



# NEWSLETTER

Volume III, No. I October 2006

## Now Playing – *Intellect, Energy, Heart*

Brooklyn Friends School, in conjunction with Current Rutledge documentary filmmakers of Seattle, has produced an 11-minute video about its educational program and extended family of students, teachers, parents and alumni. *Intellect, Energy, Heart* was filmed during the course of a school year and captures the strengths of the institution, the close relationships between students and teachers, and the sense of ownership that students, parents, teachers, and alumni feel towards their school.

Creating a school video for BFS was the brainchild of Admissions Director Jennifer Knies, who began lobbying for the project almost three years ago. "The best way to get to know Brooklyn Friends School is on a visit. Over the years, many families have told me how it feels to walk through our doors and immediately sense the energy and vibrancy of our school," explained Jennifer. "This sense of 'who we are' is often quite difficult to articulate completely. It occurred to me that the next best thing to

being here was seeing the school in action on video or DVD."

Jennifer added that there were several practical reasons for the Admissions Office to opt for the DVD format in place of the traditional independent school viewbook. "The DVD is easy to update, easy to mail, and easy to carry to school fairs," she said. "It took a couple of years to complete, but now we have a wonderful window into Brooklyn Friends."

Teacher Andy Cohen, parents Conway Boyce, Lisa Sack and Lizbeth Mitty, and alums Dominic Hackley '04, Emma Skove-Epes '04, Kira O'Brien '05, and Anne Broomfield '84 are interviewed on the video. The upper school jazz band, middle school orchestra, a second grade music class and upper school pianist Scott Gentile '07 provide background music. The DVD package also includes a video greeting that Nelson Mandela recorded for the Brooklyn Friends School community last fall.



TO REQUEST A COPY, PLEASE CALL THE COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE, 718-852-1029 X 209, OR E-MAIL [INFO@BROOKLYNFRIENDS.ORG](mailto:INFO@BROOKLYNFRIENDS.ORG).



At the ribbon-cutting for the library and science labs, from left, architects Michael Pribyl and Paul Segal '62, school committee member Fern Finkel Gentile, Head of School Michael Nill, librarians Larry Williams and Kathy Hartzler, science chair Janet Villas and librarian Angie Ungaro

## Pearl Street's "Nip and Tuck" IT'S BACK TO SCHOOL WITH NEW LIBRARY, SCIENCE LABS AND ROOFTOP PLAYGROUND

by Jeffrey Stanley

Six-hundred twenty-four students began the 2006-07 academic year with an exciting array of academic, arts, athletics, and service programs in place at BFS. They also returned to a school building that underwent \$2 million in renovations, funded by the *Building the Community* capital campaign. The major projects were the roof and rooftop playground, the biology, chemistry, and earth science laboratories, and the third floor library media center.

Onsite supervision of the projects was the responsibility of Director of Finance Mike Pellechio. Mike's title doesn't begin to describe his job at BFS. "It's not just about finance and benefits and insurance," explained Mike. "I'm also responsible for the buildings, their maintenance, and any construction projects. The renovations were a team effort with Head of School Michael Nill, Vivek Desai of RC Dolner Construction, the architectural firm of Paul Segal and Associates, and the Building Committee."

Contractors continued putting final touches on their work during the first weeks of school as faculty and staff moved into the new spaces. Librarian Larry Williams was beaming when he returned to school in September. "I'm very happy with the renovations," he said. "We now have an expanded facility, a seminar room for library classes, and an office for the librarians."

The time had also come for the fourth floor science labs to go the way of the dinosaur. "Teaching methods have changed, and the labs weren't optimally meeting the needs of the faculty or the curriculum," said Mike. The old lab benches have been replaced with hexagonal, moveable tables. Lecture chairs with fold-out writing desks for taking notes have also been placed in the rooms. New gas lines were installed, along with new plumbing, new sinks and new cabinets to increase storage space. The flooring was also replaced with more durable tiles.

**CAPITAL CAMPAIGN COUNTDOWN: See page 4**

**\$2.25 MILLION RAISED \$550,000 TO GO!**

continued on page 3

## MESSAGE FROM HEAD OF SCHOOL MICHAEL NILL

Sooner or later, every Brooklyn Friends School family will feel the impact of the changing college admissions scene. It is dramatically different from what it was even five years ago, let alone when our BFS parents applied. This phenomenon has increasingly gained the attention of the media; just this August, for example, both *Time* and *Newsweek* ran major pieces on this topic.

