

BROOKWOOD BANNER

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INSIDE

On the Front Line

Musings on the Courtyard's Old Oak Tree

by John Peterman, Headmaster

As the old oak tree began to lose limb after limb, dropping dangerously on Brookwood's courtyard, we knew it was time. Careful maintenance and trimming over the years could no longer save the heroic landmark as it was rotting from the inside out. It had stood on this hill long before the carriage house was converted into a school. Long before the pond. We were eager to know its age and were disappointed that the rotted core of the stump prevented us from counting ring years. An arborist estimated that the oak was 250-300 years old.

It is not hard to imagine that members of the Agawam tribe once walked the property on which Brookwood

now rests. The Agawam sheltered their families during harsh winters in the woodlands of what is now northern Essex County. But when spring arrived, they migrated toward the ocean and estuaries to fish for the food they would use for the year. As I stand on the hill overlooking our playing fields,

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by Barb Liston, Assistant Head

In the June of my twenty-seventh year, I stood by the hallway window outside my Brookwood homeroom (now John Peterman's office) on the last day of school. I was watching two of the eighth grade girls with whom I had forged a close bond walk across what was called the "big circle" in those days, then down the driveway past the big old oak tree at the top of the hill. Their backs were toward me, and they were wholly delighted to be scampering away from Brookwood, away from me, and toward their futures. I remember the pain in my gut as they walked away. I remember pondering at that moment all the loss involved in teaching and how hard it would be to keep at it over and over again, always "losing" the kids I had come to care so deeply about....who

quite rightly and appropriately were putting permanent distance between us -- while I, in contrast, would stay, doing it again and again, getting connected and being distanced.

Oh, this sounds dramatic, doesn't it? Well, I was twenty-seven and new to Brookwood - but the thing is: it's really true.

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Sam Lincoln '13 and Alex Emerson '13 find the perfect picnic perch during the Back-to-School Cookout.

based design firm, to capture the essence of Brookwood and translate our spirit into words and images that reflected the Brookwood of today. We believe the five words, "A Community of Exuberant Learners," taken directly from Brookwood's mission statement, most accurately portray the unique balance of rigor with compassion and excellence with exuberance that are the guiding principals of our school.

Please stop by the front office and take a look at the new viewbook. We think you'll agree it captures the

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Award-winning Novelist Chris Bohjalian speaks at Brookwood on January 22

Acclaimed best-selling novelist Chris Bohjalian will speak at Brookwood School on Thursday, January 22, 2009, from 7 to 9:30 p.m. The event is open to the public and is a great opportunity to hear from one of today's most prolific and talented writers.

Bohjalian is the author of eleven novels, most recently *Skeletons at the Feast*, a tense historical drama set in the waning months of World War II.

The selection of Bohjalian's 1997 novel *Midwives* for Oprah's Book Club established Bohjalian as a force in the literary world and ignited a string of critically acclaimed reader favorites.

Midwives went on to become a number one *New York Times* bestseller, as did his literary thriller *The Double Bind*. His work has been translated into 21 languages and has sold over three million copies. Bohjalian won the New England Book Award in 2002 and twice his books have become movies (*Midwives* and *Past the Bleachers*).

Besides his fiction work, Bohjalian is well known for a series of columns titled *Idyll Banter* (later compiled into a book of the same name), and is a frequent contributor to the Boston Globe's Op-Ed pages.

Admission to the January 22 event is \$10 and a book signing and sale will follow the presentation.

This is the kick-off event to Brookwood's new speaker series which will feature prominent and noteworthy writers, thinkers, and personalities leading the discussion of ideas in our country today.

Admissions Update

The Admissions office is bustling with activity and the admissions season is in full swing. Most exciting for us has been the arrival of Brookwood's new viewbook and admissions materials. Although, our previous materials had served us well for an extended period they had become quite dated.

After an extensive search effort, we hired Mindpower, an Atlanta-

Shannon Cabot Joins Brookwood Board of Trustees



The Cabot Family: Shannon and Jim with Sam '13 and Henry '15.

Shannon Cabot, who lives in Ipswich with her husband Jim and their two sons, received her A.B. in Philosophy from Georgetown University in 1986 and her M.P.P.M. (Master in Public and Private Management) from Yale University in 1993.

