

PROMINENT POINTER ALUMNI (an ever-growing list!)

By Scott Hopkins

Actors, Film, TV, Media:

- ★ **Faye Emerson ('36)** Film actress and television interviewer once known as "The First Lady of Television." Appeared in 30 feature films.
- ★ **Marion Ross ('46 HOF)** Broadway, film and TV actress. Her most famous role was as "Marion Cunningham" on TV's *"Happy Days"* from 1974-84.
- ★ **Margaret Avery ('61)** Nominated for Best Supporting Actress Academy Award for her role as Shug Avery in the film *"The Color Purple."* Also worked as a school Psychologist.
- ★ **Spencer Moses ('90)** Actor with Broadway and extensive regional theater credits.
- ★ **Joe Hutching ('72 HOF)** Oscars for film editing *"Born on the Fourth of July"* and *"JFK."* Credits also include *"W," "The Doors," "Almost Famous,"* and *"Vanilla Sky."*
- ★ **Chris Innis ('84)** 2010 Academy Award with co-editor and husband Bob Murawski for Best Film Editing on *"The Hurt Locker."*
- ★ **Chris Brinker ('88)** Film producer and director known for his work on the film *"Boondock Saints"* and *"Boondock Saints II: All Saints Day."*
- ★ **Dwight Raymond ('84)** Veteran film editor with 35 films to his credit including *"Fun With Dick and Jane"* and *"Batman Returns."*
- ★ **Breehn Burns ('93)** Screenwriter, director, voice artist, author and illustrator.
- ★ **Nicole Oppen ('98)** Directed and produced the documentary *"Off and Running"* for which she was honored by the Tribeca Film Festival and nominated for an Emmy.
- ★ **Jack Gross ('47)** Wrote episodes of TV shows including *Gilligan's Island, Different Strokes, My Favorite Martian, Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea.*
- ★ **Laurence Gross ('50)** A talk-show host in Denver on KGMC-AM radio, Gross moved back to San Diego where he had a lengthy career in talk radio.
- ★ **Richard Learman ('51)** Assistant Director and Production Manager for TV and Film such as *Anger Management, Rules of Engagement, Stripes, Spin City* and *Brian's Song.* His remarkable voice can be heard in Voice overs on his shows. Winner of Director's Guild and SAG awards.
- ★ **Michael Ford ('91)** (artist/digital effects)
- ★ **Mike Smith ('58)** Began his broadcasting career at KPRI radio in 1964, then moved to television (KNSD Channel 39, KGTV Channel 10, KNBC Los Angeles) where he spent 21 years as a sports reporter/anchor.
- ★ **Neil Ross ('62)** Voice actor who has narrated many episodes of A&E's *Biography* and PBS's *NOVA.* Announcer for 2003 Academy Awards and 2004 Emmy Awards.
- ★ **Lynn Kemp ('62)** As "Allen Scott," was a D.J. at KOGO and Channel 39 weather Man. Did PA for Chargers, Aztecs games, 1984 Olympic rowing, SD Crew Classic. Still working in television in his 80's.
- ★ **Jesse Macias ('65)** Won local Emmy Awards at KFMB as a reporter/anchor.
- ★ **Scott Hopkins ('67 HOF)** Award-winning writer and photographer for *The Peninsula Beacon* and volunteer who has brought the outstanding success of PLHS, its students, and alumni into the community spotlight.
- ★ **Todd Benjamin ('69)** Financial reporter/interviewer for CNN Network.
- ★ **Colette Pritchard Fox ('79)** Producer of several projects including *"Conquest of Hawaii,"* a documentary for The History Channel, in 2010.
- ★ **Halle Stanford ('87)** Has been nominated for Emmy Awards twice for Best Children's Program for the TV series she produces, *"Sid the Science Kid."*
- ★ **Justin Halpern ('98)** Wrote NY Times bestseller *"Sh*t My Dad Says."* Co-wrote and was executive co-producer of CBS sitcom series based on the book.
- ★ **Neil Ross ('62)** – Radio and voice-over artist. Academy Awards, Prime Time Emmys, NOVA Documentaries, TV Characters, KCBQ, KDEO, KSEA.

