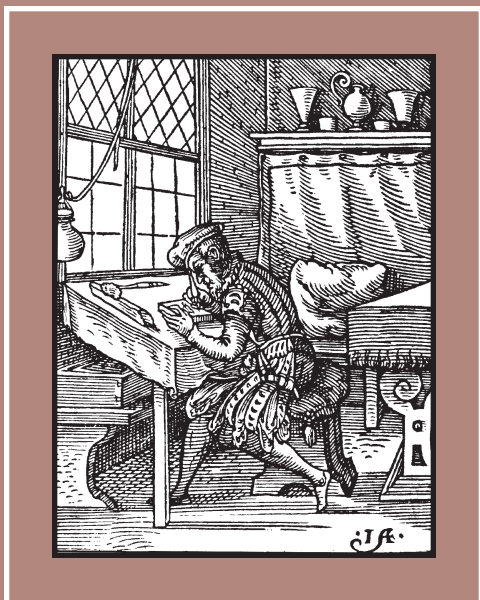


FRIENDS' CENTRAL



FORUM

SPRING/SUMMER 2011

FORUM

SPRING / SUMMER 2011

Table of Contents

Readers' Reflections	2	
Eat Past Present	Padraig Barry and Rachel Bradburd '05	4
Two Erudite Ladies of the Language Department: Jacqueline Gowen-Tolcott and Erica Harnett	Marilyn Lager	9
Memories of Youth in Yangana	Diego Luzuriaga	13
Serious in Syria	Alexander Mazurek '08	19
Mock Trial: A Reality Exercise in Court	Brad Morris	25
My Teachers	Paul Perkinson	29
How to Use 525,600 Minutes, Twenty-nine Times Over	David Thomas	32

*Education is the ability to listen to almost anything
without losing your temper or your self-confidence.*

— Robert Frost

Editor: Marilyn Lager, Director, Friends' Central's Blackburn Library
Email: mlager@friendscentral.org
Asst. to Editor: Steven Patterson, Upper School English Teacher



FORUM

Forum is our community's educational journal. Faculty, alumni, board members, parents and students are encouraged to contribute opinions, ideas, innovations and observations about any aspect of their lives relating to educational experiences.

Marilyn Lager
Editor, *Forum*



READERS' REFLECTIONS

Dear Marilyn Lager,

Just wanted you to know how I look forward to the *Forum* issues. They are always entertaining and enlightening, and I always learn something new. Many thanks!

—June Singley Evans '66

(*Note from Paul Perkinson, former history teacher to history teacher, Gary Nicolai*): I read with interest and joy your piece/interview (*Finally, My Freedom Ride*) in the last issue of *Forum*. What a grand story and superlative time away from the classroom. I always said you were walking history. My best.

Dear Friends' Central People:

I graduated in 1947—and you are still educating me! I do enjoy the small but intriguing booklet which arrives twice a year and your discussion (about *The Life of Pi* and the *Book of Job* in particular.) I read *The Life of Pi* and then re-read your comments. Fascinating! I have the feeling that your students are most fortunate to have you as teachers. (I felt the same about my teachers when I was at FCS.) Thank you for your exploration of a most interesting book!

—Christine (Meyers) Jameson '47

Comment – Behind the Classroom:

Ninth Grade Teachers Discuss The Book of Job

Thank you for publishing a wonderful, thought-provoking article. I became enthralled by the ninth grade teachers' discussions on [the] subject [of the *Book of Job*]. I agree that it adds to a greater discussion beyond the classroom, (which FCS does so well)!

During research [which I did in college], I realized early, that the BOJ is very intense and complicated; and at the end of my research, that my "human" question of "why" did not get the

answer that I anticipated — as is reflected in Ms. Perez’s notation of September 27, 2010, (*Forum* — Fall 2010/Winter 2010). I also agree with Mr. Sheppard’s views — that if one reads the BOJ in a literal sense, that one will miss the true meaning of this story, which is the “mysterious and complex nature of God” (p27); and the fact that there are many people who experience the “Job syndrome,” myself included...who get ‘redeemed spiritually only’ (p28).

This subject is a great dialogue to have with the students. After reading the challenges that the teachers had with expressing their views on this topic — I asked myself to imagine how the students may have felt. I felt the same as Mr. Rosengarten and Job’s friends as to how the character of Job gave in, “to a greater power,” (p28), until I did more reading and research on the BOJ. I then realized that the two unique identifier’s of God — his Omnipresence and his Omnipotence gave me the answer... God is all-knowing and all powerful...

I agree with Mr. Vernacchio, as he identifies Job’s recognition of God — through his torment, and his own acknowledgement of his role in the kingdom, to which he is not “at the Center...” (p32), a thought that holds true for me. I had to recognize that when I take “me” out of the center of the decision-making process, and approach situations from a “submissive” perspective..., a greater reward is achieved.

In closing, Ms. Schumacher’s notation of her student’s comparison of Brahman’s nirguna and saguna analogies, and Ms. Perez’s reflection of where we are in the universe, again, not only enlightened me but gave me an “ah-ha” moment. I thank the ninth grade teachers for sharing such a great topic for discussion and the *Forum* for publishing it.

Graciously submitted,
Angela D Murray,
(FCS Parent — ‘05 & ‘09)



Eat Past Present

By Padraig Barry & Rachel Bradburd '05

Padraig taught math to Middle Schoolers for six years and has been teaching science for the last three to sixth graders.

Rachel '05 is teaching Spanish as a long-term sub.

Middle School Minicourses grew a number of years ago (this year's minicourses celebrated their eighth birthday) out of faculty discussions that focused on the desire to have students from different grade levels work, learn and play together. This three-day mini unit was fundamentally devised to shift students out of their academic

This three-day mini unit was fundamentally devised to shift students out of their academic comfort zones and get them to interact with one another in a non-academic environment.

comfort zones and get them to interact with one another in a non-academic environment. They also were meant to provide teachers an exciting opportunity to work alongside each other on topics unrelated to the classroom. Since their inception, faculty—working in pairs—have put together units every year that capitalize on the natural connections that cut across content areas. These units were usually organized around questions, themes, problems and projects.

This year's minicourses were based on the central theme of Past, Present, Future. I had been teaching a unit on Nutrition to my sixth graders so "food" was constantly in my rearview mirror. Consequently, the embryo of an idea was already forming when I teamed up with fellow teacher Rachel Bradburd. After two brainstorming sessions with Rachel, EAT PAST PRESENT was born.

Preliminary Meeting

Once sign ups were completed, we had the chance to meet with our assigned group (a disparate but eager bunch of fifth, sixth, sev-

enth and eighth grade cooks and foodies) before mini-courses actually began. This get-together afforded us the opportunity to explain to them – in more detail – what the course was about and what our goals were. The primary objective was to have pairs of students create a PowerPoint about Food and Nutrition from specific time periods in history. The PPs would look at the types of food that were popular during those times and focus on such things as food culture, and the role that social class played in what people ate. We wanted them to investigate how food was prepared. What were typical recipes? How was food distributed? How did rural and urban diets differ? How was food preserved? What was common etiquette at the time? We selected twelve different time periods from history, covering a wide expanse of time. These included Ancient Egypt, Rome (100 AD), The Middle Ages, The Renaissance, Colonial Times, The Civil War era, and several time periods in the 20th century.

Rachel and I had spent some time looking for and collecting recipes from these time periods. We had found among other mouth-watering delicacies – Egyptian Flat Bread, dating back to 2500 BC Blank-mang, a type of curry (c.1390) Colonial Stew (1600s) and blueberry muffins (1920s).

Once partnerships were formed, we set about distributing these recipes on a “first-come first-served” basis. The recipe that each partnership received decided which time period they would then investigate. We had students haggling over some of the tastier-sounding recipes, like Apple Pecan Pie from the Middle Ages and Potato Latkes

We had students haggling over some of the tastier-sounding recipes, like Apple Pecan Pie from the Middle Ages and Potato Latkes from 1910...

from 1910, but by the end of the introductory session, I think everybody got what they wanted. Our plan was to have each pair of students present their completed PP on the final day of the mini-course. We would subsequently follow up these presentations with a banquet, when every student pair would share their own particular, prepared, recipes. Fast forward then to opening day.

