

Legacies are a recurring topic in this issue. In the “Happenings” section we’ve introduced all of the incoming legacies. In the graduation story there are comments from our outgoing third-generation legacies. So it’s no real coincidence that our cover artist is the daughter of an alumnus (renowned folk singer Bill Crofut '54), a graduate and the mom of a graduate (Amelia Crofut-Brittingham '05) and current student (Robin Crofut-Brittingham '07). Erika sent us this wonderful illustration a year ago with a note asking if we accept alumni art for cover consideration. It’s what led to the legacy theme idea. Here’s what Erika has to say about her work and things Putney:

**This Putney drawing is not a memory or Putney seen through my daughters’ eyes—it’s just a happy idea about what Putney can be.** I like making these quilts about what something can be. My favorite drawings tend to emphasize the sunny side but it’s fun to include at least a little rain or a dark winter morning.

**What I learned at Putney is that drawing makes me happy.** I draw every day and on good days the process leads, or turns into, something. Like so many of us who graduated in the '80s, I have struggled with finding a balance between my passion for making art, working, and being at home with my family. I have found the best balance teaching at a prep school not far from where we live. I get to share what I love with my students, be home when my kids are, and I have long vacations to dive into projects and follow through with ideas.

**My dad, Bill Crofut, was in the Class of '54. Putney introduced him to music—his life’s passion and profession.** He liked to tell about walking on the east lawn and hearing the *B-Minor Mass* through a window of the main building—it was one of his greatest moments of epiphany. Norwood Hinkle was a central figure in many of his happiest memories.

**Putney also gave my Dad the life attitude that anyone could do anything, “As long as they had a good teacher or a manual.”** He and I practiced this can-do philosophy together building boats: two solar electric launches and a beautiful cedar canvas canoe. We really didn’t know what we were doing but they are all still in the family and floating, and we have a lot of fun with them.

**I was not expected to go to Putney, but it was the only “choice” offered and I was excited.** My happiest

time was spent in the then-brand-new art building. Putney was what I expected. I did not have the epiphanies my Dad had while I was a student but I made a few life-long friends. I find myself reflecting on my Putney experience often. I model my teaching after my great Putney teachers (Lyn Bruce, “It’s all in the process,” and Tony Buchelli “You get out what you put in”). Putney gave me enthusiasm and a willingness to take risks that I am very grateful for and try and pass along any chance I get.

**Right now I am working on a children’s book written by my best friend and Putney roommate Melanie Regnier.**

We get on the phone together and talk with great seriousness about what kind of sandwiches turtles eat and how feathers fold into rocking chairs when turkeys are reading to their children. What could be more engrossing? ✨

Erika Crofut  
Box 446  
East Canaan, CT 06024  
860/824-1247  
ecrofut@salis-  
buryschool.org