A number of factors have brought this situation to the forefront in our society. The most obvious one is that in 1975, 50% of high school graduates went to college; today, it's 86%. In the fall of 2005, 16.7 million students enrolled, 1.2 million more than only 5 years before. Since the number of openings at historically prestigious schools has not increased, they generally now admit fewer than 10% of their applicants. Moreover, higher rejection rates lead to ever greater demand. The spillover effect is that many more colleges are considerably more selective than they once were. Yesterday's so called safety schools have become today's reaches.

### Negative Consequences

When the most selective colleges reject four out of five valedictorians and students with perfect SAT I or II scores, straight A averages, and impressive resumes, the reality of the situation is that rejection has less and less to do with lack of qualifications. Indeed, these colleges readily admit they are rejecting many applicants who would be strong students at their schools.

The unfortunate consequence of this trend is that the focus of high school can shift from preparation for college and life to being groomed to beat out all the other qualified students applying to these schools, including one's own classmates. Since selective colleges restrict the number of students they take from any particular school, applicants from larger high schools with strong student bodies and academic programs can be disadvantaged. In any case, there is no way to predict success.

What could be predicted is what has happened: sleep deprivation; increased stress and anxiety; health problems, both physical and emotional; test prep and tutoring mania; and considerable cheating. All of this

is well documented in a recent book by Alexandra Robbins: *The Over-achievers: The Secret Lives of Driven Kids*. While I believe it is vitally important that students fulfill their academic potential and achieve their personal best, it is very difficult to read this book without becoming distressed at just what some of these students go through to position themselves for acceptance by the most highly selective schools. Much of it, sadly, has nothing to do with the process of becoming an educated person.

### The Good News

Although the schools where acceptance rates are 10% will remain highly desirable for educational and status reasons, the squeeze at the top has resulted in an increasing number of first-tier colleges with strong student

*"The unfortunate consequence of this trend is that the focus of high school can shift from preparation for college and life to being groomed to beat out all the other qualified students applying to these schools, including one's own classmates."*

bodies, academic programs, and endowments. This is terrific news for the country, and should be great news for academically ambitious high school students provided they do not measure success exclusively in terms of gaining entrance into a school that rejects 9 out of 10 applicants. The growing strength of these schools has made them increasingly attractive to the best college professors, particularly those who are most interested in teaching.

Studies do not bear out the common belief that graduating from the traditionally prestigious school puts you in a better position to earn more money or be successful in life, however one defines success. Then, too, the best schools should be defined as those that promote the best instructional practices like cooperative learning, strong faculty-student relationships, active learning, frequent



assessment of and prompt feedback to students, and high expectations. These factors play little or no role in typical college-ranking systems.

### What about Brooklyn Friends?

We take pride in working closely with our students to help them determine what colleges represent the best matches for them. Typically, 85% of our seniors gain admission to their first and second choice school; and last year, one-third of them enrolled in colleges ranked in the top 3% for selectivity. Because of their sense of community, strong academics, high level of engagement, and ease with adult relationships, applicants from Quaker schools have a special appeal to colleges.

The new college admissions scene, however, does present extraordinary complications and challenges. To ensure that we provide the best possible guidance to each of our students now and in the future, the college office and the upper school administration are working closely this year with college placement consultants from Howard Green Associates. Particular areas of focus are student essays, interviewing skills, faculty letters of recommendation, our college profile, and stronger contacts with college admissions offices, including those of the most select schools. As BFS increasingly enrolls academically ambitious Upper School students and prepares to institute an IB Diploma Program, it is vitally important to us that every one of our students be well-positioned to gain admission to colleges where they will thrive. Equally important is to do this while maintaining educational integrity, joy in learning, and the physical and emotional well-being of our students.

*Michael*

## Ready to Face the World Public Speaking Course Now Required in Upper School

It's something of a paradox that an activity that is "most feared" by 75 percent of the population is probably one of the most important skills a student needs to navigate higher education and the working world. The Upper School is addressing both this fear and this need by offering a public speaking course. A long-anticipated goal of Head of School Michael Nill, the course is a requirement for all tenth grade students.

Taught by Upper School Dean Ric Anderson, the class offers practical experiences for students as they learn to understand the variety of ways to communicate. Students learn to deliver public speeches and practice various forms of verbal expression. Speaking publicly and understanding interpersonal and intrapersonal communications are important life skills for students to master. We want our students to be comfortable with public speaking – whether it's making an announcement at a school gathering, giving an admissions tour, or taking part in a college interview. Whatever the situation, students need to be prepared and to feel at ease.