Day 1

We went over the three-day schedule with them and reminded them about Tuesday’s trip to Harriton House in Bryn Mawr. (Harriton House was built in 1704 and was home to the historic kitchens of Charles Thomson, the first and only secretary to the Continental Congress.) We went over specific guidelines for the PowerPoint and explained again what we were looking for. Then, it was off to the

library to do some investigative work. They partnered up, and the research began in earnest. Rachel and I were on hand to answer questions and direct research. Almost every group succeeded in completing their PP before lunch.

After lunch we reconvened in my room where we showed them a brief snippet of *Taste of History*, an introduction to Harriton House, to prepare them for Tuesday's field trip. We finished up Day 1 by showing them several scenes from the movie, *Food, Inc.* This controversial and sometimes disturbing documentary generated many moans and groans in our audience, and opened eyes to how our food is being controlled – and many would say, “contaminated” – by just a handful of big conglomerates.

Day 2

Day 2 got off to a healthy start with breakfast provided by Rachel and me. We enjoyed bagels, muffins, fruit salad, orange juice and hot chocolate, accompanied by a brief history of each food item displayed on the whiteboard. We then headed off by bus for Harriton House.

Thomas Jefferson, a close friend of Thomson, loved to ride out to Harriton House after a long day of debating and relax over good food and wine...

Thomas Jefferson, a close friend of Thomson, loved to ride out to Harriton House after a long day of debating and relax over good food and wine provided by Charles and Hannah Thomson. It seemed the perfect place to visit if we were to find out more about the type of food eaten and how it was prepared in Colonial Times.

We were met there by Bruce Gill, the executive director, who began by providing us with a brief history of Harriton House and the larger Lower Merion area. He talked about how Merion and Bryn Mawr, or “great hill,” were settled more than 300 years ago, and the important role that the dairy industry and agriculture in general, once played in the area. We passed around glass milk jars from more than ten local dairy farms that once were located in Lower Merion. Students remarked how different buying milk is today (at Wawa) compared to years ago, when the milkman from any number of local dairies would deliver fresh bottled milk to your front door. After a tour of the grounds that included visits to a root cellar, barn (stocked with sheep, hens and horses), beehives, outhouse and garden, we were subsequently treated to a tour of Harriton house itself.

We spent most of our time in the kitchen where Bruce showed us, among other interesting things, cooking utensils from the 1700s. He demonstrated how they were used and spoke at some length about

the type of food typically eaten and the challenges and demands placed on a housewife when preparing such food. Our visit concluded with a sampling of ice cream from Guernsey cows with a topping of wholesome Harriton House honey. While we were enjoying the ice-cream, Bruce offered up some venison jerky. After tasting it and agreeing it was good, one student asked, "What was that?" Oftentimes, I think we eat food without really knowing "what it is" and where it comes from.

On returning to Friends' Central, we had about fifteen minutes to reflect on our experience at Harriton House. Many students noted what they learned about the type of preparation that went into eating, including growing and preparing food and how different it is now. Even collecting and preparing water to drink or cook with was quite

**Even collecting and preparing water
to drink or cook with was quite
a chore back in the 1700s.**

a chore back in the 1700s. Students also noted that most households back then were self-sufficient when it came to growing their own food. However, many students were eager to point out that their families also grew food, albeit in much smaller quantities. They were also excited to share with their families a newly learned trick demonstrated by Bruce about how to successfully plant tomatoes. Before we let them go, we reminded them not to forget to bring in their food for Wednesday's banquet.

Day 3

Day 3 was designed to be the "meat" of *Eat Past Present*, and it did not disappoint. In the morning students took turns presenting their PowerPoints. They did an excellent job. Each presentation taught us something new. For example, did you know that it was common practice among wealthy Romans to stuff a chicken inside a duck, the duck inside a goose, the goose inside a pig, the pig inside a cow and cook the whole thing together? Or that one reason organic food is so expensive is because organic farmers do not receive government subsidies? Or that the French Royal Court, in the 1600s, were the first to draw up a list of proper social behavior, and call it *etiquette*?

After the final presentation on Organic Food (the future?) we gave the students a fifteen minute break so that Rachel and I could set up the room for the banquet. We made paper name-plates for each dish so that everybody knew what they were eating. When the kids returned from their break, they placed their pre-cooked dishes behind the name-plates, and before we knew it, we had a full-fledged ban-

quet on our hands. Colonial Style Chile, Potato Latkes (1910), Roman Burgers, Civil War Milk Pie, Apple Pecan Bread (Middle Ages), and

Colonial Style Chile, Potato Latkes (1910), Roman Burgers, Civil War Milk Pie, Apple Pecan Bread (Middle Ages), and Egyptian Flat Bread were just some of the dishes to be enjoyed.

Egyptian Flat Bread were just some of the dishes to be enjoyed. The food was truly amazing! I think the students themselves were surprised by how good everything tasted. It was wonderful to see how



Padriag and Rachel enjoy feast.

much pride students took in their own particular dishes and how excited they were to share their food with their peers. Afterwards, we watched *Mostly Martha*, a film from 2001, about a chef and her intense connection to her cooking.

However, many of our final thoughts came directly from the students during our Meeting for Sharing at the end of the day. They spoke about their appreciation for the three days spent working and learning together, about how much fun they had, and about how novel it was to do something and not have grades hanging over their heads. One student remarked how, "Before minicourse began, I was looking forward to it being over and having Spring Break, but once it started I forgot all about Spring Break." I think this comment was not only a testament to Eat Past Present, but to mini-courses in general.



Two Erudite Ladies of the Language Department: Jacqueline Gowen-Tolcott and Erika Harnett

By Marilyn Lager

Marilyn, director of the Blackburn Library for twenty-five years, has been editor of this journal since its inception in 1987.

Jacqueline Gowen-Tolcott

Her animation and quickened body language, as well as the expressive words she rapidly and clearly enunciates, has awakened even the sleepest student on this gray March afternoon. Señora Gowen-Tolcott, who for thirty years, has been entertaining—no, really teaching—students the Spanish language in classes of many levels has not uttered a word of English. The students in Spanish III Advanced answer hesitantly, but they pay unwavering attention to their cheerful teacher. Ben Fogel '12 notes that “You can tell she’s enjoying the class. It makes it very pleasurable for the students.”

Although Jackie, as she is known to the FCS community, is teaching only Spanish now, because the interest is so high, she is as proficient in French as she is in Spanish. She was born and grew up in Cuba, moving to the US in time for high school, and after college at Drew University, she received an MA in French literature from the University of Rochester. She met her future husband Michael there, and then went on to study for a Ph.D. in French literature, at University of Virginia. Soon after, she was teaching both languages at Springside School. She was “stolen away” by Sonia Tonelli and Penny Weinstein, FCS language teachers and began her teaching career at FCS in 1981. She immediately “loved the coed atmosphere (Springside was all girls) and the warmth of the community.”

Jackie creates a comfortable atmosphere in her classes. “No one is threatened,” she says.

Jackie creates a comfortable atmosphere in her classes. “No one is threatened,” she says. She uses the target language 98% of the



Jackie, with Spanish IV students, l to r, Ally Wirshba '12 and Hannah Albertine '12.

time and is always trying different methods. "English is the last resort," she smiles. "There is immersion; there is respect. No mocking. We are all learning together."

Jackie's life has always been informed by travel and culture. She currently lives in Center City and takes advantage of cultural events. She studied dance, was inspired by noted Cuban dancer Alicia Alonso and still finds it "another way of expressing myself, deeper than words." She has been awarded a sabbatical for next year and one of her plans is to take dance classes at the University of the Arts. She and husband Michael appreciate different forms of art; in fact, Michael is the nephew of the late Roy Lichtenstein, and they have been appreciative of and involved in art through him. They have travelled throughout Spanish- and French-speaking countries, gone on

summer workshops, and Jackie has taken FCS students on exchanges to Paris, Madrid and many other Spanish cities.

