# ISSUE DUTINEY POST

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# **ON INHABITING AN ORANGE**

All our roads go nowhere. Maps are curled To keep the pavement definitely On the world.

All our footsteps, set to make Metric advance, Lapse into arcs in deference To circumstance.

All our journeys nearing Space Skirt it with care, Shying at the distances Present in air.

Blithely travel-stained and worn, Erect and sure, All our travels go forth, Making down the roads of Earth Endless detour.

JOSEPHINE MILES from *Collected Poems*. Copyright 1983 by Josephine Miles. Reprinted with the permission of the University of Illinois Press.



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From a Dozen Or So Acres of Green Grass Summer yurt near Denali, Alaska, where WildThingz Dog Mushing runs its summer tours



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# DEAR READERS,

My own journey to Putney is, in fact, bringing me "home" again.

I joined the staff this year, and now my working days are spent on the same darkly forested hills and fog-filled valleys of my young adulthood in southern Vermont. And I'm remembering, these days, how easy it was to form a kinship with this landscape, this community. Returning here feels like a holiday dinner, writ large—like each of the trees and streams bore witness to my youthful foibles and have long since forgotten the details. They're just happy to see me.

The poet John O'Donohue said: "The life and passion of a person leaves an imprint on the ether of a place. Love does not remain within the heart, it flows out to build secret tabernacles in a landscape."

Most Putney students arrive from somewhere else. They spend a few deeply creative and formative years here. And then they're off, off to Alaska (Emily Rosenblatt '10, *Call of the Wild*) or Vietnam (Ted Osius '79, *Journeys*) or off to just down the street (Peter Dixon '75 and Alex Major '10, *From a Dozen or So Acres of Green Grass*). But the landscape here does not forget them.

What does it mean to be the alumni of a school? Does it make you kindred with the other alumni? Does it mean you forever have another home, regardless of the many changes in staff that occur? Can a school know you? Love you?

At the very least, it certainly means that each of you can know this: that your presence here has contributed to the landscape in a fundamental way, and that to return here is to return to yourself, to your individual imprint on this collective idea.

I'm excited to learn more about you, and watch this group of students and all the ones thereafter, and to look for the secret tabernacles as I move through my days.

# DARRY MADDEN

Publisher | Putney Post



One spring four years ago, **Emily Rosenblatt '10 rode** shotgun in a truck headed from **Colorado to Alaska. Richie,** her boyfriend of a few months, drove. In the back, 14 Alaskan husky dogs lay in their crates and dozed. **Emily Rosenblatt '10** 

didn't intend to end up co-running a sled dog business in Alaska. But her journey was always pointing her there.

**BY BECKY KARUSH '94** 

hat was a fun conversation with my parents," Emily says, cheerful and wry. She's in between chores on a fall afternoon near Two Rivers, Alaska, east of Fairbanks, the winter cabin home for her and Richie, now her husband, and their 32 sled dogs in various states of puppyhood, racing, breeding, and retirement. Together the couple runs WildThingz Dog Mushing, a professional sled dog team and sled dog tour operation.

Normally, Emily would be at their summer yurt right now, alongside Denali National Park, where they run dog sled tours for the robust tourist trade. But a neighbor family's baby (human, not canine) had taken ill enough for a hospital stay, and Emily's helping care for their dogs.

"I had to tell my parents I'd broken up with the boyfriend who I went out to Colorado with, I was dating a man 19 years older than I am, who had 14 dogs, and now I was going to Alaska, byeeeeee!" She laughs. "It was a classic Emily move at that point. I had no idea what I was doing, I was all over the place, I wanted to do everything but nothing until then stuck."

Headlong and curious, Emily was in that post-college, early-twenties middle ground where no landscape fully meets the appetites and questions of the heart; everything feels like one long road trip. She'd felt more congruence at Putney, loving farmwork and art, especially photography, but art school in New York City held a strange sort of exile from belonging.

"I'm from Maine," she says, "I'm not a city person. I went there solely for the education and especially after Putney, I felt like a huge part of my life—nature, hands-on labor was missing."

So the summer after graduation, Emily hit the road with her then-boyfriend. They drove out west, landing in Leadville, Colorado, near a ski resort. She didn't have a plan, and she had no expectations that her art school degree would land her a job; she figured she would figure it out, wait tables, go skiing.

Then, she found a job. A sled dog tour company, five minutes from her house, was seeking a photographer.

"I started working around the dogs, and it was like, 'Oh. This is what I want to do," she says. Not long after starting, she met Richie, who'd been managing the kennel for several years. They rode across the property on a snow machine the first day they met. "That I fell in love with someone with sled dogs..." Her grin is audible. "I definitely got lucky with that."

# CHOP WOOD, CARRY WATER, COMB FUR, NAP

Emily takes a lot of steps in a day. Wake up, drink some tea or coffee, cook meat or salmon for the dogs. Take a half-hour to scoop poop from the kennel. Go to the river to haul water in five-gallon buckets for the dogs (and for her and Richie—the river is their running water). Water everybody. Emily and Richie prepare caribou, moose, and salmon meat to feed the dogs (and themselves). Far right: For decades, the Alaskan husky has been bred specifically for racing.

Depending on the season, hook up a team of dogs—45 to 70 pounds each—and take them on a training run. Get back and unhook from training run. Cook more food for the dogs and water them again.

"It's a constant flow of dog care, and in between it's getting wood for the fire, chopping wood for the fire, preparing salmon or caribou or moose scraps for the dogs later, fixing or building equipment," she explains. "And then more for the dogs, trimming their toenails, brushing their fur, giving vaccines or vitamins. There is always something to do."

Emily and Richie raise Alaskan huskies, which are a wilder breed than the Siberian huskies used in movies to play sled dogs. The breed is thousands of years old, descended, as Emily puts it, "from whatever dogs native people had in their villages."

Sixty or 70 years ago, Alaskans started breeding these huskies more specifically for racing. The genetics of modern sled dogs trace back to a handful of mushers who originated the sport, but they're not

purebred, as mushers bred in different traits over the years.

"They still have the husky look to them, but they might have floppy ears, one up and one down, or longer coats, or maybe one bloodline has a hound in there somewhere. Ours are more wolf-y looking," Emily says.

WildThingz dogs are lean and vital and physical, their eyes bright to ferocity. Emily's kinetic and visceral photographs of the teams in motion, even in harness, even at rest, show dogs of such self-possession, ambition, and satisfaction that it's clear they're made for this—running land so spectacularly beautiful and demanding, it is still a frontier.

Caring for happy working animals, nearer to wolves than to pet dogs, animals with emotional lives and complex relationships with each other, may be what Emily is made for, too.

"This life up here comes at you so hard. The work is hard, and the darkness in winter is hard. And the dogs alone, I never wanted and still





don't want kids, but now I have 32 furry kids!" Emily takes a beat. "But it gives me so much structure. If I don't have that, I struggle a lot, including mental health struggles. In so many ways, I can't even imagine if I didn't come to this. This saved me."

This is Emily's chosen frontier—the daily journey of hard physical work, the gorgeous extremeness of the landscape, and the intensity of living essentially in a wolf pack. During racing season in the winter, she also works as Richie's support team (the definition of intensity), while she juggles side gigs, including waitressing, art classes, photography, and graphic design. She'll also do some sled racing of her own this winter to see if she likes it. But there's a softness in her days, too, that exists because of the severity of life and land.

She has time during the long days to read a book. She can move slowly and deliberately through chores. She has time to look at maps. She has time to listen to the radio. If she and Richie organize their days just right, she can even take a nap. The days are full, but freer than Emily has known.

# "This life up here comes at you so hard. This work is hard."

Exploring the depths of the arctic by dog sled.

# ALASKA WAS INEVITABLE.

Though she couldn't have known it at the time, Emily started mapping out the route to this life long before she petted a husky pup in Colorado.

Childhood in Maine meant a lot of time outdoors, from sledding to fishing to playing with her family's Siberian huskies. In fact, one family photo shows Emily in a snowsuit at three years old, hanging onto a little dog sled.

