



Spring 2013

# ST. PATRICK'S PRESS



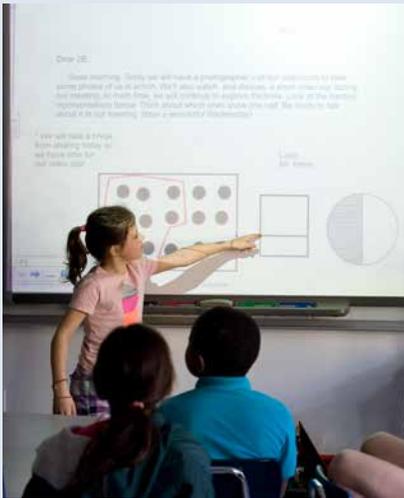
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## The Future of Exceptional Literacy

Welcome, New Board Members  
Wolfhound Watch: Sports Wrap-Up

Taizé Chapel Takes Root  
Author Anthony Marra '97

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**Photo above:** St. Patrick's sends a number of Upper School students to the annual Mid-Atlantic Episcopal Schools Association (MAESA) Fair each year to compete in various categories including science, art, geography, and spelling. Six Day School students left with medals this year. All 2013 participants are pictured above. **On the cover:** Grade 5 students work with a team to program their calculator robot during a recent science class. Students use the robots to collect time and distance data that will be used to explore concepts in Newtonian physics.

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## SPRING 2013

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*Peter A. Barrett*  
*Head of School*

# **No More Exciting Place to Be: Extending the Reach of Exceptional Literacy**

*About 40 years ago, in the midst of a job interview, I walked into the city room of a daily metropolitan newspaper where I would spend the next four years of my life. Awash in cigarette smoke, the place hummed with activity and pre-digital sounds, including a police scanner that was reporting in its clipped and scratchy tones a hold-up at a liquor store. “Get somebody over there,” the city editor growled. “You’ll have one scared victim right now.” In the midst of the Watergate era, even worlds away from Washington, D.C., I couldn’t imagine a more exciting place to be.*

---

More than 35 years ago, I began my first teaching assignment at a wonderful Chicago public school just off Lake Shore Drive. It was an open-space classroom—a pod, as they called it then—accommodating 200 students and 12 teachers, which quickly reminded me, minus the cigarette smoke and police scanner, of the city room of that metropolitan newspaper I had left some months before. Rather than learning to teach in a self-contained classroom, where a teacher could shut the door and cultivate close relationships with a relatively small number of students, I learned to teach in the school equivalent of a train station. I couldn’t imagine a more exciting place to be.

Since that first assignment, at Chicago’s Walt Disney Magnet School, I have been a teacher and administrator at three other schools, all of them independent schools—Park School just outside of Baltimore and, here in the District, St. Albans School and, of course, St. Patrick’s—none of them, as you might guess, organized around 200-student pods, but each alive in its own characteristic way with activity, with possibility, and with meaning, or at least the possibility of meaning. For the past 19 of those years at St. Patrick’s, I couldn’t have imagined a more exciting place to be.

One of the delights of teaching children and young people is the sheer complexity of it. We are linguistically inclined, as a culture, to ascribe such complexity more often to rocket science and brain surgery. But there is something about the lure of challenging content, mixed with the individual hearts and minds—the biographies, really—of a classroom full of five- or nine- or 14-year-olds and whatever the meteorological (or perhaps astrological) realities of the day might be, that must make a well-crafted, successful setting for teaching and learning among the most complex we can create.

I have long worked to understand the complexities of the innumerable settings for teaching and learning that I have created or observed from the late 1970s until today—those that have proved successful and those that have been considerably less so. It seems to me that what I have learned to do over time is slow down the activity and movement and energy inherent in

those settings—not to constrain them or to eliminate them (well, maybe sometimes) but simply to slow them down in order to understand them, to find meaning in every gesture, every utterance, every silence.

That desire to slow down, to make sense of, was in part the motivation behind *Setting Compass*, a document now 15 years old that nonetheless continues to guide our work here, largely through its articulation of Exceptional Literacy as an organizing idea for that varied, challenging, even complex work. For the most important things we do in our busy lives, we need to achieve a certain still point, a moment in which we can recognize more readily the contours of our chosen work, can realize its harder edges, rather than allow them to blur through constant motion—or perhaps through our own inattention. But because the work we have chosen here is forever marked by motion, by vitality, and by change, we must always move outward from that still point; we must always reengage with that motion and vitality and change, for that is its very nature.

This edition of the *St. Patrick’s Press* posits that, while *Setting Compass* is but 15 years old, its core concepts have animated St. Patrick’s throughout our 57-year history. At the same time, this edition also recognizes that advances in our understanding of how children learn best; emerging clarity about the knowledge and skills, the habits of heart and mind that will be required—and valued—by a rapidly changing world; and dramatic advances in technology will continue to demand of us that we articulate what Exceptional Literacy really means and what role it can or should play at St. Patrick’s as we invent our future.

There is much work to be done to keep the strong, balanced, engaging, and challenging St. Patrick’s program as vibrant and dynamic—as relevant—as it needs to be during a time that is itself vibrant and dynamic. We are fortunate to have *Setting Compass* to steer by as we continue this important work. I can’t imagine a more exciting place to be. 🌱

## WOLFHOUND WATCH: JV GIRLS BASKETBALL CLAIMS CHAMPIONSHIP

In what were two of the finest seasons ever recorded at St. Patrick's, both the junior varsity girls and boys basketball teams competed in the Capital Athletic Conference (CAC) tournament championship games in February. The girls team left the court victorious, claiming the first-place tournament title over Westminster and burnishing their first-place regular season performance. The boys, while ultimately unable to clinch the championship title against Woods Academy, nonetheless earned themselves second-place tournament and regular season banners—an achievement worth celebrating after a remarkable 12-2 season.

The seasons of both varsity basketball teams, composed of Grades 7 and 8 students, were characterized by great improvement over last year's, though both boys and girls teams were eliminated in the quarterfinal rounds of their respective CAC tournaments. The varsity girl Wolfhounds returned to action this year after not fielding a team during the 2011-2012 school year. They went on to win two games and were nearly victorious over number-one seed Woods, playing hard into double-overtime during that contest. Grade 8 student Catherine P. stood out this season and was recognized for her exceptional play by being named to the CAC All-Star team. After last year's disappointing winless season, the varsity boys team rallied to a 4-11 record, with victories over Washington Episcopal, Lowell, and Green Acres (twice). Grade 8 student Xavier F. was named to the CAC boys All-Star team.

Reports from the spring track and field season indicate that our Wolfhounds are a force to contend with in the conference. While weather-related cancelations prevented our athletes from competing as much as they would have liked, a number of students clocked personal-best times and finished in the top ten in recent meets.



On the varsity side, Grade 7 student Drew P. was consistently competitive for top spots in the 1600-meter run, and Grade 8 student Charlie H. placed second and fourth in the shot put at two recent meets. Grade 7 student Kate B. shined as one of our top sprinters, while Grade 8 student Isabelle J. and Grade 7 student Rachel V. were outstanding in longer races like the 800-meter run. Junior varsity contenders to watch include Grade 6 student Lucia D. and Grade 5 students Sophie S., Mac J., and Jesse F.

At the time of publication, the girls varsity and boys junior varsity Wolfhound lacrosse teams were poised to finish off successful seasons, with 5-4 and 6-2 records, respectively. The varsity boys and junior

varsity girls have struggled this season, but the girls team could still finish with a winning record if they are victorious in their next three games. We will report more on lacrosse, including tournament performances, in the summer issue of the *Press*. Go, Wolfhounds!

**Top photo:** The undefeated junior varsity girls basketball team proudly shows off the two CAC banners they earned this season, one for a first-place finish in the regular season, the second for winning the conference tournament. **Bottom left:** Grade 5 student Dylan T. rises above the competition during a JV boys basketball game against Norwood. **Bottom right:** At a recent track and field meet, Grade 8 student Charlie H. placed second in the shot put.

## WOLFHOUND EXPRESS PASSENGERS SUPPORT FINANCIAL AID PROGRAM

As in so many years past, the Day School community heeded the call of “All Aboard!” on March 2 in support of the Auction to Benefit the Financial Aid Program. This year’s theme, “Enrich your world . . . Travel with us on the Wolfhound Express,” was an invitation to broaden horizons, discover different cultures, and experience the diversity the world has to offer.

Co-chaired by Sammy Samadi and Courtland Willman, this year’s Auction netted its budgeted goal of \$416,000, a number that represents nearly one-fourth of the Day School’s total financial aid budget! As each of the hundreds of volunteers for, donors to, and attendees at this year’s event well knows, the Financial Aid Program is critical to maintaining and enhancing socioeconomic diversity at the Day School—a diversity we believe benefits all of our 525 students, not just the 1 in 6 students who received a financial aid grant this year.

Auction attendees were extremely generous with their support of the Silent and Live Auctions, but also remembered to include Fund-a-Scholar in their budgeting. The Fund-a-Scholar appeal—which provides an opportunity for community members to make a gift directly to the financial aid bottom line, with no prize at stake—raised an extraordinary \$160,320 of the total. Fund-a-Scholar is especially popular with alumni, parents of alumni, and former Trustees—many of whom are unable to attend the event—who have given more than \$100,000 to the Financial Aid Program over the last three years.

We extend our deep gratitude to everyone who contributed to this year’s enormous success! For more information about St. Patrick’s Auction to Benefit the Financial Aid Program, visit [www.stpatdsdc.org](http://www.stpatdsdc.org), then click “Giving,” “Ways to Give,” then “Auction.”



## GRADE 6 STUDENT WINS RECITATION CONTEST

In a shining example of Exceptional Literacy at work, an array of talented Grades 4 to 8 students recited poems and prose of their choosing at the 33rd annual Michael C. Leuthe Recitation Contest in March. These 14 Upper School students—who had already been through two rounds of qualification, once in their classrooms and once at the grade-wide level—expertly delivered a variety of pieces, some historical, some fiction, some humorous, and others quite serious.

In the end, our esteemed judges awarded third-place prizes to Grade 5 students Maddie R. and Phoebe W., who recited a selection from *The Velveteen Rabbit* and “The Spider and the Fly,” respectively. Second-place awards went to Grade 5 student Saskia B. and Grade 6 student Brittany H., who performed “Quangle Wangle’s Hat” and “Custard the Dragon and the Wicked Knight.” This year’s winner, Grade 6 student Lark W., who delivered a rendition of Lewis Carroll’s “The Walrus and the Carpenter” will have her name inscribed, along with past winners, on a plaque in the Day School Library.

This year’s judges included Robert L. Shafer, father of Adelaide Shafer Barrett ex. ’85 and grandfather of Peter, Auggie, and Ellen; Neil Sheehan, father of Catherine Sheehan Bruno ex. ’81 and grand-



father of Nicholas; and retired longtime Head of Nursery School and Director of Nursery Admission Pat Spector. We thank all of them for their service and congratulate student participants on their hard work!

**Top photo:** Auction Co-Chairs Sammy Samadi (left) and Courtland Willman (right) with Head of School Peter A. Barrett. **Bottom photo:** The winners of the 33rd annual Michael C. Leuthe Recitation Contest with the panel of distinguished judges. Grade 6 student Lark W. (second row, left) was named this year’s winner. Second-place awards were given to Saskia B. (second row, right) and Brittany H. (second row, middle). Maddie R. (front row, left) and Phoebe W. (front row, right) finished in third place. In the back row, judges Robert L. Shafer (left), Pat Spector (middle), and Neil Sheehan.



## BOOK DRIVE SUPPORTS ST. PATRICK'S PARTNER, BISHOP WALKER SCHOOL

This spring, St. Patrick's students delivered more than 500 books collected throughout the winter to the Bishop John T. Walker School for Boys (BWS), a tuition-free Episcopal school for low-income boys east of the Anacostia River. Grade 7 student Harry R., who has worked to support BWS through the Gifts for Good alternative gift fair since 2009, joined classmates Hopie C., Halsey M., Francesca O., and Kate P. in making the delivery to the school, where they also spent part of the day playing outside with BWS students.