Although Jackie and Michael live a most grounded life in Philadelphia, it is intriguing to think of her growing up in Cuba. Her

...it is intriguing to think of her growing up in Cuba.

memories include the "impeccable beach at Varadero, east of Havana, with the whitest sand and clearest water; Castro's interminable speeches, broadcast on TV, radio and loudspeakers, some of them lasting more than five hours;" and how hard it was for music lovers when "rock and roll was *verboten*, and all music had to be listened to quietly or you might be labeled a *gusano* (a maggot: a derogatory term for a counter-revolutionary)." Her parents, both dentists, were able to come to this country also, after Castro and his communism took reign.

Her colleague, history teacher Gary Nicolai, sees Jackie as "a lady, a consummate professional with dignity and class." She has been department head of the Language department for several years. Mike Crauderueff who has worked with her for many years, sees her as "a true linguist who lifts her students to increasingly higher levels of

competence. She expects a lot of them academically, but she also understands that it is not easy to learn a foreign language. She strikes the right balance between strictness and flexibility, firmness and compassion. She is, indeed a model for me to emulate.”

* * *

Erika Harnett

It’s the day before spring vacation, the last block of the day, and Erika Harnett’s Latin II Advanced students are playing a game. It is a board game called Ludi, where Latin prepositions have evolved into English prefixes, like *circum*, *intro* and *semi*. While the board represents the Circus Maximus, the answers are called out by teams who provide the matching words. It holds their interest, and it doesn’t have a screen or apps. By the end of the block, goodbyes and good wishes are called out, and Doc Harnett begins her thirtieth spring vacation from Friends’ Central School.

Now an elder stateswoman, with an elegant white pageboy, a brown-haired Erika started teaching Latin in 1981, and aside from also teaching Ancient History for four years, she has been doing that ever since. In fact, when our son Rob started Latin twenty-five years ago, and we went to Curriculum Night, my husband remembers her charming intro to the parents about the variety of words one can make from Latin words, such as *mater*: matriarch, maternal, and even matricide.

After graduating from Temple with a BA in 1974, she went to work as an archaeologist for the National Park Service, on call to dig and catalog any treasures that were unearthed at the final excavation of Ben Franklin’s home (Franklin Court). Erika went on to teach Latin to fourth through sixth graders in four Philadelphia elementary schools. After taking graduate courses at Bryn Mawr College, she was a sabbatical replacement for David Felsen at Germantown Friends, and there she heard about an opening at FCS from their school psychologist. She was hired by Tom Wood.

She received her Ph.D. from Bryn Mawr in 1986, while working at FCS, and made archeology a big part of her life: during the summer of 1997, she excavated at a site in the Mt. Carmel Range in Israel, and in 2000, she was in eastern



Picture credit: Sahara Clement '12

Erika, with double-headed herm.

Romania, digging at a Roman fort. She has taken legions of students to Italy and Greece, served as head of the Language department for over five years, been a tenth grade dean and worked in college counseling.

She is an upbeat, enthusiastic teacher who has flourished at FCS.

She is an upbeat, enthusiastic teacher who has flourished at FCS. "Latin creates mental alacrity," says Doc. "It challenges you to think about language in a different way." Amelia Weinberg says that "Doc loves to talk about the history of Rome. She is passionate about the subject, making us laugh. She has a good time." "And so do we," adds Peter Dissinger '14. She is about to offer a new course for the 2011-2012 school year, *Ancient Cities: Jerusalem, Athens and Rome*.

Erika has had a rich life away from the FCS campus. Daughter of immigrants, who spoke no English at home, she was at first thought hard of hearing when she could not respond to the neighborhood children. But she went on to master English, Latin and Greek at Temple, where she also became a varsity fencer who competed in national championships, continuing fencing after graduation. And she is a fine equestrian, introducing her daughter Emily '09, now a student at Penn, to the sport early on. They both were excited to find a reference to Friends' Central in a 1947 book, *Spurs for Suzanna*, by Betty Cavanna whose niece had attended FCS. Son Brendan '05 was born in October of 1986, and he is now a computer analyst. Emily's birth was more dramatic, when English teacher John McCollum was called into action to rush his colleague, who was in labor during lunch, to Rolling Hill Hospital to give birth.

Erika has worked closely with Mike Crauderueff for years. He finds that "her energy and intellectual prowess have earned her the

...her energy and intellectual prowess have earned her the respect of both colleagues and students.

respect of both colleagues and students. I am impressed with the loyal following she has had among her students over the years. Their fond memories of Doc's classes always lead them back to her classroom during college breaks." And Jackie Gowen-Tolcott, her colleague and "trustworthy friend for thirty years," finds her "witty, smart and sharp about any topic!"



Memories of Youth in Yangana

by Diego Luzuriaga

Diego has taught woodworking and music to Upper Schoolers for the last four years. This past January, a composition of his, called Responsorio, was performed at the Kimmel Center for Music in Philadelphia by the Philadelphia Orchestra.

My childhood was anchored in an Ecuadorian village, where the life style was closer to the nineteenth century than to the twentieth. It seems that the older I get, the more present these old memories become and the greater their influence appears to be on my personal and artistic life. Following Editor Marilyn Lager's invitation to write an article for *Forum*, I'm sharing some of those memories with the FCS community. Please forgive my self-indulgence.

For my family, up to the year 1961, life happened in two places: Loja, our native city in the remote south of Ecuador; and a cattle farm located in Yangana, a tiny village forty miles south of Loja, in a green sub-tropical region of the Andean mountains. The farm was the means to support a large family (parents and twelve children) and was to become the source of unforgettable memories. When we stayed there during school vacations, we milked cows and lassoed bulls, climbed trees and ate guayaba, fashioned toy trucks out of clay, made *dulce de leche*, cheese and brown sugar. We heard fantastic stories from neighbors, went to church and played all sorts of outdoor games. Life was definitely good on the farm, at least for the youngest of the twelve Luzuriaga children.

Life was definitely good on the farm, at least for the youngest of the twelve Luzuriaga children.

But, at some point, my parents realized that if their children were to acquire a good education, we had to move to Quito, the Ecuadorian capital, 400 hundred miles to the north. So, when I was not yet six, my father hired a truck owner, *Compadre* Carrion, to transport us on the two-day trip along the rugged and steep roads of the Andes. I remember the excitement of all the Luzuriaga children as we helped load the

truck with mattresses, wooden chests and pots and pans. We even brought with us from the farm a *múchica*—a heavy, round grinding stone used with another baseball-size stone to grind spices and soften dried meat. *Compadre* Carrion’s truck (it was actually a *mixto* bus—a truck with a wooden body, half bus, half truck, with no partition in between) was full, with bags and boxes strapped to the roof. Aside from the driver’s seat, there were no seats. We sat on wooden benches backed with wood boards. We had to use blankets and pillows as padding. So, off we went, the whole family, in pursuit of my father’s aspiration for new horizons for us all.

In the middle of the journey, some smoke began to billow out of the oil deprived engine; *Compadre* Carrion stopped the *mixto* and sent a young helper on foot through mountains and valleys to the nearest town to get motor oil. After quite a few hours, he returned with a heavy bundle of oil cans on his back. What would nowadays take twelve hours by car took us forty hours overall, but we made it to our destination.

The architecture in the high altitude city of Quito looked strange. As the *mixto* rode through the colonial part of the city, I remember observing the high stone walls supporting the old Spanish colonial houses. I remember the sun-burned faces of pedestrians walking fast. Quito was so different from anything I’d seen: big, cold, with car noises and exhaust fumes.