Much of her career was spent in the manufacturing sector, most recently as COO of Temco Corporation, a firm primarily involved in producing components for semi-conductor capital equipment. Among other duties at Temco, Shannon worked on addressing how to improve the organization while taking into account the needs of all stakeholders. "I look forward to bringing that perspective to the

[Brookwood] Board," Shannon says.

After negotiating the sale of the company in 2003, Shannon stayed on for two years as a consultant to help the new owners with the transition. She then left the corporate world to spend more time with her sons Sam, now in fourth grade, and Henry in second.

On the Brookwood Board of Trustees, Shannon will chair the Trustee Committee on Sustainability, bringing long-term experience and a unique perspective to the issue. "I first started thinking about sustainability 15 years ago when I worked with Conservation International to develop markets for sustainably harvested products from Central America. This was an effort to give local people economic alternatives to cutting down rainforest for subsistence farming," she explains.

Currently in her sixth year as a Brookwood parent, Shannon has been an active volunteer at the school, participating in a variety of Parents' Association events and classroom activities. "This year I've co-chaired the Book Fair and worked on the Sustainability Fair, and I am co-chairing the tour guide Ambassadors group. As such, I regularly interact with a wide spectrum of our community in a very hands-on way," Shannon explains.

When choosing a school for their children, Shannon says she and husband Jim liked the way Brookwood balances academics with personal growth. "We realized that our children's school would be a big part of our family's life. Of course, we wanted strong academics, but we didn't want only strong academics. We try to teach our children that we all have our strengths and weaknesses, and Brookwood does a great job of honoring many different talents in our students. I was sold after my first School Meeting," she says.

Shannon served on the boards of the E-team Machinist Training Program (through the Essex County Community Organization) and North Shore Nursery School. Her interests include riding, skiing, trout fishing, and travel.

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special spirit of our students and this community. Feel free to share the materials with your friends and families.

Given the tumultuous economic climate, we are organizing a variety of admissions initiatives to help spread the word about Brookwood. Over the next several weeks you'll hear more about these many initiatives our office and our parent volunteer Admission Ambassadors are undertaking. As always, current families are our best way to communicate with parents who may be considering an independent school for their children.

From the Admissions Team -- Barbara DiGuseppe, Joanie Gerster and Lindsay Gamage

2008-'09 Annual Fund Making Great Strides

Another year is in full swing and, as with every other year, so is Brookwood's Annual Fund Appeal. Despite a challenging economy, as this year's co-chairs we have been heartened by the response thus far. To date, roughly 62 Brookwood families have already stepped up to contribute to this ambitious effort, a sure testament to the value the Brookwood parent community places on maintaining the quality of our children's education.

Encouraging as this is, we are still a long way off from reaching this year's goal of \$575,000. This figure represents 6% of this current year's operating budget, helping to close the gap between tuition revenues and the actual cost per student. The funds raised ensure that Brookwood is able to maintain the same high caliber of academic, athletic and cultural programs we have come to expect.

Each year we ask our entire constituency - current parents, grandparents, alumni/ae, past parents, faculty and friends - to support Brookwood's Annual Fund. We are sensitive to the impact the current economy might be having on your family. As we consider ways to "tighten our belts," be it forgoing the new car, shortening or even eliminating this year's vacation, cutting back on holiday spending, please consider a gift to the Annual Fund a top priority, one that should not be included in your budget cuts. What better gift could we give our children?

The school's fiscal year operates from July 1 through June 30 and contributions can be made to the Annual Fund anytime during this period. Another great way to increase your gift is through a matching gift contribution. More than 550 American corporations match employee philanthropic contributions. Matching gifts allow you to double or triple your gift to the school. All gifts of any size do make a difference and only through community-wide support can we achieve our goal. We hope we can count on you.

With sincere appreciation and gratitude,

Susan Barry P '09, '12, '14
Pat Zonnenberg P '14
Co-Chairs

In today's crazy, rushed and usually overscheduled environment, it can seem overwhelming to volunteer for one more committee, one more event. It takes an element of courage to say yes to chairing the school store committee or to crunch the numbers as the PA Treasurer for a third year. It takes courage for new parents to be class representatives during their first year. Let's face it, for many of you it takes courage to not run in the opposite direction when you see me coming down the hall!