The BWS Book Drive was spearheaded by parent Ann Rakestraw, with help from fellow par-

ents Susie Carlson, Katie Horan (a parent of two alumnae), Trissy McHenry, Dee Dee Myers, Ann Orr, and Sam Reid. Grade 5 teacher Jared Passmore, who has been the staff liaison for the BWS booth at Gifts for Good, acted as the Day School representative on this initiative. We extend our thanks to all St. Patrick's families who donated books to this effort!

The Day School supports BWS in a number of ways throughout the school year. Head of School Peter A. Barrett, as well as St. Patrick's parents Sam Reid and Rob Griffen, serve on the Board of Directors. Former St. Patrick's Board of Trustees Chair Dick Beatty and former Head of Nursery School Julia Berry also serve on the BWS Board, as does past parent and current grandparent James Lowe. And at the Gifts for Good fair, St. Patrick's partners with GreenToys, allowing fair attendees to purchase toys for donation. GreenToys, in turn, donates all proceeds to BWS. The Grades 7 and 8 Community Service Club also selected BWS as one of the organizations they would support this year through a variety of fundraising efforts. We look forward to further developing our relationship with this Episcopal school partner in coming years!

For more information about how to get involved with supporting the Bishop Walker School, please contact Sam Reid at [sam.reid@mac.com](mailto:sam.reid@mac.com).

**Top photo:** St. Patrick's students delivered more than 500 books to the tuition-free Bishop Walker School in Anacostia. They are pictured here with BWS Executive Director James Woody. **Bottom photo:** St. Patrick's students had the opportunity to spend some quality time with boys at the school during their visit.



## DAY SCHOOL HOSTS PKU GALA IN SEPTEMBER

On September 28, the Day School Gymnasium and Performance Center will be transformed into a Saharan-themed oasis that will be the backdrop for Tuxes for Tia: Play It Again for PKU. The gala will feature fabulous silent and live auction items, a vacation giveaway, an elegant dinner, and late-night dancing.

All proceeds will benefit the National PKU Alliance, an organization that advocates for children with, and advances research for the management and cure of, phenylketonuria (PKU), a genetic disorder characterized by an inability to process essential amino acids. People with PKU must adhere to a strict diet and, left untreated, PKU can lead to severe, irreversible neurological damage. Event organizers hope that their work will help lead to the realization of a dream held by thousands of children . . . life free from the daily struggle of managing PKU.

The event is being hosted by parents Alison and Kai Reynolds. For more information about sponsorship opportunities or to learn more about the event, please contact Alison at [alisonreynolds1@gmail.com](mailto:alisonreynolds1@gmail.com). For more information about PKU, please visit the National PKU Alliance website at [www.npkua.org](http://www.npkua.org).

## TAIZÉ CHAPEL TAKES ROOT AT ST. PATRICK'S

In 2008, longtime music teacher and Music Department team leader Anne Tyler received a Parents Association Summer Grant to travel to Taizé, France, an ecumenical monastic community that began in 1950. Taizé worship is characterized by singing, prayers, petitions, and periods of silence. While there, Anne saw that Taizé worship was effective at engaging young adults in meditative reflection, allowing them time to be silent and to find quieter, stiller places within themselves. Taizé worship complements the existing St. Patrick's program of chapel services because it is accessible to, and engages students of, all faith backgrounds. As an Episcopal school, St. Patrick's has long encouraged such expressions of the openness and diversity of its community.

Shortly after her return from Taizé that summer, Anne began holding monthly Taizé chapels for students in Grades 7 and 8. Since then, Taizé has become a regular part of the spiritual development of St. Patrick's middle school students. Faculty and students alike recognized the benefits of silent meditation—particularly for teenagers, who are rarely afforded an opportunity for contemplative reflection. At St. Patrick's, each Taizé service includes a period of up to eight minutes of silence.

In 2010, Anne received the Day School's O'Neil-Carew Fellowship for Excellence in Teaching, which afforded her another opportunity to travel to Taizé, this time with an eye toward creating a video that she would use as a part of a presentation to the National Association of Episcopal Schools biennial conference. As part of that process, Anne interviewed Taizé participants in France as well as a number of St. Patrick's students and faculty. A version of that video, edited to include only St. Patrick's students, faculty, and clergy, is available on the St. Patrick's website by clicking the "Arts" menu, then "Music and Performing Arts," and clicking the "Taizé Worship" video in the right column.



Although parents and faculty and staff are welcome at Taizé services for Grades 7 and 8 students, a service is currently available to the entire St. Patrick's community on a monthly basis, held in the Nave at 7:00 am. We encourage you to learn more about Taizé worship by viewing Anne's video and attending a service (dates and times are listed on various school calendars)!

**Photos:** Scenes from a recent Grades 7 and 8 Taizé chapel. Students gather once a month for reflection, prayer, and meditation during periods of up to eight minutes of silence during each service. Candles set a quiet tone, while a projector displays calming images and, at the appropriate time, directives as to which song to sing. Music teacher Anne Tyler leads the musical interludes on the piano.

## PARENTS ASSOCIATION AND DAY SCHOOL PARTNER ON INNOVATION GRANT

The Educational Innovation Grant Program, a new initiative set to begin this summer, stems from a partnership between the Parents Association and the Day School designed to promote innovation in educational programs, pedagogies, and technologies. Inspired by a shared intention to be strategic and proactive with respect to emerging educational innovations and technologies, this grant opportunity empowers groups of faculty members to pilot such work in their own classrooms. The program will make up to \$20,000 available annually to one or more teams of faculty members who want to undertake program design work that is innovative in nature and will make a significant contribution to the current and future Day School program.

Grant-funded faculty teams may come from any division, grade level, or content area. With respect to that last point, however, teams that propose program design work that is interdisciplinary, project-based, and globally-oriented in nature receive special consideration. Teams may comprise multiple faculty members from a single grade level or across grade levels, from a single division or across divisions, and from a single department or across departments.

We are proud to announce that the first recipients of this prestigious grant are Grade 6 math teacher Beth Cole and Upper School science teacher Michelle Basile. They are supported in their efforts by Lower School science teacher Will Cook, technology coordinator Jonathan Fichter, Grade 6 social studies teacher Hank Lanphier, incoming Grades 5 and 6 science teacher Kate Selby, and incoming Grade 5 math and homeroom teacher Linda Wilson. These teachers will complete work focused on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) education at St. Patrick's. Using grant funds, they will carefully evaluate the current math, science, and technology curriculum at the Grades 5 and 6 level in order to create a new vision for STEM



**Photo:** Grade 7 students learned about the GRAMMY Awards during a recent field trip. Clare W. (left), Allie A. (middle), and Nora K. (right) are pictured here, with one of entertainer Lady Gaga's platinum albums.

education for this age group. Their work this summer will include big-picture thinking as well as work designing four detailed units for Grades 5 and 6 students. Units under consideration include "Getting a Grip on Friction" and "Model Boats and Siege Weapons," as well as extending Grade 5's work with the American shad. All of the units they design will contain abundant cross-disciplinary connections.

We congratulate this year's winners and look forward to their new programmatic offerings!

## GRADE 7 STUDENTS "GO TO THE GRAMMYS!"

As a complement to an annual unit on the music recording industry and the GRAMMY awards, St. Patrick's parent Craig Helsing arranged a special visit for Grade 7 students with the former president and CEO of the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA), Mitch Bainwol. During their visit, students enjoyed Mitch's stories about his own experiences at the GRAMMY Awards and his work with various singers and songwriters over his long career. Later on, students met Liz Kennedy, who is in charge of the gold and platinum records program at RIAA, and Darryl Friedman, chief advocacy and industry relations officer at the Recording Academy. These music-industry ex-

perts gave students an inside look at the GRAMMY voting process and even showed them one of Lady Gaga's platinum records and an actual GRAMMY trophy! During the visit, students also learned that music teacher Anne Tyler's husband was himself a GRAMMY nominee in the historical recording category.

This was one of a number of opportunities afforded MacArthur Campus students this year by Craig, who graciously offered to link St. Patrick's with a number of the interesting contacts he has made through his work at the BMW Group here in Washington. (He has titled this initiative Exposing Students to Opportunities, or ESTOP.) Other opportunities have included a trip to the local Microsoft offices, during which students were given a preview of emerging tablet technology and learned more about the technology behind the Xbox and Kinect gaming systems. Additionally, our Grades 7 and 8 Chamber Singers were invited to perform at the German Embassy this past Christmas—an experience so well-received by the Embassy that the Day School has been invited back for next year. Craig believes that any one of these experiences could provide students with the inspiration that leads them to a particular life-path. We are grateful to him for arranging these unique experiences and the excitement he has already created for our students.

## DAY SCHOOL THANKS DEPARTING BOARD CHAIR FOR YEARS OF SERVICE, WELCOMES INCOMING CHAIR DEE DEE MYERS AND FIVE NEW MEMBERS



*From the Archives:* Board Chair Jane Korhonen (front row, left), at the graduation of her daughter Olivia W '09, M '11 (front row, second from left) two years ago. Also pictured are Jane's husband Esko (back left), son Grey W '05, M '07, and Esko's parents Irja (front row, second from right) and Pentti (far right) Korhonen.

Before introducing our new Trustees, the *Press* would like to take this opportunity to honor our departing Chair, **Jane Korhonen**, who has been a Trustee since 2005. After becoming Treasurer in 2006, Jane provided the Board of Trustees and the Day School with strong and steady financial leadership through what became the most significant financial crisis in generations. Her leadership, in large part, helped St. Patrick's to emerge from those difficult years in an even stronger financial position than before—poised for continued growth while able, now more effectively than ever, to protect our core Nursery through Grade 8 program.

Jane has been the Chair of the Board of Trustees since 2010, continuing her service after the graduation of her daughter Olivia W '09, M '11. At Jane's final Board meeting in April, Head of School Peter A. Barrett offered the following tribute to her leadership: "I think that Jane has a tendency to look at the work still to be done and far less of an inclination to see the work that has been accomplished. She has done so much to poise St. Patrick's, to poise this Board of Trustees, as its leadership body, for those critical next steps. Jane Korhonen walked into a grove of tall timber . . . and she took her rightful place

in a line of really exceptional Board Chairs here at St. Patrick's. We will remain ever-grateful for her confidence in our ability to accomplish important work together, her clear-sighted understanding of what comprised that work, her just plain good sense, her unflinching generosity of time that she didn't have, and her unflinching generosity of spirit."

We extend our deepest thanks to Jane, her husband Esko, and their two children, Grey W '05, M '07 and Olivia, for their many contributions to St. Patrick's over the years. As Jane departs, she leaves the helm of a sound and steady ship to new Board Chair Dee Dee Myers.

### Dee Dee Myers

**Incoming Board Chair Dee Dee Myers** (next page, top left) has served in a number of prominent volunteer roles, most recently as Co-Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees, of which she has been a member since 2006. She was the Co-Chair of the 2007 Auction to Benefit the Financial Aid Program, "50 Years and Feelin' Groovy," and has been a member of the Auction Committee each year since. She is a champion of the Fund-a-Scholar initiative at St. Patrick's,

having acted for the past several years as the Fund-a-Scholar auctioneer. Dee Dee has served as a communications advisor to the Day School on issues ranging from admission to institutional advancement and is also a frequent classroom volunteer. We are deeply grateful for her service to St. Patrick's and look forward to her continued service as Board Chair.

Dee Dee is a managing director at the Glover Park Group, one of the nation's fastest-growing and most respected communications companies. With years of experience in politics, policy, and media, she counsels corporate and nonprofit clients on strategic communications, reputation management, and integrated marketing. She served as White House press secretary during President Bill Clinton's first term, acting as the President's chief spokesperson, managing day-to-day interactions with the media, and providing strategic communications counsel to the President and his administration.

In addition to her duties at the Glover Park Group, Dee Dee is also a political analyst and commentator. She is a contributing editor to *Vanity Fair*, and her work has also appeared in numerous other publications including *The New York Times*, *Time*, *O: Oprah Magazine*, *The Washington Post*, *Politico*, and *The Los Angeles Times*. She appears frequently on network and cable television and is a popular lecturer on politics, the media, and women's issues. Her 2008 book, *Why Women Should Rule the World* (HarperCollins), became a *New York Times* bestseller. And she worked as an original consultant for the highly acclaimed NBC drama, *The West Wing*, throughout the show's long, prize-winning run.