Our tenth grade students say they are happy that the course is being offered, and many of the upperclassmen have asked about the course being extended to them.

– Roxanne Zazzaro  
Head of Upper School

*Don't miss it...*

*This year's middle and upper school fall production is the classic musical*

*Guys and Dolls*

**Friday, November 17**  
at 4 pm and 7 pm

**Saturday, November 18**  
at 3 pm and 7 pm

*Purchase your tickets in advance.  
Last year's productions were SOLD OUT.*



Conceptual physics teacher Joe Kremer (left) with students Omar Camara and Alexandra Fernandez during a lab on friction and energy.

## Freshman Physics? What A Concept!

by Jeffrey Stanley

He's grounded in logic and rationality but has big dreams for his own little piece of the world. "Although it seems idealistic, I hope that teaching conceptual physics will provide these young students of mine with the understanding that the natural world behaves according to rules, and that understanding these rules is worth their while." Fledgling science teacher Joe Kremer was talking about his new role in the upper school as a teacher of ninth grade conceptual physics. "I designed and taught the lab classes for the eleventh grade for three years and taught the advanced physics quantitative supplement for one year, but this is the first time I'm in charge of my own class."

Traditionally, high school students don't tackle physics until after they've conquered algebra and geometry. "This approach focuses on a student's ability to understand why things work the way they do in the natural world rather than their ability to solve math problems," explained Joe. Go into the physics lab at 55 Willoughby and you'll see hand-written posters of some of the questions students are exploring, like "Why do you bounce backwards after the subway stops?" and "Why aren't clouds pulled down by gravity like everything else?"

The conceptual physics class represents a significant change in the science curriculum and Joe is happy to be spearheading it. Schools that have adopted this approach typically save qualitative physics for the senior year

after students have been exposed to conceptual physics, algebra, chemistry and biology. At BFS the gap between ninth and twelfth grade physics will be filled by the new standard level physics class, part of the school's pending IB curriculum. The hope is that by twelfth grade students are ready to dive into the more complex scientific concepts on which our world hinges. "Teaching physics before the other sciences will assure that students understand fundamental concepts like force and energy before they apply these concepts in chemistry and biology," said Joe. "Presenting the topics in this order will also give the students a better understanding of how these sciences are connected to each other."

A graduate of Oberlin College with a double major in Physics and Russian, Joe wants his students to understand science because it relates directly to their responsibilities as citizens and to an awareness of their impact on the fate of the planet.

"Joe really gets involved in lab experiments with the students and it shows," said science and math teacher Gil Zalman. "He agreed with our concern that students should learn the laws underlying the concepts and not just memorize formulae. He relates well with the students and is able to get them to understand these concepts." Gil was one of the key faculty who strongly urged Joe not only to teach this new course but also to pursue a full time profession teaching science.

## NIP AND TUCK *continued from page 1*

Science Chair Janet Villas couldn't be happier about the changes to the labs. "The rooms are brighter and more versatile," she said. "Our students will not be locked into rows and will be able to work cooperatively in small groups."

As for the rooftop, the contractors went right down to the concrete base and put in a whole new roof. After flooding it with thousands of gallons of water to determine if there were any leaks (fortunately there weren't any), they installed a new playground surface, new play equipment, and new safety fencing around the perimeter.

The computer network also underwent a major upgrade, overseen by Director of Academic Technology Kerri Richardson. Wireless access is now available throughout the building. Teacher access to online news databases, educational videos and other digital media products for classroom use has been expanded, and the Upper School's Willoughby Street network is now linked to Pearl Street as part of a single network. Faculty and staff can also now listen to their voicemail messages through their school email accounts.

Smaller projects throughout the building were tackled this summer, including new flooring on the sixth floor, brighter lighting and new benches in the gym, and repainted lockers for the middle school.



Eighth graders Cyrus Hernstadt (l) and Evan Sweet (r) enjoying the cozy chairs and the resources in the renovated Library Media Center

## A Beautiful "Buzz" in the New Library

The newly renovated library is open from 8 am to 5 pm every day and has quickly become a favorite place for students and teachers. Each middle school grade has had an introductory visit to familiarize students with the new space, the additions to the collection, and – a big hit with everyone – the cozy arm chairs. Already, fifth graders have begun a project on Banned Book Week to celebrate their freedom to read what they want to read, and seventh graders are using the library to do research for a chemistry project in science.

Reading recess began at the end of September. Students spend 25 minutes in the library after lunch reading, looking through magazines, and working quietly on research. After school, middle school students are gravitating to the library as well. Some work quietly on homework, others look for books to read. The comfortable seating and quiet, calm atmosphere are very inviting.