I entered first grade (there was no kindergarten in those days) at a Christian boys’ school in Quito. I remember my father dropping me off the first day in a classroom of around 50 boys and one teacher, Señor Martínez. Panning my eyes across the window-less room, over the battered desks and the blackboard, looking at the many boys, I

**Panning my eyes across the window-less room,
over the battered desks, the blackboard,
looking at the many boys, I was scared. I cried.**

was scared. I cried. I remember the brief conversation my father had with Señor Martínez who, with a grave voice, said something like, “So you are from Loja, Sir? Your son is going to do well here, with that great Loja food of yours.” My father, with his distinct Loja accent, bragged about the *repe*, a typical Loja soup made with green bananas. Perhaps for the first time, I realized that my family and I, with our distinctive accents and body language, with our foods, (like *sango*, a dry corn spicy paste) our sayings, our customs, were strangers outside our native province.

During the school year, while the family stayed in Quito, my father spent long periods of time on the farm back in Yangana. He communicated with us by occasional telegrams and sent us packages



Diego's house in Yangana.

of cheeses and farm produce. My father and the farm were a constant subject of conversation at home. My mother worried about my father being alone, about his health, and about farm business, but also about her own difficulties in caring for a large family in Quito without a permanent paternal presence. In the meantime, we children, in the backyard of the rented house, would try to re-live the Yangana games and stories. We missed the farm so badly. We all counted the days until our departure back to Yangana.

The day came at the end of the school year when the family joined my father at the farm for three full months—a trip we repeated, year after year. After a long journey, the *mixto* would wind its way on the narrow dirt road, slowly approaching Yangana. Because there were no river bridges, in a couple of spots, the *mixto* had to make daring crossings over fords. It was so exciting to stick our heads out of the window and see the tires, half covered in water bouncing on stones, and to hear the *mixto* make the most dramatic cracking noises (it must have been even more exciting for the one brother who was riding on the roof). It was pure bliss to feel the proximity of the farm. I would

It was pure bliss to feel the proximity of the farm.

recognize, at the side of the road, the rustic fences made out of sticks attached with jute chords. Ahead of the *mixto*, chickens and pigs (unused to motor vehicles) would cross the road in panic. And, finally, just before the village of Yangana, the *mixto* would stop by the old gate of the farm. Rubi, the little mutt that had waited for our return for nine months, jumped about and barked wildly. Oh, the smell of fruit trees and roses, the sound of wild birds chirping, the fresh air, clear, warm. The sweet light of the afternoon!

In no time my mother would be at the kitchen taking care of food. The kitchen was dark, with a wood-burning stove made out of bricks and mud, with some aspherical ceramic pans sitting on top (my mother was already boiling soup). Above the stove, hanging from the ceiling, we had a long wood board with cheeses being smoked. We had no electricity then, so after dinner we would light candles and carry them to our beds. Brothers and sisters would sleep on opposite sides of a simple partition in a very large bedroom. In bed we would chat about the events of the day and try to get to sleep on our straw mattresses. I remember trying not to be the last one to blow out the candle, because I didn't want to be awake when the room was pitch dark.

Early morning was the best time of day in Yangana.

Early morning was the best time of day in Yangana. The birds started chirping as the sunshine hit the wraparound veranda that overlooked the valley surrounded by mountains. As soon as one child got up, all of us would also jump out of bed and run to the veranda to claim one of the hammocks and enjoy the spectacle. After breakfast, we began playing or doing the farm chores assigned by my parents.

My mother often baked bread and cheese pies (*empanadas*). She and my older sisters would knead large quantities of dough on the dining table, shaping the rolls and *empanadas* and placing them on tin sheets. The older brothers would split the firewood for the igloo-shaped earthen oven located further down the hill. The younger siblings brought the tin sheets of unbaked rolls to the oven. I remember the line we formed carrying the sheets, stepping happily around chickens and ducks, hearing the sound of water falling off a moss-filled stone wall. When the baking was complete, we sat down next to the oven and sampled those delicious hot *empanadas* my mother made. (I didn't realize then how extraordinary my mother was: she not only cooked for all of us, but sewed our clothes, washed, cleaned and did so many house chores. True, she had the help of my older siblings, and often times a maid, but still, she did all that, keeping her sense of humor).

The farm was mainly a cattle farm, but we did have a mini-plantation of sugar cane and the facilities to produce our own *panelas* (large brown sugar squares). So another activity was to help with the *molienda*—the manufacturing of *panelas*. Action began before dawn with the arrival of a few hired expert workers. Two trained oxen were tied by their heads to the end of a long horizontal wooden pole with a vertical metal axle in the middle, which made the mill rotate—a two-barrel machine brand-named “Chattanooga.” The oxen pulled the

pole in circles while one person, sometimes a younger member of the family like me, walked behind the bulls, in circles, waving a stick and yelling, “*toro, toro,*” to encourage the bulls not to slow down. Another person, sitting low by the mill in the middle, pushed in the sugar canes between metal cylinders to squeeze out the juice. Another team, including a few brothers, would make trips to the other side of a hill to cut the sugar cane, attach it in bundles on top of mules and donkeys, and bring it to the mill. I remember feeling pity for the poor donkey that would carry not only the heavy load of cane, but also a chubby

I remember feeling pity for the poor donkey that would carry not only the heavy load of cane, but also a chubby boy like me on top.

boy like me on top. The cane juice was boiled for hours until thick, stirred and beaten, then poured into rectangular molds and, finally, taken as sugar *panelas* to the house. Throughout the entire process we would, of course, endlessly sample the product at every stage.

We also produced coffee for home consumption and to sell, a few hundred pounds a year. When the coffee plants were heavy with ripe red coffee fruit, my father would hire a couple of workers for the bulk of the harvest, but he often encouraged all of his children to go under the plants and collect the extra dry coffee beans left on the ground by birds who ate everything but the beans themselves. We collected as much as we could in our straw hats and in cloth bags. Then we walked to the village coffee merchant to sell our harvest. I remember the merchant using his old fashioned scale to weigh the beans. One year, I collected sixteen *suces* (the Ecuadorian currency of the time) worth of coffee, and I remember the perfect pile of shiny sixteen *sucre* coins on the counter, and I felt so proud—it was probably my first “earned” income.

I remember the perfect pile of shiny sixteen *sucre* coins on the counter, and I felt so proud—it was probably my first “earned” income.

Sometimes my parents left us alone on the farm while they visited the “*Feria de Loja,*” a big event for the people in the province. They would buy hats, nail clippers, creams, blankets from Peru, and most importantly, candy, dolls, jackknives or slingshots. After a couple of days alone, knowing that the *mixto* of the day was about to arrive from Loja bringing our parents back with our jackknives and other gadgets



Diego, at the Kimmel Center, surrounded by students.

(some bought with our coffee money), we would go outside and put our ears to the ground, patiently, trying to hear the rumble of the *mixto* engine approaching, and, when we heard it, it was total ecstasy. A very sweet reunion it was after only a couple of days of separation!

But the sad day always came when we had to pack up our things and be ready for the *mixto* to pick us up at 6AM and head back to Quito. A new chapter had been added to our collective Yangana story, and nobody was ready to return to the big city to endure the cold climate and the dreadful school for nine long months before we could breathe again the air of Yangana.

**I carry my Yangana stories as a
secret treasure in my memory.**

I carry my Yangana stories as a secret treasure in my memory. At the age of twenty-eight, I left Ecuador to study music composition in Paris. It was the first time I'd been away from my family for longer than a few weeks. At the end of an interesting but emotionally difficult first year, I composed a piece called "Paris-Yangana-Paris." The piece depicted the round trip between the big city and the tiny village of Yangana that was going through my mind constantly. Another piece I wrote, *La Múchica*, was my attempt to evoke the mineral sound of the grind stone that I associated so much with my early days in Yangana. I was living in Paris, the monumental city of high art and culture, but in my head there was this other, personal, perhaps more relevant culture that my heart was constantly bringing forward to my senses, in a place that was not Yangana.



Serious in Syria

By Alexander "Teddy" Mazurek '08

Teddy Mazurek is a rising senior at Boston University, majoring in Archeology and Classics. As part of his studies, he participated in a field school in Syria. He plans to attend grad school in Archeology.