- ★ **Gary Beck ('71)** – Radio DJ: KSDO, KSDS, KITT, KOGO, WNEW, KPRI, XTRA Gold, KIFM, KBest, Sirius Satellite, morning DJ at JAZZ 88.3 in San Diego.
- ★ **Faye Margaret Emerson ('36)**. Film and stage actress and TV interviewer who gained fame as a film actress. Hosted her own TV talk show.

Authors/Artists:

- ★ **John Robert Asaro ('55)** Painter whose work is currently sold in exclusive fine art galleries. The book *"Asaro: A New Romanticism"* covers his life's work.
- ★ **John Dawson ('55)** His nature drawings have been used by National Geographic, National Park service, Audubon field guide, USPS (stamps), and others. A 2012 "Forever" stamp shows his design of four bonsai plants.
- ★ **Richard Arnold ('59)** Operates a sculpture studio in Telluride, Co. His bronze Pointer Dog, a gift from the Alumni, was installed on the PLHS campus in 2010.
- ★ **Suzy Spafford ('63 HOF)** Created "Suzy Ducken," first of over 200 character in her "Suzy's Zoo." Millions of greeting cards, calendars and stationery sold worldwide.
- ★ **Steven V. Correia ('67 HOF)** Internationally famous glass artist with works in the White House and the Smithsonian. A Middle School in Point Loma bears his name.
- ★ **Michael Ford ('91)** Successful animator, artist and creator of digital effects.
- ★ **Ann (Dolly) Medlock ('50)** –Speech writer to Aga Khan. Started Giraffe Heroes project.
- ★ **Leslie Perlis ('68)**- Nationally recognized Glass artist. Her work is also featured in local restaurants and churches. Community Activist. Long time supporter of PLHS music program.
- ★ **Jon Koehler ('84)**. Self-taught artist known for his dynamic balloon-like steel Sculptures created using welding techniques.
- ★ **Breehn Burns ('93)** – Comic Book artist/illustrator
- ★ **Amy Schwartz ('72)** – Author/Illustrator children's books.

Music:

- ★ **Capt. Leo Nicholas Schowengerdt, Jr. ('56)** Served in the U.S. Coast Guard for 30 years where he started their jazz band ("The Nitecaps").
- ★ **Glenn W. (Bill) DeYoung ('66)** Professor of Dance at University of Michigan. Multiple awards/recognition for choreography and performances worldwide.
- ★ **Rick Gerding ('69)** Played viola on music projects and film soundtracks. Has worked with Burt Bacharach, Natalie Cole, Elvis Costello, Neil Diamond.
- ★ **Steve Withers ('78)** Pianist who toured with Michael Crawford's solo show. Veteran cast member of the comedy "Forever Plaid."
- ★ **Brian Verhoye ('79)** Concert pianist in San Diego. Has appeared with Kenny Loggins, America, The Little River Band, Kim Carnes and Mark O'Connor.
- ★ **Jason Scheff ('80)** Bass player and a vocalist for rock band "Chicago".
- ★ **Aaron Zigman ('80)** Has written musical scores for over 30 films including "Sex and the City" 1 & 2 and "The Ugly Truth."
- ★ **Glen Fisher ('82)** Originator of the San Diego's First Friday Club of young PL musicians who play locally. Also started music programs for homeless teens.
- ★ **Dr. Joseph E. Allen ('84)** Physician who has expanded his interests into award-winning "abstract impressionist" art and music. Serves as a team MD for PL football.
- ★ **Eric and Chris Reading ('86)** Rising country-western singing duet.
- ★ **Miles Doughty and Kyle McDonald ('96)** Their band "Slightly Stoopid", was signed by Skunk Records while they were still students at PLHS.
- ★ **Sue Palmer ('65)** –San Diego Music Hall of Fame. Known as the "Queen of Boogie Woogie," "Sultana of Swing." A presence on the San Diego live music scene.
- ★ **Mike Wofford ('56)** A jazz pianist who began playing at age seven, legendary performer who had a solo career but also played with such stars as The Ventures, Joan Baez, The Jackson Five, Cher, John Lennon, Donna Summer, Sergio Mendes,

Harry Nilsson and Roger McGuinn. Toured with Ella Fitzgerald, Sara Vaughn.