Librarian Angie Ungaro has made a very positive start with the students. She has started to do "Five Book Talks in Five Minutes". This is a speedy tour through some exciting books to whet the appetites of our students. After the talk, the books fly off the shelves. Check out the library one day after school. You might find yourself sinking into one of the cozy chairs and reading a YA (young adult) novel. - Joan Rappaport, Head of Middle School

# COUNTDOWN FOR THE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN — BUILDING THE COMMUNITY

by Karen Edelman

Three major renovation projects of the capital campaign: the rooftop playground, library, and science labs have been completed. At the conclusion of the campaign, we will be in a position to renovate the meeting-house/theater, create a lower school exploratory lab, and undertake infrastructure improvements, including cooling and ventilation on the upper floors of Pearl Street.

## A \$50,000 Challenge Grant for the Meetinghouse/Theater

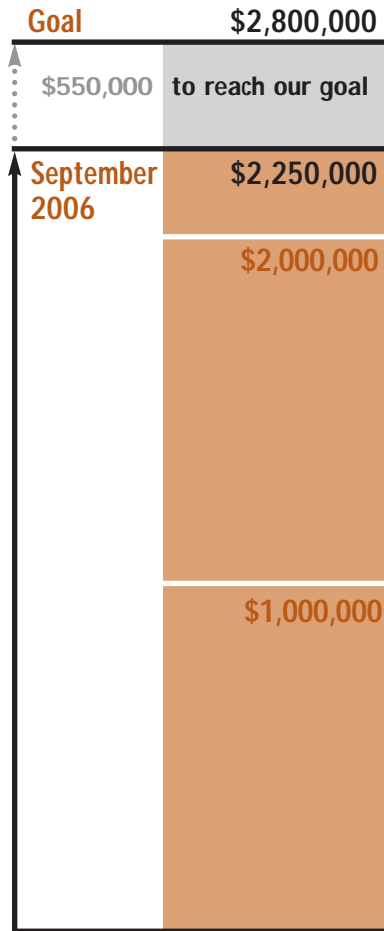
The Edward E. Ford Foundation has awarded the school a \$50,000, 2 to 1 matching grant for the renovation of the meetinghouse/ theater. Under the terms of this award, we must raise \$100,000 in new cash gifts for the capital campaign by July 31, 2007 in order to receive the grant. Since our community has been extremely generous so far towards our capital campaign, we have set out to meet this challenge with confidence.

## Lower School Challenge

In addition to their own generous gift to the campaign, a lower school family has presented a challenge to their fellow families in the lower school to move the campaign forward. If, by December 31, 2006, at least one family in each of the lower school grades (K-4) pledges a gift of at least \$10,000 over two years, this family will give an additional \$20,000 contribution to the capital campaign. The second grade has already met this challenge with one family pledging a gift of \$10,000 over two years. We look forward to meeting (and even surpassing) this goal.

## It's a Theme: Donors Thank and Honor Faculty Members

Alumna Mechele Plotkin Flaum '68 remembers her years at BFS with affection and gratitude. Just as it is today, a talented and caring faculty was the key to Mechele's successful Brooklyn Friends education.



Brooklyn Friends, Sharon served as PAT president for two years, then as part of the School Committee for nine years, and now, as alum parents, she and her husband Tom are co-chairs of the capital campaign. "Over the 23 years that our family was a part of the BFS community, we were always impressed by the dedication and support of the faculty as they provided our children with an excellent education and the values we share. To thank them for their tireless efforts, our family chose to name the Faculty Lounge at Pearl Street."

The teacher who had perhaps the greatest influence on her, in and out of class, was Martin Norregaard, who fostered the love of writing and learning that Mechele has called on throughout her life. In recognition of Mr. Norregaard's inspired teaching, Mechele has used her gift to the capital campaign to name the college guidance office in his honor. She hopes to encourage other students to take what they learned at Brooklyn Friends with them as they move on to college and beyond.

A wonderful gift arrived this spring from a family with two children in the Lower School. They, like many others at Brooklyn Friends, have been so happy with the education that their children have received at our school. This family is especially grateful for the start that their children received in the Preschool – a caring, nurturing environment that has placed them on the path to becoming life-long learners. While their children have moved up from the second floor of Pearl Street, the entire family wanted to thank the faculty and administration, and especially the Preschool, for the strong start that their children received.

