

Admissions Open House & Merit Scholarship Exams

OPEN HOUSE DATES

Friday, December 2 8-10 am
 Friday, January 20 8-10 am
 Saturday, January 21 9-11 am
 Friday, April 13 8-10 am

To RSVP for an Open House
 or to register for the
 Merit Scholarship Exam,

MERIT SCHOLARSHIP EXAM DATES* [For Students Entering Grades 5 and 6]

Friday, January 20 4-6 pm
 Saturday, January 21 10-noon
 Wednesday, January 25 4-6 pm

please contact
 Kristin Emory,
 Director of Admission,
 401.849.4646, ext 147,
 or kemory@pennfield.org

** Exam registration deadline is January 17, 2012.
 One \$5,000 scholarship will be awarded to a student seeking
 admission to grade 5 and one to a student seeking admission
 to grade 6.*



Have You Considered Making a Bequest To The Pennfield School?

Bequests have long been one of the easiest and most popular ways of supporting charities. To leave a bequest to the School, simply include the following language in your will:

I give (_____ dollars/ _____ percentage of the entire residue of my estate) to the Board of Trustees of The Pennfield School, a Rhode Island educational, charitable corporation.

As with any financial decision, you should consult your financial advisors. If you are contemplating a gift to Pennfield, please let us know so we can ensure your gift can be used according to your directions. If you have questions about your philanthropy, please contact Head of School, Rob Kelley at 401.849.4646.

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The Pennfield School



The Spirit

VOLUME XX, NUMBER 3

FALL 2011

SCHOOL NEWS, INFORMATION AND EVENTS

Message from the Head of School



Dear Community Members,

The 2011-2012 school year is Pennfield's 40th. For many of us – myself included – turning 40 certainly is fun – but it's tempered by the undeniable fact that we've moved into the dreaded "middle-aged" category. For Pennfield School, though, turning 40 is somewhat akin to any one of our Lower School students celebrating a birthday –

with cake, birthday presents, and high hopes and expectations for a bright future.

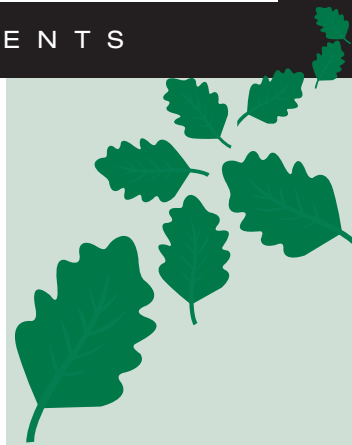
Pennfield School, established in 1971, moved four times over four decades before settling into our permanent home at Little Slocum Farm in 2004. Under the leadership of Heads of School Father Cranston and John Pedrick

and talented faculty, and the support of hundreds of loyal parents and friends of the School, Pennfield has established deep roots in the community. Our mission to foster joy, understanding and respect defines us – and sets us apart from other elementary schools. Just walk onto campus and you can see our students engaged intellectually, caring for each other, and thoroughly enjoying their Pennfield experience.

Looking to the future, Pennfield is exploring new approaches to infuse technology throughout the curriculum with a particular emphasis on writing, and we are teaching students about the importance of "sustainability" and "going green." That said, we will always remain true to our mission and core values and honor our humble beginnings.

If you haven't stopped by campus in awhile, please do so. You'll like what you see.

Rob Kelley,
Head of School



Future Events:

Cornucopia Preview Party
Friday, November 11
6 pm – 8 pm

Cornucopia Fine Arts Sale
Saturday, November 12
9 am – 4 pm

Winter Concert
Friday, December 16
11 am – noon

Alumni Holiday Reception
Thursday, December 22
7 pm – 8 pm
The Gas Lamp Grille

Faculty/Parent Cocktail Party
Saturday, January 28
6 – 8 pm

40th Anniversary Gala
Saturday, February 25
Ochre Court,
Salve Regina University
6:30 – 10:00 pm

The Pennfield School



Joy • Understanding • Respect

Little Slocum Farm

110 Sandy Point Avenue • Portsmouth • Rhode Island • 02871

401.849.4646 / www.pennfield.org

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The Pennfield School Mission

The mission of The Pennfield School is to create an inclusive community of dedicated learners, where students are given a foundation and appreciation for the joyful pursuit of understanding, while fostering respect for oneself and others as a way of life.