Later, she came to Putney in the midst of a tough adolescence, and she was drawn to the school like a salmon to its stream. Here she found hard work, beautiful land, daily structure, and a passion for art that helped her discover a self to respect and love.

Even in college, far from her natural habitat, Emily explored what would become her future. "For my senior thesis, I documented people living traditions around homesteading and self-sufficiency," she says. "I shot with a 4x5 large format camera, because I wanted to use traditional tools, too. I photographed lobstermen, dairy farmers, my own family, people who lived off the grid in random places. That was the commonality, people making an effort to self-sustain and have a minimal footprint."

She laughs again. "Ironic, right? Lo and behold, that is so much of what our life is based around."

That life, however, is at risk. Climate change isn't theoretical here. This summer saw the most intense period of drought in the state since drought monitoring started in 2000. As of mid-September, more than 2.5 million acres had burned in wildfires. That's about half a million fewer than the peak of 2015, but with more damage to homes and other structures. Elsewhere in the state, tundra lakes are drying up, rivers are filling with silt, and coastal storms are forcing villages to move. It's harder for animals, of wild and human variety alike, to find food.

Emily sees it all firsthand. "Every summer, Richie fishes for our own fish. In the fall, we end up getting about 500 salmon for our dogs. There were no salmon this year. The river we would usually go to, it's dried up. The fish never made it there. That's devastating in itself, and it's definitely weird for us, to be in a place that's so bountiful but not to be able to get the food we rely on."



# **WHY LIVING IN ALASKA MATTERS**

Part of her mission now is to help people see, love, and live in some measure of respectful harmony with the planet, as Alaska has helped her do. She and Richie can't help but live simply, using resources sparingly and creatively, providing for themselves as much as possible with what they have at hand. But Emily hopes that with her photography and her stories, and by sharing them on social media, she will help inspire people to take care of the land as much as they can.

She hopes, too, that she might inspire people to connect with work that makes them feel joy.

"This is a super corny thing to say, but life is short." She's urgent now, her natural vigor and delight focused on what matters. "Don't waste it doing something that doesn't light a fire in your belly. It's important to me that people know: my life is not just romantic. It's heartbreaking. I have 32 dogs. I have to have my heart broken 32 times when they die. It never gets easier, and it always hurts. We're with them when they die, and that's really sad and stressful. It's tough.

"Every time it happens, I don't think I'm strong enough for this. But ultimately the joy of raising puppies and living with these dogs, it makes it worth it. Having these guys, my kids, and being there with them every day, makes me feel like if I died tomorrow, I would be happy. I'm doing what I'm doing to die happy."

She pauses. Dogs are waiting. There's more road ahead of her today, more work, more love. "I wish that more people felt that way in life. Hopefully I can help them know that somehow, somewhere, they can."



The hallowed, pungent halls of Parish Hill Creamery

# INDER A DOZEN DR SO ACRES OF GREEN CRASS

MILK, EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY, AND NATIONAL AWARD-WINNING CHEESE

**BY DARRY MADDEN** 

UTNEY SCHOOL'S FARM PROGRAM is a lot of things. First and foremost, it is an invaluable teaching tool for students, who learn highly exacting and demanding skills. It is also a functioning dairy, producing a half million pounds of high-quality, pasture-raised milk every year. For years, most of the milk produced on the farm was

sold to Cabot's regional cooperative. But the last six years have seen a shift, and now the bulk of Putney's milk goes to two local cheesemakers, both with Putney ties. This year, their cheeses made with Elm Lea Farm's milk took home three first-place medals in the American Cheese Society Awards and two bronze medals at the World Cheese Championships.

Peter Dixon '75 makes cheese at Parish Hill Creamery, next door to David Major and his son, Alex Major '10, at Vermont Shepherd, on a sleepy stretch of country road in Westminster.

Parish Hill's *Reverie*, a traditional, semi-hard Toma, and *Kashar*, a Balkan-style cheese in the same family as provolone, took home first-place medals at the American Cheese Society Awards (and their *Suffolk Punch* took home a second-place, as well). *Humble*, a whole milk Tomme, and *Idyll*, a long-aged mountain cheese, both took home bronze medals at the World Cheese Championships in Bergamo, Italy.

Dixon takes the lion's share of Elm Lea Farm's summer milk. Whereas Vermont Shepherd uses its own sheep's milk in its cheeses as well, Parish Hill cheeses are made with 100% Putney School milk, about 200,000 pounds every year.

According to Dixon and his partner, Rachel Fritz Schaal, the quality of the milk is the key to their success, but so too is the fact that they use autochthonous cultures—cultures made by harvesting microbes from their own environment—rather than cultures produced in a factory. They are the only cheesemakers in the US or Canada using this method. These cultures are like sourdough, used

# **MORE PUTNEY TIES**

Emily Aldrich '07, formerly an intern at Parish Hill, now manages quality control at Oregon's Rogue Creamery, whose Rogue River Blue was named World Champion of Cheese at the 2019 World Cheese Awards. again and again to start a batch of cheese. The first cultures were made six years ago from the milk of Helga, Abigail, Clothilde, and Sonya—four Putney School cows chosen for their health and disposition and are still in use today.

Vermont Shepherd's award winner this year was *Invierno* (meaning "winter" in Spanish). They step in as Parish Hill's production season comes to an end, buying the school's milk through the winter months. Major explained that

sheep's milk becomes very rich toward the end of the grazing season—so rich it makes cheesemaking difficult —so it is blended with cow's milk to make a semi-hard natural rind cheese that is common to the Pyrenees of Spain and France.

Pete Stickney has been Putney's farm manager for the last 22 years. When he started, he "renovated" the pastures—which were run down and depleted—by reseeding and fertilizing them. But since then, he hasn't needed to apply fertilizer or manure; the fields are managed through the rotation of the cows and supply all of their nutritional needs during the growing season.

"It's fun growing grass," said Stickney. "And it's incredibly rewarding to see our milk be made into tremendous cheese."

Stickney emphasizes that, in addition to the good pasture, the other key to having high quality milk is having a strong and consistent routine every day. "The fact that we can do that with student workers is astounding."

"Cows have to be milked twice a day, every day, the right way," said Stickney. "There's no good-enough and there's no revision."









- 1. Peter Dixon '75, of Parish Hill Creamery
- 2. Alex Major '10 collecting milk from the Putney School barn
- 3. David Major outside of Vermont Shepherd's cheese cave.
- 4. Vermont Shepherd's flock numbers 300.
- 5. Sheep on their way to be milked.

# GOES TO TWO LOCAL CHEESEMAKERS, BOTH WITH PUTNEY TIES.



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When Secretary of State John Kerry swore me in as America's sixth ambassador to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, he urged my family to join us on stage. Laughing about our infant son's suit, the Secretary welcomed my mother, my husband Clayton, and our 11-month-old son, TABO. Our son, he said, "is decked out in the best seersucker suit I ever saw at that age. There he is. You can record the day that TABO stole the show." he Secretary continued, "I first met Ted in January of 1998, when I travelled to Vietnam to take part in a disabled veterans bike ride. The bikers had come down all the way from Hanoi; I joined the ride in Vung Tau, and we biked up to Ho Chi Minh City with a bunch of veterans who had been wounded in the war. And the heat and the humidity was pretty intense, as you can imagine, but the worst part of it was every time I'd look up Ted was just kind of biking along, leading the trail with ease, sort of a Sunday stroll for him. And I found out later that it was a Sunday stroll for him because he's ridden the full distance of 1,200 miles between Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, not just the final leg."

That's not exactly how I remember that bike ride. John Kerry is an avid biker and intensely competitive. I remember his tall, lean profile well ahead of me on the long, hot ride to Saigon. And the first ambassador to Vietnam, my boss Pete Peterson, was close behind his friend and fellow veteran, then-Senator Kerry. He had borrowed my bicycle seat to cushion his ambassadorial tush.