A beautiful and popular vacation spot in the Mediterranean Sea, the Spanish island of Minorca, seemed like the perfect place to start off my work in Archeology. After a long day, I could return to the nearby air conditioned hotel and relax. That was one of two options Boston University provided me when I looked for a field school in order to fulfill one of my Archeology double major requirements. My interest in the Roman ruins there reflected my other major, Classics. However, the other option was the Bronze Age site of Tell es-Sweyhat near the tiny farming village of Nefileh in northern Syria. Unlike Minorca, Nefileh lacked tourist comforts, and it may be one of the least attractive places for vacation.

Some might see this decision as an obvious one. Why in the world would I, a white Jewish male who grew up on the Main Line,

Why in the world would I, a white Jewish male who grew up on the Main Line, decide to go to Syria for six weeks instead of to the safe and luxurious Spanish island of Minorca?

decide to go to Syria for six weeks instead of to the safe and luxurious Spanish island of Minorca? I, on the other hand, saw the possibility of spending six weeks in the Middle East as not only a once in a lifetime experience that many would never dare to venture, but as a perfect opportunity to test my passion for archeology as a potential career option.

On the first of June, I began my journey from JFK airport with a nine hour flight to Istanbul, before another two hour flight to Aleppo,

the second largest city in Syria, after its capital, Damascus. This city that historians believe may be the oldest modern city in the world would prove to be a safe haven for me and the other participants, a haven from the third-world lifestyle that Nefileh offered. About two hours away, Aleppo had several luxuries which I would find myself without while in Nefileh, such as air conditioning, internet access, good food and real mattresses.

My ride from Aleppo to Nefileh taught me many things about the Syrian culture. From my journal entry about this voyage:

It is a law in Syria that no women can sit in the passenger seat of a vehicle, let alone drive. As a result I sat up front and was warned that the upcoming ride would be like no other I had experienced. The driver hospitably offered me a cigarette, and I politely declined as he drove an average of what I estimated to be 80 mph. Once we left Aleppo all there was for miles was sand with small mudbrick structures built atop of it. The realization that I was in Syria came to fruition when I saw more people driving animals on the road than cars.

Tell es-Sweyhat, which translates, "Tell of broken promises," is an important site to study not because of its size, but rather because of when it reached its peak. In 2200 BC there was a large scale drought throughout Mesopotamia and Egypt. Scholars believe it may have caused the collapse of the Egyptian Old Kingdom and the Akkadian Empire. What is odd is that Sweyhat hit its climax during that drought. Even more curious is that we have only found one artifact with writing on it, which was only a unit of weight. One would think that a site that flourished during a drought would have some evidence of writing.

While archeology can be studied in the classroom, one can never truly get a feel for what the job is like without going into the field.

While archeology can be studied in the classroom, one can never truly get a feel for what the job is like without going into the field. Field school at Tell es-Sweyhat gave me and the other students opportunities to get our hands dirty in several tasks that archeologists might find themselves doing. This included keeping a meticulous field journal of what we found, supervising a trench that was dug by non-English speaking Syrians, taking elevations of the unit, drawing plans of the unit, and drawing profiles of a wall. While a lot of work is done on the site, an equal amount of analysis is done in the lab. As part of the field school we also studied the bones and pottery that were found and collected at the site. We would clean and identify the bones, hoping to find out what the people at this site ate. We also

classified the pottery into different styles and practiced drawing them and reconstructing whole objects from broken pieces.

My journal entry:

When we arrived at the site, I saw that the girls' living area (mud brick house) was closer to the bathroom, kitchen and classroom. It is also much newer, but more crowded. Not only do the female field students live there, but also the female volunteers. It is also shared by a family, with approximately five kids. My room was a bit farther off. This means I have to plan on taking a longer time to get to places. I am the only person in the room except for a lizard. We are mutually uncomfortable with each other. There is a small window above the door where light comes through, but no other window to look through. There is also a working ceiling fan. Professor Danti explained that the room I'm in is a dowry room. That means all the junk that the family received as a dowry is placed in my room. It consists of chests, cooking supplies, mattresses (which I can't use), pillows, and two pictures of women whom I presume are the married daughters of the family who own the building. When arriving in Nefileh I was given a pillow, a blanket and a mattress. The mattress was more of a pad than a mattress itself. It is lightweight so I could easily move it to the roof of a building if I wished to sleep outside.

**The biggest adjustment I had to make
was the sleep schedule.**

The biggest adjustment I had to make was the sleep schedule. As one could imagine it gets awfully hot during the day. In order to avoid as much of the heat as possible, we started the digging around 4:45 AM. This meant that I woke up around 3:30 and went to breakfast around 4:00. No one ever took a shower in the morning because inevitably we were going to sweat and get dirty in the field. Breakfast for me usually consisted of a cup of coffee and some water. I really never did get used to eating so early, and I don't think any of the other students did either. Now and then I would indulge in a piece of pita, but usually breakfast was spent trying to wake up and watching the stray cats eat out of the garbage.

At precisely 4:30 we would leave for the Tell (Arabic for mound) via a truck whose driver we paid at the beginning of the dig season. If you weren't on the truck at 4:30 it was assumed that you weren't coming for that day, and no one bothered to wait for you. I knew that participation was a key part of my grade, so I made sure never to miss the truck. If I did I wouldn't be working that day.

We would work in the field with the local hired workmen until 9:00, when our director Dr. Brad Hafford would call *mangaria* which means second breakfast. Unlike the breakfast at 4:00, this meal was

much more substantial. It consisted of hot tea, pita, tuna, tomatoes, cucumbers, hard boiled eggs and various condiments. You knew it was a good day when the eggs were fully cooked, and there were Sammys included in the meal. Sammys are a popular cookie, much like a Vienna finger minus the icing, which everyone loved to snack on.

Before I had arrived at the site the graduate students built a large tent for everyone to eat *mangaria* and to conceal us from the hot sun. At 9:30 we went back to work and did not stop until noon. The last few hours were always the hardest and slowest. After *mangaria* the temperature was anywhere from 95° to 110°. It was a brutal few hours compared to the pleasant 80 degrees with shade that I experienced in the morning. Once everything was cleaned up we rode back to Nefileh and had lunch at 1:00 PM. At first I always ate lunch, but after a week or so I decided that the extra sleep was more worthwhile than

At first I always ate lunch, but after a week or so I decided that the extra sleep was more worthwhile than hot soup.

hot soup. Yes, I did say hot soup. That is what we had for lunch every day. After lunch everyone either slept or read inside. The hours from 1:00 to 4:00 are easily the hottest, reaching up to 115° on several occasions, so I would avoid any contact with the outside world at any cost. On Monday and Wednesdays we would have lectures between 4:00 and 7:00; on the other days we would go out to the Tell for an afternoon session. Dinner, when on time, was at 8:00 PM, and I would try to go to sleep at 9:00, in order to get at least six hours of sleep.

Routine dominated my life while in Syria. Although the schedule sounds difficult, it became natural after a week. Most free time is spent sleeping during the afternoon. There was usually an hour of free time before dinner when a bunch of us would play whiffle

Who would have guessed I would get in touch with a childhood pastime in Syria?

ball. Who would have guessed I would get in touch with a childhood pastime in Syria? In honor of the World Cup, we decided to have a whiffle ball tournament where everyone participated either as a player or a manager. For the last three weeks we conducted this tournament before dinner when the sun was setting.

On Friday and Saturday we would have the day off from digging. Sometimes we would visit Aleppo and stay there overnight. Other times we would visit other archeological sites such as Palmyra, Mari,

and Dura Europos. Unlike Sweyhat each of these sites are monstrous, many with free standing architecture, and most importantly, writing. We also visited several museums and dined in some Syrian restaurants during these trips. Of course we did stop at some more conventional tourist draws, such as the pancake house in Palmyra and my personal favorite, Mr. Chicken, a restaurant in Aleppo.



Teddy, deep in his dig.

