

# What sustains you?

## Sustainability from the Quality of Life Angle

### Here's the e-vite:

Select the most likely quote to go with this photo:

1. Blues: Fun for all Ages
2. Geezers Rock
3. When Do We Eat?

If you answered: "1," "2," or "3," do not pass "Go!" Do not collect \$200. You need to report directly to The Fourth Annual Gray House Blues Jam Barbeque and Sled Ride this Saturday, February 17, 1-5:30 pm.

**Now, be honest. If you got that e-vite, would you go?**

If you're exhausted and cranky, you should. The Annual Gray House Blues Jam Barbeque and Sled Ride is a phenomenally friendly musical blow-out that comes just when it's needed—as the snow gets crusty. Hosting it and playing rock and blues guitar at it and singing like he means it is one of the many ways that Dondo (Putney's communications director, **Don Cuerton**) sustains himself in the weeks crawling up to March Break.



*Music*

**Dondo isn't the only Putney faculty or staffer who draws sustenance from music. Clearly the music faculty (including Inés Gómez-Ochoa, Draa Hobbs, John Hughes '84, Amy Cann, Julie Marden, and Becky Graber) does. But so do members of the English and history faculties.**

**Harry Bauld** plays jazz piano and has a trio going with History Teacher **Blake Zahn** (playing drums) and student **Hallie Herz '07** (vocals). Blake also plays guitar.

**Carol Dickson** (who teaches English and coaches soccer) plays fiddle.

### The Green Cup Challenge

Fifteen boarding schools from around the Northeast are competing this winter for the highest percentage of energy conservation by way of behavioral modification. In other words, we're trying to outdo each other by personally consuming less energy. The three top schools in last year's event cut usage by roughly 8-11 percent, or the equivalent of removing 34 cars from the road.

After a "quiet" monitoring period to establish base usage levels, dorms met to elect one student "energy boss" to encourage housemates to conserve. The dorm with the greatest percentage of savings won a pizza night. Adult energy bosses were also chosen for non-residential buildings. Off-campus faculty and day students were also encouraged to participate by turning in two months of utility bills to demonstrate savings.

Average Number of Horses in Our Stable: 15



Yes, we don't work for badges, honors and grades. But a little healthy competition is just the thing to get everyone fired up about sustainable living. It's also a media-friendly way to get the word out to the greater community. Not everyone understands ozone and greenhouse gasses, but winning and losing are attention-getters.

The entry fee is \$200 per school, which funds the purse: \$3,000 for the winner and \$2,000 for the runner-up. That would buy a lot of biodegradable compost bags, so we're going for it. We won't know the outcome before we go to print, but you can check the results on our website at [www.putneyschool.org](http://www.putneyschool.org). Search for "Green Cup Challenge" if you don't see it right off.

Usual Percentage of Students on Campus Who Can Play Guitar: Approximately 65

## Senior Work Terms

Each year, members of the senior class have the option to apply for a senior work term in which they trade March break (plus a week of classes prior) for a glimpse inside the working world. Work terms must be approved by the school and require a faculty sponsor. Upon returning, students often share their experiences in class. Here is a list of this year's approved work terms to give you an idea of their scope:

**Adam Mirani:** Building a community library in Accra, Ghana.

**Samia Abbass and Hallie Herz:** Working in an orphanage/clinic/Buddhist monastery library in Kathmandu, Nepal.

**Kathy Meyer:** Working in a horse-training stable in South Carolina.

**Elisabeth Yazdzik:** Procuring horses for a therapeutic resort in Panama.

**Ruthie Carter:** Performing field identification and censuses with a professor of herpetology at Middlebury College.

**Clara Rowe:** Working with underprivileged youth in the Dominican Republic.

**David Crook and Gryphon Rower-Upjohn:** Apprenticing in a sculptor's studio in China.

**Maarit Ostrow:** Interning at the American Antiquarian Society's conservation/museum studies program in Worcester, MA.

**Rosa Indenbaum, Samar Lichtenstein, Taylor Daniels, Annie Carter and Esther Howe:** Interning for an immigrant/human rights organization in Tucson, AZ, doing office and outreach work.

PUTNEY STUDENTS  
BUILDING A LIBRARY  
IN GHANA DURING  
MARCH BREAK, 2005.

Number of Looms in the Weaving Studio: 21

## Music-playing members of the art faculty include:

Lithographer *cum* violist **Brian Cohen**, who plays chamber music and performs with the Windham Orchestra.

Photographer and filmmaker **Jason Whiton '83**, who plays guitar and harp and who writes songs.

**Christie Baskett**, director of development, has sung in both orchestral and church choirs. Indeed, she chose her last two churches partly on the merits of their music programs.

**JD Mellowship** coaches mountain biking and is the breakfast and lunch chef at the KDU. He drums. Practicing and performing provide JD with times that he experiences as almost mystical.

College Counselor **Joyce Vining Morgan** has sung in choral groups since she was 13, though, Joyce admits, "it was only four years ago that I learned to sight read music."