Of course, John Kerry was right that it was broiling hot and unthinkably humid. The war veterans and disabled participants who rode in the World T.E.A.M. Sports' "Vietnam Challenge" bicycle ride had visited hospitals and orphanages along the route. Their journey was part of a long process of reconciliation between former adversaries. Veterans without the use of their legs rode hand-powered cycles, an unthinkable feat of determination on 100-mile days. They rode over the towering Hai Van Pass and the Hien Luong bridge spanning the 17th parallel that separated north from south during the war.

That was one of many bike rides for me in Vietnam, from the north mountains on the border with China to the flat, fertile Mekong Delta. Consistent with the practice for a new ambassador, before my arrival I released a short video telling something about myself. I chose a biking theme, to indicate to the Vietnamese people that I knew something about their country. I narrated the video entirely in Vietnamese, and pretty quickly the word spread that the new U.S. ambassador spoke the language and loved the country.

I rode my bike in the north, south, and center—as often as possible—because I liked biking and the image it conveyed. While few modern Vietnamese leaders would be caught on camera riding a bicycle, I wanted the U.S. image to be one of accessibility and friendliness. The "biking ambassador" image caught on, including in the USA, where *PBS News Hour* broadcast a profile, "Meet bicycle diplomat Ted Osius, America's modern ambassador to Vietnam."

What did I learn on my bicycle seat? First, that the foundational skill of diplomacy is respect. When you show respect to people, to their history, culture, food, art, and language, you can build trust. You can expand that trust by doing things together, which leads to partnership. Partnership—not transactional relationships, or tit-for-tat—is in America's interest. It's also important that the respect be genuine, not just a show. That was easy for me, because I love and respect Vietnam, its people and its culture.

Second, I learned that if you want to make a difference, you must engage. You must engage patiently, persistently, again and again. If you want to have any kind of



influence, you need to show up, and not walk away when the going gets tough. There were many things about the Vietnamese government that I did not like. (There are a lot of things about the U.S. government that I don't like, either.) But if you engage, there is a real opportunity to change a relationship and make a lasting difference.

When I was a kid, my parents read to me a poem by Mary Lathrap, which had the line: "Walk a mile in his moccasins before you abuse, criticize and accuse." As a diplomat—and, I would argue, as a human being—it's critical to know what's fundamentally important to another person, and to understand other perspectives, to walk a mile in another's moccasins. That was the third lesson I learned on my bicycle seat.

By the way, these foundational skills showing respect, engaging in order to make a difference, figuring out the other's

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perspective—are transferable. Regardless of whether you're working in government, in education, in the arts, or in the private sector, these skills will help.

As a diplomat, on my bicycle seat or in meeting rooms, I tried to promote reconciliation between two former enemies, and to bring the United States and Vietnam together as partners. The highlight of 28-and-a-half years as a diplomat was in 2016, when I hosted President Barack Obama in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. Those three days were also the most challenging moments in my career.

In planning the trip, I had to bring together the U.S. and Vietnamese governments, and each had a different view of the visit. For the Vietnamese, it was essential that the U.S. president show respect by meeting with all four top leaders of the Communist Party. For the Americans, it was essential to get the president out of the official bubble, so that he could meet real Vietnamese people and get a feel for what was actually happening in the country.

Earlier, I had helped Vietnam's top Party leader get an Oval Office meeting, where President Obama voiced his respect for systems of government different from our own. That successful visit had earned me some credibility as a friend of Vietnam. I had to use that credibility to persuade Vietnam's leadership that, by meeting with young people and interviewing entrepreneurs, Barack Obama was in fact showing his respect to all the people of Vietnam. I had to persuade them, for example, that forgoing a State dinner in favor of bun cha and beer with Anthony Bourdain was not an insult, but rather a compliment to Vietnam's cuisine and its culture.

I tried to use all the foundational skills discussed above: showing respect, engaging, and understanding the concerns of all parties. But in one area—the sensitive realm of human rights—I couldn't bridge the gap.

Trip planning really went off the rails as we arranged for President Obama to meet with civil society representatives in Hanoi. I had cut a deal with Vietnamese leaders so that Clockwise: Ted Osius '79, the "bicycle diplomat," connected with the Vietnamese people in part through his exploration of that country by bicycle. Ted with Secretary of State John Kerry, also a cycling enthusiast. Ted with his husband, Clayton Bond, and their children, Lucy and TABO.

As a diplomat, on my bicycle seat or in meeting rooms, I tried to promote reconciliation between two former enemies, and to bring the United States and Vietnam together as partners.

President Obama could hold a roundtable discussion, and the Vietnamese reneged on that deal. Angry with both the Deputy Prime Minister and with another Politburo member who had abandoned his personal commitment, sealed by a handshake, I asked Secretary Kerry, "What do you do when someone betrays you?" Without missing a beat, he replied, "It happened to me yesterday. My advice is: let them know what went wrong, but don't burn bridges."

The event took place, but it was reduced in scope. Like Secretary Kerry, the president took a broader perspective. Although he would face criticism at home, President Obama considered thoughtfully the perspective (I would have said paranoia) of Vietnamese leaders. "They have never faced this before," he said. "A visit by a head of state who wants to speak directly with activists. We will have to give them some time."

So the fourth lesson I learned on the bicycle seat was from the president and Secretary of State. No matter how let down you might feel, don't burn bridges. While you may face real setbacks, it is important to keep relationships going. I think these are lessons to live by, whatever journey you choose.



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What brought Putney to the point where this role was created? I believe all constituents of the school, board, alumni, faculty, staff, and students were ready for this role to be a reality on campus. Putney's Fundamental Beliefs outline the importance of this work in a variety of ways. This work is not for one person to complete alone; this work involves everyone.

What is the work Putney has done so far in this sphere? The board had made this work a priority in the three- and ten-year strategic plans. Putney's student leaders have organized the community on and off campus, ranging from weekly meetings, Putney Panels,

Q+A WITH DIRECTOR OF EQUITY AND INCLUSION LISA MUÑOZ This summer, Putney welcomed Director of Equity and Inclusion Lisa Muñoz. With a background in law and education, Lisa brings a wealth of experience and a passion for learning and teaching through the lens of community, inclusion, and sustainability. The *Post* sat down with Lisa this fall to learn more about the role, her vision, and the role of students in the work.



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# a Civilization Morthy of the Name

school-wide MLK Day events, climate justice education and rallies, and attending the March for Our Lives, Women's Marches, and, recently, the Climate Strike.

# What is the work you plan to

accomplish this year? For my first year, I plan to: (1) Be self-reflective/Be visible/Ask questions; (2) Spend time learning the community; (3) Understand my role and authority within the organizational structure; (4) Be transparent about my role, my motivations, and my intentions for the year; and (5) Complete the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) Assessment of Inclusivity and Multiculturalism Survey, and then set goals based on the data and self study. This assessment can help Putney take inventory of current efforts or perceptions of diversity and inclusion within the community, provide Putney with an opportunity to benchmark progress, determine whether objectives are being met effectively, and sustain forward movement and growth. It can also yield valuable information to help Putney think strategically and

make informed decisions regarding resources, energy, and future action. Additionally, the process of self-reflection and critical analysis can deepen knowledge of diversity issues while engaging the whole community in meaningful and productive dialogue.

You talk a lot about concepts of "belonging." Can you say more about that? One of the outcomes of this work is people feeling like they belong. If you belong, then everyone is free to bring their full selves to the community. The theory under which I work is that it's the job of the community to welcome people, rather than making a new student or faculty member shapeshift to truly be a part of a community.

What is the role of students in this work? Students are the best part of this work. We live in a diverse and global world. More than ever, we need well-functioning, highly inclusive people to solve problems. During student leader training, we discussed this theory of belonging, which sparked a lot of great conversation about the difference between fitting in and belonging. We worked on practices all student leaders could do to help the sense of belonging, putting the onus on themselves as student leaders and not on people arriving at Putney.

I also work with the student diversity committee, whose work is student-driven and focused on what they see and feel is important. I'm there for support and guidance and suggestions but I let them develop what that will look like. I challenged them to work with all student groups this year. So far, they've worked with the sustainability committee on the September 20 climate strike; the next challenge is to identify the next student group with which they'll partner, and figure out what can they do together.

