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MAGAZINE SPRING 2021

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Alumni journalists report on 2020

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On the Cover

Baratunde

Thurston '95.

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The Light Ahead

A lot has changed in a year, but not our spirit.

BY BRYAN GARMAN

On a cloudy February afternoon, I wandered across campus, looking for light in a gray landscape. With luck, I encountered the Upper School Chamber Chorus rehearsing in front of the Kogod Arts Center. Worried that they may not be at their best, the choristers smiled sheepishly beneath their masks as they socially distanced across the courtyard. Under less than ideal circumstances, they moved tentatively but determinedly through a piece

they had once mastered, rediscovering familiar lyrics, reconstituting community, and forging beautiful harmonies. They were inspiring because, under the direction of Sarah Markovits, they found opportunity and joy in the imperfect.

The pandemic has provided challenge and change, which have had major impacts on how our students experience learning. Moreover, it has profoundly altered the college process. The most selective

colleges and universities have become test optional, a decision that dramatically increased their applications and curbed interest in other institutions, two-thirds of which reported enrollment decreases in 2020/21. Colgate's applications doubled, Harvard's soared by 42 percent, and Quaker-rooted Haverford and Swarthmore saw double-digit gains. Yet, applications from first-generation students, as well as Black and Latino teenagers, have fallen. Many institutions have reduced staff, overspent financial aid budgets, and now face existential questions.

These developments have introduced more uncertainty into a process that had already been in flux. Our students have been fortunate to rely on the leadership of Director of College Counseling Laurén Carter, who last year returned to the position after a three-year hiatus. In short order, Laurén has reorganized the office, recruited three stellar full-time admissions professionals to the staff, and significantly improved and expanded the program. She and her team have been especially skilled at providing support and insight during this recent turbulence. As a parent and three-time veteran of the college process shared, Laurén, whom she described as "organized, smart, calm, strong, and available," does "so much to make things better." In particular, the counselors teach students that they need "to work hard, face reality," and "dust off" when this arbitrary process does not end the way they had hoped.

"As I limp away from the process," the parent wrote, "I'm reminded that it is a demon for those who seek control. It also spawns panic and blame. Above all else, in the moment, it dissolves perspective." Laurén, she observed, simply wants the students to "land well," and in preparing for that landing, there is no better advisor, no shrewder strategist, no stronger advocate, no more grounded ethicist. "Thanks to Sidwell," the parent wrote, "for revamping the program and finding someone with the perfect combination of grace and expertise to lead it."

The pandemic has also shifted the admissions landscape at Sidwell Friends. We have seen double-digit growth in our applicant pool and are delighted to welcome our extraordinary new families to the Sidwell Friends community. We too waived standardized-testing requirements for this admissions season. In fact, under the thoughtful leadership of Director of Admissions and Financial Aid Frankie Brown, we had been considering the possibility of discontinuing standardized testing altogether, both because tests limit our understanding of candidates and because

they contain racial, gender, and class biases. In accordance with our Strategic Plan, Sidwell Friends wants to welcome a wider community of talented and diverse students, and Frankie and her team continue to find new strategies for recruiting, assessing, and greeting families. She and her staff have built an engaging and effective online program for prospective families and have especially focused on inviting current students and alumni to speak about how they have benefited from our program. There are no better examples of wisdom, adaptability, and resiliency, qualities that define the School's success.

Our persistent if imperfect commitment to accessibility and inclusion infuses our Equity, Justice, and Community (EJC) Strategic Action Plan, which too has grown out of our strategic objectives.

Under the leadership of EJC Director Natalie Randolph '98—whose position has been generously endowed by a former parent, grandparent, and now trustee family—the EJC Strategic Action Plan was built from honest conversations with students, young alumni, parents, and faculty and staff; it provides a dynamic blueprint for how we can reckon with the shortcomings of our past and transform them into a hopeful future. Our recent partnership with Howard University, the establishment of

the Señora Supervía Chair in Spanish Language and Latino Studies, and accelerated efforts to fund the Faculty Chair in African and African American Studies, represent important milestones in our work, as does our ongoing effort to assemble an outstanding faculty and staff that look like the 54 percent of our population who are students of color.