The Kennedy Family has a long-time association with the school. Their three children attended

## Matching Gifts

Your charitable gift to Brooklyn Friends can be worth even more if your company provides a match. Matching gifts are offered by over 500 American corporations who match or sometimes even triple their employees' philanthropic gifts. Check with your employer to learn whether your company participates in this wonderful giving opportunity.

## Planned Gifts

Planned gifts are strategic charitable investments that can provide you with important tax benefits. Planned gifts greatly enhance the School's endowment, assure a strong financial future for Brooklyn Friends and give you the satisfaction of supporting a BFS education for generations to come.

*If you would like to know how a planned gift can help benefit both you and Brooklyn Friends, contact your financial advisor or the Brooklyn Friends School Development Office*



Top photo: Parent Susan Bridges tries out the new playground equipment on Ribboncutting Day. The playground was named for Susan's late husband, Charles Leeds, Jr., the father of ninth grader Charlie Leeds. Above, eighth grade students working in the new earth science lab.



## Thank you, Capital Campaign Donors!

Brooklyn Friends School is very grateful to the members of our community, listed below, who have already made a contribution or pledge to the Capital Campaign. *Thank you for your support.*

Jane Aboyoun  
and Marjorie Abagnalo  
Murray and Lucy Adams  
David and Nina Allen  
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and Lori Falco-Greenberg  
Peter Fante and Elisa Baldwin  
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Mechele Flaum '68 and Sander Flaum  
Jessica Fleischer-Black '86  
Rachel Foster Kodsi '85  
and Alain Kodsi  
Thomas Franco  
and Allison Sargent-Franco  
Anthony and Fern Gentile  
Erika Goldman '77  
Judith Greenberg, M.D. '64  
Robert Gumenick and Lizbeth Mitty  
Robert Gurney '36  
Harding Education  
and Charitable Foundation  
Sebastian Heath and Sarah Burnes  
Viola Henrius  
Vic Henschel and Judy Samuelson  
James Horton '46  
William and Sara Jane Horton  
John Howard '48  
Raymond Irizarry '70

Susan Radwin Isaacs '53  
Jay B. Itkowitz  
Lawrence Jacobs and Karen Danzig  
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Thomas Klitgaard and Kyle Staver  
Jill Kneerim '56  
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and Carmen Ejogo-Wright  
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Mitchell Zeller '75  
Peter Zorach '60

*\*listing of donors as of October 15, 2006*

# ALUM PROFILE

## Melorra Sochet '84

by Jeffrey Stanley

*"It was an opportunity to bounce off the 500 ideas of what you want to do with your life. You were surrounded by great people who would encourage you to explore all the possibilities."*

Melorra Sochet '84 was recalling what she loved best about her years at BFS. Today she is a busy civil rights lawyer for the city's youth. She gave a quick review of her professional work to date via telephone between meetings. "My career has had lots of meanderings but it's all related."

After graduating BFS Melorra went to Columbia University for a bachelor's degree. It was there that she had her first brush with the law. "I had been arrested at Columbia when I was involved in anti-apartheid demonstrations, and I was represented by William Kunstler one summer." Kunstler, the flamboyant and controversial civil rights lawyer, is perhaps most famous for having defended 1960s radicals Abbie Hoffman and the rest of the "Chicago Seven." He left an impression on her. "I decided I wanted to be a civil rights lawyer."

She went on to obtain a law degree from Northeastern University and then went to work in employment discrimination cases and representing labor unions in their suits against large employers. Ultimately though, she became disillusioned with the David and Goliath model of taking on individuals' cases against large organizations, even though she was winning cases. "The litigation itself was not always getting us the results we were hoping for, and it was really brutal on the client. And even when you had a success the underlying institutional issue would remain."

She switched gears and decided to work more on changing discriminatory policies in a broader sense rather than just representing individuals. "I went to the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights." There, she worked to change institutionalized discrimination in public schools; for example, trying to change policies that allowed some minority students to be automatically placed in special education classes simply because they were from economically depressed neighborhoods. "I worked there for several years and then went to work at a place called the Vera Institute of Justice."

That "place," as she humbly called it, is an internationally acclaimed civil rights organization founded in the early 1960s. Vera most recently made headlines this June when it released to the US Congress an in-depth report on violence and abuse in correctional facilities



*"The litigation itself was not always getting us the results we were hoping for, and it was really brutal on the client. And even when you had a success, the underlying institutional issue would remain."*

nationwide, calling attention to the mental and physical health care shortcomings in the treatment of prisoners. Melorra remained involved primarily with Vera's youth and education programs, focusing on kids stuck in the juvenile justice system. "Once they're arrested they drop out of school and never go back," she said. This pattern encourages youth to remain criminals as adults. She also worked on school safety issues, "figuring out how administrators can use nonpunitive measures and still make schools safer."

