituary.aspx?page=lifestory&pid=136080865>.

3 Quotes: 1) "Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap, but by the seeds you plant." – Robert Louis Stevenson. 2) "Today is the tomorrow you worried about yesterday." – Dale Carnegie. 3) "Live your life so that you would not be ashamed to sell the family parrot to the town gossip." – Will Rogers.

Until next time, the observatory is closed.

Answers to trivia questions: 1) Colma, CA. 2) On the estate of matador Antonio Ordenez in Ronda, Spain.

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## America's Favorite School

Galileo Academy of Science & Technology was the 5<sup>th</sup> place winner of the "America's Favorite School" contest co-sponsored by Care2 and Great Schools. The school was awarded \$1,000. Thanks to everyone who voted!

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## Lions Football Team Wins Big

Congratulations to Galileo's varsity football team for winning the 86<sup>th</sup> Annual Turkey Bowl at Kezar Stadium on Thanksgiving Day. The team defeated Lincoln 35-0. This was the 16<sup>th</sup> Turkey Bowl championship for Galileo, the most wins in San Francisco AAA history (see following article).

Video coverage of the game:

[http://www.eenersports.com/EENER\\_Sports/Game\\_Highlights/Entries/2009/11/26\\_Highlights%3A\\_\\_AAA\\_Champion\\_Crowned.html](http://www.eenersports.com/EENER_Sports/Game_Highlights/Entries/2009/11/26_Highlights%3A__AAA_Champion_Crowned.html)

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## **From Worst to First/From Zero to Heroes**

Thanksgiving 2009 was the culmination of Galileo's Varsity Football Team "Cinderella Story," going from losing 18 games straight to coming back this season winning the Turkey Day Championship against Lincoln, 35-0.

This win marks Galileo's record setting 16th AAA/CIF San Francisco Section Crown and their first win since 2001.

Over 2,000 Galileo fans were at Kezar cheering for our Lions.

Congratulations to the team and Head Coach Mark Huynh, Assistant Coaches Don Harris, Dominic Mullens and Ben Moore.

See news video at <http://cbs5.com/sports>

Jeanne Yee  
PTSA Secretary

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## **Galileo Gift Giving**

Galileo Academy now has an on-line store. If alumni want to buy gifts any time during the year, please visit [www.cafepress.com/galileoacademy](http://www.cafepress.com/galileoacademy). All net proceeds go directly to fund Galileo student activities. The on-line store manager is 2010 senior, ASB Business Vice President, Ms. Jennifer Zhang.

*The above was submitted by Bruce Eng, Galileo PTSA, Cell 415-238-1975.*

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## **Mez Sez**

by Vince Gomez

*On July 28 ,2009 I was driving from my home in Mountain View to the Cazadero Music Camp where I would be conducting the High School Orchestra for a week. On the way I passed by the town of Rio Nido, next to the Russian River. This brought back the memory of*



*the summer of 1951 when Ron Sligar, Mel Chiarenza and I went up the lazy river in Sligar's '37 Chevy and slept under the sign of the La Scala Inn. The Harry James big band played in the town square that weekend. Ron, Mel and I were three of the five Sinners Vocal Group (Tom King and Al Marcucci were the other two). Every one in the group was over six feet tall except me at 5'3". We sang at Galileo assemblies and some local service club meetings. Hard to believe that it was over 58 years ago.*

*For the past 9 years I've been a San Francisco Giants ball dude at various games. One of these occasions was the night (April 21, 2009) that the Filipino boxing star, Manny Pacquiao, threw out the first ball. I met him before the game and I found out that he spoke the same dialect of Cebuano that my mother spoke. A very soft-spoken guy but one who has become the best boxer, pound for pound, in the world after defeating Oscar De La Hoya, Ricky Hatton, and Miguel Cotto. His upcoming match in 2010 with Floyd Mayweather should be a classic battle. On August 7, 2009 I was the ball dude on the right field line and fellow Galileo alum Harry Holsworth was on the left field line. Two old Lions trying to help the Giants win, but former Giant manager Dusty Baker and his Cincinnati Reds won and beat Giants Cy Young winner Tim Lincecum on that evening.*