Meanwhile, plans for the Center for Ethical Leadership, an all-School space that will be built in the new Upper School on the Upton campus, are also taking shape. Exciting student programs in community engagement and justice-based courses—such as Natalie Randolph and Robbie Gross's senior seminar, "Metropolitan Policy and the DMV"—will combine to deepen the intellectual lives of our students and encourage them to practice Quaker values in School and out.

The storms of the past year have darkened our days, but we have never stopped seeking the Light. As the clouds begin to clear, we hope that it shines more brightly on and from our students than ever. With the commitment of our faculty and staff, the welcoming of new students, and the ongoing support of parents, alumni, and our philanthropic partners, we are confident that we will see brighter days ahead. ✨



ON / OFF CAMPUS

CULTURE CLUB

Brain Stem

A new award-winning student journal recognizes girls in science, technology, engineering, and math.

When **Layla Dawit '22** and Georgetown Day School student **Avani Ahuja** qualified for the Mathcounts National competition one year, their team stood out—Dawit and Ahuja were members of the first all-female team to represent DC at this level of the competition. They noticed there were fewer and fewer female competitors as the competition moved into the higher levels, and that got them thinking—which turned into writing, which turned into publishing, which turned into their new magazine, *Gxrls in STEM*. The effort paid off: The magazine, which was started by “gxrls” (students who identify as female or nonbinary) from both Sidwell Friends and Georgetown Day School, has since expanded to include gxrls from eight schools internationally. What’s more, *Gxrls in STEM* won a 2021 Crown Award from the Columbia Scholastic Press Association, a student journalism organization at Columbia University. The magazine won in the category of High School Print General Magazine. All selected publications will receive a final Gold or Silver Crown designation in March 2021. “Avani and I saw that more and more gxrls were feeling less confident and more intimidated by advanced classes



Dawit '22

in math and science,” Dawit says. “We wanted to build a community that could support each other and explore their interest in STEM.” Their magazine has a smart and lively dynamic: STEM-related memes and jokes mix with scholarly articles on vaccines and interviews with women working in STEM. “The articles are science-based, but a lot of times they end up connecting to other fields,” Dawit says. “STEM can connect to so many other fields—mental health, art, everything.” sidwell.edu/student-life/publications



Sean '28

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STATE OF THE ARTS

Peace Offering

Middle School students use art and music to celebrate their values.

The Young Musicians and Artists for Peace program was supposed to be a short, in-person affair to celebrate peace with talented Sidwell Friends Middle Schoolers. It became a much larger enterprise. “What was supposed to happen was a concert where the kids could come, play an instrument, sing, read their poetry,” says **Carmen Marchetti (P '26)**, one of the parents organizing the event. “The irony was that we were worried we wouldn’t have enough time.” This year, thanks to the shift to a virtual event, they had all the time and cyberspace in the world. Middle School student artists uploaded their artwork and videos of performances. “The students understand they live the lives they have today because many people before them didn’t have that life,” Marchetti says. “So, it is important to celebrate peace as a Quaker value.” Music and art can be joyful expressions of peace, she added, as well as activities the School can do as a community.



1969, the new BSU magazine

CULTURE CLUB

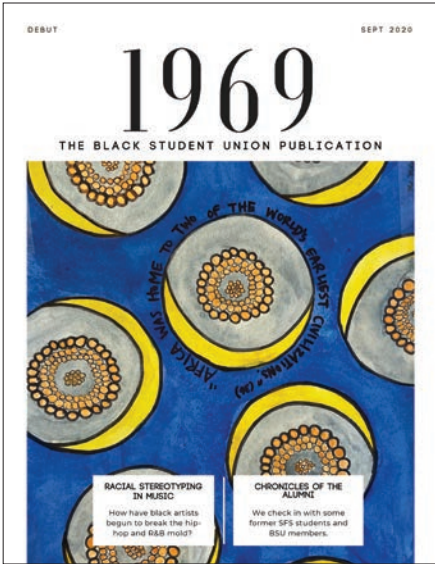
Voices Carry

1969 gives Black students a space of their own—and a few awards to boot.