What is the role of adults in this work? The NAIS assessment will hit all constituents—board, faculty, and staff. It's a deep dive into this work that contains very pointed questions about people's comfort level with equity and inclusion work and how it reflects the school's mission. I plan to provide multiple entry points to equity and inclusion because faculty and staff are in different places along the continuum of this work. Having multiple entry points will allow for different approaches for (1) adults who still need help articulating their racial identity (and who that makes them as a teacher); (2) those who are ready to dive deep on being an anti-racist educator; and (3) those who want to lead the charge in this and want to be a segment that prioritzes it.

Another example is our plan to look with the faculty at Putney's unspoken rules, with the goal of identifying them and articulating them so students and faculty can know what they are. It will help make an equitable playing field if we can say, "This is what success looks like here."

Belonging is a continuum. This work is never done. There's no end point. This work is ever-changing and it's our responsibility to learn, to grow, and to keep up with it.



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# FROM HIGHWAYS TO HEDGEROWS

# HAILEY SCOFIELD '08 AND HER QUEST TO SAVE THE BEES

If you ask beekeepers and farmers to name their biggest problem, you'll get a unified, resounding answer: mites. Specifically, the Varroa mite, a large, tick-like parasite that carries diseases and results in more than a 30% loss in honeybee populations every year. With the goal of improving pollinator diversity and increasing the sustainability of our food system, Combplex, an ag-tech sustainability start-up founded by Cornell University PhD students Hailey Scofield '08 and Nathan Oakes, has created an innovative solution the Varroa mite problem.

**BY ALISON FRYE** 

# SCIENCE, CAR WASHES, + LASERS

Named Cornell student business of the year in 2018 and recently selected as finalists for Grow-NY, an international competition for innovation in ag-tech and food production, Combplex initially developed a smart beehive frame that could tell commercial beekeepers which of their thousands of hives were distressed, allowing beekeepers to focus their energy on the hives most in need of help. But after Combplex's participation in the National Science Foundation's I-Corps program, which allowed Nate to log 8,000 miles traveling across the country to interview beekeepers, the priority became clear: remote monitoring wouldn't be useful until Varroa mites were taken out of the picture. If Combplex couldn't address the mites, they had no product.

Hailey and Nate wanted to move away from current systemic mite treatments, usually a vaporized acid or patties that slow-release a noxious chemical that kills mites sooner than it kills the bees. Hailey says those treatments are "like chemotherapy for bees; they can cause serious damage to the colony if they're done at the wrong time, and you can't use a lot of the chemicals while bees are producing honey, even though that's when mites are active."

Make no mistake: this is big business. Killing mites is *the* question in the beekeeping world. Big corporations and big science want to solve the mite problem, too. Unintimidated, undeterred, and approaching the problem with Hailey's knowledge of bee behavior and a creative bent, Combplex invented a way to kill mites. "Nate is a computer scientist who is really into creative thinking, and I'm a bee scientist who picked up the value of creativity at Putney. We started to think, 'Maybe there's an approach these big companies haven't thought of that we can use to treat Varroa mites."

It was Nate's idea to hit the mites with a laser, a technology the company has now patented. "We thought we'd have to kill the bee as well, but because of the anatomical structure of a mite—they're like water balloons—we tried a laser. We pinned the bees down, fired the laser, and the mites exploded. And we thought, 'OK, this is a thing."

Combplex knew bee behavior is very predictable. Varroa mites prefer to feed on bees of a certain age (nurse bees), and these nurse bees reliably move through gaps between frames full of developing bees. Combplex can illuminate the mites when they pass through one of these gaps, allowing them to identify bees that are carrying a Varroa mite. Any detected parasite is zapped with a laser, which does not hurt the bee. Hailey clarifies, "It's sort of like bad laser hair removal." Bees don't love it, but they're OK afterward. "They blow up like a water balloon!" she exclaims. Hailey emphasises the verbs like she's describing an action movie—The mites *explode*! They're *blasted* with a laser!

But blasting one bee at a time? Is that enough? Yes, says Hailey: "If you can save one queen bee, you can save a whole colony of bees."

To clarify: the product is fully automated and uses basic image recognition to only blast bees that have a parasite. The laser is stationary and trained at one specific angle. Combplex can do this because the mites prefer to feed in one place on the bee, and ride around in two or three other safe places on the bee where the bee can't reach the mites. It was important to design a product that was "drop and go," as it meant the beekeepers didn't need to do anything extra to install Combplex's smart frame, and could place it in a colony like a regular bee frame. Hailey notes, "I spent a lot of time on the farm at Putney, and I learned (and Nate learned from interviewing US commercial beekeepers) that all farmers agree that the last thing they want is one more chore to do. You have to make it easy."

**VARROA MITES** 

arrived in the US in late 1980s.

resistance to the last chemical

pesticide effective against them.

Around 2004, the mites developed

And in 2006, the US started seeing massive die-off in honeybee colonies.

# **BIG DATA + A HEALTHIER FUTURE**

Ultimately, Combplex hopes to use its technology to reduce pesticide application rates in pollinator habitats. "We want to leverage agricultural sustainability through the commercial marketplace," says Hailey. "Our current agricultural landscapes can't support native pollinators, so we had to resort to transporting 70-75% of all US honeybees on the back of semi trucks, going farm to farm to pollinate crops. The scale is unbelievable," says Hailey. For example, Nate met a farmer who moves 50,000 boxes of bees across the US. If 450 boxes of bees fit on a single semi truck, you can imagine the size of his bee army as it rolls across our highways. You can make a lot of money

20 PUTNEY POST

# "WE PINNED THE BEES DOWN, FIRED THE LASER, AND THE MITES EXPLODED. AND WE THOUGHT, 'OK, THIS IS A THING.'"

doing this. For almonds, each hive costs a farmer around \$200, and you need 2–3 hives per acre.

The bees spend two weeks at a farm and then move on, going from monoculture to monoculture, which impacts honeybees' diet. Honeybees are generalists, which means they thrive with food diversity, but they don't have it when they spend two weeks at an almond farm, then move on to two weeks with alfalfa, or sunflowers, or apples.

In addition to lack of variety, food competition between bees is also intense. Moving bees into an area without additional forage leads to stiff competition for the small amounts of nectar and pollen to be had. This can help a farmer maximize yields, but can also end up hurting colonies of bees who usually need to be fed sugar syrup and pollen substitute by their beekeepers.

Combplex wants to open up the marketplace and to leverage the commercial bee market as a way to increase a more stable and sustainable agricultural environment. Pollinator diversity is currently very low. "If farmers had hedgerows—if they let flowering weeds grow between rows or in fallow fields—it would help increase pollinator diversity, the health of bee colonies, and the farmers' yields. But today there's no market-driven financial incentive for farmers to have these pollinator-friendly practices," Hailey laments.

Combplex hopes that by tracking the health of colonies, the compny can collect data about how bee health changes in a farm with a variety of flowers versus in a monoculture. "It's a huge difference for bees, but we have to introduce it to the market and have a financial incentive for farmers to let flowers grow, which ultimately increases their yield in the long run because you have all of these native pollinators helping." People in the food security system are concerned about this. Says Hailey, "We need a higher level of pollinator diversity in our food system, and more resilience. We're looking at the reality of climate change and unstable weather. A more diverse agricultural ecosystem can better withstand drought, intense rains, and so forth. How can we take our agricultural system and move in that direction while still producing massive amounts of food? That's what we're looking at."

A recent grant from the New York Farm Viability Institute secured Combplex's funding for placing laser devices in 200 colonies across New York State, which will serve as Combplex's scientific validation study, in partnership with Cornell's Bee Tech Team. It's a labor-intensive, exhausting path to bring a product to market, and next year Combplex expects to be selling smart frames and rapidly growing the company.