Before joining the Clinton administration, Dee Dee worked on numerous political campaigns. She is a graduate of Santa Clara University and lives in Washington, D.C., with her husband, Todd S. Purdum, national editor of *Vanity Fair*, and their children, Kate and Stephen.



## Nancy Wheeler Balboa

**Nancy Wheeler Balboa** (left, middle) has been one of St. Patrick's most active volunteers for a number of years, including serving as the Co-Chair of the 2011 Auction to Benefit the Financial Aid Program, "It's Circus Time!" In 2010, she was the Co-Chair of the Silent Auction portion of that event. She has also been active in supporting the Annual Fund, both as a class representative and as a Nursery School coordinator. Nancy has spent time as a Room Parent and Family Fun Day volunteer, helped with Faculty and Staff Appreciation events, and served on last year's search committee for the Assistant Head of School for Development. Professionally, Nancy spent 11 years as vice president for business and legal affairs at Discovery Communications. She is currently a business and legal affairs consultant for several nonfiction television production companies. Born and raised in Los Angeles, Nancy holds a bachelor's degree in economics from Boston College and a J.D. from Loyola Law School, Los Angeles. She lives in Washington with her husband, George, and children George, Nicholas, and Charlotte.



## Michael J. DeSantis

In the two years since he came to St. Patrick's, **Michael J. DeSantis** (bottom left) has held a number of volunteer posts, including as a member of the team that successfully concluded A Broader Vision, the campaign that financed the Day School's first regulation-size athletic field, which opened last year on the Foxhall Campus. He also serves on the Project Management Committee II, the Communication Advisory Committee, and the Nursery/New Parent Communication Task Force. As an Admission Office volunteer, he was the host of the Day School's first same-sex prospective family reception earlier this school year. For the past several years, Michael has been a producer, co-producer, and investor in numerous Broadway productions, including *ANNIE*, *War Horse*, *Kinky Boots*, *Macbeth*, *Nice Work if You Can Get It*, and *One Man Two Guvnors*. From 1996 to 2007, Michael was a senior executive with Choice Hotels International, having served as senior vice president and general counsel. Michael is the current president of the DeSantis Family Foundation, a charitable organization focused on issues surrounding education, the arts, and the environment for minority students. Michael attended John Carroll University and Case Western Reserve University School of Law, both in Cleveland. He lives in Washington with his partner, Patrick Baugh, and their twin boys, Alex and Nick.



## Brett O. Greene

**Brett O. Greene** (opposite page, top) was the first chair of the new Business Advertising Committee supporting this year's Auction to Benefit the Financial Aid Program, "Enrich your world . . . Travel with us on the Wolfhound Express." Since becoming a St. Patrick's parent, Brett has been an active volunteer in support of the Annual Fund, most recently as a pho-nathon caller. He has also been a Family Fun Day volunteer and field trip



chaperone. He is the president, CEO, and founder of American Management Corporation (AMC). Through his work at AMC, Brett has managed large-scale programs for agencies and organizations at the federal, state, and local levels including a number of Washington associations, businesses, and landmarks. Brett has served as finance chairman and on the finance committees of several successful political campaigns and professional organizations and on the board of Leadership Greater Washington. He has received the "40 Under 40 Business Leader" and "Minority Business Leader" awards from the *Washington Business Journal*. He is a native Washingtonian, a graduate of Howard University, and a veteran of the United States Air Force. Brett and his wife, Tiffini, live in Washington with their daughters, Nina and Zoe.

### Laura Griffen



St. Patrick's parishioner and current parent **Laura Griffen** (left) was a grade-level coordinator for A Broader Vision. She has also served on a number of committees for the Auction to Benefit the Financial Aid Program and volunteered at the Fall Book Fair, Family Fun Day, and Grate Patrol. A lawyer by trade, Laura has worked at several local law firms and as an attorney for the Nature Conservancy, where she was responsible for government relations and tax, conservation finance, and policy. She also served as an officer of the Nature Conservancy Action Fund. Most recently, she served on the board of Discovery Creek Children's Museum (now Living Classrooms) and worked on zoning issues for a local preschool, representing it in front of the Advisory Neighborhood Commission and the Board of Zoning Adjustment. Laura and her husband Rob are active with a number of local organizations including the Bishop Walker School, Oceana, and World Wildlife Fund. Laura holds a bachelor's degree from Georgetown University and a J.D. from the University of Virginia School of Law. She and Rob live in Washington with their two children, Sonia and Henry.

### Gretchen Hartley



**Gretchen Hartley** (left) is also a parishioner at St. Patrick's Church, where she is an active volunteer for the Sunday School Planning Committee. She has volunteered for several classroom roles at the Day School. Gretchen currently serves as the senior director of communications and marketing for Marriott International's Design and Construction Division. As a member of the division's executive committee, Gretchen oversaw its recent reorganization and development of strategic priorities. She has devoted her career to hospitality design and communications and worked globally with three of the world's largest architectural design firms. She earned a bachelor's degree in communications and history from Washington State University, with additional coursework at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School of Business and the Institute of Design at Stanford. Gretchen lives in Washington with her husband Charles and twin sons Alex and Gabriel.

## FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

In each edition of the Press, we bring you sketches of current Day School faculty and staff. We are proud to share the stories of the many accomplished people who make St. Patrick's the outstanding institution it is.



## Julia Smith

### Grade 6 Teacher

Julia Smith has spent (almost) her entire teaching career at St. Patrick's—and now is in her 16th year as the 6A homeroom and Grade 6 language arts teacher. The only time Julia spent teaching elsewhere was her first year after graduating from college, when she took an internship at Potomac during which she worked with students in Grades 4 to 6. She says that “it took less than a week in a Grade 4 classroom to convince me that teaching would be my life’s passion.”

At St. Patrick's, Julia joined a Grade 6 team composed of two people she describes as “master teachers,” Tuck Ganzenmuller and Pam Seale, great friends whom she credits with mentoring her and easing her transition to solo teaching. Julia still receives correspondence from Tuck addressed to “Crackerjack,” his nickname for her, and the rocking chair Pam bequeathed to Julia upon retiring is still one of her most precious classroom possessions. “I love that I never have to leave school,” says Julia. “That means a fresh start each year in so many ways. New students, new avenues of study—a whole world of possibilities opens up every September!”

Asked about her teaching philosophy, Julia says, “It is profoundly important to me that each student find something to get excited about in language arts, because that excitement—rather than any particular skill or piece of knowledge—fuels a life of joy and inquiry.” Teaching fiction through the lenses of a variety of quirky characters, Julia works to imbue each of her students with that joy and curiosity. “Greek history, ornithology, biography, poetry, fantasy—there’s got to be something in there for everyone!”

Julia received her bachelor’s degree in English, *cum laude*, from the College of William & Mary. She also holds a master’s of fine arts degree in writing from Vermont College. She lives in Virginia with her husband, Brian Frickert, and their two children, Henry Frickert 2A and Silas Frickert PK3, both of whom began at St. Patrick's in the Infant-Toddler Center.



## Chris Heim

Grade 2 Teacher

An independent school “lifer,” Grade 2 teacher Chris Heim attended the Shipley School in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, for Grades 1 to 12 and earned his bachelor’s degree from Wake Forest University and his master’s in education from Johns Hopkins. Teaching is in his blood—his mother taught in Catholic schools in the Philadelphia area for more than 35 years. Chris is in his third year at St. Patrick’s. He has been an educator for 15 years—as a Grade 2 and Grade 3 teacher at Beauvoir, as a Grade 4 teacher at Grace Episcopal, and then as an administrator there overseeing Grades 1 to 8.

In addition to his mother, Chris credits, in part, his Grade 5 homeroom teacher and high school Spanish teacher with inspiring him to pursue teaching. “They showed me what it meant to connect with one’s students and, as male role models in a profession where men were (and continue to be) a very small minority, they inspired me to consider a career in education for myself.” He considers himself a “reflective practitioner,” constantly looking for ways to improve the student experience by reviewing influential educational texts, evaluating students’ development, and working to make his curriculum flow more seamlessly.

Asked about his favorite part of teaching, Chris said, “It is a real challenge to create lessons and activities that will motivate students to learn and be successful. A teacher has so much influence over whether students will wait complacently at the door of learning for any given topic or want to crash right through it with a battering ram of enthusiastic curiosity. My hope every school year is to leave as many busted-down doors behind as possible.” He believes that all students are capable as learners in every subject area. But, he says, it is essential to understand that child development is uneven and no two students’ learning profiles are exactly the same. He works to ensure that he has an accurate read on each child’s progress in his classroom in order to provide instruction to meet his or her particular needs.

In his free time, Chris enjoys reading, writing, sports, and music. He lives in Maryland with his wife, Maryann, a math specialist at Beauvoir, and his daughter Alison 1B.



## The Future of Exceptional Literacy

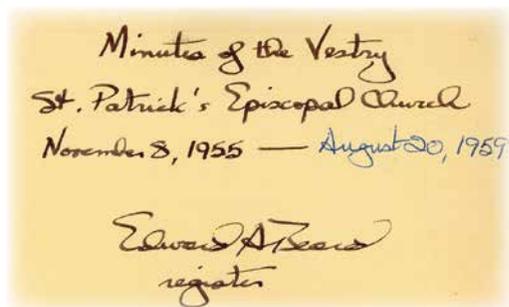
A look at the history of the Day School,  
the deep roots of this uniquely St. Patrick's outlook on education,  
and what it means for students today and tomorrow

*Photo opposite: Former longtime Head of School Isabelle Schuessler with students, ca. 1984.*

NOW, THEREFORE, be it

RESOLVED

1. There shall be and, by this action, is created an organization known as the St. Patrick's Day School.
2. The existence and duration of this organization shall be continuous.
3. The purpose of this organization shall be to sponsor, encourage, maintain and support a neighborhood school for the primary grades and for pre-school children consistent with the purposes and ideals of the Episcopal Church and with accepted educational policies and tenets, the same to be conducted upon the property of the St. Patrick's Episcopal Church, located at the intersection of Foxhall and Reservoir Roads, N. W., Washington, D.C.



**In June of 1956**, the Vestry of St. Patrick's Episcopal Church appropriated \$1,000 to a committee charged with planning for the opening of a Church nursery and day school. By September, this committee—composed of Judge Edward A. Beard, Dr. John Peacock, Mrs. Andrew Burnet, and Mr. James Rogers—had hired Mildred Gessford as the teacher and administrative supervisor for the new

school at a salary of \$200 per month. (Born in 1901, Mildred was a resident of Tilden Street in Tenleytown when she took her appointment.) What remained of the original \$1,000 was to be spent on “school equipment, office equipment, forms, announcements, and the like.”