Adeoluwa Fatukasi '21 wanted to hang some historical details and facts on bulletin boards to brighten up the Upper School hallways. “I really wanted to know more about what the BSU did in the 1990s,” says Fatukasi, the 2019/20 community coordinator for the Black Student Union (BSU). “I met with School Archivist **Lori Hardenbergh**, and originally, she was going to help me draft some sort of time line that I would put up on a bulletin board.” But when Fatukasi went down to the School’s Archives, she was blown away. “I saw so many cool initiatives that the BSU had started,” she says. “There used to be a Black student magazine called *The Earthquaker* published in 1982. It only had one issue, but its whole premise was to give Black students a space to write whatever they want.” Fatukasi was inspired. She turned to Upper School English teacher and BSU advisor **Hayes Davis** for advice,



and the magazine 1969, named for the BSU’s founding year, was born. Then Fatukasi submitted the first issue to the American Scholastic Association’s annual awards: 1969 took prizes for First Place Magazine with special merit, Most Outstanding Digital Magazine, and Most Outstanding First Issue. Fatukasi recently published the magazine’s second issue. “I really want 1969 to have a significant space in the School’s publication sphere,” she says. “Often, when we approach EJC work, it’s always through a lens that’s catering to the white gaze and wanting to make sure people aren’t uncomfortable—when you need that discomfort to push forward. This magazine is monumental because we’re not doing that; we’re giving students a space to say whatever they need to say.” Davis sees 1969 as a vital part of the School’s commitment to anti-racism. “In my role as an EJC coordinator, I noticed more and more students wanting to express voices that they were not experiencing in the classroom—which is to say, their own voices,” he says. “The most important role I see the magazine playing is amplifying those voices. It’s providing a necessary outlet for those voices to have a level of



"OFTEN, WE APPROACH EJC WORK THROUGH A LENS THAT'S CATERING TO THE WHITE GAZE AND WANTING TO MAKE SURE PEOPLE AREN'T UNCOMFORTABLE—WHEN YOU NEED THAT DISCOMFORT TO PUSH FORWARD."

conversation until EJC work is more folded into the fabric of who we are in the hallways and in the classrooms every day.” Those voices, Fatukasi notes, will be wide-ranging. “This magazine is showing that there is no single story to the Black community,” she says. “Everyone has different experiences with their Blackness and what it means to be a Black person in, essentially, an anti-Black world. This magazine is a compilation of stories, because storytelling is the best way to go about elevating those voices. Stories are really everything.” sidwell.edu/student-life/publications



Kabir '29

KIDS 'N PLAY

Class Actors

4th grade narrators tackle the audiobook.

From personal experience, **Morgan '29** has some advice for aspiring voice actors. "I would express a lot more than what was actually there" on the page, he says. "Instead of saying, 'Please, let me go,' I would say, 'PLEASE! LET ME GO!'" Morgan and the rest of the 4th grade class made their voice-acting debuts by recording audiobooks for a fundraiser to support their class gift to the Lower School before they head off to the Middle School. "Traditionally, that fundraiser has been a car wash or a bake sale," says **Sherrese Smith (P '29, P '31)**, one of the 4th grade room parents. "The challenge was finding something that would excite the kids, still be interactive, not put a lot of responsibility on the parents, but really be a community project." Then **Tarun Upaday (P '29, P '32)**, another room parent,

recalled hearing that the stars of the *Harry Potter* films read the books aloud for a charity project. "And that was the basis of the idea," he says. It was perfect: "something all the kids could work on together, but asynchronously." So, after the grown-ups made sure all the stories were in the public domain, the students started reading. They also adapted stories that hadn't aged well. "In the original, the prize was going to be the princess," says Morgan, who read *The Golden Goose*. "But we decided to change that so the prize was a diamond." That kind of thinking about suitable or dated material and cultural stereotypes allowed parents to start conversations with their kids. "It was a good way to tackle difficult issues," Smith says, "so it added another benefit to a great project." Though they're younger than most audiobook narrators, the students see their age as an advantage. "If it's adults reading, kids may not want to listen to it," says **Kabir '29**, who read *The Queen Bee*, "but if it's kids reading, they'll feel like it's more about them." Listen: anchor.fm/sidwell-friends-pa.