In 2002 Melorra was selected by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, a renowned nonprofit organization devoted to improving opportunities for disadvantaged youth, to become a Leadership Fellow. She was proud to be among the few individuals chosen every year to receive this honor and the training it provides to help committed professionals better serve children and families in their home communities.

Soon she was working in the New Jersey Office of the Child Advocate, an agency created by the governor to help improve the lives of at-risk children in that state. Melorra admitted that after a year, she could no longer handle the daily commute from New York City to Trenton

and sought work a little closer to her home turf.

In 2004 she was asked to run a commission created by the New York City Council to determine how state education money should be spent in the city's schools. She and the commission drafted plans, conducted interviews and held public hearings. "In the end we came up with a comprehensive plan for how to improve the New York City educational system."

Shortly afterwards, she took her present job as Director of Accountability, Assessment and Communications at Turnaround for Children, a nonprofit that brings mental health and support services to the city's children. According to the organization's website their "comprehensive approach removes barriers to learning, provides connections to caring adults, and breaks destructive cycles while giving children the tools and support they need to succeed." Melorra explained that their outreach isn't just to at-risk students, but to their teachers, administrators and parents. A major goal is to improve the overall conditions for learning in an urban child's life, not just buying textbooks and school supplies. Melorra's job is to respond to funders' requests and to make sure the program is of the highest quality possible with demonstrable results.

These are difficult societal tasks from which most people would walk away but Melorra has always embraced these challenges. She credits BFS with helping her understand that a difference can be made in one's community. "I am flooded by memories of Brooklyn Friends. They were the most formative years of my life, more than college or graduate school," she said. "I think that's in large part due to the powerful connections I created there." She said BFS taught her that she could do anything she wanted to do. "They looked at each kid's idiosyncracies, what made them special, and helped that to blossom."

Melorra lived on the Upper West Side of Manhattan but her parents loved BFS so much they let her commute every day. "The only time I didn't do that was during the subway strike, and then I stayed in Brooklyn for a week at [classmate] Jane Abramowitz's house." Today she has resettled on the Upper West Side and she recently married.

She remembers her first advisor, Stanley Brimberg in the Middle School, and how he helped her transition into BFS from a much smaller school. She loved English with Ron Patterson, and remembers in particular a mock trial in Rudy Jordan's class in which she got to play a lawyer. "Perhaps that's partly why I went into law."

The school's emphasis on public service also influenced her. "Even though you were an individual you were taught that you could make changes. You could create communities of change and be even more powerful but you could also create change all by yourself."

## ALUMNI/AE CLASS NOTES

### 1934

**Ann Waldenburg Steinacher** wrote in early summer, "I have wonderful memories of Friends at Schermerhorn Street and Quaker Meeting. I loved sports and was full of school spirit – do the old plaques still exist? I can still make it around a 3 par 9 hole course here. During World War II, I worked for the American Red Cross overseas and with the Veterans Administration. When Bob died, I moved to the hamlet of Southold and am happy in a small house in the village. I have one child, Susan, who lives in Nome, Alaska. She is a very fine artist and writer and works for the State to keep people educated on the handling of wildlife. If someone would visit on their way to Orient, I'd be thrilled."

After reading the last line, **Susan Price '86**, Alumni Director, took a drive with her husband Scott Cornwell and visited Ann in early September. It was a special pleasure to share that, yes, the athletic plaques are still displayed at BFS. Ann is an amazing woman and getting to spend an afternoon with her was an absolute delight. I look forward to visiting again. Ann sends her very best to her friends and classmates from BFS and Brooklyn Meeting. To get in touch with Ann, please contact the Alumni/ae Office.

### 1946

**Adina Gray Simonson** called the Alumni/ae Office and we had a wonderful chat. She is doing very well and sends her regards to her classmates and friends.

### 1952

**Rev. John G. Weber** writes, "Thanks to all for a memorable Homecoming!! Prowling through old School haunts and quiet time in the Meeting House were especially meaningful. I was pleased to hear from **Chuck Aquavella** and **Joanna Noble Fleming** and our homeroom teacher (Mr.) Joe Derse."

### 1956

**Marty Garrell** sends his best to his former classmates and reports that he is doing well. He is living in upstate New York and is a professor of physics at Adelphi University.