## Humble Beginnings

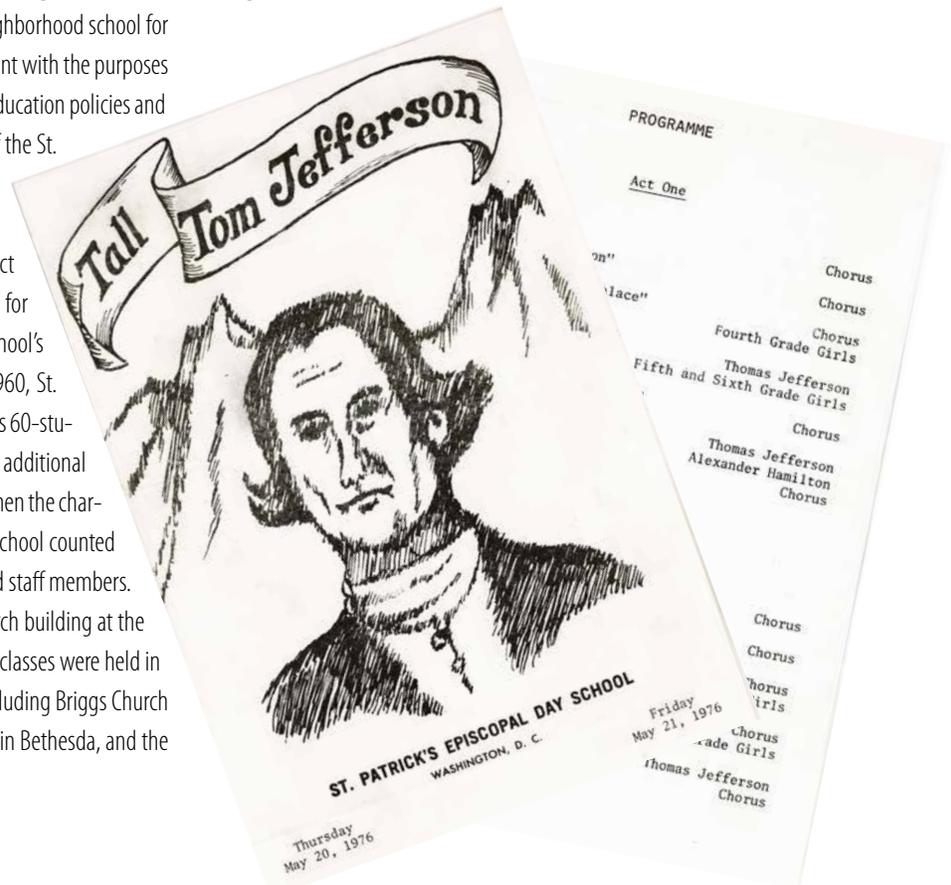
As early as 1952, members of the Church Vestry had discussed the possibility of creating a St. Patrick's school. Records of this conversation speak to a familiar inclination toward growth and change that has continued to characterize the St. Patrick's community in the decades since. Despite the results of a 1954 public meeting designed to gauge parental interest in such an endeavor—interest that was, apparently, lacking—the inclination to grow became stronger after the opening of a new, larger Church building at the intersection of Foxhall Road and Reservoir Road later that year.

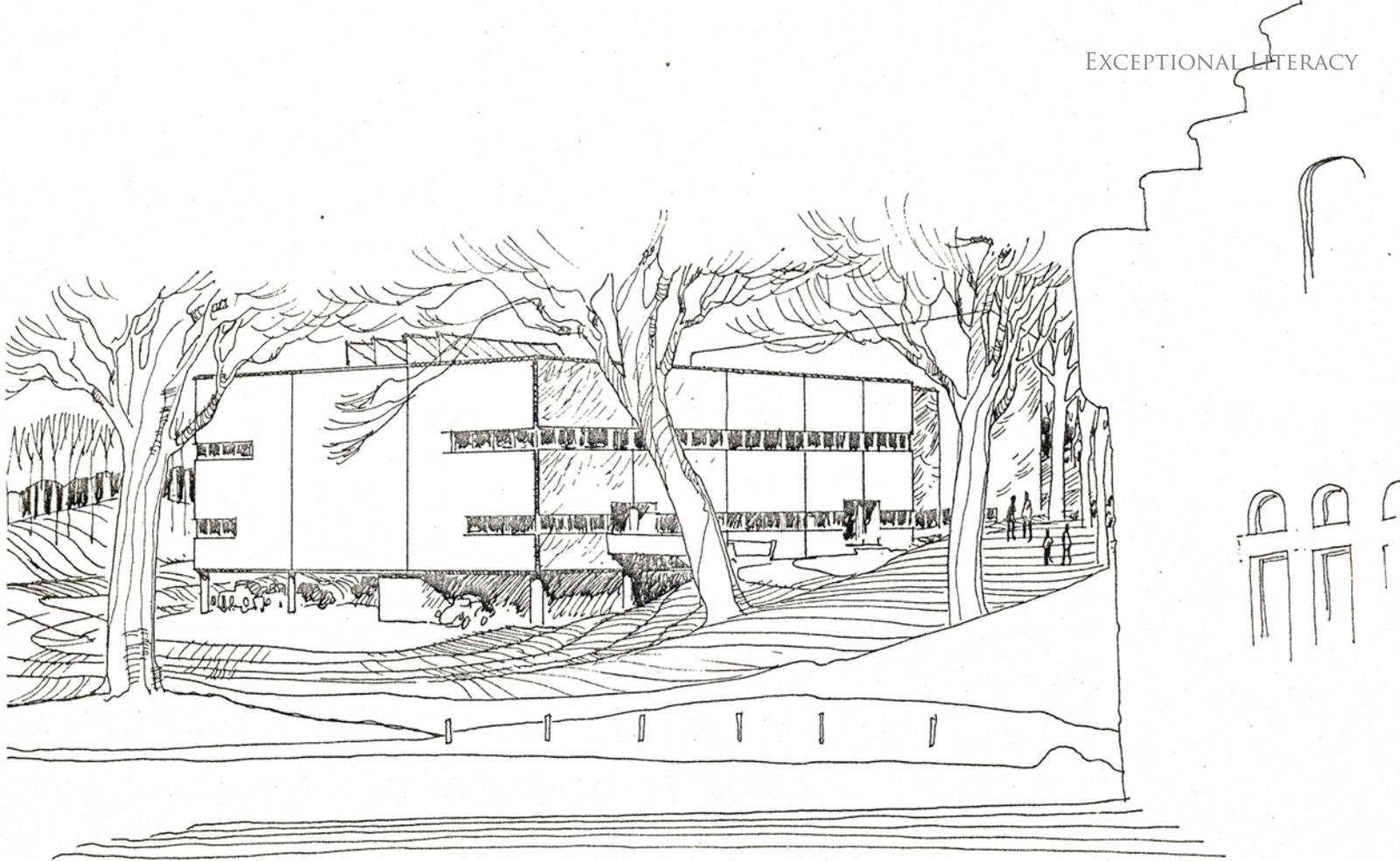
Six families enrolled their Nursery School students for the 1956–1957 school year—a number, evidently, deemed sufficient for proceeding with the experiment. A September 1956 resolution by the Vestry formally sanctioned the creation of St. Patrick's Day School: "The existence and duration of this organization shall be continuous. . . . The purpose of this organization shall be to sponsor, encourage, maintain, and support a neighborhood school for the primary grades and for pre-school children consistent with the purposes and ideals of the Episcopal Church and with accepted education policies and tenets, the same to be conducted upon the property of the St. Patrick's Episcopal Church . . ."

One year after its opening, in June of 1957, the District granted the new school a permit to operate a school for 60 students. While there is little record of the Day School's operations in that first decade, we do know that in 1960, St. Patrick's added Kindergarten classes, quickly reaching its 60-student enrollment cap. In 1968, St. Patrick's began adding additional grades—one per year—through Grade 6. By 1974, when the charter cohort of 11 Grade 6 students graduated, the Day School counted among its ranks nearly 300 students and 40 faculty and staff members. Having quickly outgrown the basement of the old church building at the intersection of Foxhall and Reservoir roads, St. Patrick's classes were held in a variety of rented spaces between 1968 and 1985, including Briggs Church in Bethesda, Pilgrim Church on Massachusetts Avenue in Bethesda, and the German School in Potomac.

## Familiar Themes

During its first two decades, this burgeoning community of students, faculty and staff, and parents had developed a number of traditions that would be familiar to us today. Grades 5 and 6 students performed in an end-of-year musical production—like today, a collaboration among the art, music, and physical education departments. (In 1976, Grades 5 and 6 students performed "Tall Tom Jefferson," a musical history of America's third president, in honor of the United States Bicentennial celebrated that year.) The June 1975 edition of this publication, the *St. Patrick's Press*, included tributes to each of the graduating students as do current graduation editions and a record of the Grade 6 Class Gifts to the Day School (that year, a wrought-iron and gold leaf altar cross and pair of candlesticks). A. Wayne Gordon Jr., then the Assistant Headmaster at St. Albans and a member of the Day School Board of Trustees (and, as fate would have it, now-Head of School Peter A. Barrett's first boss during his tenure as a teacher at St. Albans) delivered the commencement





**Photo:** A schematic drawing, used as part of capital campaign materials in the early 1980's, for the main academic building on the Whitehaven Campus. Readers will recognize this as the middle section of the current Whitehaven Campus building, now with the Church on the left side and the Day School Library and Grade 3 classrooms on the right.

speech in which he exhorted parents “not to be afraid to require their children to work hard, because the truly memorable events of one’s life are often the most demanding in stretching our minds and abilities.”

Meanwhile, the ongoing work of managing a rapidly expanding organization was stretching the minds and abilities of the Day School volunteer leadership and administration, by this time under the directorship of longtime Head of School Isabelle Schuessler. (Mrs. Schuessler began at St. Patrick’s in 1962 as a kindergarten teacher, became assistant director in 1965, and was appointed to the directorship in 1966.) The Head of School’s message in the 1976 Annual Report included the usual inventory of student successes over the preceding school year but also catalogued a number of challenges facing the institution. These challenges, too, remain familiar to us (and, probably, to all independent schools) today: The financial burden associated with expanding operations, a scarcity of spaces for new admissions, and a dearth of available spaces at local secondary schools for graduating students. (The latter issue, which has not been a concern for St. Patrick’s graduates for some years, was enough of a factor then that St. Patrick’s was involved in discus-

sions with other area Episcopal elementary schools to plan for a new co-educational Episcopal school for students in Grades 7 through 12. This conversation was the genesis of St. Andrew’s Episcopal School, now located in Potomac.) Added to these day-to-day concerns was the fact that, after nine frustrating years of planning and fundraising, the Day School broke ground on a new school building (the core of the current Whitehaven Campus; schematic drawing above) after navigating what then-Board Chair Richard Beatty called an “administrative and judicial labyrinth” to receive zoning approval for the project—a timeless reality that would certainly resonate with those involved in the more recent acquisitions of the MacArthur and Foxhall campuses and efforts to win approval from the Board of Zoning Adjustment for expansion in those locations. Throughout the late 1970’s and early 1980’s, the Day School consolidated its students on this new campus.

Mrs. Schuessler oversaw this consolidation—finally completed with the arrival of Nursery School students on campus in 1985. This happy achievement was overshadowed just one year later, when a governance dispute in 1986—involving the Head of School, Board of Trustees, and Vestry—re-

## CLASS PROPHECY

We look into the crystal ball. It is nearly the year 2000, and it is amazing how many of our fellow students have made the headlines. On this, the last day of 1999, it is fitting and proper to review the year's highlights and newsmakers. This is Daniel Weeks, Editor in Chief of the Washington News Bureau, reporting on the significant headlines that occurred during the year.

David Baker has just been appointed Secretary of Defense, due in no small part to his years of reconstructing the Civil War and his recent best-seller, Who Was the Unknown Bugle Boy at Gettysburg That Day?

Kimberley Hill, now a prominent architect, has redesigned the White House for its present occupant, Alan Kirby. These two outstanding people, who had not seen each other since graduating from sixth grade at St. Patrick's School, met at last year's Olympic Games in Canada. It was Miss Hill's honor to present Olympic Swimming Team Captain, Alan Kirby, the Gold Medal.

Tucker Battle is now the owner of a large chain of movie theaters. The latest one in downtown Washington is opening with a revival of the hit production "Our Country 'Tis of Thee," starring movie queen Angela Adams.

Jeffrey Hamilton and Clarence James have been the joint recipients of the Outstanding Athletes of the Country Award.

Jocelyn Frye has just been appointed District Attorney, having won the case of Devin Reese who, in a fit of jealousy, mutilated the World Soccer Cup.

Dr. Royal Redecker has just won the Doctor of the Year Award for having transplanted brains between a monkey and a chicken.

Kear Martin has now become president of Channel 20 and has appointed Mrs. Dalton program director, so she will realize that all sixth graders must have all free time to devote to watching cartoons, instead of doing such insignificant things as homework.

Alice Stoepelwerth has just been appointed Ambassador of Goodwill to Russia, which is why all our diplomatic relations have completely failed.

As Daniel Weeks reviewed the year's events he was happy to find that all headline makers and breakers were former classmates.

## LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT

We, the graduating class of 1975, in a restless state of mind, do will and bequeath all our outstanding qualifications to the unfortunate students in the fifth grade.

David Baker wills his messy desk to Michal Slavik, in the hope that somehow all the books will fit in. Dan Weeks leaves his braces to Julia Rapley, having promised the class they will lock and keep her silent for a day. Devin Reese leaves her geography books and assignments to Justin Swift, knowing his many travels will help him to get better grades. Jeffrey Hamilton leaves his soccer talent to Tom Mobbille, knowing he needs it. Tucker Battle leaves Mrs. Dalton to his brother, John, in hopes that she will be able to straighten him out. Kear Martin leaves his Channel 20 card to Scott Hoffman. Angela Adams leaves her sniffles and a box of Kleenex to Jim Davis. Royal Redecker leaves his riding ability to Lorna Ashe and Judith LaGorce, in hopes their combined efforts will win a trophy. Alice Stoepelwerth leaves her brains to her brother, Walter, and her good looks to Ari Kroyer. Jocelyn Frye leaves the class money to Adam Macaluso and Malinda Diggs. Alan Kirby leaves his glasses to Peter Neubauer and Jackqueline Baldwin because he will have no further use for them. Kim Hill leaves her book collection to Liz Perkins, Denisse Paul and Phillip Bullen, because her unending supply will keep their eyes open and their mouths shut. Clarence James leaves his unfinished assignments to Chris Jorss and Scott Stuckey, knowing it will take the two of them the whole year to complete.

Last, but not least, to Mrs. Critchell and Mrs. Thompson the sixth grade turns over all math books, worksheets and all such unnecessary assignments.

## FAREWELL TO OUR GRADUATES

Perhaps its fondest memory will be the cherished World Cup championship just before graduation, but the class of 1975 will surely be fondly remembered for other reasons. So many of its members are products of many years of the very special St. Patrick's brand of TLC. This group includes two who have been with us for the full nine years, and three others for six-eight years. We have been happy, too, to have other great additions as the years ticked past. As a group, this class has an outstanding academic record.

Angela Adams is one of the charter members of the class. She has worked very hard this year as the first Captain of the School Safety Patrol which was begun this year, and as spring semester Class Vice President. An able musician, she has long been a member of the Chapel Choir. Accepted for admission next year to four schools, Angela has chosen to attend National Cathedral School.

David Baker graduates as the valedictorian of his class. He has sung with the Chapel Choir for two years. Accepted at the two schools to which he applied, David will attend St. Albans in the Fall.

Tucker Battle has made his mark during his three years here. Stage manager and equipment operator par excellence, many special productions have run smoothly under his supervision. A Safety Patrol Lieutenant this year, he also sings in the Chapel Choir and is an able athlete. Tucker was also accepted by his four schools, and will attend St. Stephen's School.

Jocelyn Frye entered St. Patrick's in first grade. She has had many interests, including basketball and soccer in the after-school program. Jocelyn has been a Chapel Choir member for four years, serves as a member of the Safety Patrol and as class Treasurer. With singular determination she applied for admission to only one school, and happily was accepted for admission in September to National Cathedral School.

Jeffrey Hamilton first joined this class in second grade. In a group not lacking in athletic ability, Jeff stands out as a gifted athlete who has contributed significantly to soccer success. Jeff plans to attend St. John's College High School this fall.

Kimberley Hill is one of the most recent additions to 1975's class, having last year followed her sisters to St. Patrick's. Percussionist for the Chapel Choir she is also a member of the Safety Patrol. Kimberley was accepted at both schools to which she applied, and has chosen to attend National Cathedral School.

Clarence James has attended St. Patrick's since second grade. His happy disposition has always been a bright spot, as has been his willing assistance as an audio-visual crewman. Also an able and enthusiastic athlete, he has served as a Safety Patrol this year. Clarence plans to attend Our Lady Queen of Peace School next year, and hopes to go on to St. John's later.

Alan Kirby first joined his class in first grade after moving from Chicago. An able student, Alan has participated on the soccer teams, too. Alan was accepted by the two schools to which he applied and plans to attend St. Albans School in seventh grade.

Kear Martin was originally a charter member of the Class of 1975, left for a few years, and re-joined the group in fourth grade. Kear has been a member of the Safety Patrol, an avid soccer player, and has served this year as Class President during the Spring Semester. He, too, had a choice between the Episcopal schools, and has decided to attend St. Albans School this fall.

Royal Redecker has attended St. Patrick's only one year, after moving here from Belgium. He is a talented musician, playing clarinet in the instrumental music program, a budding actor, and an able athlete, too. Royal will attend St.

Devin Reese is another charter member of her class, with only a one-year absence at age four. Her sister, Andrea, Class of 1974, Devin is a gifted artist. She has been a member of the Chapel Choir for four years. Devin, too, knew she needed to attend one specific school, and has been accepted for admission to Georgetown Day School. Alice Stoepelwerth is the second of the nine charter members of her class. She has had many interests at St. Patrick's, including four years' service in the Chapel Choir and various sports, including gymnastics, basketball and soccer. She served as Fall Semester Class President and Spring Semester as Class Secretary. Alice was faced with a nice but most difficult choice between the two schools to which she applied, and plans to attend National Cathedral School.

Daniel Weeks joined this class at age four and has missed only one year since. A boy of many talents, his most recent interest is his trumpet, part of the instrumental music program. He has sung in the Chapel Choir for four years, served as a Lieutenant of the Safety Patrol and Fall Semester Class Secretary, and plays soccer in the after-school program. Dan was accepted at two schools, and realizes a long standing ambition as he plans to attend St. Albans School in the Fall.

While we are happy to see the five opportunities which lie ahead for these fine students, we are also truly sad to see them leave. It is especially at this time of year that we wish we could add more grades forever!

We wish for the Class of 1975 much success and happiness as you move forward in your ever-changing world. May you always find strength in the foundation we have worked so hard to build together at St. Patrick's and remember our happy times. Come back to visit us. Above all, know that I am very proud of every one of you.

Isabelle S. Schuessler

**Background photo opposite:** A photo from the *St. Patrick's admission viewbook*, ca. 1980.

**Text:** Excerpts from the 1975 graduation edition of the *St. Patrick's Press*.

sulted in a schism that ultimately led to the departure of Mrs. Schuessler, along with a substantial number of Day School faculty and staff and families. In the fall of 1986, that group began Washington Episcopal School, now located in Bethesda. This event was a painful disruption to the sense of community that has always been a hallmark of the St. Patrick's family. Head of School Rob Peterson, appointed in 1987 after a one-year interim Head of School, worked to restore a sense of stability to the Day School. During his tenure, Rob—now the Head of School at the Oakwood School in Greenville, North Carolina—also worked to maintain and enhance the strong tradition of academic excellence we explore at some length below. We might also draw your attention here to the remarkable fact that, with the exception of a short transition period in 1986–1987, St. Patrick's has had only three Heads of School since 1966, providing tremendous stability and focus.

### Self, Text, Others

On that point, of great value to our purposes here are the familiar philosophical themes revealed by the archives that have clear connections to our present-day work. One of the earliest Day School admission viewbooks states, "The philosophy of St. Patrick's is based on the concept of maximum individual accomplishment and self-fulfillment, consistent with constructive participation in today's world. We strive to accomplish these goals through a stimulating program combining broad academic challenge and creative expression which encourages happy, enthusiastic participation in a relaxed yet disciplined environment." In these words, we can trace connections to our current Mission Statement, our efforts to educate the whole child through a combination of rigor and nurture and, as you will read later, a deliberate focus on each student's relationship with one's self, with text, and with others. This trinity appears again in early capital campaign materials, describing St. Patrick's educational objectives: "To recognize each child as an individual with developed and potential talents and to help each child to begin to discover his own uniqueness and individual gifts . . . [To provide] a program of learning experiences designed to develop the academic skills, intellectual capacity, and spiritual awareness of each child . . . [And] to help each child become a constructive member of his family, his school, and his community."

### Setting Compass

By 1994, when current Head of School Peter A. Barrett assumed his post after 14 years as a teacher and administrator at St. Albans, St. Patrick's was a well-established independent elementary school in the Washington, D.C. area. Five years later, inspired and encouraged by, and in collaboration with, then-Trustee (and later Board of Trustees Chair) Katherine Bradley, Peter began work on what would become—and continues to be—the Day School's "north star," *Setting Compass*, and its core idea, Exceptional Literacy. Its publication was intended to identify and describe the qualities that had come to define the St. Patrick's experience up to that moment and to explore how we might aspire to cultivate, improve, expand, and codify them, and apply them more vigorously and systematically.

Peter and Katherine began work on the project in earnest in 1998. "By that time, it had become clear to me that St. Patrick's is a place that has always valued change and growth—that dynamic quality is really an essential feature of the community. The writing of *Setting Compass*, and the work that went into developing its contents, was an opportunity to provide a framework for that growth." Peter presented the fruit of the collaboration with Katherine—who is now a well-known educational reform advocate—to the Board of Trustees and distributed copies to faculty, staff, and parents. Its central idea, Exceptional Literacy, has since become the primary means by which St. Patrick's describes its work with children to the outside world and the yardstick by which St. Patrick's faculty members measure their own success.

### The Architecture of Literacy

*Setting Compass* argues, fundamentally, that literacy—broadly defined—is the foundation upon which the development of character, advancement of human understanding, and promotion of academic excellence is built. (These are the three central goals of what would become St. Patrick's Mission Statement in 2007.) "The ability to comprehend and to organize the spoken and written word, and the struggle to accomplish that sometimes difficult task," Peter writes, "prepare an individual to understand and communicate effectively with others, to seek new knowledge, and to fulfill a greater sense

# “The Architecture of Literacy”

*From Setting Compass, 1998*

READING AND LITERATURE	WRITTEN AND ORAL EXPRESSION	LANGUAGE MECHANICS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exposure that seeks to develop an affinity for books</li> <li>• Varied techniques (exposure to written text, proficiency in word recognition, phonics) for emerging reading fluency</li> <li>• Daily practice, in school and at home, in reading for enjoyment, for information, and for problem-solving</li> <li>• Thoughtful literature choices</li> <li>• Challenging content to enhance cognitive, social-emotional, and ethical growth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At every opportunity, our children write</li> <li>• Our students learn mechanics in the context of their writing and speaking</li> <li>• Varied instruction based on the philosophy that:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Words matter</li> <li>– The struggle to clarify an idea and to specifically express a thought is an essential activity</li> <li>– Effective communication is a balance of speaking and listening</li> <li>– Each voice is distinctive</li> <li>– Written work is synthesis of ideas, imagination, values, organization, and skill</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sound-symbol relationship (from Nursery School)</li> <li>• Phonics (from Kindergarten)</li> <li>• Spelling (from Grade 1)</li> <li>• Mechanics and usage (from Grade 1) (Punctuation, Capitalization, etc.)</li> <li>• Structured vocabulary work (from Grades 2/3)</li> <li>• Formal grammar instruction nested in frequent student writing and as a separate course of study (beginning in Upper School)</li> </ul>

T E X T U R E



S T R U C T U R E

of personal responsibility. The inability to do so—at the intersection of what one author calls ‘instances of wordlessness and experiences of powerlessness’—can result in alienation, thoughtlessness in the truest sense, and irresponsibility.”

The author to whom the text alludes is Maxine Greene in a 1982 article entitled “Literacy for What?” in *Phi Delta Kappan*. Greene argues that only through literacy can our children truly understand, interact with, and, most importantly, elaborate upon, the world around them. *Setting Compass*—variously described in the years since its publication as a destination, a challenge, a framework, and a journey—is an answer to Greene’s question, “for what?” Exceptional Literacy became, and remains, one of St. Patrick’s most essential characteristics. It is the guiding philosophy by which we achieve the goals articulated in our Mission Statement. It “instill[s] in our students the means to lead articulate, purposeful, rewarding lives, as they acquire and put to effective use the words, attitudes, and conventions to comprehend and express meaning and to engage others in worthy purpose.” So what, then, does *Setting Compass* ask of each of us as the educators and parents of children?