CLASS ACTS

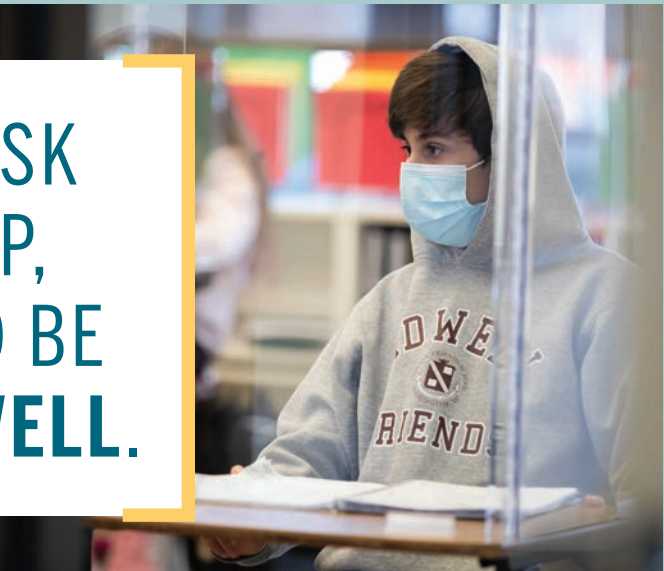
An Essay You Can Dance To



Students create musical essays.

Students cope with the pandemic by writing words and music.

For distance learning, **Mark Vialva's** 7th and 8th grade music students received miniature electronic keyboards. The keyboards don't just help students practice music; they help them make it. "Some of the best music that lasts the test of time is the music that reflects its time," says Vialva. "I wanted the kids to articulate how the pandemic affects them. So, I had the kids write out a script and then record it to music they created." The combination of writing and music was a profound medium for the students. "One student started with: 'Announcement! Read all about it! The world is ending! School is going to distance learning! Basketball practice is now canceled! You need to wear a mask!'" The script, of course, was only part of the process. "I didn't take it easy on them musically," Vialva says. "If something is off beat, we need to fix it. If you can't dance to it without tripping over yourself every two minutes, we need to fix it." The project let the students tap into the complicated emotions they've had the past year. "The kids being able to let their emotions out and let their Light shine, being able to share their stories through music," Vialva says, "it's like having a superpower."



MASK UP, AND BE SIDWELL.

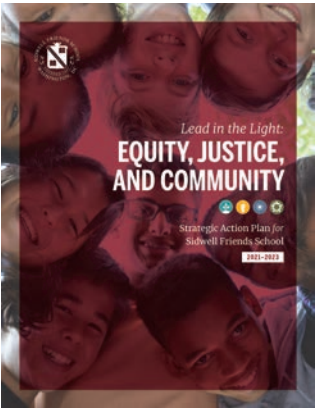


JUST CAUSES

Making Equity a Legacy

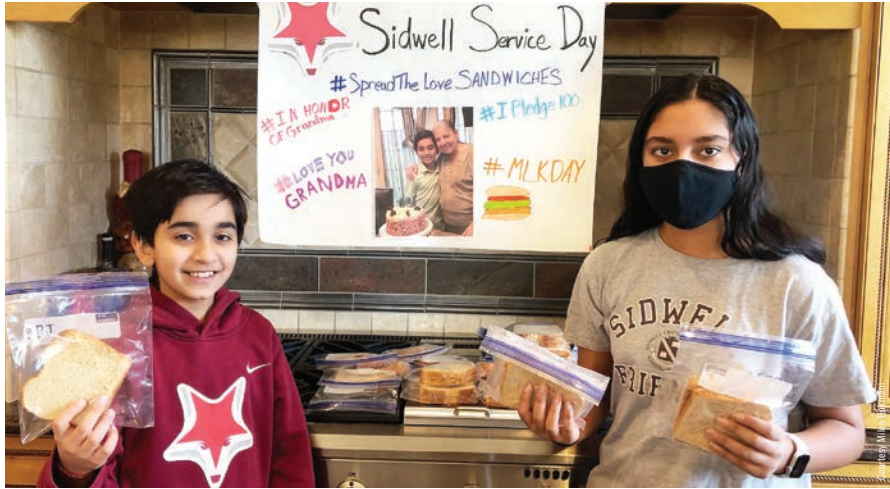
The Equity, Justice, and Community director position is fully endowed.