### **ROOTS + LESSONS**

Hailing from the far reaches of Nome, Alaska—a biologist's paradise full of muskox, grizzly bears, and arctic foxes— Hailey came south to attend Putney. But it was a birding trip to Nicaragua with Cathy Abbott and Mick Baisley at Putney that first ignited her love of insects. "We were in the

> tropics. I was supposed to be looking at birds, but I was much more excited about crazy-looking beetles. I looked under every leaf. There were these little aliens everywhere. Since then I've been fascinated by insects and trying to figure out why they're so successful at what they do." After

Putney, she meandered a bit, eventually graduating from Wellesley, and then onto the PhD program at Cornell.

Hailey says that growing up in Alaska taught her an appreciation for rural problems, and working on a farm at Putney and then in agricultural jobs after graduation also made it easier to relate to people who are very different from her colleagues at Cornell. "Being able to go from bee rancher meetings in the Plains and then to come back to the ivory tower and say, 'What kind of tech can help them?' is a real asset. We need more communication between those two communities. In order to have effective communication, you have to have a deep understanding of both worlds."

Hailey wisely observes that "We need to break down prestigious, 'educated' vocabulary and get the academics and the ranchers in the room together to come up with innovative solutions." She and Nate have leaned on their

rural roots as both balm and bearing during graduate school's challenges. "It's helpful to be able to go talk to folks who have nothing to do with the university. We can talk about real problems affecting real people and how we can solve them. Nate is from rural Pennsylvania; I'm from Alaska. We can hop into that way of speaking and leave the university behind. That's something that's allowed our company to be successful."

Their experience growing up in rural areas and having family members who are farmers from Appalachia and the Midwest makes it easier for them to see connections than other companies working in bee health science. Hailey sees the importance of such cross-cultural dialog—"It's a huge problem at Cornell that people aren't addressing—the lines created by regional and socioeconomic diversity. Sometimes those barriers are a lot steeper and higher than we realize."

Hailey talks with deep love and great enthusiasm about bees: she delights in the differences between honeybees and bumblebees, explains which bees are generalists or specialists, marvels at bees' strict adherence to routine and how they manipulate and adapt to foraging, describes their metabolic homeostasis, and much, much more. Sometimes people, like bees, don't take a direct route to arrive at a destination. And sometimes, when they finally do arrive, their clarity of purpose tells us, quite plainly, that they've landed in the right place, and are doing exactly the work they were meant to do.

# 

# LETTER FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

One of Putney's great blessings is that our founder's basic ideas about education and about right and wrong are as meaningful and useful today as they were in 1935. While many independent schools have had to ignore, explain away, or outright repudiate their own histories and founding intentions, Mrs. Hinton's clarity of purpose and deep underlying optimism have served the school well for 85 years.

What we call the "Fundamental Beliefs" come from a letter Mrs.

Hinton wrote to alumni in 1954, outlining what she believed to be the school's highest purposes and aspirations. Some leaders at Putney have actively used these words and some have not; nonetheless it seems that all generations here have tried to adhere to their intentions.

Last school year we decided to make some modest amendments to the document—not something to be done lightly. We wished to make the language less gendered, and to add a statement about environmental work. Land use was a central piece of the early Putney, and environmental sustainability has become a core belief and identifier for us. In recent

years the sustainability squad has provided powerful student leadership, the trustees have moved the endowment to an ESG investment firm, and we have written a campus master plan outlining our path to a net-zero energy campus.

The students worked hard on getting the meaning and the wording right, and the board spent hours on it as well. Wordsmithing as a collective activity is not efficient, but it does clarify intentions and deepen commitment. In the end we came out with something that clearly reflects Mrs. Hinton's thinking and style, and yet does not feel archaic. The new version got its first live reading at this year's Convocation.

Here is the new document for your perusal, as well as its 1954 publication in the *Putney Post*.

All the best to all of you, EMILY JONES Head of School Wordsmithing as a collective activity is not efficient, but it does clarify intentions and deepen commitment.



We reached out to **Harriet Stupp Rogers '49**, who was our alumni director from 1999-2007 and can be counted on to know everything, to ask her about the origins of this document, and she pointed us to the *Post* article you see on the following page.



# PUTNEY POST

PUBLISHED OCCASIONALLY BY PUTNEY SCHOOL

PUTNEY, VERMONT

Alumni Supplement

## MAY, 1954

# TO THE ALUMNI

I hope that not any one of you alumni have resented the Annual Giving program. In a way, I think you well might, as everywhere one turns, one faces appeals for funds. Give to the Red Cross, to Polio, to Cancer, to CARE, to the Share Croppers, World Students' Service, Children of Palestine, to Save the Redwoods, to Wild Life Conservation; and finally, to education: your college, your secondary school, even your elementary school.

I don't know how you evaluate these appeals, but I should think you would not feel it in your heart to give to Putney unless you thought its education very good indeed, and, in many ways, unique; unless you wanted it to continue to develop with even more wisdom, spirit, and drive; and unless you considered it a very special growing-up place for many more youngsters, your own children and others.

When I started Putney I chose to work in the independent school field knowing that there was much less red tape to cut through there than in the public school area, that one could realize one's objectives faster and then see that what turned out well was made available for secondary education in general.

It also seemed to me important, in this peculiarly materialistic and mechanistic age, to strive for deep-thinking, broadvisioned graduates. In our rural boarding school environment, with the use we make of the farm, the woods and the whole countryside, with the freedom of thought and investigation that we maintain, with the practical idealism of what the world might be like, I felt that we had something distinctly worthwhile to offer and to back; that so situated and so motivated, we could make a very definite contribution to education.

## Annual Giving Report

The initial response to Annual Giving has been gratifying. About ten percent of the alumni have responded so far, with a total of \$625, and contributions are coming in every day. There are some 650 alumni now, and if the majority give, the accumulated sum will be substantial. As Annual Giving becomes an ingrained habit, and as the number of alumni increases, it should be possible for the alumni body to contribute at least one-third of our \$15,000 goal! We can dream, can't we?

Tom Wendel

May I be more specific and refresh your memories in regard to some of our very fundamental beliefs?

 To work not for marks, badges, honors, but to discover truth and to grow in knowledge of the universe and in the understanding of men, to treasure the hard stretching of oneself, to render service.

2. To learn to appreciate and participate in the creative arts where man gives expression to his struggle for communication of his inner life and for beauty, and to grant these arts great prestige.

 To believe in manual labor, be glad to do one's share of it and proud of the skills learned in the doing.

4. To play just as wholeheartedly as one works, but watching out a bit for the competitive angle, remembering that play is for recreation and an increased joy in living.

To want to lend a hand to the community at large, not to live in an "ivory tower."

6. To combat prejudices caused by differences in economic, political, racial, and religious backgrounds; to strive for a world outlook, putting oneself in others' places, no matter how far away or how remote.

 To have old and young work together in a true comradeship relation, stressing the community and its need for the cooperation of all.

8. To wish to live adventurously though not recklessly, willing to take risks, if need be, for moral growth, so that one definitely progresses along the long slow road toward achieving a civilization worthy of the name.

Carmelita Hinton

# Alumni News

The Executive Committee felt that the new policy of the Post, that of including alumni notes in each issue, is working out well. There will be three issues of the Post each year, in September, winter, and May. Class secretaries will collect and send items into the Post for each issue, trying to cover everybody at least once a year.

Some of the classes in this issue are scantily covered, as the secretaries have only recently been appointed, or are still to be settled.

# Graduation

Graduation takes place on Friday evening, June 11. Leta Cromwell is to be the speaker. Mrs. Cromwell taught English at Putney from 1943 to 1947, and since then has spent most of her time abroad, first with the American Friends Service Committee and then teaching in Jerusalem.

The Spring Festival at the Lower Farm is on Thursday, the 10th, the play to be *The Madwoman of Chaillot*, preceded by music and the buffet supper as usual. The music for both events is yet to be decided, but the orchestra, chamber music and madrigal groups are now working on choruses from Handel's *Solomon*, Brahms' Liebeslieder, an early Mozart Mass in F major, the choral setting of the 100th Psalm by Vaughan Williams, the Mozart 40th Symphony, and instrumental music by Handel.