- ★ **Christopher Reutinger ('64)** A violinist who has contributed to more than 555 motion picture scores and 450 records and CD's. Has recorded and played with Elton John, Barry Manilow, Henry Mancini, Frank Sinatra, Roy Orbison, Ray Charles, Diana Ross, Lionel Richie, Beck, Natalie Cole, Andrea Bocelli, Jewel and Michael Feinstein as well as playing with many symphony orchestras.

Athletics:

- ★ **Faye Baird Fraser ('27)** Recognized as the first woman to surf in San Diego.
- ★ **Jack Prodanovich ('32)** Pioneer in skin diving and spear fishing. Formed "The Bottom Scratchers" group, was featured in National Geographic.
- ★ **Florence Chadwick ('36)** World-famous endurance swimmer, first woman to swim the English Channel both ways. Set record (13 hrs, 20 mins. one direction.)
- ★ **Peter Peckham ('44 HOF)** Three-time world champion sailor in PC boats. A local philanthropist and investor in the S.D. Padres, Peckham's family funded the girls' softball field at PLHS.
- ★ **Malin Burnham ('45 HOF)** San Diego investor and philanthropist. Won the prestigious Star class world sailing championship while a 17-year-old at PLHS. Involved in America's Cup wins by Dennis Conner and a partner in the 1990 purchase of the Padres.
- ★ **Lowell North ('47 HOF)** Sailing Gold Medal in the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City. Founder of North Sails, known worldwide.
- ★ **Fred Sills ('58):** Veteran track and field coach at Southwest High School, named San Diego Hall of Champions "High School Coaching Legend" in 2000.
- ★ **Dennis Conner ('60)** Achieved fame by winning sailing's America's Cup four times. Also a two-time Star class world champion.
- ★ **Larry Penacho ('61):** Men's National Water-Skiing Championship 1963; World Jumping Championship 1965. Named to Water Ski Hall of Fame in 1995.
- ★ **Jeff Staggs ('62)** Football linebacker at SDSU. Played pro football for the Chargers and Cardinals from 1967-73.
- ★ **Greg Slough ('65)** Linebacker at USC. Played for the Oakland Raiders 1971-72.
- ★ **Eddie Butler (Skipper-'67) and Alex Caldwell (Crew-'66)** Won national Intercollegiate sailing title in '68 and '69 for the SDSU two-boat team.
- ★ **Mike Côté and Randy Guyer ('69)** Members of the 1973 San Diego State University Hall of Fame volleyball team that won the NCAA championship.
- ★ **Mark Reynolds ('73)** Star Class sailing Olympic Gold Medalist in 1992 (Barcelona, Spain) and 2000 (Sydney, Australia).
- ★ **Peter McNabb ('70)** Played 14 years of NHL hockey. All-Star team 1977. Team USA in 1986. Currently a Colorado Avalanche broadcaster.
- ★ **Craig Settles ('71)** Played four seasons in the Padres' baseball farm system.
- ★ **Kelly Ricon Mitchell ('77)** Member of the U.S. Olympic crew team.
- ★ **Jacqui (Nicoletti) Mc Sorley ('80)** Jr. World Golf Champion for her age in 1973. Japan's LPGA tour. Now teaching.
- ★ **Lynn Silliman '77** won a bronze medal in rowing at the 1976 Montreal Olympics.
- ★ **Manny Neves '79** played professional soccer for: California Surf, SD Sockers, Houston Dynamos and Los Angeles Heat.
- ★ **Cecil Espy ('80)** 8th player selected in the first round of the 1980 draft. Played major league baseball for 8 seasons in outfields of the Texas Rangers, Pittsburgh Pirates and Cincinnati Reds.
- ★ **Waad Hirmez ('81)** Led PLHS soccer to CIF finals. CIF Player of the Year 1981, 15-year professional career. 9 seasons with S.D. Sockers. 9 championship rings.
- ★ **Terry Mann ('87)** Leader of four-time state championship Lady Pointer basketball team (122-1 record). Calif. record of 250 steals in a season, US record of 2,256 career rebounds.
- ★ **Eric Allen ('83)** Defensive back at Arizona State. Played for NFL Philadelphia Eagles and Oakland Raiders. Six-time Pro Bowl selection. Elected to the NFL

Hall of Fame in 2025.