The concept of repairing the world has motivated **Lora and Jeffrey Drezner (P '03, '06, GP '34)** across their lives and careers in healthcare and education. But rising hate crimes and violence, plus ongoing institutionalized racism, gave them a renewed sense of urgency. Moved by Head of School **Bryan Garman's** and the Board of Trustees' commitment to equity, justice, and community (EJC) and inspired by the value of a Sidwell Friends education, the Drezners decided to permanently fund the EJC director position. In February, Garman announced the chair and presented the School's



new EJC Strategic Action Plan, created in response to the Board of Trustees' Minute on Racial Justice. "There is always this continuing call to pursue a more just world," Lora Drezner says. The Drezners, parents of **Michael '03** and **Dani '06**, appreciate how Sidwell Friends shaped their children and gave them a sense of service. Jeffrey Drezner, a current trustee, has a similar wish for the EJC position: "It

is our hope that this initiative will make a significant difference in what people believe and how they deal with truth." Relatedly, the Class of 1971 launched an endowment for their 50th Reunion to partly support the EJC Strategic Action Plan. Similarly, the Class of 1970 created an EJC fund in honor of their own 50th Reunion. The Drezners' funding fortifies the School's commitment to equity and to sustain continuous leadership. Gifts like these, including the fully funded Señora Supervía Chair for Spanish and Latin American Studies and the African and African American Studies Chair (now in active fundraising), enable the School to connect Quaker values directly to its initiatives. The new EJC director, **Natalie Randolph '98**, says the chair "really makes a statement that EJC work is important, forever and always." To learn more, email **Mary Carrasco** at **carrascom@sidwell.edu**. See also: **sidwell.edu/equity**.



Milen '29 and his cousin make sandwiches to honor their grandmother.

AT YOUR SERVICE

The Story of Us

Spirit, friendship, and sandwiches highlighted Martin Luther King Day.

When the Sidwell Friends community gathered virtually in January to recognize

Martin Luther King Jr. with a Day of Service and Learning, faces were lit by screens. **Diane Macklin** asked attendees to think of another glow. Macklin, a performer, cultural mediator, and former Sidwell Friends teacher, performed fireside stories for *My Story, Your Story—Uniting Our Voices*. "When we gather around the fire and we cling

to one another, there is strength," she said. Macklin told fables from African American, Thai, and Bantu cultures focused on issues of justice, respect, community, and kindness. That spirit continued as the Parents Association announced its new Parents Friendship Initiative. Inspired by the Atlanta Friendship Initiative, the project will build an anti-racist community by creating intentional friendships among people with visible differences. Next, the School talked about service with **Makenzie Delmotte** from N Street Village, which gives women in need housing, food, and healthcare. That led to active service: Volunteers made sandwiches for Martha's Table, baby kits for A Wider Circle, or cards for essential workers and children at the National Institutes of Health Children's Inn. Many hung out on Zoom as they colored, slapped jelly on bread, or made kits. One class dedicated their 331 sandwiches to the recently deceased grandmother of one of their classmates, **Milen '29**. "She always wanted people to have food!" he said.



Randolph '98

CLASS ACTS

A Teacher Corps for All

Professional development spotlights anti-racism, identity, and openly exploring difficult issues.