The Pennfield School Core Values

- We are committed to creating an environment in which everyone is treated with kindness and respect.
- We are committed to being a joyful place, where students learn by example: the importance of honesty, integrity, generosity and humor.
- We are committed to providing a challenging and balanced curriculum, enabling our students to succeed at a wide variety of secondary schools and beyond.
- We are committed to fostering a strong partnership between faculty, students and parents.
- We are committed to creating an inclusive culture that is diverse in make-up, is tolerant and accepting, and helps develop a strong sense of social and community responsibility.
- We are committed to embracing the uniqueness of every member of our community and providing the individual attention needed to help each student's talents unfold.
- We are committed to providing a safe and supportive environment in which students are encouraged to take academic, artistic and athletic risks.

Cornucopia

Art Sale Celebrating **20** Artistic Years

By Amy Simmons

Over 20 years ago, a few very creative and dedicated parents came up with a wonderful idea to raise money for Pennfield while promoting Aquidneck Island's vibrant art community – our Cornucopia Fine Arts and Craft Sale.

Cornucopia was one of the first of its kind art show and planning the event for early November, it became the unofficial start of the holiday shopping season!

Gradually over the years, artisans from all over

New England learned of our show and our artistic reputation. Our vendors come back year after year and Cornucopia has



developed quite a following throughout the state. In addition to promoting our wonderful vendors, Cornucopia has showcased Pennfield parent's creative side. Gifts from Pennfield has been a tremendous success, our parents outdoing themselves artistically year after year.



Christine Bandoni, past Board Chair, purchasing an item.

Proceeds from Cornucopia benefit Pennfield's Art Festival, promoting art education and workshops for our students, The John Pedrick Faculty Endowment Fund, as well as special projects. Most recently, Cornucopia funds were used to purchase the sound system for our auditorium.

Please join us on Friday, November 11 from 6-8pm for our Preview Party as we honor those parents who have committed themselves over the years to Chairing Cornucopia, growing it into the incredible event that it is today and will continue for many years to come.





Alton Jones Trip

By Heather Strout

The fourth and fifth grade classes went on their annual overnight trip to W. Alton Jones on September 15th and 16th. This is an exciting outdoor educational and team building program. Some of the activities the students participated in included pond ecology, an egg drop, archeology, and campfire songs and activities. The Pennfield students led by chaperones Erin Carr, Valerie Connor, Robbie DeSouza, Ted Karousos, Rob Kelley, and Heather Strout had a fantastic time. Among many things, an all cabin pillow fight helped to make memories that will last a lifetime!

Sargent Center

By Mathew Bottone

The Upper School fall trip took place from September 12-14 at Sargent Center. This annual trip typically alternates between two uniquely different destinations, to prevent any eighth grade students from attending the same camp for three consecutive years. After attending Chewonki for a second straight time last year, while searching for a suitable replacement for Farm and Wilderness (shuttered its schools program after our last visit in 2008), we finally discovered Sargent Center in Hancock, New Hampshire. How lucky for us!

At Sargent Center, we were led so enthusiastically by Larry “Harmonica Man” Chambers. Our seven energetic camp instructors provided the students with an incredibly positive and enriching experience. With a focus on the Four C’s: Communication, Commitment, Cooperation and Care, our Upper School students engaged in a variety of activities that always put a stress on teamwork and mutual respect. Students participated in fascinating aquatic biology research, created remarkably sturdy catamarans from canoes, hiked miles of wooded trails, visited a NASA radio telescope installation, took a night hike, and tackled many diverse group challenges designed to promote problem solving, resourcefulness, and teamwork. The dorms and bunks were comfortable and the mess hall dining was delicious and filling. The final day’s highlight featured a spectacular high ropes course challenge for everyone – even some of our faculty and parent chaperones participated! When we boarded our coach busses for the return to Pennfield, we all realized that Larry had been very prophetic when he told us upon our arrival that three days at Sargent Center would pass in a flash. Regardless of how quickly this adventure seemed to pass, our experiences at Sargent Center bonded us all together in the spirit of the Four C’s, and we will carry those positive memories forward the rest of the school year.