Well, I'm happy to report that we have plenty of courageous parents here at Brookwood. The Parents' Association has had a terrific start to the school year. Approximately 50 individuals are PA committee volunteers, 31 are class representatives, 25 either chair or co-chair our various committees and four of us are PA Officers. Additionally, significant contributions have been made by the countless parents who have participated in numerous class-sponsored events, including chaperoning field trips, working at the Back-to-School Cookout, and volunteering at Bingo Night, a recent resounding success.

Thank you for all that you do, and thank you for letting your gut sometimes beat out your rational, highly intelligent, and emotionally competent brain!

Did you know.....

- 1) The school store has received a shipment of both old favorites and new items (sweatpants and pajama bottoms). Check it out when you have time. The store will be open every other Thursday before and after School Meeting as well as during events such as the Lower School Play, Revels, etc. Check the website and *This Week At Brookwood* for times and dates.
- 2) More than 45 current parent volunteers attended the Admissions Ambassadors Breakfast in November. Since then, Ambassadors have been busy giving tours to prospective parents and inviting them to learn more about our "Community of Exuberant Learners." Please contact Shannon Cabot for details.
- 3) In 2007-2008, the \$160,000 PA budget was spent on the following:
 - Financial Aid - \$35,000
 - Brookwood Operations - \$83,000
 - Faculty Wish List - \$10,000 (200 Green Folding Chairs; Lower School classroom library; lights for the School Meeting House; 3 Smart boards for 5 & 6th grades; 20 lacrosse sticks);
 - Faculty Grant Program – \$10,000 (Trip to Guatemala for Maile Black to study Spanish; National Educators Computer Conference for Doug Fodeman; trip to Martinique for Stephanie Kendrick to study culture and history; airfare to Earthwatch Expedition in the Amazon for Anna Myers; NAIS Summer Institute for Leadership in Sustainability for Ben Wildrick; three-day trip extension from England to Versailles for Kent Lenci)
 - Parent Education – \$2,000 (Internet safety; Keeping our Kids Safe in Public Places; How Much Is Enough?; Families First Parenting Program)
 - Cultural Enrichment – \$10,000 (Phunk Phenomenon; Bob Milne Ragtime Pianist; Sustainability Expo; Janet Wong Author; Ron Reid's Berklee School of Music Steel Drum Band; Odaiko New England Drumming; Inflatable Planetarium; Holocaust survivor - Sonia Weitz; INCS SON Flute players; Wampanoag Tribe Performances and Workshop; Tufts Beezlebubs a capella group)
 - Family Activities - \$500 (Back-to-School Cookout, BINGO night, Brookwood-on-Ice)
 - Hospitality – \$1,000 (Flowers for 8 major events and throughout the year)
 - Miscellaneous – \$7,000 (Drug awareness program; intern scholarship; faculty luncheon; S.E.E.D.; President's Fund)

As you can see, the volunteer work of the Parents' Association is far reaching. Whether you devote an hour helping with mailings or months chairing an event, we sincerely appreciate all of your time, energy, and yes, courage. Thank you for your ongoing support, and I hope you have a wonderful holiday season.

Jayne Rice
President, Parents' Association

SAVE THE DATE:
BROOKWOOD ON ICE
Sunday, January 11, 2009, 3 - 5 p.m.
at the Pingree School Johnson Rink

Faculty Forum: Can you remember being a Middle Schooler?

Sixth grade. Seventh grade. Eighth grade. If you're like most people, these were not necessarily the highlight years of your life. Yet, as parents and educators, we know these years to be jam-packed developmentally and hugely important academically. How do Brookwood's Upper School teachers cope with their students' raging hormones, attitudes, moods, and never-ending social quandaries while instilling a love of learning?

In his article *Remember the Middle Schooler in You*, Harry Finks, author of the National Association of Independent School's *Middle School Handbook*, states that in order to respond to the unique developmental issues of young adolescents, "it's important to recall how we felt and acted during that time in our lives" and be reintroduced to our "younger selves at that vulnerable, transforming age." Members of Brookwood's Upper School faculty, recently shared reflections about their own experiences during those "middle" years, as they transitioned from elementary school and prepared for high school life and beyond.