Mrs. Hinton's tea is on graduation afternoon, and the square dance ends the festivities that evening.

## Alumni Meeting Notice

There will be an informal alumni coffee at the Alumni House on Friday, graduation morning, at eleven. On Saturday morning, the 12th, the Executive Committee is having an open meeting at the Alumni House at eleven, and any alumni are welcome to sit in on the discussions.

### The Alumni House

Since last September there have been approximately 182 overnight guests at the Alumni House, a good record for the first year.

The Alumni House work job crew, under the supervision of Ralph and Thelma Becherer, has assembled and stained nine double deckers. The girls' dorm and part of the living room have been pine-panelled. The crew has also put in a culvert and built a retaining wall to help drain off excess rain water, and is now planting trees and shrubbery to the side and in front of the house.

Equipment is coming in slowly but surely. We have a sink, still to be installed, and Jim Crowell has donated an ice-box. We still need a stove and cooking utensils. Effie Davenport reported that she is on the track of several pieces of furniture.

The Alumni House is becoming an integral part of school life too. There have been Relief (now called "Service") Committee and snow parties there. And finally, the Experiment has used it now and then. The house is beginning to prove its worth.

# The Putney School Fundamental Beliefs

**TO WORK** not for marks, badges, or honors, but to discover truth and to grow in human understanding and knowledge of the universe, to treasure the hard stretching of oneself, to render service.

**TO LEARN** to appreciate and participate in the creative arts, where we give expression to our struggle for communication of our inner lives and for beauty, and to grant these arts great prestige.

**TO BELIEVE** in manual labor, be glad to do one's share of it and proud of the skills learned in the doing.

**To PLAY** just as wholeheartedly as one works, but watching out a bit for the competitive angle, remembering that play is for recreation and an increased joy in living.

TO WANT to lend a hand to the community at large, not to live in an "ivory tower."

**TO COMBAT** prejudice and injustice wherever it appears; to strive for a world outlook, putting oneself in others' places, no matter how far away or how remote.

**TO HAVE** old and young work together in a true comradeship relation, stressing the community and its need for the cooperation of all.

**TO STEWARD AND PROTECT** the land, to seek ways to live on the earth that are healthy for all beings, and to shape our community as a model of sustainable living.

**To WISH** to live adventurously though not recklessly, willing to take risks, if need be, for moral growth, so that one definitely progresses along the long slow road toward achieving a civilization worthy of the name.



# **Putney Joins** Catamount Library Network

In the first two months alone, Putney sent over 150 books to other libraries, and we're excited to continue sharing our diverse collection with the rest of the state, as well as allowing the Putney School community to borrow from other Vermont libraries more easily. Putney has among the strongest collections of African American history and culture, LGBTQ+, fiber arts, and environmental studies and sustainability books in the state of Vermont. Putney is the first secondary school to join this consortium.

# KDU RECIPE TREAT YOURSELF

This issue was in production in late summer, and will land in your hands in late November. As we on the hill looked ahead to those dark, cold days, we thought of warm blankets, wool socks, wood stoves, and the ways the KDU shores us up against the cold. We wanted to share two of our favorite recipes with you, from Alison Dougan (our baker) for your own enjoyment. Bon appétit!

# **KDU MAPLE SCONES** Makes 8

# 2 cups flour

1 tablespoon baking powder ½ teaspoon baking soda 1 teaspoon salt <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> cup sugar 1 stick cold unsalted butter 3/4 cup buttermilk Maple syrup to taste



ILLUSTRATION BY HÁ HUÝNH '17

- Preheat oven to 400 degrees
- Line baking tray with parchment paper In a large bowl, combine flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Cut in butter. Mix the buttermilk into flour mixture until moistened.
- Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface, and knead briefly. Roll dough out into a 1/2 inch thick round. Cut into 8 wedges, and place on the prepared baking sheet.
- Bake 15 minutes in the preheated oven, or until golden brown. Brush the warm scones liberally with maple syrup and wait five minutes for the syrup to absorb before serving.

# **KDU CHAI**

1 tsp. fennel seeds 8 pods green cardamom 6 whole cloves 1 stick cinnamon, halved 4 cups boiling water 6 black tea bags 1 (1") piece ginger, peeled and crushed (optional) 2 cups milk (whole, skim, soy, almond, etc.) 1/2-3/4 cup brown sugar (to taste)

 Lightly toast the spices in a dry sauté pan. Combine with the boiling water and tea bags, steep 6-8 minutes, to taste.

 Add remaining ingredients and heat to a simmer. Turn the heat off and steep until the flavor is fully developed. Strain spices and reheat to serving temperature. [editor's tip: add a bit of cream for a perfectly comforting cup of rainy day happiness]

# By the Numbers

**CLASS OF 2023** 



12 countries

REPRESENTED: Botswana, Indonesia, Croatia, Germany, Ethiopia, Mexico, China, South Korea, Guatemala, Vietnam, Singapore, United States FARTHEST HOMETOWN: Ho Chi Minh City, VIETNAM

NEW STUDENTS HAVE PUTNEY FAMILY TIES

US STATES REPRESENTED: New Hampshire, New York, Vermont, California, Massachusetts, Colorado, Connecticut, Maine, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Oklahoma, Alaska

# **NEW COURSEWORK ON CAMPUS**

## FINANCIAL LITERACY

Four years ago, math teacher Mike Keim created "Tax Day." Because of its popularity and practicality, the Putney curriculum has expanded to include a more general financial literacy curriculum, including taxation, saving, and investing. "I consider money one of the big taboos in our culture," said Keim. "But normalizing conversations about it is a way to help students make conscious choices about the role money will play in their lives."

## FACING WHITENESS

An ongoing group project that offers white students a chance to face and reflect on their racial identity development. Led by white teachers for white students, it offers students who have not lived in richly diverse settings a chance to understand the implications of their whiteness. "Until we work with the white people and help them appreciate what they don't understand and don't know, we can't move diversity work forward."-Kate Knopp, Facing Whiteness cocreator and dean of faculty.

## MASCULINITY

An annual "mini-class" open to male and male-identified students, this group reads and discusses *The Will to Change: Men, Masculinity, and Love* by author bell hooks as its primary text. Members of the group also meditate, journal, and share their understanding of stereotypes that limit their identities.



The donation and planting of an elm tree in honor of their 50th reunion was truly a team effort from the class of '69.

# ALUMNI CONNECTIONS

# **ALUMNI BOOKS**



# Life Isn't Everything: Mike Nichols, As Remembered by 150 of His Closest Friends Ash Carter '02 & Sam Kashner

Henry Holt and Co., 2019 The work of Mike Nichols pervades American cultural consciousness—from The Graduate and Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? to Angels in America, The Birdcage, Working Girl, and Primary Colors, as well as hit plays including Barefoot in the Park and The Odd Couple. Over a career that spanned half a century, Mike Nichols changed Hollywood, Broadway, and comedy forever. Most fans, however, know very little of the person behind it all. Since he never wrote his memoirs, and seldom appeared on television, they have very little sense of his searching intellect or his devastating wit. They



don't know that Nichols, the great American director, was born Mikail Igor Peschkowsky, in Berlin, and came to this country, speaking no English, to escape the Nazis. They don't know that Nichols was at one time a solitary psychology student, or that a childhood illness caused permanent, life-altering side effects. They don't know that he withdrew into a debilitating depression before he "finally got it right," in his words, by marrying Diane Sawyer. Here, for the first time. Ash Carter and Sam Kashner offer an intimate look behind the scenes of Nichols's life, as told by the stars, moguls, playwrights, producers, comics, and crewmembers who stayed loyal to Nichols for years. Life Isn't Everything is a mosaic portrait of a brilliant and original director known for his uncommon charm,

wit, vitality, and genius for friendship. This volume is also a snapshot of what it meant to be living, loving, and making art in the 20th century.

