

With good humor we welcome you to the 2013-2014 school year and the fall edition of our newsletter. Read Ali Wentworth's very funny take on her life from our Mother's Day Benefit lunch (if it's not one thing its your mother), enjoy a piece extolling the virtues of laughter with your children and luxuriate in the warm welcome back to school from our Presidents. As always we look forward to your feedback and wish you many laughing-out-loud moments this year. — THE EDITORS

Mother's Day Benefit Lunch: Ali Wentworth

BY PAMELA AWAD

By the time Ali Wentworth found herself at the podium in front of two hundred or so guests at the Cosmopolitan Club last May, she'd been a cast member of one comedy series and starred in another, acquired a number of movie credits, married George Stephanopoulos, written a couple of books, and taken up residence in New York City. She was happy to "talk shop" at the PIA Mother's Day Spring Benefit lunch, and her audience was delighted to listen.

Blond and patrician looking, the comedienne and actress, who grew up in Washington D.C., regaled the audience with stories about ex boyfriends, her husband's Greek Orthodox family and her life as a working woman, wife and mother. She describes her memoir, *Ali in Wonderland*, as "a love letter to my mother," her mother being Muffie Cabot, who served as Nancy Regan's social secretary in the White House. Fast forward to a crisis involving Wentworth's ex-fiancé and a surreptitious call to the answering machine at the home they formerly shared. Upon listening to a message confirming a private charter flight to the Bahamas for the ex and his very new wife, Wentworth became "completely unglued" and indulged a "primal need to call my mother." Her mother listened to Wentworth's lament and after a long pause responded, "Oh, Ali, nobody goes to the Bahamas in July."

Her mother helped her plan the wedding that took place six months after a blind date with Stephanopoulos, who was 40 and had never been

married. They met in New York although Wentworth was living in Los Angeles at the time, and by the end of their lunch date at Barney's, "it was done... like a good melon, you just know." Her father-in-law, the Rev. Dr. Robert G. Stephanopoulos, a Greek Orthodox priest, married them in "a ceremony that was fifteen hours long," and subsequently baptized their daughters, Elliot and Harper. Wentworth's description of Elliot's baptism:

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"I'm a WASP and what we do when we baptize or christen a baby is put a little holy water, a cross and then we go have eggs Benedict and mimosas. The Greeks take it a little more seriously... these Greek old ladies came out and put down a towel and they put Elliot down and they started undressing her until she was completely naked lying in the big cold church. Suddenly my father-in-law comes over with oil and starts rubbing oil all over my baby. My baby is naked and drenched in oil and then my father-in-law takes her to this big copper pot and submerges Elliot in water so she goes all the way down, she's underwater in a pot. Finally they take her out, she's purple and shivering and I look out at the church, remember we're half WASPS, half Greeks and I look over at the Greeks and they've got their instamatic cameras going, 'this is so great' and they're taking pictures and smiling and I look over at the WASPS and my mother's crying and she's looking at my sisters

ALI WENTWORTH CONTINUED

going, ‘Look away! Look away!’ I always said it was like two groups watching two different movies, *It’s a Wonderful Life* and *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*.”

At one point there was talk at ABC about Wentworth and her husband appearing together on Good Morning America. She remembers musing to George, “Can you imagine 15 years ago, when I was playing a stripper on the show *In Living Color* and you were working for Clinton deciding huge important issues for the White House, that we’d be up for the same job?” That led

to a discussion about work/family balance. “Here’s the thing, there’s no good answer to that. When you look at gender roles I feel like we have to do all of it. I had to create a career around George’s—he’s the big star. There’s a multi-tasking that’s not a chip that men have. I take the girls to school every morning and make moussaka at night and that’s how it works. I don’t think you can have it all at the same time.” ●

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If you’d like to be in touch with NYC-Parents in Action, you can reach us at:

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Our Web site is a great source of information on our programs, upcoming events and other parenting resources.

NYC-Parents in Action, Inc. invites speakers to present their own opinions and expertise on specific topics. Their opinions and comments are not necessarily those of NYC-PIA.

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Train to Be a Discussion Group Facilitator

Are you looking to give back the support and shared experience other parents have given you during the child-rearing years? If you are, here’s a way:

VOLUNTEERS WANTED!

NYC-Parents in Action provides facilitated discussion groups free of charge to member schools. To serve an increasing number of requests for discussion groups, we need to train parent volunteers from as many schools as possible. We are looking for parents who are articulate, comfortable speaking in groups, and have an interest in parenting issues. Our goal is to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and concerns among parents and to create a comfortable communications network that will be in place through lower, middle and upper school. Facilitators receive professional training, and become an integral and valued part of the NYC-PIA community. If you would like more information about becoming a discussion group facilitator or about our upcoming training, please call NYC-PIA at 212-426-0240 or e-mail facilitation@parentsinaction.org.

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