At its core, the rubric of Exceptional Literacy provides for all of us in the St. Patrick’s community a way of thinking about the essential purposes of our work with children and, ultimately, evaluating our success at doing so. Exceptional Literacy obliges us to cultivate in those students an early affinity for language (both written and spoken) and literature, to provide those students, over time, with the mechanical skills they need to engage with that language and, finally, to guide them in the elaborative and creative process as they apply both their enthusiasm and acquired skills to begin to express their own ideas and perspectives. Through Exceptional Literacy, St. Patrick’s strives to bring forth into the world thoughtful students who can interact with increasing sophistication with the texts they encounter, with others, and with an ever-developing sense of self.

*Setting Compass* refers to this relationship—among a child’s affinity for language, mechanical skills, and opportunities to allow students to express their own understanding through writing and speaking—as the “Architecture of Literacy.” Citing educator Priscilla Vail, the text distinguishes between “structure” (phonics, spelling, grammar) and “texture” (exposure to a variety of challenging texts, development of an affinity for the written word, appreciation for its many uses) and argues that Exceptional Literacy requires of students a mastery of both—when too often, in academic settings, the

focus remains on structure or on texture, rather than skillfully weaving them together. Only through this dual mastery can students achieve the depth of understanding for which we strive.

That depth of understanding extends well beyond the language arts classroom. While the original text of *Setting Compass* couches its conception of “literacy” in a language arts-based frame, it can be—and is—applied elsewhere in the curriculum. The study of mathematics, science, music and the arts, and technology each requires (literally or figuratively) its own unique language that must be mastered in order to bring one’s ideas to life. This broad definition of “literacy,” and even of “text,” enables us to foster in our students a range of literacies in a variety of subject areas.

The publication of *Setting Compass* did not necessarily precipitate a sea change in the way teaching and learning occurred at the Day School. As its original purpose was, in at least some measure, to identify and reflect upon what was already being done in a distinctive manner at St. Patrick’s, teachers at the time were likely not surprised by the contents of *Setting Compass*. “The document should function as both a window and a mirror,” said Peter in a recent interview, referring to a metaphor often used in other contexts. “St. Patrick’s educators should see reflected in it a familiar philosophy on teaching, recognize elements that exist in their own classroom curriculum, and be already largely conversant in the language of Exceptional Literacy. By the same token, they should also see an invitation to push harder, to challenge themselves and their students to achieve more, to understand more, and to gain more depth and range.”

St. Patrick’s educators—to whom falls the awesome charge of bringing Exceptional Literacy to life, and a great many of whom began their tenure at the Day School after the publication of *Setting Compass*—are quickly assimilated into the culture of Exceptional Literacy. (In point of fact, new members of the St. Patrick’s faculty family are often chosen based on their commitment to Exceptional Literacy—whether they describe that commitment in those words or not.) This commitment is evident throughout St. Patrick’s, regardless of what the content being explored in a particular classroom or grade level may be. That is to say, whatever one might see in a classroom—learning to identify flags of the world and their associated countries in Grade 1, writing first-person accounts of the Jamestown settlement (Grade 3), programming electric vehicles using graphing calculators (Grade 5), using a computer program to recreate an ancient Roman village, or writing deeply about oneself during the “Identity Project” (Grade 6)—teachers are using



**Photo opposite:** A Grade 1 student works to identify flags of the world. In the background, Grade 7 students—each of whom has a Grade 1 “reading buddy”—assist with the project.

those topic areas to develop habits of mind and thinking patterns that are not visible. They are guiding students to become active thinkers and creative problem-solvers while leading them to ever-higher levels of understanding and self-expression. Within each area of the curriculum, students learn to ask questions, make careful observations, explain their reasoning, use the essential terms (vocabulary) of the discipline, solve problems, analyze information, and express what they have learned in novel ways.

As with all aspirational ideas, we may never know whether our students—or we—have “arrived” at Exceptional Literacy. Instead, we remind ourselves of Maxine Greene’s admonition that “. . . literacy ought to be conceived as an opening, a becoming, never a fixed end.”

### Tradition and Innovation: Exceptional Literacy in a Changing World

*“As St. Patrick’s seeks and experiences change—and balances tradition and innovation—exceptional literacy can provide the touchstone for our efforts.”*

Exceptional Literacy continues to act as a guide for our work today, as we determine how best to prepare our students for future endeavors and challenges in a world that demands a novel combination of skills, some familiar and timeless, others ambiguous and new. As we in the academic world know, and many of us outside that world intuit, the work of teaching young children has, in important ways, changed considerably since the first publication of *Setting Compass*.

Dramatic advances in technology have precipitated equally dramatic changes in the way “text” is discovered and delivered, a fact that has significantly altered the classroom landscape. Research advances have provided us with a deeper understanding of the way children learn, and we continue to identify more fully the skills needed to succeed in a world that will look as different from today by the time our students enter it as the late 1990’s look in hindsight—and perhaps, even more so. All of these changes have led to a proliferation of new teaching techniques, adaptations of traditional techniques, and widespread integration of increasingly powerful and affordable technology into the classroom. Our challenge today, of course, is to strike that balance between tradition and innovation where that balance is appropriate—and to take bold steps in new directions that can enable us to meet the needs of individual students even more effectively.

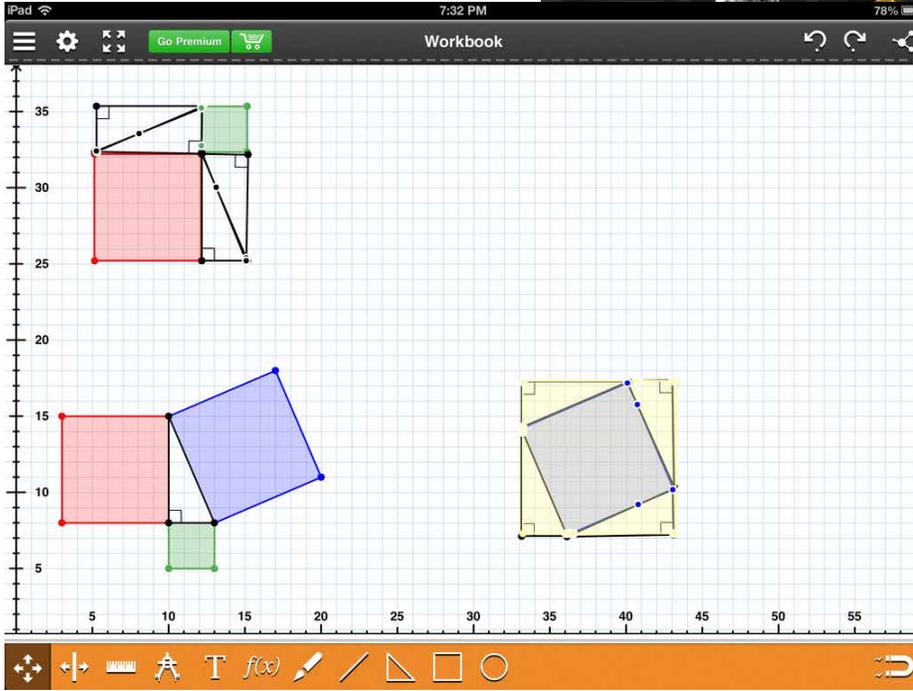
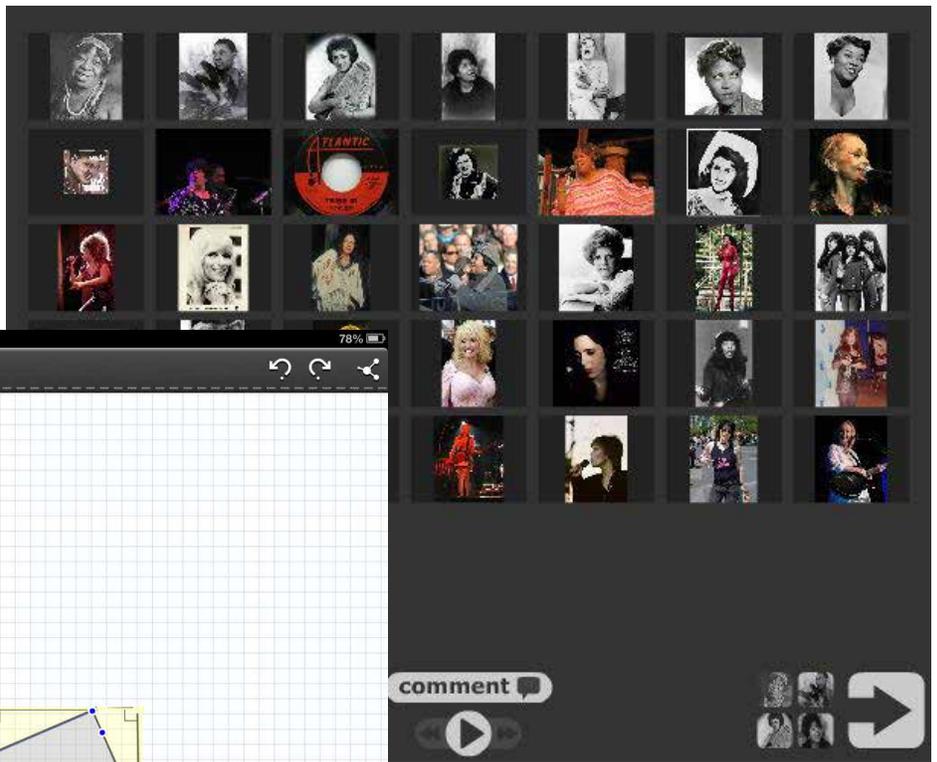
In either event, we recognize that our interpretations of the various components of Exceptional Literacy, as originally conceived, will change over time. The idea of “text,” for example, takes on a new meaning in the context of an interactive web, user-generated content, and the social network, just as “academic excellence” might require promoting a different subset of the range of literacies, as outlined earlier in this article.

Even as these changes occur, however, St. Patrick’s continues to believe that an ability to interpret text (in whatever form it takes) and to extract meaning from it is crucial—perhaps even more so than when “text” was more simply defined. We believe that our efforts to help our students achieve Exceptional Literacy do not lose their value as the world changes; in fact, we believe those efforts gain value. The goal of Exceptional Literacy—to foster in students an ever-more sophisticated ability to interact with text, with others, and with their developing sense of self—remains powerful, timeless. By the same token, we challenge ourselves to experiment with, and ultimately identify with increasing clarity, the ways that evolving technology, expanding knowledge about the way children learn, and innovative classroom practices provide opportunities to enhance our work and, ultimately, enhance the student experience. Given the astounding variety of new ideas, and the speed with which those ideas are disseminated, we are fortunate as an organization to have Exceptional Literacy as a means by which to test the value of each. Former longtime Head of Lower School Gretchen Spencer, one of the foremost advocates for Exceptional Literacy, reminds us that “as the pace of learning quickens with new technologies, it becomes even more important that students learn—even at a young age—to think critically, creatively, and independently in order to live purposeful and productive lives in the future.”

Given the promise of these opportunities to enhance student learning, St. Patrick’s faculty and administration have responded with characteristic enthusiasm—engaging in wide-ranging efforts to foster those innovations at the Day School. This effort has manifested itself both in a thorough-going study and planning effort by administrators and a vibrant array of faculty-driven classroom endeavors. We are confident that these two complementary approaches, described below, will deliver, in time, a more comprehensive interpretation of Exceptional Literacy for the years to come.