In February, the Sidwell Friends faculty and staff gathered for professional development sessions focused on the School's dedication to an anti-racist climate. **Christopher Brown '86**, **Traci Cohen Dennis '86**, **Dax-Devlon Ross '93**, and Endowed Director of Equity, Justice, and Community (EJC) **Natalie Randolph '98** each led panels in their fields of expertise, from reconceiving American history to bias-training for future teaching. The four alumni session leaders had previously worked with Sidwell Friends during the School's study of **Ibram X. Kendi's** *How to Be an Antiracist* at the beginning of the 2020/21 year.

Brown, a Columbia University professor, led "Teaching American Slavery." He shared how teachers can make an informed examination of slavery as one of the most powerful forces to shape American history, making it clear just how much of the hemisphere's culture connects to chattel slavery. Using the Trans-Atlantic Slave Database, Brown demonstrated the sheer vastness of the slave trade, both in terms of time and in human lives. Brown cautioned against teaching slavery as a pat set of data and instead encouraged using it to introduce students to the ways history echoes into the future.

BROWN CAUTIONED AGAINST TEACHING SLAVERY AS A PAT SET OF DATA AND INSTEAD ENCOURAGED USING IT TO INTRODUCE STUDENTS TO THE WAYS HISTORY ECHOES INTO THE FUTURE.

Cohen Dennis, an American University professor, led an interactive session on "The Future is Now: Creating Antiracist Spaces for 2021 and Beyond." She offered faculty and staff the tools to develop anti-racist protocols. Attendees completed a "self-interrogation" worksheet in which they examined their "bridges, barriers, and blind spots"—bridges to help them be intentional about promoting an inclusive and nurturing classroom for all students; barriers that may hold them back from doing so; and blind spots they may need to address. At the end, Cohen Dennis asked all participants to choose one action to commit to as a way of ensuring an anti-racist environment.

Ross, an equity consultant, led "Teaching Hard History," which encouraged teachers to examine the difficult subjects they may be glossing over, why they may be downplaying certain events, and how they can bring those critical conversations into the classroom. Ross emphasized acknowledging the identities of everyone in a class, rather than having students leave their core selves behind in order to teach history "objectively"—which often comes at the expense of some people's experiences, particularly historically marginalized people. Ross applauded a diverse curriculum but cautioned that teachers must also examine which ideas aren't being taken seriously and why.

Finally, Randolph led a session on "Assessment and Grading Equity," asking attendees to explore their own memories of evaluations. Often, participants noted, assessments are presented negatively—think of a paper returned with red scrawls all over it and a mysterious grade of C+. Instead, Randolph taught, an assessment must be unique to each student, deliver precise feedback, and be transparent about how the teacher reached the final grade. Empowering feedback, Randolph said, provides motivation, which results in a higher skill level.

Professional development that focuses on EJC is a cornerstone of the anti-racist community the School has pledged to build—as described in the EJC Strategic Action Plan—in which every student is seen and heard.

CULTURE CLUB



Cooking classes courtesy the Parents of Asian Students

Global Flavor

Families explore Asia through food—and so can you!

The range of cultures and traditions the School celebrates was top of mind when the Parents of Asian Students met to discuss the 2020/21 academic year. “At the kickoff meeting, we started with the definition of what ‘Asian’ means to us,” **Nishita Shah (P ’24 ’28)** says. “It’s one of those words where you ask anybody and they have a different definition

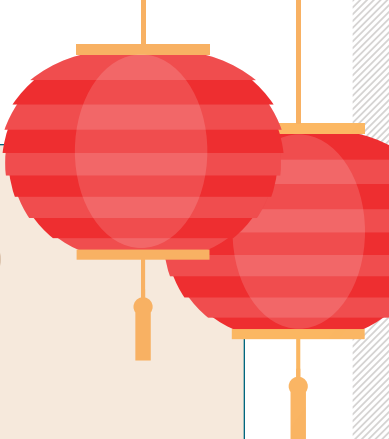
depending on where they’ve lived. With Sidwell Friends, a lot of the focus has been on China and India, while there are a lot of people who come from different parts of Asia.” The question was, how to do it? “We always had a Lunar New Year celebration, and it was always focused around cooking,” **Grace Mai (P ’25)** says. “This year, we really wanted to expand and celebrate the other Asian holidays, and we thought that cooking would be the best way to do it.” So, the Parents of Asian Students launched a series of virtual cooking