- ★ **JJ Stokes ('90)** Wide receiver at UCLA, first round draft pick of San Francisco 49ers. Spent nine years in the NFL.
- ★ **La'Roi Glover ('92 HOF)** Defensive lineman at SDSU. Drafted by the NFL. Played 13 seasons, six Pro Bowl selections, recorded 17 sacks in 2000 for New Orleans. Donates two major scholarships annually to PLHS seniors.
- ★ **James Leon "Jimmy" Wilson ('04)** American football cornerback and safety drafted by the Miami Dolphins in the seventh round of the 2011 NFL Draft. Played for the San Diego Chargers of the NFL.
- ★ **Campbell Wear ('11)** Professional Baseball Player for the Colorado Rockies.
- ★ **Conner Baits ('12)** Professional Baseball Player. Round 23 draft pick by Mets in 2012 and Round 33 draft pick by Brewers in 2015.
- ★ **Carol Pollock Sing ('59)** – World records: Oldest woman to swim the San Pedro Channel, Solo swim around Island of Manhattan, Oldest woman to swim the English Channel. Also swam Straits of Gibraltar, Spain to Africa, Maui Channel, Loch Ness, Pennick Island in AK.
- ★ **Larry Penacho ('62)** – Three time World Water-ski champion, Overall World Champion, Ski Jumping. His record of 150.8 feet held for over 20 years.
- ★ **Peter Virgidamo ('65)** – NCAA Track All American honors, Author US History of WWI, Peace Corps.
- ★ **Keith Genovese ('69)** – Pro Bowlers Association, North Country Hall of Fame. Drummer for Zephyr Blue cover band; Author, Foster Parent, AlAnon Sponsor.
- ★ **Kenton Kirkpatrick ('60)** – All High School SCIF Golf team, Helms Award 1960, USC Golf team captain, Winner of over 100 Amateur Golf events. Natl Board of Directors Burger King.
- ★ **Jamal Agnew ('13)** NFL wide receiver for the Detroit Lions, Jacksonville Jaguars after Being drafted from the University of San Diego.
- ★ **John Balaz ('68)**. Played major league baseball for the California Angels.
- ★ **Graham Biehl ('73)** Member of the 2008 and 2012 Olympic team in men's 470 Sailboats.
- ★ **Brianna Provancha ('07)** Competed in the 2016 Summer Olympics in the women's 470 sailing.. In 2019 she was elected as the Sailor Athlete Director on the board Of U.S. Sailing.
- ★ **JL Skinner ('18)** Pro football player for the Denver Broncos after being selected in the Sixth round of the 2022 NFL draft.
- ★ **Dan White ('90)**. Quarterbacked University of Arizona from 1993-1995, including the Wildcats' only Pac-10 championship as well as a record-setting Fiesta Bowl victory. Played Arena League football for Tampa Bay.
- ★ **Keegan Smith ('17)**. After winning the NCAA Men's Doubles Championship in 2019 while playing for UCLA became a professional player. Competing again after a near-fatal skateboard accident.
- ★ **Marty Smith ('75)**. Motocross racer who won the American Motocross Association 125cc Championship in 1974, 1975 and the 500cc title in 1977.
- ★ **Jimmy Wilson ('04)**. Played safety in the NFL for Miami and San Diego after playing in College at Montana.
- ★ **Tate Carew** National champion skateboarder and member of the 2024 U.S. Olympic skateboarding team.
- ★ **Kien Vu ('22)**: An All-CIF baseball player at PLHS, went on to star at Arizona State, earning All-American status after batting .413 in his sophomore year. Drafted and signed by the Cincinnati Reds in the 9th round of the 2025 Major League Baseball draft.