### 1961

**Lois Brenner** reports that she has finished physician assistant (P.A.) school and will be working part-time with a cardiologist in Manhattan. As a lawyer, she continues to work in divorce mediation. Her daughter, Stephanie, is a radiation oncologist at Dana Farber in Boston and teaches at Harvard Medical School. Lois and her husband, Bob, bought a house in Weston, CT for weekends to be near Bob's grandkids, in whose lives they are actively involved.



*Ann Waldenburg Steinacher '34 at her home on Long Island this September*

### 1962

From **Paul Segal**: "In addition to the honor of having our firm work on the enhancements to 375 Pearl Street, the year was special for me in having my first book published by W.W. Norton, *Professional Practice: A Guide to Turning Designs Into Buildings*. It's based on the course I've taught at Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation for the last 20 years."

### 1967

**Claire Oppenheimer** reports that she and **Neil Prose** had a delightful visit in the spring. Both currently reside in North Carolina. [This note was run under 1964 in the June 2006 Newsletter. We sincerely regret the error.]

### 1974

From **Jessica Wittenstein Barranco**: "This photo [above at right] was taken when **Sally Smith Christ** came to visit in Phoenix, Arizona. We were best friends in high school at BFS and have remained in close contact ever since. Sally currently lives in Maine with husband Costas and sons Tamu and Nikos. I live in Arizona with husband David and children Nicholas, Allison and James. Both Sally and I will turn 50 this fall (November and October respectively) and both of us have sons entering college this fall, Sally's son Tamu at Northwestern and my son Nick at the University of Arizona. So hard to believe."

### 1978

Our Athletic Director, David Gardella, reports that he met up with **Julian Palmer** while Julian's daughter attended a sports clinic. David said it was terrific to see both father and daughter.

### 1981

**Seth Phillips**, Principal of P.S. 8 in Brooklyn Heights, was praised by NYC Mayor Michael Bloomberg on the first day of public school. The Mayor and Chancellor Joel Klein made Seth's school the first stop on their tours of public schools on opening day. The mayor credited Seth with leading his school through needed changes and turning it into a "model school."

### 1982

**Sarah Baldwin** writes, "After many years of being a "lost alum," I finally reconnected with BFS. I completed my master's degree in Santa Fe, New Mexico and fell in love with the city. I've lived in Santa Fe, on and off, for the past 15 years and work as an editor. I would love to hear from anyone who might be passing through Santa Fe or who would just like to touch base."

**David Fenichel** reports that he and his wife, Sharon Mulligan, are the proud parents of twins. William and Sophie were born in May of this year. By this time, everyone has settled in just fine. David reported they were sleep-deprived, but really happy.

### 1987

**Maggie Goodman Ford** writes that she has been married for 13 years to Scott Ford. Their daughter Ella is 2 years old and their son Lucas is 3 months old. She also writes that they are currently building a home in Nosara, Costa Rica.

### 1992

**Greg Denny** writes, "To keep you up to date, my wife Beverly and I had our first child this year, a son we named Kyle Xavier Denny. Coincidentally, he was born on my birthday so he was a great birthday gift."

### 1995

**Yndia Lorick-Wilmot** writes, "This summer I completed my doctoral studies with High Honors in Sociology from Northeastern University in Boston. I'm in the process of preparing a manuscript of my dissertation for publication. Also, I plan to work as a research consultant for a project funded by the State of Massachusetts and the City of Boston and I will continue to teach as an adjunct professor. My husband Damian and I are really enjoying being parents: our son Justin is now 3 years old."



*Sally Smith Christ '74 and Jessica Wittenstein Barranco '74 this summer in Arizona*

### 2001

**Adrienne M. Randolph** was married earlier this year to Airman Brandon Wheeler of the U.S. Navy. Adrienne is raising their beautiful daughter, Kaycie Lauren Wheeler. Although her husband is stationed in Virginia, Adrienne lives in New York and would love to be in touch with any of her BFS teachers or classmates. To get in touch with Adrienne, call the Alumni/ae Office.

### 2005

**Kira O'Brien** writes, "Sorry we couldn't make it to Homecoming, but the community service trip to Mexico was amazing. **Samantha [Elinson]** and I agree that it was the most incredible 12 days of our lives. We were in an extremely poor section of central Mexico, working with two different families. By the end of the trip we were able to dig out and set the foundation, brick the walls and cement the floors on one home, and create the ceiling structure and cement the floor and roof of another. I look forward to seeing everyone at BFS very soon!"

### Former Faculty

**Patty Sarmuk Canny** writes, "Bill and I just had our first child, a boy named Cam William Canny. We are very happy! I am teaching middle school math in Connecticut, at the school that I attended and I love it. All is well. My best to everyone at BFS. Feel free to contact me through Susan Price."