While I learned a tremendous amount about field work and the history of Mesopotamia, I found learning and exploring the Syrian culture the most worthwhile experience. I didn't know much Arabic, except for the words they told us to learn, which were mostly the names of tools, numbers and basic essentials. Most of the workers we hired were teenagers. Working sometimes as their supervisors and other times hand-in-hand allowed me to become both

Working sometimes as their supervisors and other times hand-in-hand allowed me to become both a boss, but also a friend.

a boss, but also a friend. I found it tough at times to make them do such hard labor; they were getting paid (\$7 a day) for their efforts. The hardest thing I had to do during my time in Syria was telling our supervisor, an Arab speaking archeologist, that one of my workers, whom I considered to be my friend, should be fired. He lay most of the time in the shady part of the trench while we all worked.

Our trips to Aleppo provided me with several opportunities to take in the local culture. In the heart of Aleppo is the *souk*, the marketplace, where both tourists and citizens go to shop. Each section of the *souk* sold different items; there was a section that had jewelry stores, another with bakeries, and even one with dead animals hanging from racks outside the entrances. For Americans who love to shop this could be considered heaven. Not only are items cheap because of a rather favorable conversion rate (one US dollar equals 46 Syrian pounds), but you can learn how to haggle, a life skill that I learned and practiced while in the *souk*. The secret is to always walk away, because when you do the seller instantly lowers the price. I talked

with the men working in the stands. Most of them spoke English fairly well and were incredibly friendly. They loved to hear about America and why I was spending my summer in Syria, and I enjoyed listening to their stories about growing up and living in Syria.

They loved to hear about America and why I was spending my summer in Syria, and I enjoyed listening to their stories about growing up and living in Syria.

When we were out of Nefileh, our evenings were spent watching the World Cup. I had never been a huge soccer fan, but my time in Syria changed that. Although the Syrian national team was not in the tournament, I noticed that most male citizens took great interest in watching the World Cup. When in Aleppo we would walk to a fancier hotel which broadcast the games and watch with several other tour groups. While it was nice to watch with people who understood English, I felt more comfortable in Palmyra watching the World Cup with a dozen Syrians most of whom didn't know a word of English.

My journal entry:

At 11:30 PM instead of going to sleep I decide to stay up and watch the remainder of the Ghana versus Uruguay game in the hotel lobby. I watched it with a dozen Syrian men from the hotel. One of them knew some English, so we talked about football. No matter what language you speak, sports and the language of sports are universal. It must have been a pretty amusing image: me, a white Jewish kid from the sheltered suburbs of Philadelphia, watching and yelling at a TV with a dozen thirty- to sixty-year-old Syrian men. I got only a few hours of sleep that night, but the experience I had was much more worthwhile than getting eight hours of sleep. The fact that I got to watch a football game with guys from the other side of the world equally as passionate as I am about sports was an experience I wouldn't trade. Even though we didn't speak the same language, we all yelled at the official at the same time, cheered, and groaned in unison.

I went to Syria to discover if archaeology is where my passion lies. I found such passion in the desert village of Nefileh along with the various sites I visited on excursions. Friends' Central always spoke

Friends' Central always spoke about the light within.

about the light within. My time in Syria and interactions with people who call that land home, has allowed me to see the inner light in those people and realize that while our homelands are vastly different, we as humans are not.

Mock Trial: A Reality Exercise in Court

By Brad Morris

Brad has been teaching math to Upper Schoolers for twenty-six years and has been department head. He is advisor to the Debate Club as well as the Mock Trial Club.

Legan Auerbach, a wealthy businesswoman from the Main Line, has been accused of murder. Her investment company, Alwinjo Investments, was using a fancy computer program called Stock Snake to lure investors, but one of her employees, Ophile Serat, knew that the program was a fake and that the whole thing was nothing more than a massive Ponzi scheme. He decided to confront her. When Mr. Serat disappeared without a trace leaving behind a large quantity of his own blood on the carpet in Legan's office, the detective assigned to the case, Zene Gafney, presumed that Legan killed him to shut him up about the Ponzi scheme. But without a body, a conviction of

But without a body, a conviction of murder in the first degree was going to be difficult for the Friends' Central Mock Trial prosecution team to prove.

murder in the first degree was going to be difficult for the Friends' Central Mock Trial prosecution team to prove. And besides, Legan had an alibi. She was at the Phillies World Series game at Citizens Bank Park the night of the disappearance of Mr. Serat. And she had just testified to that fact in Courtroom A of the Montgomery County Courthouse under direct examination by the defense counselor from the Baldwin School.

The courthouse judge, robed and professorial on the bench in Courtroom A, was in complete command of his domain. He turned to the Friends' Central Mock Trial team. "Do you have any cross examination?" Harper Estey '13, one of the three attorneys on the prosecu-



Mock Trial Team, Brad, second from right, second row.
History teacher and assistant, Gary Nicolai, left.

tion team rose. “We do, your honor.” “You may proceed,” replied the judge. Harper approached the witness. He leaned in. “So you say you were at the Phillies game the night of the disappearance of Mr. Serat. Is that correct?” “It is,” replied Auerbach. “Were you in the upper deck or the lower deck?” A look of horror flashed across the Baldwin student’s face. After hours and hours of preparation, practice after practice, every detail covered with a fine toothed comb, how did they not think of this? The jury gazed in. The student’s panic-stricken eyes darted to the defense bench who were frantically going through the case materials trying to find the ticket stub, labeled exhibit 6 in the Mock Trial packet. One of them flashed a “thumbs down” indicating lower deck and the student playing Ms.Auerbach recovered nicely, indicating she was in the lower deck section 132. But the damage was done. Harper pressed on. “And who was pitching that night?” “Cliff Lee,” the flustered witness stammered. “Actually it was Cole Hamels who got the start that night, Ms.Auerbach,” Harper responded. “No further questions.”

For high school students courtroom drama does not get any more authentic than this...

For high school students courtroom drama does not get any more authentic than this—unless the students are actual witnesses or defendants in a real trial. But the Pennsylvania Bar Association Mock Trial program is such an outstanding facsimile of a real trial that, with the exception of the ages of the participants, one can hardly tell the difference. Mock Trial gives students a real judge in a real courtroom

in front of a real jury. How cool! What more could a high school student interested in the law ask for? How about a fascinating case with over 100 pages of detailed case materials including descriptions of the events, stipulations, jury instructions, witness statements for each of six witnesses (three for each side) and an exhaustive list of exhibits in a balanced package of materials that give both the plaintiff and defendant an equal chance of winning?

The whole thing takes a little over an hour and plays out in the courtroom, in this case in Norristown, Montgomery County, like loosely choreographed intellectual theater with judges, jury, clerks, witnesses and counsel all playing key roles.

The judge is the real McCoy. We are in his court, and he presides over it with authentic purpose and presence. His presence is both authoritative and appreciative of the effort and talent of the participants.

The witnesses comprise half of the Mock Trial team. They need to know their characters inside out, not only in terms of what is in their witness statements, but also from a psychological point of view. They have to decide what motivates their characters to act the way they do. The witnesses are first and foremost actors who need to bring their characters to life and make them as credible to the jury as possible.

The attorneys make up the other half of the team and are responsible for the opening and closing statements to the jury, (often without notes!) and all direct and cross examinations of the witnesses.

**Months of preparation are needed
to get the team ready for trial.**

Months of preparation are needed to get the team ready for trial. But they can't do it alone. The FCS Mock Trial team has been aided in large measure by the assistance of several attorney advisors to the team. The 2010/2011 season was FCS' third year participating in the program, and we have been blessed to have two full time attorney advisors, Friends' Central parents Susan Tabor and Steve Chawaga all three seasons, and two part time advisors, John Estey and Rob Fox, over much of that period as well. Our attorney advisors are instrumental in guiding the students through all of the legal aspects of the program. They help the students with raising objections and responding to raised objections, rules of evidence, introducing exhibits to the court and developing overall legal strategy.