ATHLETICS; UNIQUELY PL:

PLHS has the distinction of being the only high school in the U.S. with two alums who have pitched perfect games.

- ★ **Don Larsen ('47 HOF)** On Oct. 8, 1956 he threw a perfect game for the Yankees in The World Series against the Brooklyn Dodgers.
- ★ **David Wells ('82 HOF)** Also pitched a perfect game for the Yankees, May 17, 1998 against the Toronto Blue Jays. PLHS baseball field at Dana Middle School named "David Wells Field."

Judges:

- ★•**Mack Lovett ('49)** Named as a Superior Court Judge in San Diego County in 1974.
- ★•**David Thompson ('49)** Appointed as a U.S. Federal Judge, Court of Appeals, 9th District, in 1985 by President Ronald Reagan.
- ★•**Larry Irving ('52)** Appointed as a Federal Judge in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California in 1982 by President Ronald Reagan.
- ★•**Gordon Thompson ('47)** Appointed as a Federal Judge in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California in 1970 by President Richard Nixon.
- ★•**John Thompson ('68)** and **Gerald Jessop ('69)** Are currently serving as Superior Court Judges in San Diego County.

Military Honors

- ★•**Martin Vatis ('50)** – 23 years Air Force service. Distinguished Flying Cross for Heroism.

Academics:

- ★•**Jeffrey Bennett ('76 HOF)** Astronomer, educator and author of children's and adult books, as well as textbooks. His solar system model is on the National Mall in Washington, D.C.
- ★ **Michele Goodwin ('89).** A legal scholar whose expertise is in the areas of bioethics and health law. Professor of law at UC Irvine, currently a professor at the Georgetown University Law Center. Prolific writer of books, editorials and commentaries.

Politics:

- ★•**William Cleator ('45)** Served on San Diego City Council 2nd District from 1976-1986. Acting Mayor of San Diego in 1983.
- ★•**John deBeck ('47)** Elected to the San Diego Unified School District Board of Education in 1990. Served until 2010.
- ★•**Paul Fordem ('48):** Mayor of La Mesa, 1974-1980. Elected to the San Diego County Board of Supervisors, representing the 2nd District from 1981-1985.
- ★•**Bill Lowery ('65)** San Diego City Council member from 1977-80. Elected to the 41st District Congressional seat in 1980 and re-elected five times.
- ★•**Byron Wear ('72)** Former city lifeguard elected in 1995 and '98 to represent the Point Loma community in District 2 on the San Diego City Council. He remains active in the community.
- ★•**Steve Baldwin ('75):** Served in the California State Assembly, 77th District, from 1994-2000. Chairman of the Assembly Education Committee in 1996.
- ★•**Ben Hueso ('87)** Elected to San Diego City Council 2006. Appointed to California Coastal Commission 2007. Elected to the California State Assembly Dist. 79, 2010.

Philanthropists:

- ★•**The Hervey Family:** The generosity of the Hervey family, which includes four PLHS alumni, has assisted with many on-campus and community projects, including the Point Loma branch of the San Diego Public Library that bears their name.
- ★•**Susanne Cramer Ballantyne ('50)** Volunteered thousands of hours to establish and maintain records of PLHS alumni, keeping the records by hand before the computer era. She still reports information to PLHS Alumni.

Professional/Multi-faceted:

★ **Wayne Watson ('50)** – DDS /Editor American Journal of Orthodontics; Artist, Author

Community Impact:

★ **Lee Grissom ('60)** - President San Diego Chamber of Commerce, Chair S.D. Housing Commission. Jacees; 50 who made a difference SD Magazine, SDSU Alum of the year.

Staff:

Bennie Edens (1948-1998) Began at PLHS as a student teacher, was the head football coach from 1950 until 1998. Overall record of 241-168-16, a section record for most victories at a single school. Won five CIF Championships, was San Diego, Southern Section, California Coach of the Year, California Athletic Director of the Year.

Miscellaneous:

Randy Gardner ('64) Once held the world record for the longest amount of time a Human has stayed awake (11 days, 24 minutes), done when he was 17 years old.

Names added 9 -11-2025