# More Than Meets the Eye: What Blindness Brings to Art

Georgina Kleege '74 Oxford University Press, 2018 In the quarter century following the enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act, art museums, along with other public institutions, were tasked with making their facilities and collections more accessible to people with disabilities. Although blind and other disabled people have become marginally more visible in recent years, the vast majority of blind Americans remain undereducated and unemployed. In More Than Meets the Eye, Georgina Kleege shows how the scrutiny of one cultural issue-access to arts institutions-in relation to one subset of the disabled population-blind people-can lead us to larger and more general implications. Kleege examines representations of blindness, arguing that traditional theories of blindness often fail to take into account the presence of other senses, or the ability of

blind people to draw analogies from non-visual experience to develop concepts about visual phenomena. The book also describes Denis Diderot's remarkable range of techniques to describe art works for readers who were not able to view them. Diderot's writing not only provided a model for describing art, Kleege says, but proof that the experience of art is inextricably tied to language and thus not entirely dependent on sight. By intertwining her personal experience with scientific study and historical literary analysis. Kleege challenges traditional conceptions of blindness and overturns the assumption that the ideal art viewer must have perfect vision. More Than Meets the Eve seeks to establish a dialogue between blind people and the philosophers, scientists, and educators that study blindness, in order to create new aesthetic possibilities and a more genuinely inclusive society.

# 

Have you written a book? Let us know by contacting *alumni@putneyschool.org.* 





We enjoyed a lovely reunion weekend in June with meaningful connections, fresh air, and the usual Putney adventures and antics. Our thanks to the alumni who rallied their classmates, brought their old photos to share, sang with full-throated joy, and made it a truly special weekend. Mark your calendars for reunion 2020, June 12–14, 2020! (50th reunion for class of 1970 will begin with dinner on June 11): Classes of 1950–51, 1960, 1964–66, 1970, 1979–81, 1989–91, 2014-16.

# **REUNION CLASSES**

Classes of 1949 & 1950 Phyllis Watt Ingersoll, Christie Poindexter Dennis, Harriet Stupp Rogers, Jerry Ingersoll, Nate Chaffin '52 / Class of 1955 Front Row: Penny Tyson Adams, Anne Baker White, Susy Colt Doolittle, Peng Mei Back row: Peter Castle '51, Wayne Richter '54 / Class of 1959 Suzy Knickerbocker Colt, Keila "Tibi" Fulton DePoorter, Tori Bryer, Lee Combrinck-Graham, Sandy Walcott Back row: Phil Mendershausen, Jerry Burnham, Peter Clark, Peter Hatch, Jon Rosenfeld / Class of 1969 Front row: Marni Hinton Rosner, Deb Burns, Bob Raynolds, Aubrey Reese, Eric Bergh Middler row: Bruce Tanner, Tim Fisher, Clare Miller Watsky, Abby Rubin Riddell, Judi Lowenburg Forman, Sonia Kelly Reese, Henry Isaacs, Rob Fruchtman with daughter, Kira Back row: John Mundy, Anne Beals, Lindy Corman, David Fichter, Lisa Chase, Rob Postel, Cathy Carlisle Tomlins, Stuart Michaels, Lucy Winner, John Emery, Yuka Narasaki / Classes of 1983-85 Jennfer Bomser Dryden, Deb Holway, John Labine, Kenny West, Clay Wilcox, Abby Jones, Susannah Frith, Matt Wormser, Anni Crofut, Kate Lawless / Class of 1995 Anna Heidenreich, Augusta Rodgers (Caitlin's daugther), Caitlin Baggott Davis, Jessica Taylor, Jesse Kurlancheek, Lucy He / Classes of 1999-2001 Front row: Jamie Duong, Elan Hersh, Jessamy Olson, Jonas Fricke, Kayle Sawyer, Deo Dustin Bhattarai, Alex Lester Back row: Ben Coven, Kate Crawford, Brayton Osgood, Sarah Treiber, Toby Wells, Chris Quinn, Suz Wheeler Baker, Vanessa Compton, Brittney Borjeson, Kuna Tavalin, Sam Heidenreich, Ethan Gray, Megan Keil Murray, Megan Campbell O'Toole







# IN MEMORIAM



Joan Hersey Carr Shimer'45 Joan was born the eldest of three children to Robert and Jean Hersey. She graduated from Mills College with a BA in dance, drama, and music. She lived in numerous places, including San Francisco, San Rafael, and Cupertino, CA; Putney and Hartford, VT; San Miguel de Allende, Mexico; New Haven and Middletown, CT; Cambridge, MA; New York, NY; and Randolph, NH. Her spiritual life was strongly guided by anthroposophy; she hosted a group exploring the works of Rudolph Steiner, and was a member of the Guilford (VT) Community Church. Joan lived her life with purpose and grace, and had numerous interests. She was a gardener, a harpist, recorder player, a member of the Hallowell singers, and was executive secretary of the Country Dance and Song Society, directing family week at Pinewoods dance and music camp. She enjoyed painting watercolors and attending writing classes to better record impressions of her life. She was the executive secretary of Waldorf Education's teacher training institute, originally headquartered at Adelphi University. She worked in personnel at

Digital Equipment, and under Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak at Apple Computer in the 1980s. She studied spatial dynamics, receiving a teaching degree at age 70, and taught both "Body Recall" classes to adults and movement games to preschoolers. With Valerie Baadh Garrett, Joan co-authored the book Games Children Sing and Play. She was a founding member of the Inner Fire community of Vermont. Joan was predeceased by her husband and love of her life, Jack Shimer. She is survived by her brothers, Robert Hersey '49 and Tim Hersey '52, her sons, Jesse and Jeffrey, two grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

# David Hoddeson'46

David Hoddeson died July 18, 2019, at the age of 90 in his home in Somerset, NJ. David graduated from Bard College in 1952 and began his career as a staff writer and editor at Forbes, and later Barron's. He went on to take an MA in English literature from NYU in 1963, and earned his PhD at Stony Brook University in 1975. In 1971 he began teaching at Hunter College (CUNY) as a director of writing programs, during open admissions. He was tenured at Rutgers University, Newark, where he taught for nearly 40 years. David trained at the National Psychological Association for Psychoanalysis, and in 2004 was licensed by the state of New York. He maintained a private psychoanalytic practice in New York City. He is survived by his wife, Hillary Murtha. Donations in David's name may be made to The Putney School or to the Bard College Fund.

# Holly Forbes Leon'47

Holly Forbes Leon, of Sudbury, MA, died at home on February 28, 2019, following a prolonged illness whose origin was attributed to a Lyme tick infection that occurred during Thanksgiving 2012. She was 89 years old. Born on May 21, 1929, her parents were J. Malcolm (Mac) Forbes and Ethel Cummings. Holly was born in Orlando, FL, where her father was teaching at Rollins College. She was the oldest of five children: Joan Koponen, J. Malcolm (Jock) Forbes, Beryl Eddy (deceased), and Charles (Charlie) Forbes. Holly grew up in Cambridge, MA, and graduated from the Shady Hill School in 1944, where she made friends that have continued to be close over all these years. At Putney, she met her future husband, Gonzalo S. Leon. After a couple of years at Radcliffe College in Cambridge, she transferred to Barnard College in New York and received a BA in 1951. Holly and Gon married in 1950 on Naushon Island. The couple lived in New York until 1953. She taught at the Brearley School until they moved to Glastonbury, CT, where her husband started his career as an engineer at Pratt & Whitney aircraft. At that time, Holly began having children, a total of five: Paula Leon Roberts '71 (deceased), Renata (Ren) Leon Davidson '72, married to Malcolm Davidson, Lydia Leon, Alexander (Alec) Leon, and Michael Leon. She had five grandchildren, Grey, Kate, Eleanor, Bennet, and Colin, and one great-grandchild, Alden. After her children grew up, she went to Boston College, where she



received a master's degree in social work, and for many years Holly worked as a clinical social worker in early intervention and with individual families. Throughout her life, Holly enjoyed travel with Gon, and they explored many parts of the world in the United States, Canada, Europe, Africa, and South America. Holly was a talented and prolific artist. She painted in watercolors and oils, and did ceramic pottery. She privately published a couple of small books of watercolors relating to her extended family. She enjoyed music, had lessons on and played the piano and flute, and for many years after moving to Sudbury, MA, enjoyed singing madrigals, a capella, as an alto, with her husband and a group of about a dozen special friends, every two or three weeks at each other's homes. (The last such gathering was on January 24). Besides her devoted husband of 68 years and her children, their spouses, grandchildren, and great-grandchild, Holly has many very dear friends, and a large extended family of Forbes, Cummings, and Leon cousins, all of whom loved her and grieve this sad loss.