Celebrating our
40th
Anniversary!



Current Pennfield fathers Ed Sisk, Frank DeSouza, and Anson Stookey



Trustee Rachel Balaban and Assistant Head of School Mattie Edwards-Kemp



Pennfield mom, MJ Torello and daughter Alexa Torello '22

A Birthday Message from John Pedrick

To Mr. Kelley, the Administration, Faculty and Staff, Board of Trustees, Families, and Students at Pennfield,

Pretend that this is assembly and I am singing this:
HAPPY BIRTHDAY DEAR PENNFIELD,
HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU.

WOW! FORTY YEARS OLD – and what a history you have! The majority of you who are celebrating this milestone have never known anything but the school's home at Little Slocum Farm – lucky you to be teaching and learning at such an incomparably beautiful place. It didn't come easily. There are some in your midst, I hesitate to call them old-timers who, with me, traveled from school building to school building as we searched for a permanent location.

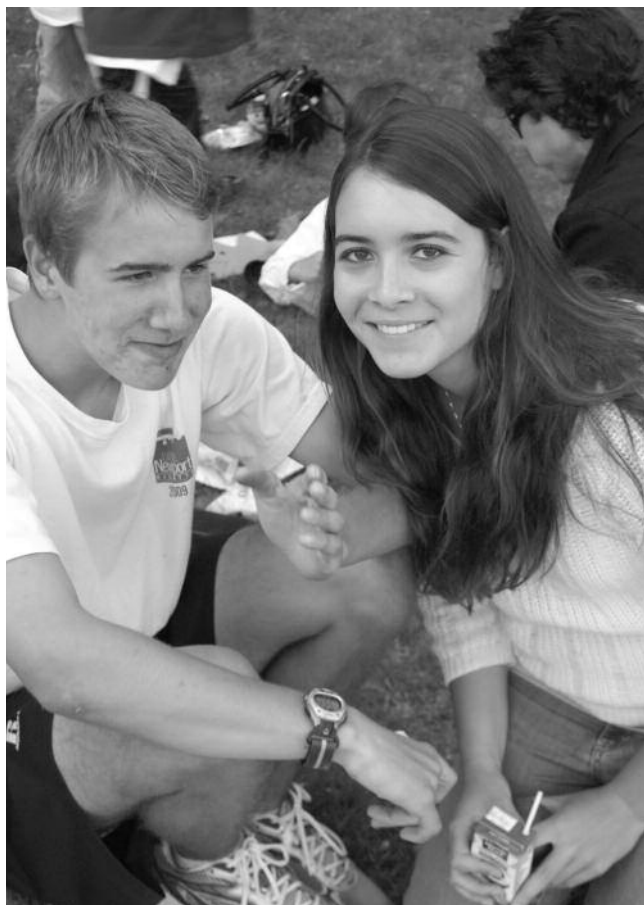
I arrived at the school, then called The New School, in 1983, when the school was twelve years old. Father Cranston and many loyal people, some of whom may be there today, had founded the school in 1971 – they wanted a unique, special, place for young people to learn. I was honored to carry on the tradition. Between 1983 and 2005 when I retired, the school was in four different locations – but wasn't it worth the wait! In 1993, when the school was no longer 'new' it was renamed in honor of Isabelle and Roy Penny. Isabelle had been the school's assistant head for more than twenty years and Roy was an invaluable trustee. Their farm in Middletown was called Pennfield Farm, so it was a fitting way to honor them and a name that just seemed to fit.

Had so many people not loved the school as they did over the years, had faith in her future, and poured their time, treasure, and talent into her survival, Pennfield wouldn't be where she is today. She has been known as "The Little School that Could". Her legacy is yours to carry forward.

Cherish her as so many have, nurture her with your gifts and talents, and celebrate not only this birthday, but your good fortune that Pennfield is part of your lives – as you are a part of its promise for the future. Have a great day!!