Science Teacher **Hans Estrin '85** plays folk and blues guitar and, with his daughter, Isadore, takes violin lessons from **Amy Cann**.

**In the popular imagination, anyway, talent in music easily parlays into talent in math and vice versa. Well, surprise, surprise! Putney's math faculty includes two avid musicians.**

**Abijah Reed '53** sings in choruses. Years ago, though, he played classical guitar seriously, aspirationally. Abijah was sidetracked from his near obsession with playing guitar only by a new music-related preoccupation—building harpsichords and clavichords. "Music," says Abijah, "is the closest I come to spirituality. If there were no such thing as music, I would have been just as well off as a rock or a tree."

**Joe Holland** plays rock and blues harp for the joy of the music and because "it makes me feel like a cool guy instead of a math dweeb." Still, though he plays—and plays well, as his neighbors on Windmill Hill Road who hear him out on his back porch on summer evenings can attest—he admits that it isn't music that sustains him. "Long periods of sweaty, monotonous, repetitive motion really does it for me," says Joe. Translation? Either "I ski" or "I run." Joe does both.



Ok, so that's Joe Holland out on the road, performing sweaty, monotonous, repetitive motions to keep himself joyful and in shape. Who else relies on physical activity to sustain them?

English Teacher **Carol Dickson** plays on a woman's ice hockey team.

Carpenter **Gene Eckhoff** dances the Argentine Tango.

Dean's Office Assistant **Judith Petry** takes daily long walks in the woods, or at the very least, through a 7-circle Cretan labyrinth she had mown in the grass in her orchard.

Dance Program Director **Kalya Yannatos** dances almost as much as her students, swims when she has time, and practices Tai Chi and yoga.

Annual Giving and Volunteer Manager **Carol Chidley** lift weights, exercises on a treadmill (winter) and rides her bicycle (spring and summer).

Executive Chef **Marty Brennan-Sawyer** runs and skis.

Horses may be Athletic Director and Horse Program Manager **Cara Snarski's** passion, but running is what she does for endorphins. She also snowboards, bikes, and does yoga.

ESL Teacher **Robyn Scarth** swims a mile and a half every morning and walks the Putney trails with her dog every afternoon.

History Teacher **Kristin Dawley** still runs, though now that she has an infant and a toddler, she no longer runs marathons.

Science Teacher **Glenn Littledale '76** had to give up marathons, too, when one of his knees complained. He hikes now, sometimes with his beagle, Buddy.

Summer Programs Administrative Coordinator **Maria Ogden**, who was always the last person chosen for teams when she was growing up, now runs, spins, bikes, hikes, does Pilates, x-c skis, skate skis and snowboards.

**Wendy Wilson**, business manager of the Summer Programs, plays racquetball two or three times a week, mostly in winter.

Dean of Students **Ben Freeman** tries to run or bike most days, usually early in the morning.

**Lies Pasterkamp**, who directs the Afternoon Activity and Work programs, runs trails, x-c skis and rows.

Run into Spanish Teacher **Elizabeth St. John '74** at the Annual Putney Town Party and you'll quickly learn that she loves to dance to live bands.

As does Ceramics Teacher **Naomi Lindenfeld**, who says that "Dance keeps me alive and feeds me physically and spiritually." Naomi also hikes, x-c skis and bikes.

Director of Admissions **Rick Cowan** works out every morning on "a strange rowing machine called 'The Fluid Rower.' My strokes turn a propeller in a tank of water while an LCD tells me how far I've rowed, how many calories I've pumped out, how long I've been rowing and how much energy I expend with each stroke." Quick, someone. Cue the photographer.

Of course Yoga Teacher **Jamie Coulter** practices yoga each morning. But he also does a little bike-commuting and plays *capoeiras* (the African-Brazilian dance/fight/game).

**Joyce Vining Morgan** lifts weights, hikes, skis, snowshoes and does yoga.

And the kicker: Mild-mannered English teacher **Chris Bagg** is also a professional triathlete who swims, bikes and runs all year long, twice a day.

# Physical Activity



**FOSSIL FUEL ALTERNATIVE: ROSIE COHANE-MANN '08 HOLDS A TEMPLATE FOR MARKING USED VEGETABLE OIL CONTAINERS FOR BIODIESEL FUEL PRODUCTION. SO FAR, ROUGHLY 300 GALLONS OF FUEL HAVE BEEN PRODUCED FOR USE IN TWO OF THE FARM'S TRACTORS. PLANS FOR A COMMUNITY USED VEGETABLE OIL COLLECTION COOPERATIVE ARE IN THE WORKS, BUT FOR NOW A SINGLE RESTAURANT IN BRATTLEBORO OFFERS MORE THAN WE CAN PROCESS.**

**LOCALVORE MOVEMENT: FACULTY AND STAFF MEMBERS JAY JENKINS, GEORGE BARBER AND JOE HOLLAND PERFORM THE MARCH OF THE TURKEYS FOR OUR ANNUAL KDU THANKSGIVING FEAST. FEATURED ON THE PLATTERS ARE TURKEYS RAISED RIGHT HERE ON ELM LEA FARM.**