What do you remember about your middle school years? What were you like as a middle schooler?



Maile Black, Grade 6 English

Evan Diamond: Middle school was an interesting time for me. In the primary grades I had some learning issues and was delayed in my reading and writing skills. As a result, my grades were always really poor. When I hit 7th grade, some things started to click for me, but I held on to my preconceived notion that I was just dumb. It's a shame that kids often feel stupid when they may in fact be quite intelligent but hampered by a learning issue.

Monika Carbochova: I went to a sports school and I loved it. It kept us busy and out of trouble. Also, the small classes gave us the opportunity to be close as a whole group.

Anna Maria Licameli: I remember intense concern about friendships and never being satisfied that enough people liked me. I remember feeling the world was ending when things went wrong---things that now look very minor to me but sure didn't look or feel minor then. I also remember thinking my parents had absolutely no idea what it was like to be me. On some level I resented them for that, even though at the same time I knew it was silly to feel that way about them.

Barb Liston: High achieving and very seriously mischievous. Wise-cracking and short-cutting all over the place but genuinely engaged and curious.

Hillary Hogan: I remember hating math class, loving history class, counting down the days until the spelling bee each year, and being nervous to fit in. I was part of the "in crowd" and hated every minute of it....I wished that I had other friends.

I remember liking some of my teachers and dreading others...I was really afraid of my math teacher.

Kent Lenci: Good years for me. Lots of friends, enjoyed living in Tampa, which was a three-year stint. I grew increasingly nasty as a middle schooler, I think-- I was really a pain to my teachers.

As you look back, is there an event/moment/person that lead you to teach this age student?

Debbie Gantt: No, I just absolutely LOVE teaching pre-teens/teens.

Anna Maria: When I was in seventh grade, I already wanted to teach mainly because I loved learning. But I was really sad when I saw classmates NOT liking it, or thinking they couldn't learn--especially in math or science class. I was already thinking about how I might do things differently than what I saw my own teachers doing, so that I might find ways to reach more of the different minds in the classroom, and NOT make kids feel bad when they made mistakes.

David Southworth: No. The decision to teach middle school came after years of teaching at the secondary level. I wanted to try a different age level and I have never regretted it.

Barb: When I came to Brookwood, I had been to graduate school and I had taught high school kids. And I was entirely uncertain if I wanted to continue in the field. But within weeks of joining Brookwood's Upper School, I knew I was home: For me, the emotional vulnerability of middle school kids, the crazy mixture of naivete and posturing, the very real darkness and confusion of the period, the shimmering excitement of "coming of age"...it is all palpably present in a middle school classroom, and it makes for predictably unpredictable days that never want for interest, engagement, even a kind of passion.

Hillary: When I was in high school I had an amazing psychology teacher. She was the first teacher that understood who I was as a person. She gave me her home phone number and I could always call her whenever I wanted to. She even helped me stop biting my nails!

Sheila Geraty: I was moved and impressed by my Spanish teacher. I sensed that she really wanted us to learn and be successful at Spanish. This was a revelation.

Are there experiences from your own middle school years that inform your work with kids this age?

Maile Black: I wasn't squelched and I try not to squelch them.

Adriana Gonzalez: Yes, of course. I was very sensitive about what my teachers said. I felt so bad when a teacher reprimanded me in front of others.

Debbie: I understand how important friendships are...I understand that they are trying to



Monika Carbochova, Grade 7 Math, Upper School Student Council Advisor



Evan Diamond, Grade 6 Social Studies, History Department Coordinator



Debbie Gantt, Performing Arts Department Coordinator



Sheila Geraty, Librarian



Adriana Gonzalez, Spanish



Hillary Hogan, Grade 7 History



Ann Johnson, Grade 6 Science

find their “adult” selves...I understand there is more going on than academics for them.

Evan: I definitely understand kids who struggle. I also have more empathy for them and more patience. I distinctly remember what it was like to be in middle school. When I mesh my memory of my own experience with my years of teaching, the two have really helped me better understand the kids I teach and clearly inform my practice.

Hillary: Not judging anyone and making everyone feel welcome. I was always trying to be someone that I truly wasn't deep down inside. I see that with some of my students, and I strive to make their real inner cores come out.