*The dedication of the George White Football Field (the former Galileo High School Field) on October 9, 2009 brought together the present Galileo student body with the family of deceased Coach George White, many San Francisco School District members, San Francisco 49ers representatives (who had donated \$250,000 towards the renovation costs of a million dollars) and members of the Galileo Sports Hall of Fame. This group included the following: John Bologna, Fred Setting, Al Massucco, Jim Dresser, Pete Pompei, Sisvan Der Harootunian, Ron Sligar, Lawrence Bravo, Vince Gomez, Rudy Behar, and present Galileo baseball coach and teacher Don Papa. A week later at Caesar's Restaurant was the annual Marina-North Beach reunion luncheon. Among others seen at the luncheon were Nick Valeri, Mario Lombardi, Ed Belasco, Bob Gelardi, Hugo Giovannoni, Al Bravo, Bill Dito, Ron Ertola and Bernie Valdez. What a great pleasure to see so many old friends and catch up on what has happened to us over the years.*

*A film by Jenna Rosher called "Junior" happens to be about Galileo alum Ed Belasco and his mother. A special showing of this documentary film was held on October 26, 2009 at the Roxie Theater in San Francisco. The small theater was filled to the 300 seat capacity. Many of Ed's former classmates, relatives, neighbors, and colleagues from his theater group were in attendance. Many waited in a long line before the theater opened the doors for the showing. Among those seen in the line were Cordy Porter Surdyka, Nina Pattini Clima, Carmela Lombardi Hoffman, John Lombardi, Mario Lombardi, Pete Pompei, Hugo Giovannoni, Jim Dresser, Betty Grinnell, Bill Dito, Sisvan Der Harootunian and Ron Ertola. It was a hilarious and heartfelt portrait of a mother and son growing old together and was an official selection of the Woodstock Film Festival for 2009.*

*The passing of former classmates is always a sad feeling. Frank Clima, Ray Piccinini and most recently Kay Lazzari Michelis have left us, but we remember the times we shared with them in high school and in adult life. Frank and I were on the 1949 110's basketball team and we had only 5 guys on the team. If anybody fouled out we had to play with whoever was left. The others were Norman Marcelli, Vince Marcellino, and Alan Ceccanti. Ray and I were in a lot of Galileo shows and assemblies and he became the famous S.F. Easter Bunny. Kay came to the Washington Square Bar and Grill on occasion when I was playing bass with jazz pianist Dick Fregulia. My sincere condolences to their loved ones.*



Ed. Note: For photos of Galileo's championship victory, the George White Field dedication, and GAA's participation in the Columbus Day parade, go to <http://galileoweb.org/alumni/events/archive-of-past-events/>.

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## *Announcements*

The 40th Reunion for the Class of 1970 is in the works, coming in 2010. Planning has just started.

All interested alumni or anyone with information on students or faculty please contact:

Gail (Chong) Megdadi

(310) 804-7880

[callmenjy@yahoo.com](mailto:callmenjy@yahoo.com)

OR

Nancy Yee

(510) 325-4350

[anhuda@aol.com](mailto:anhuda@aol.com)

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# *Watch for GAA's Spring Fling*

## *A Social Event For Family & Friends Coming This April!*

*(details to follow)*

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## **Seasoning**

A new book by Tony Compagno ('61)

Tony Compagno's collection of reminiscences and reflections may not bring anything new to the table, but his special brand of "seasoning" makes the familiar and seemingly prosaic details of our little lives more palatable. Working his way through the calendar year, the author offers vignettes revealing the rich interaction of husbands and wives, parents and children, teachers and students, people in general coming to terms with their vulnerability and humanness and sometimes stifled capacity for love. Depending primarily on humor, Compagno explores events surrounding traditional holidays such as Halloween and Christmas, and some obscure ones such as the birthday of Mickey Rooney or Sadie Hawkins Day. He looks at seasons of the year and what they add to (by extracting from) the human spirit. The book is one big celebration of the times of our lives, a feast wherein the most mundane meal becomes ambrosia.

Available in softcover from PublishAmerica — \$19.95. For further information, contact the author: [ajcompagno@yahoo.com](mailto:ajcompagno@yahoo.com).