Cheers, congratulations, and many happy returns, -

John R. Pedrick
Head, Emeritus



Alumni Dirk Johnson and Eliza Radeka, both class of '09



New Faculty



Jennifer Alexander
Writing Skills Educator

B.S. Roger Williams University
M.A.T. Roger Williams University



Toni Ciany
Sustainability Educator

B.A. Webster University



Kristin Emory
Director of Admissions and Financial Aid

B.A. University of Colorado
M.A.T. University of San Francisco



Elisabeth Swain
Grade VIII English

B.A. Sarah Lawrence College
M.A. Plymouth State University



Maria Takacs
Nursery-Grade V Spanish

B.B.A. Universidad de Puerto Rico

Writing Skills Educator

By Jennifer Alexander

The ability to represent oneself well on paper is a skill necessary to succeed not only at Pennfield, but in all facets of life. The writing skills educator enhances the writing program at the school in many unique ways. Student newspapers, a literary magazine, and an all school spelling bee are just a few of the intriguing projects forthcoming this year. The goal of the writing skills educator is to work with the classroom teachers to allow students ample time to practice the art of writing. Through various writing pieces, students will be given the opportunity to express themselves with the written word.

I am thrilled to aid students on their quests to becoming confident, solid writers. Words on paper have the power to evoke

Sustainability Educator

By Toni Ciany

Embracing the current movement towards sustainable campuses has been, up until now, the provenance of colleges and universities. Leave it to Pennfield to lead the way for other Rhode Island elementary schools by deciding it was high time that the younger crowd got involved in protecting our environment too!

I arrived at Pennfield in early September with two things: First, a long history of environmental stewardship and second, the requisite passion to assist the school leadership in expanding the notion of “respect” to apply to our increasingly more fragile eco-system, while also implementing conservation-minded strategies to achieve those goals.

The response from the Pennfield community has so far been not only welcoming, but enthusiastic! Faculty and parents have been sharing their ideas and observations with me, the staff is exceedingly accommodating, and the students who have been attending our Friday Ecology Club couldn't be more astute!

Besides the Club, in which we are exploring our natural resources, I hope to expand the school's existing recycling practices, explore resource and energy conservation measures, provide classroom lessons, work with the parent's association, expand the school vegetable gardens and compost facilities, build a greenhouse and grow our exciting partnership with the Aquidneck Land Trust.



Zoë Lowney, '15.
PHOTO: CLOUD HOWARD

emotion in both the writer and the reader. It is my hope students will begin to understand the force of words, and respect words in their writings. Words are not merely letters thrown together, but an ancient tool that has allowed mankind to communicate facts, thoughts, and emotions with others throughout time. Lord Byron wrote:

“But words are things, and a small drop of ink,
Falling like dew, upon a thought, produces
That which makes thousands, perhaps millions, think.”

As students come and work with me, they will be guided and taught to respect words, and the powers they hold. They will come to understand the everlasting joy writing can give them. The Pennfield School has a wonderful writing program in place, I am ecstatic I am able to supplement the program and showcase the amazing talent we have at our school.



Paying Tribute to Those Who Protect Us

In order to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks on America, The Pennfield School made cards and wrote letters to the local fire departments and police stations, thanking them for their service to the community. Students hand delivered these items, along with some freshly baked cookies, to the Portsmouth Fire Department, Portsmouth Police Station, and the Rhode Island State Police Barracks.



Brothers Matthew Stapleton '12 and Benjamin Cory '22 with a police officer and his police canine.

Annual Alumni Holiday Party!

Thursday, December 22, 2011

7- 8 pm

The Gas Lamp Grille

206 Thames St., Newport, RI

Classes 1972-2004 reconnect with each other

Calling All Alums...

Please contact the alumni office (pmeadows@pennfield.org). We need your updated email and mailing address. Most important – we need your news. What are you doing?

Check out The Pennfield School facebook page:
<http://www.facebook.com/pennfield>

Friend Pennfield!

40th Anniversary Annual Fund

Celebrate four decades of excellence in education by making your gift to the Annual Fund.

The mission of The Pennfield School's Annual Fund is to raise unrestricted funds to support operational costs.

Commemorate our 40th anniversary and be a part of Pennfield's continued success by contributing to the Annual Fund today.

**Annual Fund Goal:
 \$130,000**

If you would like to make an Annual Fund gift, please contact Polly Meadows in the Advancement Office at pmeadows@pennfield.org or 401.849.4646 ext. 148