“IT BRINGS PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS TOGETHER OVER A TOPIC THAT EVERYBODY LOVES: FOOD.”

classes. “We give the ingredient list in advance,” **Zhe Tang (P ’25 ’22)** says, “so the people need to go shopping.” This has led to a pursuit of ingredients new to many Sidwell Friends families, who are having a lot of fun: There was a moon-cake-making class to celebrate East Asia’s Mid-Autumn Festival; a class on Punjabi *khichdi* for the Indian festival of Lohri; and, most recently, a dumpling-making class led by **Chef Peter Chang**, known for his eponymous Szechwan restaurants across the area. “Doing the virtual classes has allowed us to get access to a lot of great chefs in DC,” Shah says. In addition to Peter Chang, chefs have included **Lisa Chang**, from Mama Chang’s in Fairfax, and **Jassi Bindra**, from Punjab Grill in Washington. “We’re trying to help these businesses as well,” Shah says. “At the end of the Lohri class, we offered a 20 percent discount to families if they went to Punjab Grill. It’s giving back to the community where we live.” Next up is a dinner for Nowruz, the Persian New Year. “We are bringing people from different backgrounds together over a topic that everybody loves: food,” Shah says. “There are no issues when it comes to language, there are no issues when it comes to religion, none of that stuff. It’s something that connects everyone.”

Lunar New Year Dumplings

Think you’ve got the chops to take on Peter Chang’s recipe? Give it a shot.



Dumpling Wrappers

- 400 grams of flour
- 200 grams of water

Note: Prepare the wrapper dough ahead of time, because it needs to rest. (You can also find pre-made dumpling wrappers in an Asian grocery store.)

Pour the flour into a bowl. Add water slowly, two to three times, and stir as you add. Start kneading the dough with both hands. Criteria: smooth dough, clean hands, and clean bowl. Then, cover the bowl with a cloth and let it rest for at least 30 minutes. The resting process will help soften the dough. The longer it rests, the softer it becomes.

Pro tip: If you need more information, this website has in-depth instructions on dumpling wrappers: redhousespice.com/homemade-dumpling-wrappers/.

Dumpling Filling: Meat

- 450 grams of ground pork (or any meat you like)
- 450 grams of Chinese cabbage (finely chopped, soybean size)
- 20 grams of soy sauce
- 5 grams of salt
- 15 grams of ginger (finely minced)
- 30 grams of green onion (finely minced)
- 5 grams of white pepper
- 30 grams of sesame oil

Note: You can mix all the ingredients to make the filling in advance and then allow it to marinate—or you can use it right away.

Put the ground pork in a bowl and add the salt, soy sauce, and minced ginger, stirring constantly. Next, slowly add the diced cabbage, two to three times, and stir as you add. Once you’ve mixed in the cabbage, add the white pepper, sesame oil, and chopped green onion. Mix well.

Dumpling Filling: Vegetable

- 1,000 grams of Shanghai or Napa cabbage
- 150 grams of fresh shiitake mushrooms
- 15 grams of salt
- 8 grams of ginger (finely minced)
- 30 grams of green onions (finely minced)
- 40 grams of sesame oil

Cut the fresh mushrooms into fine pieces, and combine them with the salt, minced ginger, and minced green onions. Wash the cabbage, quickly blanch it in hot water for two minutes, remove it, and rinse with cold water to dry. Chop the cabbage into fine granules, wrap them in gauze, and press out the water by adding a weight on the top of the wrapped gauze. Leave the weight in place for two hours. Then pour the cabbage onto a plate, and add the mushrooms, salt, minced ginger, and chopped green onion mixture to the cabbage. Mix well. Then add the sesame oil.