*Ed. Note: Tony guarantees Lions a good read. As for the future, Tony says, readers can look forward to a collection of stories that should elicit memories of a time gone by.*

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## **Travel**

### **New Orleans Snapshots**

A cool Monday morning in the French Quarter, which is three times larger than North Beach . . . a multi-colored cat that is camouflaged among the antiques on Royal Street greets me . . . the Monteleone Hotel where Hemingway, Faulkner, Capote, Tennessee Williams and Eudora Welty stayed. Its Carousel Bar is still an attraction. Five years after Katrina, the Quarter is undisturbed. The locals are proud of their undefeated football Saints, shouting “Ho, Ho, Ho, Ten and 0!” The Omni Orleans which was The Royal Orleans, where I stayed on two consecutive weekends over 40 years ago. The 7’5” doorman is gone. This was the hotel where all the movie stars and celebrities stayed. Brennan’s -- one of the few truly unforgettable meals I have had -- poached salmon -- the other being duck à l’orange at Aventino in Caracas. Breakfast at Mother’s is as it always has been -- authentic and generous and always a waiting line outside and inside (like The Pantry in L. A.). Old men reading books in their taxis, waiting for a fare outside the elegant Windsor Court Hotel.

The trolley through the Garden District, past Loyola and Tulane Universities and Anne Rice’s former house, to Commander’s Palace, the restaurant where Emeril Lagasse and other noted chefs got their first start. A menu so large it wouldn’t fit in your suitcase. On a previous visit, the wine manager took me on a tour of the wine cellar and the entire restaurant, now owned by the Brennan family, and introduced me to Sonoma County’s Rochioli wines.

Back to the Quarter -- the Martin Lawrence Gallery, where I bought my original Picasso several years ago. On Bourbon Street, a silver-coated street man with a silver-coated alligator in his hand. The man is real, the alligator not. And the jazz . . . all that jazz! Coffee and beignets at Café du Monde. I bump into Brenda who owns her own fabulous Cajun restaurant on Polk Street in S. F. (she’s visiting family). We exchange notes on the best fried chicken and the best po’ boy sandwich. Oysters and more oysters on the half shell -- “One dozen, please!” at Acme Oyster House, another New Orleans institution where Curtis, the bartender, pours me an Abita draft and discusses sports intelligently. Thanksgiving at The Court of Two Sisters for the jazz brunch. Pat O’Brien’s -- a Reba McEntire look-a-like playing a killer piano and singing Johnny Cash, Willie Nelson, etc. in the U. S.’s #1 volume bar.

Out in the neighborhoods, Willie Mae's Scotch House – the best fried chicken in America (crispy outside, juicy inside) and turtle cheesecake with a decadent chocolate chip sauce. Black Friday and retailers go from red to black. The Bayou Classic – The Big Easy comes alive with people. The lighting of the Harrah's Christmas tree and the Miracle on Fulton Street. Saints Quarterback Drew Brees joins Mayor Ray Nagin to pump up the crowd for their Super Bowl aspirations – free food and drinks courtesy of Harrah's.

The charm, friendliness and hospitality of the New Orleanians is unmatched. If you are not a friendly person when you arrive in New Orleans, you will be when you leave. — SDH

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## **Food**

### **A Mexican Vegetarian Sandwich**

Here's a sandwich I created to satisfy one's hunger, yet it does not have a lot of calories. Between slices of whole grain bread, put a slice of cheese (cream cheese will do), top it with *nopalitos* (canned and drained cactus strips) or avocado and roasted red peppers, and enjoy! The red, white and green of the ingredients represent the colors of the Mexican flag. Note: Try a tortilla wrap instead of the bread. -- SDH

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## **GALILEO ALUMNI ASSOCIATION Annual Financial Statement January 1, 2009 – December 31, 2009**

|                                 |                    |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>BALANCE FORWARD</b>          | <b>\$12,747.08</b> |
| <b>INCOME</b>                   |                    |
| Membership Donations (New)      | 405.00             |
| Membership Donations (Renewals) | 2,450.00           |
| Bank Interest                   | .43                |
| <b>TOTAL INCOME</b>             | <b>\$2,855.43</b>  |

## **EXPENSES**

|                                                                                      |          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Office Supplies - Postage/Stationery                                                 | 1,257.80 |
| Fees – State of California                                                           | 20.00    |
| Web-site                                                                             | 154.95   |
| Donation – Galileo Dragon Boat Team                                                  | 500.00   |
| Donation – Salesian Boys' and Girls' Club (Clima)                                    | 50.00    |
| Donation – George White Plaque                                                       | 500.00   |
| Football AD                                                                          | 100.00   |
| San Francisco Alumni Council (Dinner)                                                | 124.41   |
| Loan from Endowment Fund to Galileo for<br>George White Plaque (per schools request) | 1,000.00 |
| Re-payment to be made to GAA upon maturity of CD.                                    |          |