As a lawyer and mother of two teenage boys, I continue to be impressed by the depth of thinking and dedication the students demonstrated. They were excited by the ongoing preparation--discovering a clever strategy, learning rules of evidence, and crafting sophisticated arguments. The competition gave them the platform to put their arguments to the test, think on

their feet, comport themselves with courtesy and respect, and live the excitement of a trial. It is an invaluable experience that these students truly will carry with them, whatever their ultimate careers. —Susan Tabor

And team co-captains Adam Posner and Alex Kleiman offered these reflections on the program:

To me, being an attorney on Friends' Central's first mock trial team has been a gift in so many ways. From very early on I had the opportunity to explore something that to this day truly fascinates and excites me: the law. In hindsight, however, the greatest part about being one of the original mock

To me, being an attorney on Friends' Central's first mock trial team has been a gift in so many ways.

trial members is the ability to appreciate the incredible transformation we as a team underwent over three Mock Trial seasons. We matured from a group of inexperienced sophomores (with no clue what we were in for) to a truly first rate and highly efficient team of attorneys and witnesses. My fellow captains and I are incredibly proud to have participated and led this team through three very successful seasons. —A. Posner '11

I truly love the mental challenge that is Mock Trial, and I revel in the time we spend as a team analyzing the case before us. In addition, the experience of engaging in a battle of thinking and wits with someone in

I truly love the mental challenge that is Mock Trial...

competition is simply fantastic. There is another aspect of Mock Trial that I enjoy, however. I refer to the team aspect. Each year, I see a small group of students of different ages, interests and grades come together to form one cohesive unit. Because of this, Mock Trial will forever stand out from my other extracurricular activities. (I guess you can tell I'm not much of an athlete.) —A. Kleiman '11

The judge in Courtroom A addressed the FCS bench. "Do you have a closing statement?" "We do your honor." "You may proceed." Co-Captain Mike Fires '11 approached the jury and delivered a stirring and persuasive address on the merits of the case against the defendant, especially the defendant's shaky alibi. The jury deliberated and returned a verdict of guilty. High fives all around for the FCS Mock Trial team.



My Teachers

By Paul Perkinson

*Paul taught history at FCS from 1984-1992.
He served as Upper School head at North Shore Country Day,
Head of School at Tandem Friends for eleven years,
and this July, he will move to Blue Hill, Maine,
to head the George Stevens Academy.*

I had dinner with my mother in law recently. She is a true mid-westerner...honest, reticent, stern, with a hands-on-her-hips toughness. It was after a school event in which she met many of her granddaughter's teachers. Pausing between bites, she exhaled, looked out the window as if to gather herself and turned to me and said, "I do not think I had a single good teacher in my entire school life. Not one that I remember. Not one that talked about teaching the way Emma's teachers did tonight. Not one good teacher who made a difference." She continued to look out the window, then asked "Now why is that?"

It was a stunning statement not only because of the power of the admission but also because of the discovered lament in her voice. It seemed so true to her, but the realization was raw and new.

I was silent. Not having an answer, I got the sense that she was not really looking for one. The conversation moved on to other topics but, in the back of my mind, I thought how lucky I have been to have had, as a learner, so many, many fine teachers in my life.

Indeed, it is because of those teachers that I teach. I teach because I was taught so well that I wanted to be part of that dynamic exchange

I teach because I was taught so well that I wanted to be part of that dynamic exchange between teacher and student, between someone who mastered 'it' and someone who has just become aware of 'it.'

between teacher and student, between someone who mastered 'it' and someone who has just become aware of 'it.' I wanted to be part of that



Paul Perkinson.

kinship between a person and an idea. I teach because I want to be involved in the life of another person in ways both transactional and transformational.

I teach because I had a 2nd grade teacher who thought it was important for every student in her class to learn how to write a thank you letter, and thus I learned how to express gratitude. *Thank you, Mrs. Todd.*

I teach because a veteran English teacher once grabbed me in the hall after witnessing me mishandle a situation with a student and told me, "Just because she has an emergency does not make it your emergency." I learned how to be mentored and how to be a mentor. *Thank you, John McCollum.*

I teach because my wife told me once that everything we do as parents and teachers should be about love. I learned better to love. *Thank you, Kip.*

I teach because I had a football coach in sixth grade who taught me never to be afraid of push-ups, and thus I learned how to deal with my fears. *Thank you, Tommy Moses.*

I teach because my incredible eighth grade Georgia history teacher held me after class to return a paper to me saying, "This is a very impressive paper, Paul. You should think about what this means. You might be good enough to be a teacher some day." She taught me the power of believing in unseen futures. *Thank you, Mrs. Posten.*

I teach because my scoutmaster helped set up a tent in a driving, horizontal rain. I learned how to work *and* laugh under adverse conditions. *Thank you, Bart Miller.*

I teach because my tenth grade English teacher deftly evaluated my precocious and arrogant term paper on "Sartre and Existentialism" in way that was not dismissive or demeaning. *Thank you Mrs. Woods.*

I teach because a groundskeeper told me, "Ya gotta' aerate before you drop the grass seed...and you need to drop the grass seed just at the right time...kinda' like life, right?" I was reminded of the power of metaphor. *Thank you, Solomon Banks.*

I teach because my father clipped my fingernails every Sunday until I was eleven, thus showing me how a man can be gentle doing sharp things. *Thank you, Dad.*

I teach because my five-year-old son, now a college graduate, once asked, "When I die, will you bury me under that tree?" I learned to be comfortable with frightening questions. *Thank you, Gabriel.*

I teach because my baseball coach promoted me over two older, more experienced, and far more popular infielders. I learned that recognizing talent and rewarding merit and effort matter tremendously. *Thank you, Coach Andrews.*

I teach because a professor who was a dynamic lecturer began the semester with the statement, "I really aspired to be a stand-up comic but I wanted to keep learning...so your job is to teach me with your comments, questions and papers." I learned the place of humor and humility from him. *Thank you, Gordon.*

Because of my experience with these and other teachers...there are few words I revere more than 'teacher.' And I wish my mother-in-law could begin school all over again!



How To Use 525,600 Minutes, Twenty-nine Times Over

By David Thomas

David has been teaching science to Middle Schoolers for twenty-three years. The following is his tribute to his beloved colleague, Lylee Van Pelt, who is retiring from FCS after twenty nine years of service.

Alida Van Pelt, Lylee to most of her colleagues and to her parents, will retire from Friends' Central School at the conclusion of the 2010-2011 school year. Since Lylee is a math teacher, one might ask how did she spend her approximately 11,431,800 minutes (525,500 minutes per year \times 0.75 years/1 school year \times 29 school years), at Friends' Central School? I will try to answer the question in part, by sharing the experiences and perspectives of some of the members of the Friends' Central community who have had direct contact with Lylee over the years.

Lylee has been the Grade 5 math teacher for most of her time at FCS, but she has assumed many more roles during her tenure.

Lylee has been the Grade 5 math teacher for most of her time at FCS, but she has assumed many more roles during her tenure. She has also taught social studies and science. Her colleagues, as well as students, have benefited from her willingness to take on these different roles.

When I arrived at Friends' Central, Lylee was already an established teacher of ten and eleven year old students, but she was adjusting to her new assignment as a teacher in the Middle School. One year earlier, the fifth grade had been separated from the Lower School, where Lylee had started at Friends' Central, and added to the Middle School. She and her colleague Steve Ruzansky and their students went from being the oldest grade in the Lower School to being the youngest grade in the Middle School. Their classroom locations, principal and immediate teaching colleagues all changed! Their mission as Grade 5

teachers also changed, for now they were no longer cultivating leadership of the eldest of the Lower School student body. Their new focus became helping the youngest members of the Middle School manage the transition to being in the Middle School. Lylee brought perspective, creativity, enthusiasm, sensitivity, compassion, open-heartedness, versatility, energy and a sense of adventure to the task. One year after her move to the Middle School, I would join the Friends' Central community and begin to experience the perspective, creativity and energy that Lylee brings to her teaching.

I was not new to teaching, but I was new to teaching pre-adolescents. Lylee's experience with and perspective about ten and eleven year old students was indispensable in helping me transition from teaching high school students to teaching middle school students. Her grasp of the developmental needs of this age group was particularly helpful to me. It was, however, the professional but caring way, in which she helped me to learn these needs quickly that earned Lylee high respect, high appreciation and much gratitude from me. What follows is a sampling of the impact that Lylee has had on the lives of members from a variety of different sectors of the Friends' Central community.