#### *Dual Tracks for Our Work*

One layer of this initiative is an effort on the part of the Senior Administrative Team, in collaboration with the Board of Trustees, to identify, track, and provide



*Clockwise from left: A Geometer's Sketchpad proof of the Pythagorean Theorem; a student-programmed sequence in Scratch, part of the interdisciplinary marine organisms unit in Grade 5; the homepage featuring the dozens of podcasts created by Grades 7 and 8 students highlighting notable musicians of the 20th century.*

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organism
x: 32 y: -43 direction: 35

Scripts
Costumes
Sounds

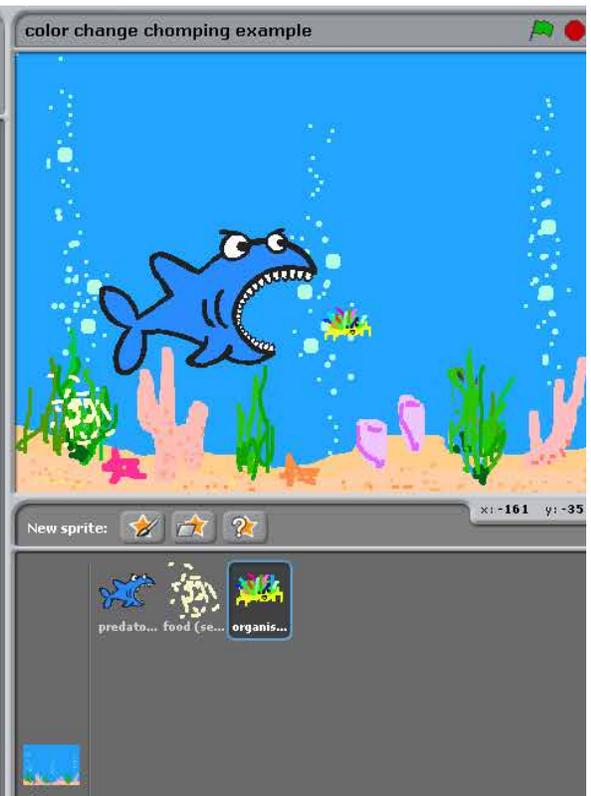
when clicked
  set y to -150
  set organism currently eating? to no
  set organism currently eating? to no
  switch to costume nuble1
  go to x: pick random -150 to 100 y: 10
  show
  broadcast 1 food: decide when to appear
  switch to costume nuble1

  This gets things started for the organism: it sets some variables to a good starting-out place, places the organism on the screen, and gets the organism moving randomly.

when I receive 2 organism: run away from pred
  switch to costume camo
  set organism currently escaping? to yes
  think Iikes! A predator!
  change y by 1
  set y to -150
  glide 1 secs to x: 230 y: pick random 0 to 0
  wait 2 secs
  switch to costume open mouth1
  set organism currently escaping? to no
  think I'm glad I escaped! for 3 secs
  broadcast 1 organism: move somewhere new

  This shows how the organism should react to a predator.

  At this point, the organism has escaped. We start returning things to normal.
    