Tim Wright: Yes. I had a horrible time as a sixth and seventh grader. The social dynamics of my class left a lot to be desired. Kids would change their opinions about each other, and me, frequently. It felt like a mob rule.

Ann Johnson: Mrs. Niekirk. 6th grade teacher. Totally understood me as a girl who didn't want to do girly things. She asked me about the football games and tetherball games at recess. She told me that I was unique and different from the other girls. And I believed her. She made my interests, though different from other girls, feel valid. She made me feel good about my talents. What a gift.

Kent: I avoided a science project in eighth grade. I kept delaying it, thinking that it would go away. I distinctly recall the intervention of the teacher and my father and the ensuing lesson learned: things need to be finished. They will not go away. This is often on my mind when my students do not have their homework.

Marcus Young: All of it. Remembering my youth really helps me to better relate to how our kids might be feeling today. Thinking back on the things that my friends and I went through has helped me a lot with my interactions with students.

Sheila: I'd say that I value listening to middle school students. This process allows me to understand what they need to be successful in completing an assignment or project. Listening allows me to recommend books that students will enjoy reading.

Adolescents are well known for their “attitudes.” When you deal with attitude, do you remember having one? If so, how would you describe it?

Monika Carbochova: Oh, I was bad with attitude, but only to my parents, I would never dare to have attitude towards adults.

Maile: I was the worst. What a horrible little brat—my poor mother. I knew everything, she knew nothing. Because she knew nothing, she was not worthy of my respect. I don't know how she put up with me. I'm sure we both breathed a sigh of relief

when I went off to boarding school.

Debbie: I absolutely remember “attitudes.” I NEVER take them personally, and I deal with them with LOTS of humor and firmness when I need to.

Evan: I had a ferocious attitude. I know that I gave teachers fits largely because I struggled in their classes and being a goofball was easier than focusing and trying to improve. There were also teachers that I just didn't like and they got my worst attitude of all. I feel bad about it when I look back on those days.

Rich Lehrer: I can't really remember having an “attitude” as such. I was a pretty easy-to-get-along-with kid...although this is probably due more to selective memory loss than anything.

Jane Pirie: I had a lot of attitudes but it was when a teacher showed that he/she cared my attitude became more consistent and pleasant.

Tim: I try to understand what the students are going through, knowing how vulnerable they can feel and how important it is for their voices to be heard and respected.

Ann: No way. I was an eager to please kid. I always did as I was told! I was practically mute in class but participated more actively in athletics.

Kent: Entitled, indestructible.

Marcus: I don't really remember having an “attitude” per say. I remember not being happy with certain decisions, but in my household, there was no such thing as giving attitude to an adult. I just dealt with it and moved on.

How did you identify as an early adolescent? Which groups did you identify with at that age?

Monika: Popular, student council, athletic.

Maile: Cool, popular. I liked power. I liked being at the top of all things.

Adriana: As an older adolescent (16 years old), I identified myself with hippies and Herman Hesse books. As an early adolescent I did not have any particular group to identify with. Probably I identified with my own family.

Jane: I would have to say I identified with the kids who liked to play sports, girls as well as boys.

Anna Maria: At school, I fit in with a small group of kids, kids who didn't quite fit in with the “mainstream.” At the time, I was sad about it because I wanted more friends. In the long run, I'm really happy about it because I think it sowed the seeds for being an independent person in general.

Hilary: I wasn't sure at the time which group of students that I identified with. That was the problem, I could see myself being a piece of every group and they were just so cut and dry at that age that I was pigeon-holed into the wrong group.

Rich: Musician and hockey player. Was there anything else in the Canadian Plains?

Ann: I was a tomboy through and through! Yes, I



*Marcus Young,
Computer Support
Specialist*



*Tim Wright,
Computer*



*David Southworth,
Grade 8 Math*



*Jane Pirie, Athletic
Director, Physical
Education*



*Barbara Liston,
Assistant Head of
School*



*Rich Lehrer, Grade 8
Science, Science
Department Coordinator*



*Kent Lenci, Director
of Outreach Initiatives,
Grade 7 History*



*Anna Maria Licameli,
Grade 8, Math
Department Coordinator*

*Middle School,
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was that girl that joined the boys for their daily football game during recess.