"One of the things I have always admired and appreciated about Lylee—as my former teacher and now my colleague—is her strength and outspokenness as a woman. When I was in Middle School, she helped me and other girls to feel empowered—not only in math and science, but also in our broader lives—to speak our minds. From her work with IGLES to her refusal to ignore common statements like, "You throw like a girl," Lylee emphasized that there were no limits to

**Lylee emphasized that there were no limits
to what girls and women could do.**

what girls and women could do. She is the first teacher who showed me it was important to actively confront the societal forces that had the potential to make me and my friends feel like second class citizens. I have been fortunate to have many strong women in my life, and Lylee is certainly one of them."

—Alexa Dunnington '98
Administrative Assistant
Grade 7 Language Arts Teacher

"Ms. Van Pelt was so amazing at helping me to adjust to a new place. She would help me no matter what, even when I wasn't in her

class. She was always thinking of different things our homeroom could do to help the community.”

– Annie Kennedy '16

“I will always remember the first time I met Ms. Van Pelt. I was in fourth grade, and it was Moving Up Day. The fourth graders moved from classroom to classroom, briefly meeting all of the teachers we would have the next year. As soon as I stepped into Ms. Van Pelt’s room, I knew where I wanted to have homeroom every morning in fifth grade—the room with the giant sofa. When the new school year started, I found out that I got my wish. I soon realized how right I was in wanting to be in Ms. Van Pelt’s homeroom and advisory, but for the wrong reasons. Sure, the couch was fun to have, but what was even better was the fact that I got to spend a large portion of my first year in Middle School with MVP. Pretty quickly, I discovered that she was a fun, reliable and dedicated teacher as well as a caring, compassionate and supportive person. I would always enjoy being in her math classes, homeroom, advisory, and her “Share the Warmth” service. Now that I am in seventh grade, I still smile whenever I talk to her, because that’s just the type of person she is.”

– Jesse Rubin '16

“Lylee was one of my first friends when I started at FCS! Over the years Lylee and I have collaborated on many ways of combining our disciplines for the benefit of our students, where Math + Art + Life experiences allowed for creative learning opportunities, including: Designing mosaics, constructing recycled bird feeders, fabricating ‘Fantastic Patterned Fish,’ stitching tangram quilts, weaving Navajo rug samplers... all in order to instill educational and creative results using math concepts and art techniques. Lylee’s love of sharing the



Lylee, with fifth graders, at Camp Dark Waters.

natural world and stewardship with students has always been our ‘connecting fiber,’ and I was thrilled to be a part of her Girls Celebrate Science workshop when she asked me to share natural remedies, which we still use every year at the fifth grade Dark Waters camping trip! She is an avid knitter. Another of our ‘connecting fibers’ lies in our passions for fiber as we designed a mini course combining recycling (plastic bags) and fibers (weaving, knitting, crocheting) into ‘Plastic Fantastic,’ an avenue for students to craft from discards! As an

“...Lylee always offered deep insights and vast knowledge throughout the years and remains a committed and inspiring role model to me.”

invested colleague on the fifth grade team, Lylee always offered deep insights and vast knowledge throughout the years and remains a committed and inspiring role model to me.”

– Caroline Maw-Deis,
Middle School Art Teacher

“Lylee is a fearless advocate for the environment. I have worked alongside her on Streamwatch for several years, and her devotion to this Service project has been an inspiration to me. She is ever mindful of her carbon footprint and is tireless in her efforts – leading by example – to motivate her students and colleagues to be mindful of theirs. She makes me want to be a better environmentalist.”

– Pdraig Barry,
Grade 6 Science Teacher

“When I started, Lylee became a mentor to me. She had the patience to sit and talk to me when she felt she had suggestions on how to improve my curriculum, along with helping me enhance my teaching abilities. She is one of the most courageous and outspoken people that I know. Lylee is not afraid to speak her mind or stand up for something when she believes she is right. She is a loyal friend and has taken the time not only to help with work, but personal issues as well. She always had very good advice and a positive outlook on life itself. She is a role model and an outstanding teacher who teaches, not just about math, but about life itself.”

– Melissa Rabena
Grade 5 Social Studies Teacher

“Many years Lylee would visit the Copy Room, and we would talk. I looked forward to seeing her. Our main discussion would be

movies. Lylee is a movie buff—old and new movies. I so enjoyed her input about the actors and actresses on screen and the best movies to see. She would say, “Go see this or rent that, and you won’t be disappointed.” There were also times when my children were growing up that I would ask her questions about them relating to their progress in school. I always valued her opinion. She is a wonderful teacher and a wonderful person.”

—Laura McTaggart,
Copy Room Manager

“When I started to work here, there were ‘linkage’ events, in an effort to keep the faculty connected even though they were on two campuses. Lylee was, as I remember it, very involved in the planning of those occasions. My overriding memory of her my first year was as an extremely bright, encouraging, welcoming presence, expressly reaching out to me as a new faculty member. I was particularly touched by this because she was in fifth and I was in first, and on separate campuses, and her way of greeting and welcoming me gave me the sense that I was joining a school that truly was ‘linked’ even with the separate campuses. Of course, we know that’s true, but not as true as maybe we would like. Lylee stands out as someone who really did her part to make us one school community. And of course, I think of her singing and playing music with Steve Ruzansky.

—Chris Ramsey,
Lower School Teacher

“There’s a boldness and verve in Lylee that I’ve always respected. It’s a willingness to engage intensely – whether it’s with the needs and struggles of a particular advisee; interesting ideas and questions raised by colleagues; or the vibrant colors and textures of the yarns she joyfully knits and wears. I value her intellectual energy and collaborative spirit and will miss her presence among the fifth grade teachers.”

—Juliet Sternberg,
Middle and Upper School Psychologist

“One day at my register, a little girl was standing with her friends, and she didn’t have any lunch. Lylee said, “Why aren’t you eating?” The girl replied that she didn’t have any money, and Lylee bought her lunch. I have always remembered this experience with Lylee, because I thought it was so kind of her.”

—Kathleen Canaris,
Dining Service

“I have been honored to work with Lylee for almost three decades. She has been a colleague and a dear friend. Lylee has always been a natural, gifted teacher. Her expertise and wisdom in the classroom have exhibited what Friends education is all about—command

“Her expertise and wisdom in the classroom have exhibited what Friends education is all about..”

of material, knowing the minds of children and most especially seeking and finding the Spirit of the Divine in every child and adult she encounters each day.

Lylee’s friendship has been evident so many times for me, but none more than two times during my year of serious illness. First, she sent me the gift of a Baha’i prayer. She knew that I needed spiritual uplifting, and that prayer helped heal me—it was spiritual medicine from within! Second, she shared another gift with me, that of music. Her invitation to play guitar with her and friends helped take me beyond any realm of pain or worry. Each time we played I was physically stronger and able to meet the challenge of new songs. After only a few weeks, I knew I would be able to return to school with energy and optimism. “Jamming” with colleagues is a practice that has continued each week for the past two years, as we have intentionally shifted into “music mode,” that place beyond pain and worry. Indeed, we have learned that it is a sharing time when we cannot *not* be there. And, when we are most frazzled, we must be there. Thank you, Lylee, for helping me move into such a space.

I will miss Lylee, both as a colleague and as a friend. Friends’ Central will miss her gentle, loving, great soul.”

—Mike Crauderueff,
*Upper School Spanish and Religion Teacher,
Former Middle School Language Teacher*

One of Lylee’s passions has been gardening. I know that her departure from our community will create a void not likely to be filled, but the “gardener” in her has planted the seeds in each of us that will bloom and continue to add to the strength and beauty of Friends’ Central. I know also that her departure from our community represents an opportunity for Lylee to grow and experience a new adventure where she can plant seeds that will add to the beauty and strength of another community.



FRIENDS' CENTRAL SCHOOL
1101 City Avenue
Wynnewood, PA 19096

NONPROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PHILADELPHIA, PA
PERMIT NO. 6702