**TOTAL EXPENSES** **\$3,707.16**

**BALANCE as of 12/31/2008** **\$11,895.35**

Submitted by:  
Joe Scafidi  
Treasurer, GAA

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## **GALILEO ALUMNI ASSOCIATION Annual Financial Statement Solari Endowment Fund**

### **SOLARI ENDOWMENT FUND First Republic Bank**

|                                   |                    |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| Renewal date 06/06/2008           | \$16,582.61        |
| Interest 06/06/2008 – 12/29/2008  | 309.92             |
| Interest 12/30/2008 - 12 /07/2009 | 633.18             |
| <b>CD Value as of 12/07/2009</b>  | <b>\$17,525.71</b> |

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# LETTERS

*Hey everyone! I just realized it has almost been 50 years since I left Galileo, a whole lifetime, 13 children and a wife, a teaching career and so much more. I live in North Carolina and raise horses now, but I keep up with "home" (SF) in this newsletter and the internet. Opera season is starting and it looks like a great one there, I miss that. Two of my classmates are running for board positions. Keep sending me the e-mail. Happy Fleet Week! Oct 9, 2009 --John L Barker [lebeaque@yahoo.com](mailto:lebeaque@yahoo.com)*

*My sister, Edith Gilbert nee Wiesinger, who would have graduated from Gallileo in 1935 if my family had not had the misfortune of moving to L.A. at the end of her junior year, passed away July 31st at the age of 91. Among her things are 5 copies of The Telescope, for years June 1932, June 1934, June 1933, December 1931 and December 1933. Would anyone like to have them? They have signatures of students and faculty of the period.*  
--Margot Smith  
[margots999@aol.com](mailto:margots999@aol.com)

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## CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

70s Pop Concert & Carpenters Tribute, Galileo Academy, 7:30 PM, Saturday,  
January 30, 2010

GAA Board Meeting - Room 210, Galileo Academy, 6:30 PM, Thursday, February  
11, 2010

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When checking for upcoming events between issues of the *Observer*, please visit the web site <http://galileoalumni.org/home.html> for the most up-to-date listings.

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### Contributors

Bruce Eng  
Vince Gomez  
Jeanne Yee

### The OBSERVER Is For All

Galileo alumni, family, friends, students, faculty . . . anybody and everybody, the *Observer* is for you. If you haven't already done so, send in the email addresses of anyone who would

like to receive a FREE emailed newsletter to <http://galileoalumni.org/contact.html>. We'd like to reach as wide a range of readers as possible.

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**BACK ISSUES OF THE GALILEO OBSERVER CAN BE VIEWED AT**

<http://galileoweb.org/alumni/newsletter/>.

**For all EDITORIALY-RELATED comments or suggestions, please address your emails to [galileoobserver@aol.com](mailto:galileoobserver@aol.com).**

**For all TECHNICAL problems (non-receipt of newsletter, etc.), address your emails to <http://galileoalumni.org/contact.html>.**

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The Galileo Observer invites your articles, letters, memor, inquiries and suggestions. All submissions are subject to editing. Deadlines for submissions are January 1, April 1, July 1 and October 1. Send them by email (preferable) to [galileoobserver@aol.com](mailto:galileoobserver@aol.com), or by postal mail to: Galileo Observer, c/o Galileo Alumni Association, 1150 Francisco Street, San Francisco, CA 94109.

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GAA BOARD OF DIRECTORS, OFFICERS, & COMMITTEE CHAIRS  
ARE LISTED AT <http://galileoweb.org/alumni/contact/>

The Galileo Observer is issued quarterly during the months of January, April, July and October by the Galileo Alumni Association, 1150 Francisco Street, San Francisco, CA 94109. Views expressed are strictly those of the Association and in no way reflect those of the Galileo Academy of Science and Technology, its students or faculty. Dennis Eleen, President; Sisvan Der Harootunian, Editor; Vaughn Spurlin, Production Manager/Website Director. Copyright 2010, Galileo Alumni Association.

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