Marcus: I identified with a few different groups when I young. I was curious and intellectual so I fit in nicely with the smart kids. On the other side of the coin, I was huge jock so I got along with that population as well. Of course, being a minority, I was also a member of the group by default.

Did you separate from your parents, as in become a more individual being, during these years or was it at an earlier or later time?

Maile: Definitely. Age 12.

Adriana: At a later time, when I was about 15-16 years old.

Jane: Tough call as my parents were in the process of getting divorced during this period of my life. I would say the separation from them was healthy and never an issue.

Debbie: I definitely separated from my parents early.

Evan: My parents divorced when I was four, so I was always very independent. Growing up with a working mom forced me to be independent at an extremely early age. It was high school where I really broke away and began acting somewhat more rebellious at home.

Hillary: I was always really close with my mother. No matter what the situation was, I could always tell her the truth and she would listen. Even though I always said her favorite word was, "No," she still understood.

Ann: I always felt independent from my parents from the start; not in a negative way, just in a self-sufficient way. They taught me to be self-sufficient in every aspect of my life. So, sure, I separated from them before, during, and after my middle school years ... in growing increments as I got older.

Marcus: My mom was, and still is one of my best friends. That being said, however, my mom was big on individuality and was always good about letting me express myself as I saw fit, as long as it was safe and healthy for me and others.

Parenting a teen brings all sorts of worries and concerns. Do you remember your parents expressing theirs? If so, were they legitimate concerns?

Adriana: When I was a middle schooler (11-13) my mother was concerned about me having a boyfriend. I was too young in her eyes for having a relationship.

Evan: While I took some risks, I always knew when to back off and as a result I steered clear of trouble. As a kid, I was a strong believer in working hard and taking my responsibilities seriously. The wacky stuff I did with my buddies was my reward for time spent taking care of my primary responsibilities.

Barb: My parents were worn out by three previous kids, and they thought the world's biggest threat to me was alcohol or a broken curfew. But it was 1966-68 when I was in middle school. Need I say more? Sometimes I think that it's very similar now because the threats from technology are so little known to so many parents, and yet kids are fully ensconced in the world permeated by those threats. It's a good world, too-- but it is definitely full of hobgoblins.

Rich: I definitely remember my parents expressing theirs. I was pretty lucky in having parents that didn't spend a lot of time harping on unimportant things. The things they were concerned about were very legitimate concerns and, in fact, in retrospect I'm a little surprised that they weren't more concerned than they were.

Did you have a favorite book during that time of your life? If so, what was it?

Maile: *Forever* by Judy Blume. Definitely. And *The Promise*. Every afternoon, my best friend Charis and I would lounge on her hammock and read to each other, all kinds of stuff.

Adriana: *The Wolf* by Herman Hesse.

Evan: In middle school I loved the book *Go Ask Alice* by Anonymous. It was the diary of an adolescent drug addict. It really spoke to what I was seeing every day at school and on the street, and it was genuine and real. Otherwise, I really hated reading while in middle school. It was just too hard for me for it to be pleasurable.

Anna Maria: *Little Women*.

Rich: Definitely *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton...I must have read it five times in my early teens...I still get chills when I think about the first couple of paragraphs..."As I stepped from the darkness of the movie theater to the bright light of the street I had two things on my mind: Paul Newman and a ride home" or something like that.

Annie: I loved stories of independent, outdoorsy adolescents. Historical fiction was my favorite. Anything having to do with Native Americans and/or the Civil War.

Kent: I was all about Stephen King books. *Skeleton Crew* comes to mind. Sick stuff, really-- I wonder what that says about me?

Marcus: *Just So Stories* by Rudyard Kipling. The book was given to me by an old family friend who passed away when I was in fourth grade. Good stories. Good memories.

Sheila: Probably *The Black Stallion* books by Walter Farley.

Did you have a favorite teacher? If so, why was he or she a favorite?

Maile: Yes, Sandy Ellis. She was a teacher, though not one of mine. She showed me through her actions what it meant to be a generous spirit and to operate from love and not pettiness. A very big spirit.

Adriana: I remember my English teacher because the projects he asked us to do were very fun. I remember my art teacher because she praised me when I did good work.