```



resources in support of these emerging opportunities. In an ongoing conversation, a group comprised of the Head of School, the four Assistant Heads of School, Division Heads, and the Board of Trustees has been studying and evaluating the innovative ideas, techniques, and technologies that are re-shaping settings for teaching and learning. The findings of this group will be used to adopt (or adapt) those techniques and technologies that can significantly advance our efforts to develop and apply a fresh conceptualization of Exceptional Literacy. Of each idea or technology, we ask variations of the same question: How does it support the Architecture of Literacy? How does it enhance a student's relationship with text, with others, with him/herself? How does it develop character, advance human understanding, and promote academic excellence?

Already, that group has coalesced around a number of techniques and philosophies—which, in some cases, already exist in some form at the Day School—that we will work over coming school years to integrate more fully. These include an expansion of project-based learning; interdisciplinary study; a more deliberate focus on science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics; and elements of the “flipped classroom” in which the traditional lesson from the teacher is delivered electronically to students at home and class time is used to deepen the student's understanding of those concepts.

There has also been significant funding set aside to spark innovative work. In its 2013-2014 budget, the Board of Trustees allocated \$250,000 to a “program reserve” to support efforts that will keep our program strong and vibrant. And the Day School has partnered with the Parents Association in making available grants totaling up to \$20,000 per year to teams of faculty engaged in program design work (see story on page 8).

### *Innovative Classrooms*

The other layer involves dynamic activity on the part of faculty members to develop and experiment with these innovations in their own classrooms, the most successful of which are applied more systematically across the curriculum. To that end, and in an effort to enrich an academic culture that both values our commitment to Exceptional Literacy and is also flexible and forward-thinking, we have created time and space to facilitate faculty collaboration across disciplines and divisions. For example, the Grades 7 and 8 humanities program has been a shining example of interdisciplinary work for more than a decade. Project-based units are becoming more prevalent in the science and mathematics departments—students recently wrote their own basic programs to build robots that would measure velocity and acceleration, for example. In a unit that is becoming a staple of the Grade 5 experience, students create their own marine organisms in science class and bring them to life using the MIT-

developed programming language Scratch. Even further, a number of teachers have experimented with delivering lessons online.

To develop this work, faculty members have focused on technology that enhances learning and enriches student engagement. Utilizing a number of intriguing technological tools in recent years that we believe hold significant potential as we work to develop that fresh approach to Exceptional Literacy, we are helping students create, collaborate, communicate, and even customize their learning. Among these tools are programs like Geometer's Sketchpad, an iPad application that allows for an interactive approach to geometry; VoiceThread, a cloud-based that allows teachers to upload a range of media to which students can respond, in essence holding online conversations; Skype and Facetime, applications that allow students, like those in our Grade 3 music classes, to connect with experts in the field who might not have been available to them otherwise; and Audacity, a sound-mixing program that allowed our Grades 7 and 8 students to research, write, and record their own podcasts featuring notable musicians of the 20th century.

In much the same way that the original *Setting Compass* codified and systematized the work that was already underway at St. Patrick's, our work today is designed to simultaneously allow for creativity and flexibility on the part of faculty members and also bring an increasing level of clarity to the always-evolving strategic framework for the innovative work already underway here.

## Conclusion

As we have learned, Exceptional Literacy has deep roots at St. Patrick's—and been a defining feature of our educational outlook throughout our existence as a school. Our efforts to encourage the student to think deeply, to truly understand, and to examine the relationship with one's self, with text, and with others, may not have always been called by the same name but are part of our fabric as a community. And we believe our work to integrate innovative ideas, techniques, and technologies represents an evolution of, rather than a departure from, the work St. Patrick's has done for the past 57 years.

Whether one considers Exceptional Literacy a beginning, a destination, a framework, or something else entirely, one need look no further than the Alumni Class Notes in an issue of this publication to recognize that our graduates—authors, teachers, scientists, entrepreneurs, actors—have certainly absorbed its meaning. St. Patrick's is once again poised for tremendous growth in coming years. Exceptional Literacy will continue to be our guide as we work to incorporate the latest in educational innovation, always with our intent firmly focused on graduating students ready to live with integrity, compassion, and purpose. 🌱

# Anthony Marra '97 Publishes Debut Novel

## *A Constellation of Vital Phenomena* Received with Enthusiasm by Critics

St. Patrick's alumnus Anthony (Tony) Marra '97 is a fiction writer who recently published his debut novel, *A Constellation of Vital Phenomena*. After St. Patrick's, Tony attended Landon and went on to the University of Southern California. He is a graduate of the Iowa Writers' Workshop at the University of Iowa and a recent winner of *The Atlantic's* Student Writing Contest and, according to actress Sarah Jessica Parker, should be the next recipient of the Pulitzer or Nobel Prize.

*A Constellation of Vital Phenomena* brings to life an abandoned hospital in a small rural village in Chechnya. It has earned rave reviews from authors, actors, and award-winning journalists alike. *The Press* spoke with Tony about his passion for writing and the experiences that guided him to penning his first novel. He told us that "reading has been the doorway through which he has engaged with the world," and that he truly believes that reading and writing are essential aspects of life. We hope that St. Patrick's had a hand in forming this outlook!

### ***When did you become passionate about writing?***

Like most writers, I came to it through a love of reading. In second or third grade, I began reading the *Goosebumps* and *Redwall* series, and there was something so incredible about opening a book and finding myself transported to an entirely different world. I did not try writing fiction myself until I was in high school (my first story was about a man walking up a staircase; it was about as bad as it sounds). It was a revelation to realize that I could create stories of my own, and I've been doing it ever since.

### ***What inspired you to write A Constellation of Vital Phenomena? How did your time living in Russia influence this work of fiction?***

I studied in Russia in college and, much later, had the opportunity to travel through Chechnya, where I was among the first foreign tourists to visit after the [Chechen] wars [of the 1990's and 2000's]. Chechnya has fascinated me for years now. It is only the size of Connecticut, but it is (and has been for centuries) populated by fiercely independent highlanders who are a perpetual obstacle to Russia's imperial ambitions. But for all the nonfiction I was reading about Chechnya, I couldn't find a novel about the recent wars that was available in English. The stories I had heard and read about ordinary Chechens placed in extraordinary circumstances demanded to be brought to life as only fiction can. So I began writing the novel because it was the kind of book I wanted to read, that I wanted to pick up from a bookstore shelf, but it was not there yet.

### ***Do real-life experiences ever play into your work?***

Certainly the background noise of history plays a major role. My novel is set from 1994 to 2004, and roughly follows the contours of Russia's two wars with Chechen rebels. Several scenes are drawn from real accounts I have heard or read about, and the main events of the novel *could have happened*, even if they did not.

(Continued on next page)



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**“...No one sees the world quite like you do. Your experience is as unique to you as your fingerprint, and if you can express that, you will have written something that no one else could have written.”**

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***What are you most proud of in the novel?***

A novel about the Chechen wars might seem necessarily bleak, but I tried to honor the suffering of the time without forsaking humor or hope or compassion or love. Not only because I think that makes for a more layered, nuanced novel, but because I think that is true to life in Chechnya. It is a novel about the things in us that outlast our cities and our institutions and even the roofs over our heads, and if I had to be most proud of anything in this book, it would be that.

***What was the most challenging part of writing a novel?***

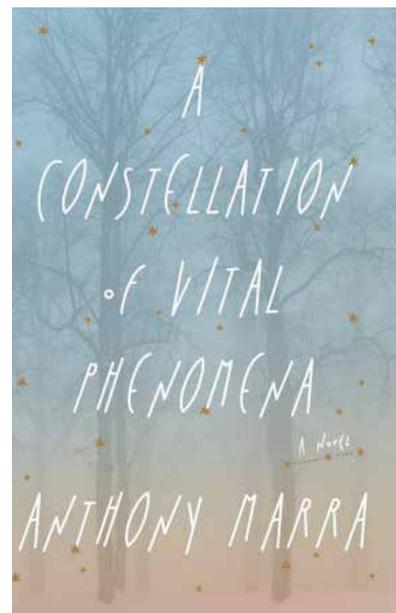
The greatest technical challenge was getting the voice and tone right. The greatest mental challenge was sitting at my desk with the door closed every day for several years. But the challenges of writing the novel were also its joys. “The higher the mountain, the better the view.”

***What kind of advice would you give to St. Patrick’s students, many of whom are aspiring writers?***

Read, read, read! After you have done that, read some more. Read the books you are assigned in class, but more importantly, find books that speak to you personally. And if you want to be a writer, all you need to do is write. Unlike movie directors or rock stars, writers use the same equipment you probably have access to right now: a pen or pencil, paper, maybe a computer. Then tell your story. You might not believe me, but no one sees the world quite like you do. Your experience is as unique to you as your fingerprint and if you can express that you will have written something that no one else could have written. When you hit roadblocks, keep writing. When you think what you’ve written is no good, keep writing. Keep going and you will get there in the end.

***Why do you think writing and reading are especially valuable?***

Reading has been the doorway through which I have engaged with the world. I can open a book and find myself in the oil fields of Saudi Arabia, or the wilderness of Alaska, or inside the mind of Churchill. Books are the reservoir of human knowledge, and we have the privilege of dipping our toes in with nothing more than a library card. Sometimes I hear people ask, “Why read fiction when you can read a nonfiction book about things that actually happened?” To that, I would say that good literature expands its



readers’ understanding of compassion, sacrifice, love, betrayal, remorse, and acceptance—in short, all the remarkable and regretful things that make up our lives. Good literature both enriches us personally and makes us more aware and responsible citizens. As for writing, beyond being the most democratic of the creative arts (a sheet of paper and a pencil are all you need), it is essential across all walks of life. The ability to express yourself in clear, cogent, and persuasive language will likely take you further than any other single skill. 🌱

# Alumni Class Notes

## 1980

**Stuart Pierson** now lives in Round Hill, Virginia, where his investment firm, Piedmont Capital Asset Management, is based. Stuart is also enjoying a second career as a professional soccer coach, while raising his two children, Mary Stewart (17) and Taylor (12). Stewart looks forward to reconnecting with old classmates on Facebook!

## 1981

**Catherine Sheehan Bruno ex. '81** will have both her boys at St. Patrick's this fall. Nicholas is currently a PK student, moving on to Kindergarten next year, and brother Andrew will become a Nursery School Wolfhound in September.

## 1985

**Renee Esfandiary Crupi ex. '85** keeps in touch with classmates **Kathleen Koltes Crawford '85** and **Danielle Dooley '85**, also a St. Patrick's parent. Renee's son Gavin is often on play dates with Danielle's son Jack.

## 1991

**Amanda Rucci Lessard** got married in June and is expecting her first child at the end of May.

## 1994

**Justin Lott** is engaged to be married to Elizabeth Allina on April 27 at Middleton Plantation, just outside Charleston, South Carolina. He continues to work for the Chief Information Officer at BlackRock in New York City and is accruing hours towards his instrument pilot's license, as is his fiancée. They are part-owners of a Cessna 182 and fly around the East Coast when the weather permits! **Cameron Garner** and wife Emily welcomed a baby boy, Sanders McLeod Garner, into the world on July 31, 2012.

## 1996

**Trevor Lott** graduates from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania in May and will work in New York City for private equity company Prospect Capital. He traveled to Colombia over spring break, visiting cultural sites and beaches. He continues to play hockey at Penn and will miss it when he moves to New York, but he will be rejoining many of his friends there, including St. Patrick's classmate **Jonathan Nobil**.

## 1997

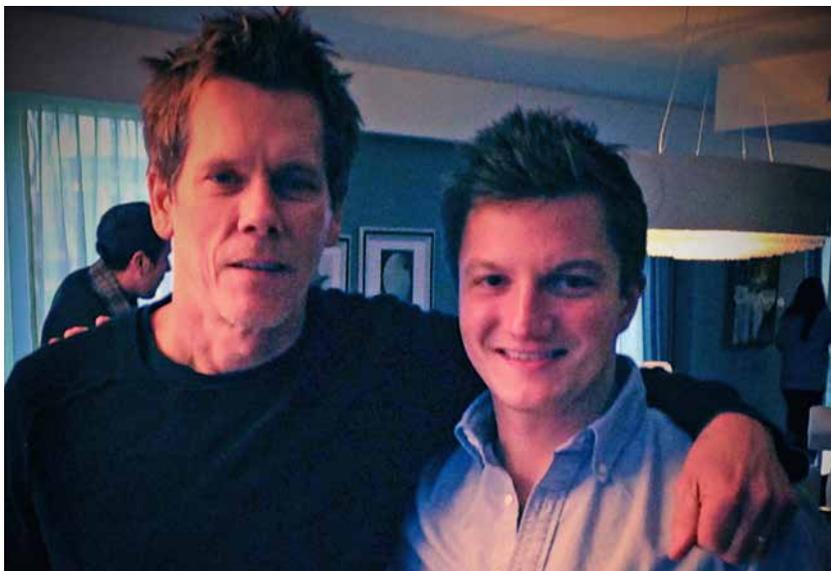
**Nancy Weindruch Stewart** and **John Stewart** were married on September 15, 2012. The ceremony took place at the National Cathedral and was followed by a reception at the Sulgrave Club. The wedding party included a number of St. Patrick's alumni, including **Louisa Weindruch ex. '06**, **Cristin Datch '97**, **Emmett Weindruch ex. '91**, **Andy Dayton ex. '96**, **Andrew Riotto '96**, and **Phil Mause ex. '96**. The newlyweds reside with their cat, Happy, in Cleveland Park. **Annie Sandza** recently earned her master's degree in education, specializing in secondary biology, life science, and Spanish from the George Washington University and her teaching certificate from the District of Columbia after teaching for one year at KIPP College Preparatory Academy in Anacostia.

## 1999

**Read Wall** has launched a menswear collection and was recently profiled in GQ: "Though the brand is just two years old, Wall is smartly carving out a niche for himself by selling the kind of clean prep essentials guys will wear on and off the clock."



*Top photo: Cameron Garner '94 (front, right) is pictured with his wife Emily, newborn son Sanders, and his mother Jamie and her husband Michael Sullivan. Bottom photo: Nancy Weindruch Stewart '97 married fellow alum John Stewart '97 in September. Congratulations!*



**Top photo:** Read Wall '99 and Kevin Bacon at the launch party for Wall's menswear line, held at Bacon's apartment in New York City. **Middle photo:** Sam Wilkins W '01 is pictured here with his platoon, currently deployed in Afghanistan. Sam is the tall soldier, just right of center in the back row. **Bottom photo:** Brendan Murphy '00 was married in Key West in January. In this photo, from left to right: Colleen Murphy '99, parent of alumni James Murphy, Brendan's wife Julia Rogers Murphy, Brendan Murphy '00, parent of alumni Karen Murphy, Sean Murphy '96, and Sean's wife Tara Murphy.

## 2000

**Brendan Murphy** married Julia Rogers on January 5 in Key West. **Alex Williams** works as an investigator at the Mintz Group in San Francisco while continuing to pursue his own creative interests. In April, he spent two weeks on Martha's Vineyard at a writer's residency program. **Amy Johnson** was recently promoted to associate in the J.P. Morgan Private Bank offices here in Washington, D.C.

## 2001

**Andy Dawson W '01, M '03** just moved back to D.C. from New York City to work for agencyQ, an independent marketing firm. He will be marrying fiancée Alexandra Sedaghatpour on May 26 at the Anderson House in Washington, D.C. The two met in college at American University. **Kate Fletcher W '01** will be working as a summer associate at Skadden Arps in Chicago before returning to her last year at Georgetown Law School. **Sam Wilkins W '01** graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point in 2011 and was commissioned in the U.S. Army. He graduated from Ranger School in January 2012 and is currently deployed as a 1st Lieutenant in the Kunar province in Afghanistan. He and his fiancée, Ashley Miller, are planning for a fall wedding.

## 2002

**Stephanie Hoover W '02** graduated in 2012 with honors from the University of Pittsburgh with a degree in English fiction writing and is an assistant literary agent with Trident Media in New York City. She lives in Astoria, Queens. **Diamond Riley W '02** graduated from the University of Virginia in 2012, where she earned her bachelor's degree in psychology. During her time at Virginia, Diamond spent a semester at sea and traveled to 15 different countries including Singapore, Japan, and South Africa. She

enjoyed South Africa so much that she is now a graduate student at the University of Kwazulu-Natal in Durban. Diamond will receive her master's in research in psychology in August. Diamond is considering attending law school in the fall. **Rob Stewart W '02** is wrapping up three months of gaining French fluency in Paris before moving to Montreal. He is happy to be settling there as spring begins.

## 2005

**Lauren Hoover W '05** is a sophomore at the University of San Diego. She is a member of Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority as well as a number of business fraternities and clubs, including the Urban Land Institute Young Leaders. She also volunteers with the Women's Center on campus. Lauren lives on Mission Beach in San Diego and will be studying abroad in Rome this fall. **Preston West W '05** is an aspiring hip-hop artist and recently spent time with St. Patrick's Grades 7 and 8 students talking to them about the music industry.

## 2006

**Keenan Fisher ex. W '06** is finishing up a post-graduate year at Vermont Academy and will attend Marist College in Poughkeepsie, New York.

## 2007

**Dan Y., W '07, M '09** and two Potomac School teammates won the 2013 VEX U.S. National Robotics Tournament in Omaha.

## 2008

**Michael M. W '08, M '10** designed the set for St. Andrew's Episcopal School's spring musical, *The Wiz*. **Andrew T. W '08** is a junior at St. Albans this year and played the role of Jud Fry in

The Close Theater's recent production of *Oklahoma*. He was also recognized by the National Society of Arts and Letters Washington, D.C. chapter with a certificate of merit honor award for excellence in the arts. This award recognizes the most promising junior-level talent from 32 different Washington, D.C.- area high schools.

**Emma T. W '08** was fortunate to spend the first semester of her junior year at an amazing school called Oxbow in Napa, California, centered on the creative process. She was able to explore the usual academic subjects using the artistic and creative process as a critical learning tool. The school enrolls junior, senior, and gap-year students. She found the experiential learning coupled with a creative focus to be empowering and transforming. She discovered a special interest in neuropsychology and neurobiology and based her final project on those subjects. A sculpture she created was featured in the local Napa newspaper. Now back for her second semester at the National Cathedral School, she is looking forward to senior year and college.

## 2009

Competitive horse show jumper **Chloe R. W '09, M '11** was selected as one of four young people to represent the USA on the Junior Nation's Cup Team and came in fourth in that competition held in Wellington, Florida, in early March. Chloe also recently won the Artisan Farms Young Rider Grand Prix Team Event, a competition featuring the leading U.S. show-jumping riders 25 years old and younger. **Memuna M. W '09, M '11** continues to enjoy her art as a sophomore at St. Andrew's. In one current work in progress, she depicts herself on a throne, on top of the world, with a white tiger.



*Photo above: Current Madeira students and St. Patrick's alumnae Mollie T. (left), Nora C. (middle) and Carson P.*

## 2010

**Mollie T. W '10, M '12, Nora C. W '10, M '12, and Carson P. W '10, M '12** are all enjoying the Madeira experience!

## 2011

**Matthew T. W '11** played basketball for the St. Albans Grade 8 team this winter. He was named the team's most valuable player and selected for the All-Tournament Team in the Bullis Middle School Tournament.



## Opening the Door: A Conversation with Kit Ballenger

**Above:** *Kit Ballenger (left) is pictured here with her husband Matt and children Joshua 1B (center) and Charlie PK1 (right).*

We were drawn to St. Patrick's for many of the same reasons families constantly sing its praises—the emphasis on process over product, the interdisciplinary approach to thematic study units, and the collegial feel of classrooms and shared space. However, an accidental encounter with a group of Upper School students vaulted St. Patrick's to the top of our list as we considered area schools during our search two years ago. A dozen or so children poured out of the front doors as we entered, charming and impressing us by the casual confidence, poise, and articulate warmth with which each child politely greeted us. This was no put-on; this was how we wanted our children to behave as “big kids.” The emphasis on integrity and citizenship continues to show every time we have the opportunity to interact with students, as integral to daily learning as the rock-solid academic foundations being built by the tremendous faculty.

Where, why, and how we give of our time and energy are deeply personal decisions. We are grateful to be members of the vibrant St. Patrick's educational community, and we feel that helping out around the school is a simple way to show our continued appreciation of the daily opportunities afforded our children as students here. But helping a Lower School student check out a library book, manning a booth at Family Fun Day, contributing to Faculty and Staff Appreciation events, or reading aloud to a Nursery School class—those are almost selfish decisions for us as parents. Certainly, those opportunities afford us a glimpse into the minutiae of our children's school days. More importantly, though, those brief encounters with faculty and with students of all ages serve as an enduring affirmation of the phenomenal community of which we are now a part. That group of Upper School students opened more than just a door that day. They opened up a whole, wonderful world for our family.





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Washington, DC 20007  
[www.stpatsdc.org](http://www.stpatsdc.org)

*Our Mission*

*St. Patrick's Episcopal Day School strives to create a diverse learning community of students, teachers, and parents who recognize the infinite value of every participant as a child of God. We are committed to developing character, advancing human understanding, and promoting academic excellence in our students in order to prepare them to live with integrity, compassion, and purpose.*

# SAVE THE DATE

## Lower School Chapel of Celebration

Friday, May 31, 8:30 am

## Nursery School Closing Chapel

Friday, June 7, 9:15 am

## Grade 6 Graduation Ceremony

Thursday, June 6, 7:00 pm

## Kindergarten to Grade 8 Closing Chapel

Friday, June 7, 11:00 am

## Grade 8 Graduation Ceremony

Friday, June 7, 7:00 pm



St. Patrick's is on Facebook!

[www.facebook.com/StPatsDC](http://www.facebook.com/StPatsDC)