### Alum Faculty

We are thrilled to announce that **Claudia Lewis '88** and **Cassie Broadus-Foote '01** have joined the Preschool faculty this September and that **Jesse Phillips-Fein '94** is teaching dance at the school.

### Alums in Politics

Two alums ran for public office in the recent Democratic primary election and both won their respective races: **Dena Douglas '83** for Kings County Civil Court Judge and **Karim Camara '88** for NY State Assembly member for the 43rd District. Karim received our George Fox Award at Commencement in June.

## A Special Thank You

Last year, **Mark Zauderer '63** challenged our parents to increase their overall participation in the Brooklyn Friends Fund: for each class that reached 80% participation, Mark would give an additional donation to the Brooklyn Friends Fund. We are happy to report that our parents responded well to Mark's challenge and netted the school an extra \$5,000. We are all extremely grateful to Mark for his generosity and for his continuing commitment to our school.

## A Gift of Song from the Preschool

A musical song-book of 31 original compositions that are a cherished part of Brooklyn Friends School history has been published and distributed to preschool families this fall. The book, *Dinosaurs, Dolphins and Friends*, was compiled by middle school teacher and alum parent Tony Soll, who for the past 12 years has led our preschool children in a weekly "sing." Selections in the book include many of the songs Tony sings with our students, such as "Amanda Demanda," "The Dolphin Song," "Hello, Hello," "The Lunch Song" and the all-time BFS favorite, "This Little Light of Mine."

The publication of the book will enable family members to "sing along" with their children at home and share the joy of music with them. We also plan to have MP3s of some of the songs available on our website soon.

## ALUMS IN THE ARTS

**Francine Prose '64** is the author of the newly published *Reading Like a Writer: A Guide for People Who Love Books and for Those Who Want to Write Them*. It is receiving rave reviews in the *New York Times* and *Publishers Weekly*, is already on the Times Bestseller List, and is being favorably compared to quintessential writer's guides (Forster's *Aspects of the Novel* is but one). The critical praise is wonderful, but even more so is the fact that Francine dedicated the book to three of her teachers, one a college professor and two from her Brooklyn Friends high school years: **Alberta Magzarian** and **Phil Schwartz '55**.

**Joe Ritter '75** had a live script reading in of his latest project, *Vampyre Confidential*, at Galapagos Arts Space in Williamsburg. It is described at [vampyreconfidential.com](http://vampyreconfidential.com) as "the Sopranos meet Vampyre Women."

**Sam Rosenthal '86**, as Eaton the Magnificent, is performing his one-man show, *The Quantum Eye*, at Partners in Crime Mystery Booksellers in Greenwich Village. Susan Price '86 attended a show, describing it as "an incredibly fun evening of parlor magic and mentalism." For showtimes, visit [www.thequantumeye.com](http://www.thequantumeye.com).

## ON THE ROAD WITH FRIENDS

Ten alums from the Class of 1944 to the Class of 1997 (photo below) met at the Old Ebbitt Grill in Washington, DC on April 3 for a dinner hosted by Head of School Michael Nill and Director of Development Karen Edelman. It was a delightful evening of conversation and catching up. It went so well that we decided to host one regional reunion every year in a different part of the U.S. In March 2007, Michael and Alumni Director Susan Price will be in Boston. Stay tuned for details.



Top row: Joshua Farber '69, Betty Chang '69, Ira Meiselman '68, Sandra Cohen '69, Karen Edelman, Michael Nill, Louise Edelman Sagalyn '44, Rebecca Morrissey '88. Seated: Bill Bielefeld '97, Mitch Zeller '75, Stephen Wermiel '68, Mechele Plotkin Flaum '68

## First Young Alum Pledge to the 06-07 Brooklyn Friends Fund

**Daniel Eden '06** has the distinction of being our first young alum pledge of the year. As he wrote to Director of Development Karen Edelman: "I've been at Georgetown for about two weeks now and I'm certainly having a great time. However, I can't get over the fact that I'm no longer at Brooklyn Friends School. BFS truly was the ride of a lifetime. I couldn't have asked for a better high school education or experience. Hopefully, we can get more of the Class of 2006 involved to make a difference at BFS in the near future. I'd like to make my first donation to the school. I hope this helps jump-start the 2006-2007 Brooklyn Friends Fund and kick-off a long series of donations this year. This first pledge is just a symbol of my gratitude to the school and a thank you for everything it has given me."

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