Jane: My PE teacher, my coach and my math teacher because they treated me more like a person. They talked to me, shared appropriate experiences and seemed genuinely to care about how I was doing.

Evan: My favorite teacher was my 7th and 8th grade English teacher. She was the first one to "reach me." In her class, I finally began to make connections in writing, and for the first time I felt intelligent.

Anna Maria: Mrs. Walker was my language arts teacher in 8th grade. She was the first person who made me really think I could be a writer. She gave me encouragement along with specific feedback, and that really made an impression on me. She showed how much she cared and took me seriously as a writer.

David: No. Teachers then were not nurturing and they encouraged neither openness nor trust from students.

Barb: One of my favorite teachers was my 7th grade English teacher, Ms. Lydecker, and I remember that she went to Bates. I loved her because she was the person who "lifted the veil" and introduced me to symbols in literature, to the notion that the story was about A LOT more than an old fisherman and a big fish that he lost. From then on, symbols of all kinds became meaningful to me, and that has lent both richness and direction to my life. One of the reasons that I LOVE teaching middle school kids is that it is during these years that many of those wondrous intellectual transformations take place. It's hard, but it's exciting!

Rich: Mr. Ohashi, my 9th -12th grade math teacher. He was tough but you could tell he really cared. He wrote me a great long note when he found out later in life that I had become a teacher.

Marcus: Mr. Mabie. He was the first teacher I had who actively taught each child and not just the class. He was good at recognizing people for who they were and helping them to incorporate their schooling into their life.

Listening to Their Voices

by Lower School Head Nancy Evans

You can stop by any classroom in the Lower School and it is clear that children are physically and mentally interacting with peers and with their environment. You also hear lots of talking. “How could I...?” “What do you think....?” “What could we do to....?” “What would happen if...?” are only a few of the phrases heard. As children share ideas, negotiate with peers, and reflect on their tasks, it is clear that voice is a critical component of their work in the classroom.

Most classes begin each day with a morning meeting. During this time of sitting together in a circle, voices of both students and teacher are heard through daily greetings and shared stories. This is a time for all to learn more about each other and about the events/plans of the day. Learning to listen to others is an important skill that needs modeling and practice.

Lower School academic work often is done within a workshop model. In this model we are encouraging the development of skills and motivation as children make choices that matter in an environment facilitated by the teacher. Allowing children to make choices about parts of their learning is a way to honor their voices.

Classroom discussions are a critical component of the math curriculum. Conversations with peers and with the teacher are an integral support to the development of mathematical thinkers. In our curriculum the development of each child’s ability to articulate mathematical ideas is stressed. Learning to communicate ideas through conversation and through written representations is crucial. Through pictures and words each child develops mathematical reasoning.

A beginning focus of the writing curriculum is on the personal narrative. After an explicit teaching lesson, children choose a topic of personal significance to write about. Sharing, reflecting and publishing are ways to further honor the voice of each writer.

The social curriculum is important to our community development. Children are encouraged, coached and honored to express their individual ideas. The many class gatherings center on conversations that help children participate in a community of learners and to express their personal thoughts while growing in the understanding of what it takes to be part of a cooperative and collaborative community.

The child whose “voice” is encouraged, and listened to, comes to understand that what he/she says is important. We also see that a child who feels that his/her thoughts are valued is more likely to listen to others when they express their thoughts and beliefs.



Voices of the Lower School were loud and clear on Election Day as students cast their votes for president. Members of the Second Grade headed up the process, organizing voter check-in and presenting the pros and cons of the two additional ballot initiatives (themed lunches and bringing toys to school). Pictured (from top): Katharine Henderson '15 greets voters; Brian Ross '15 prepares to check-in voters; Second graders Gus Hawley, Emma Crate and George LeBoeuf during the Lower School Election Day meeting; Head of Lower School Nancy Evans discusses the importance of the electoral process with the Lower School.

Peterman, Continued from page 1

I imagine that this must have been a wonderful spot for a temporary summer campsite. Easy access to the waters, protection from floods, and the hills behind offering shelter from invading neighbor tribes.

Our oak tree, perhaps only a seedling then, was a reminder of our earliest known history of the area. One hundred years after the Agawam vanished from our area, colonial New England fought the war for independence. One hundred years after that New Englanders died in country-side fields from here to Virginia in the war between the states. In another 100 years, Brookwood founders were clearing the brush away from the oak tree in preparation for the founding of our school.