# Jean Van de Water '49

Jeanne Norton Van de Water, 87, of Imperial Beach, CA, passed away on March 17, 2019. She was born July 17, 1931 in Lancaster, PA, to James and Marion Norton. She is survived by her three children, eight grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband of over 66 years, Dave '49, last October 2018, her parents, and her brother, Jim Norton. Jean earned a liberal arts degree from the University of Iowa in 1953. She moved with her husband to Germany where he was stationed while serving in the US Army. Upon returning, they lived in Omaha, NE, and eventually moved to Phoenix, AZ, with her husband's job relocation with Western Electric. As well as raising three children, she was involved with many volunteer activities over the years. Jean was an excellent seamstress and spent many hours making clothing, including cheerleading outfits for the local high school, as well as alterations on bridal dresses. She was involved with her husband in the Telephone Pioneers



of America. Another ongoing project was making hundreds of "Hug a Bears" that were distributed to various charities and fire departments. She loved knitting, and was often seen knitting hats for hospital newborns. After retiring, Jean moved with her husband to Imperial Beach, CA, where they lived for the past 30 years. She and her husband traveled the world but home was always their beloved Imperial Beach, where they continued their spirit of giving back to the community. After Dave's passing, she moved to Gilbert, AZ, to be closer to family.

# Paula Granger Atkeson'51

Paula Atkeson died on May 2, 2019. Born in 1934 in Washington, DC, Paula graduated from Smith College in 1955 with a degree in history. After Smith, her first employment was as a social worker for the New York City Welfare Department. In 1956, she married Timothy Breed Atkeson and moved to Washington, DC, in 1957. By 1963, she had given birth to five boys. While raising her sons, she went to school and received a master's in social work from Howard University in 1966. In 1967, she published Alternative Career Opportunities for the Neighborhood Worker, which was a precursor to her earning a PhD in social work in 1979 and becoming a practicing psychoanalyst with a focus on child therapy. Paula enjoyed a

full life fueled by a strong sense of purpose. In 1967, she moved the family to the Philippines where her husband, Tim, became the first general counsel of the newly formed Asian Development Bank. She worked in a hospital offering counseling to patients and therapy at home to a mix of Filipinos and expatriates in Manila. Paula was chairman of English language training for the women's club at the Asian Development Bank. Paula gave birth to three more children between 1969 and 1973. The family returned to Washington, DC, in 1969. Never one to obsess or find a challenge too daunting, Paula persevered in her pioneering effort to become a non-MD psychoanalyst while raising her eight children. During this time, she was a consultant, board member, lecturer, director, faculty member, and therapist. She published three more times in 1970, 1975 and 1977. Paula had a strong sense of adventure and enjoyed a good laugh. The door to the house was never locked, allowing all types of neighbors to stop by for a visit. Exchange students from China and South America added to the household of ten. The family traveled the national parks in a Winnebago. International travel included China, India, Africa, Mexico, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. In 1982, when Mt. Kilimanjaro opened for tourism, she led much of the family to the crater rim. Over the past 35 years, her "super bowl" was the annual week-long family reunion in Centerville, MA. Paula was guided by family, persistence, courage, compassion, strength, and love. She always said "do what matters." To her teenage children, it was not entirely clear what she meant. Looking back on her life, there is no doubt what she meant.

# Peter Pratt '51

Peter Wenzel Pratt died peacefully at his home in Bridgewater, CT, on February 2, 2019. Peter was 85 years young. He was preceded in death by his brother, Roger '56, and sister, Vera '52. Peter was born August 14, 1933, eldest son of Eliot Pratt and Trude Lash. He graduated from Harvard University in 1955 and married Elaine Egee in 1956. In 1961, Peter graduated from Hanuman Medical School and completed his internship at Mt. Sinai Hospital, where he specialized in hematology, focusing on the treatment of childhood leukemia. Peter had a keen interest in emergency medicine, which ultimately led him to the director's position at Danbury Hospital emergency room. In 1982, he founded Primary Care, a facility that focused on immediate and affordable care-a first of its kind in the state of CT. No grass grew under Peter's feet. By all accounts, he was a "man of action." Husband, physician and father of three children before the young age of 29, Peter's interests were many and varied-football player, ski jumper, angler, car racer, builder, educator, inventor, conservationist, sailor, businessperson, farmer, and physician. Peter is survived by his wife, Elaine Pratt, his three children, Chris, Ann, and Tim, his brother, Jonathan Lash '63, and his grandson.

# Peter Lowell'57

Francis C. (Peter) Lowell Jr. of Falmouth, MA, died at home on August 4, 2019, at the age of 80, six months after being diagnosed with metastatic brain cancer. He was the husband of Victoria Lowell. They had been married for 54 years. He was born in Boston and grew up in Concord, spending summers in Cotuit. Pete had a lifelong curiosity about how things work and took pleasure in explaining these workings to others. In his college years he built and registered a steam motorcycle. He graduated from Harvard College and earned an electrical engineering degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Summer jobs at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution gave him an interest in underwater acoustics. In 1966, he and his wife moved to Falmouth so he could work at Ocean Research Equipment. During his long tenure at ORE, the product line expanded from transponders, beacons, releases, and sub-bottom profilers to systems for navigating underwater vehicles and travel-time acoustic flow meters. These meters have been installed in hydro electric dams, aqueducts, and sewers around the country and the world. Although he and his business partner sold the company in 1997,

Pete stayed on as a consultant, retiring gradually. He was at home on a bicycle, often commuting to work and enjoying many longer bicycle adventures with his wife and friends. Two such trips were a transcontinental, 3,800-mile bicycle trip from the Columbia River in Oregon to Cape Cod during ten weeks in the summer of 2000, and a month-long trip in the spring of 2002 when the Lowells, accompanied by six companions, bicycled 1,400 miles from Natchez, MS, to Nashville, TN, continuing over the Blue Ridge Mountains to Williamsburg, VA, and ending up in Yorktown, VA, the site of the battle that marked the climax to the Revolutionary War. Both treks were the topic of talks accompanied by slides and presented by the couple in the "Conversation" series of Woods Hole Historical Museum. Pete dedicated half of his basement to an extensive model railroad layout that he designed and built based on the Columbia River Gorge and he met with fellow modelers for weekly operating sessions. Working with a boat builder, he created a cruising lobster boat that would accommodate him and his tall family. When his children gave him a 3-D printer for his 75th birthday, he enthusiastically learned to master the new technology. In addition to his wife, he leaves a daughter and son, his brother, and two granddaughters.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** People for whom we don't have an obituary or whose notice of death we received as the issue was in production are listed below.

Elizabeth Haines Goldwater '39 Adam Nott '46 Emily Platt Hilburn '49 Stanley Peele '50 Carl Newlin '56 Carolee Schneemann '52 Kathryn Tomlins '72 Milton Allen, Former Trustee

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Joan Williams Farr '49 Sarah Kerlin Gray Gund '60 Peter Pereira '52 Bici Binger Pettit-Barron '48 P'77, '79, G'07 Please send address corrections and new phone numbers to: Alumni Office The Putney School 418 Houghton Brook Rd. Putney, Vermont 05346 802-387-6213 alumni@putneyschool.org





Sunrise from the observatory: the astronomy class spends the night up here when viewing conditions are optimal.

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classes of 1950

1951

1960

1964



Winter cabin in Two Rivers, Alaska. PHOTO BY EMILY ROSENBLATT '10