**Percent of Milk Production Converted to Butter and Soft Cheese: Untallied, but "a lot"**

# Fiber Arts



**WASTE NOT, WANT NOT: PART OF THE RECENT COW BARN RENOVATION INCLUDED NEW WINDOWS THAT MAKE IT MUCH WARMER IN THE WINTER AND MUCH COOLER IN THE SUMMER (BECAUSE THEY CAN OPEN!).**

**SAY CHEESE: EXECUTIVE CHEF MARTY BRENNAN-SAWYER TEACHES A SEMINAR IN CHEESE-MAKING TO PUTNEY STUDENTS AS PART OF LESLIE FROTHINGHAM'S CHEMISTRY CLASS. AS PART OF THE SCHOOL'S "LOCALVORE" EFFORTS TO USE LOCALLY PRODUCED FOOD AND CUT DOWN ON TRANSPORTATION ENERGY, MARTY PLANS TO MAKE UP TO 100 POUNDS OF "UTILITY CHEDDAR" PER MONTH—UP FROM THE TWO TO THREE WHEELS MADE NOW.**



**Percentage of Post-Consumer Materials in the Paper Used to Make the Viewbook from Which These Sustainability Facts Were Gleaned: 100**

*That means:*

**22.66 trees preserved for the future**  
**65.45 lbs. of waterborne waste not created**  
**9,629 gallons of wastewater flow saved**  
**1,065 lbs. of solid waste not generated**  
**2,098 lbs. net greenhouse gases prevented**  
**16,055,941 BTUs energy not consumed**

**Premises 1 and 2:** (1) Exercise can help keep one sane through trying times. (2) So can the acts of artistic creation and/or performance.

**Theorem:** **Joyce Vining Morgan** is the sanest adult on campus.

**Evidence bridging premises and theorem:** Joyce appears to be the one adult who regularly exercises and regularly indulges in more than one art form.

**Full Disclosure:** The research for this article involved querying faculty and staff members only about their forays into physical activity, music and fiber arts. It did not ask about other art forms. The research plan adhered to no scientifically valid research design. Furthermore, Joyce herself wildly objects to any diagnosis of her as "most sane," claiming instead that she is just trying as hard as everyone else to be sane at all.

It is true, though, that she knits. She has sewn since she was five years old. She weaves. It makes you wonder, doesn't it?

**Other faculty and staff members knitting, sewing, quilting and weaving their ways to mental health include:**

Obviously, the fiber arts faculty. They include **Melissa Lumley '77, Hillary Maynard** and **Patty Blomgren**.

ESL Teacher **Libby Holmes**, who does all of her mending during faculty meetings and "darns socks that probably even my grandma would have thrown away."

**Harriet Stupp Rogers '49**, the director of alumni affairs, who was taught to knit by her mother's friend the summer that she turned 15 and hasn't stopped since.

**Judith Petry**, who quilts and raises llamas.

Librarian **Nancy Hellekson**, who knits and spins.

History Teacher **Lorne Johnson**, who raised sheep, sheared them and took about 50 pounds of his fleece as well as fleece from a few other local sources to the Green Mountain Spinnery for spinning. Then he brought the wool to Peggy Hart in Shelburne Falls, MA. "Peggy has a considerable selection of nineteenth century power looms. She worked out a few staggered twill designs and then produced, let's say, a dozen blankets for me. And, of course, 'Solomon in all his splendor was never so arrayed in such as these.'"

The most impressive Putney-person-sustains-self-through-fiber-arts story, though, is that of Assistant Librarian **Cathy McKenna**. She once lived in Hoboken, NJ and wore suits to her job in lower Manhattan. "Somewhere along the line I realized I was unhappy. I started thinking of ways to live in a more natural world and came across the idea of raising alpacas. When I started visiting farms and talking to breeders to learn more about alpacas I completely fell in love with the animals.

"In December of 2001 I moved to Vermont, had some of my land cleared and a barn erected, and moved my small herd of eight alpacas onto the farm. The fulfillment for me is twofold. First, the alpacas themselves are very spiritual in nature. They are graceful and elegant, the females are amazing mothers, the babies are full of wonder and oftentimes hilarious as they explore their environment. (The males have minds of one track, breeding.)

"Second, the fiber they produce is a wonderful tactile experience. Considered a luxury textile, alpaca yarn is soft, soft, soft. It is a joy to spin and like butter in the hands. I dye and paint the yarn; this allows me to experiment with color and hue in ways I've never before experienced.

"The herd is much bigger now—there are 35 alpacas. I guess the overall 'why' of why I do this is because I'm always learning something new, whether it's related to the health management of the alpacas or some new fiber aspect. Plus, I absolutely love the alpacas. And, I get to be surrounded by beauty instead of concrete and noise. It just feels right." n