Several new trees have been planted to replace the old oak. We can only imagine the folks who will live, work and play beneath them in the years ahead. Maybe some of those folks will have a 100 year birthday celebration for the new trees in 2108.

Liston, Continued from page 1

The fact of loss doesn't change much over the years, but one grows wizened and philosophical about it, so it isn't quite as raw now as it once was. And I guess after 30 years of watching the disappearing backs of kids I love and care for, with whom I have shared deep moments of life...after all that, when the big oak finally came down this past summer, I felt much of the same tight ache I always feel in June.

I even felt a twinge of the old rawness, for the tree was witness with me and before me to so many lives, to all the growing, the tears, to first crushes and skinned knees. It was there long before Brookwood was Brookwood, that tree; it was an old and dignified witness to so much history - natural, personal, cultural history. It was the background in hundreds of school pictures, it was a branch to swing on, a place to laugh with a best friend, a summer camp lunchground. It just stood tall and dignified over a great big chunk of life.

I do miss the big oak everyday; it felt a bit like "a mate" at this point. But I look out my office window these days and watch kids jumping off the stump at recess, and I suspect that the witnessing continues. And I fold this change into the many changes over thirty years of life at Brookwood, and I imagine that it, like the two girls disappearing down the driveway, is simply as it should be.

The *Brookwood Banner* is published quarterly for the Brookwood School Community.

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Brookwood School
One Brookwood Road
Manchester, MA 01944

UPCOMING EVENTS AT BROOKWOOD SCHOOL

RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

FRIDAY, JANUARY 9, 11 A.M. - 5 P.M.

TODDLER/PARENT ART CLASS

10 A.M. WEDNESDAYS, BEGINNING JANUARY 21

ADMISSIONS OPEN HOUSE

THURSDAY, JANUARY 22, 8:45- 10 A.M.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 25, 1- 3 P.M.



Fall '08 Campus Candid



Returning to his alma mater, world-class athlete Elliot Hovey '98 spoke with the first grade about his experience as a member of the U.S. Olympic crew team at the Beijing Games.



Sixth grade parent volunteers served scores of students and their families at the Back to School Picnic.



Pippa White '13 casts her vote on Election Day.



Jeffrey DePiero '11 and other sixth graders map their way through Boston as part of the annual Sixth Grade Scavenger Hunt.



Headmaster for the Day Austin Begien '15 conducts the Headmaster's Quiz during School Meeting. Austin assisted Headmaster John Peterman throughout the day, greeting students, meeting with school administrators, and serving lunch to the Lower School.



Members of the Sixth Grade table congratulate Charlotte Reynders '11 on her Bingo win.



James Riordan '14 waits as Olivia Bryan '12 checks his Bingo card.

Members of the Upper School Student Council held their annual Ice Cream Fundraiser during Bingo Night, raising \$300 for the Cape Ann Habitat for Humanity. Pictured (from left) are: Ahamdi Ogwuru '09, Tucker Quinlan '10, Lucy Purinton '10, Clare Grady '10, Stephen Fehnel '09, Emma Fehnel '11, Abby Gracey '11 and Rob Irvin '11.



Second Annual Sustainability Fair



Kayli Cutler '13, Stephen Friend '12 and Indiana Sobol '12 create non-toxic household cleaners from everyday materials.



Heading up the Second Annual Sustainability Fair were returning co-chairs Amy Henderson and Ben Wildrick, Lower School science teacher and Sustainability Coordinator.



Science teacher Ann Johnson at the Sixth Grade composting station.



Blair Kaneb '10 helps students learn about water conservation issues.



Noah Robb '16 and Bey Guerster '16 are all smiles at the face painting booth.



Angie Wright '17 enjoyed interacting with one of the many reptiles at the Cape Ann Vernal Pond Team booth.

Lower School Halloween Parade



Christopher Curran-Cardarelli '16 as the Statue of Liberty.



Second graders Katharine Henderson '15, Eliza Patterson '15 and Bobby Beardsley '15 enjoy their final Halloween Parade around the school



Sophia Carter '16.



Indiana Jones (aka Hayden Byrne) '17).