Assemble the Dumplings

Knead the rested dough. Split it into two halves so it is easier to work with. Put flour down on your work surface and hand-roll each section of dough into long tubes about the diameter of a broom handle. Break the tubes of dough into ~1-inch pieces, about 13 grams each, either by knife or just by hand. Put flour on top of the pieces and then flatten them down using the palm of your hand. Re-flour your surface. Individually roll out each hand-flattened piece of dough into ~2- to 4-inch circles, generously using flour on all sides as you go. Note, try to keep the middles of the circles thicker and the sides thinner, as the middle will hold the filling and the sides will need to be folded. Next, put a spoonful or so of filling into each circle of dough, and spread out the filling so that it is fairly flat. Then fold the dough in half, creating a semi-circle, and pinch the sides together along the arc of the crescent. Gently press the far ends of the semi-circle together so that the edging comes up to the center.

Cook the Dumplings

In a wide, nonstick pan, add a little oil and the dumplings. Then gently add a little water. The water should cover the bottom half of the dumpling, leaving the upper half exposed. Cover and cook on medium heat until most of the water evaporates, about five minutes. When the water is almost gone, add a little more oil, and pan fry the dumplings one more minute. Enjoy!



“The Heartbeat and the Light”

Mamadou Guèye remembers Brittany Chase.

Brittany Chase, the senior executive assistant to Upper School Principal Mamadou Guèye, passed away on January 30 after being hospitalized for nearly two months. Chase was the Upper School's touchstone, the “Bring It with Britt” Zumba instructor extraordinaire, an enthusiastic member of the Black Student Union Production team, and the founding advisor of the Upper School's Black Girls Society. In other words, Chase did not just work at Sidwell Friends School; she wholeheartedly gave her time, energy, and spirit to the students of the School. Below, Guèye reflects on a life that spoke to all of us.

By Mamadou Guèye

Brittany Chase was, simply put, the heartbeat and the light of our community. An immensely brilliant, giving, talented, and kind person. A friend—a beautifully devoted, beautifully caring friend—to so many of us. Brittany loved her Upper School community, just as we loved her. Any parent who ever stopped by her office to schedule an appointment, to check in or out, to ask a question, or to just be with her could not help but see that she created a special and unique space in her office. There was always someone in that office with Brittany, was there not? We went to Brittany because she was so warm, so sharp, so welcoming, so trustworthy, and so joyful. The list of those whose lives she unalterably affected is staggering in its scope and in its depth. Amid this painful moment is the opportunity we have in the days, months, and years ahead to hear from our community about just what Brittany meant to us and to keep her with us forever by sharing these stories.

It was one of the greatest privileges of my career and of my life to work with her so closely over the last six

years. Our countless hours spent together were filled with laughter, and I was constantly in awe of all that she did and all that she was. She was not simply the first person you saw when you walked into the Upper School building and the last when you walked out. Brittany was the logistical mastermind behind the daily operation of the School. And she was certainly at its ethical and social core. Despite being only 25 years old when she started working at Sidwell Friends School, Brittany possessed enormous wisdom and grace. She taught us all, and she taught me, an incalculable amount. She single-handedly made Sidwell Friends School a better place for students. And she meant the world to me.

Everyone who knew her—whether at Sidwell Friends School, or in her church, or in her Zumba classes, or among her indelibly close and loving family and friends—could immediately see that Brittany lived her life to the fullest. Let us, in that spirit and in her honor, support one another in our community as we grieve this inexplicable loss and celebrate her singular life.

AT YOUR SERVICE

Parents vs. The Pandemic



Cristina Faz (P '20, '24, '28) and Robert Kang (P '23, '25, '27) became co-clerks of the Sidwell Friends Parents Association (PA) last spring amid the socially distant and wildly uncertain first wave of COVID-19. Now they're pros at Zoom and sage about coming together—without being together.

1. What were the PA's biggest challenges over the past year?

CF: For me, it was not being able to be physically together or have social interaction. So it became super valuable to work very closely with the vice clerks and division clerks. We tried to be intentional about keeping those connections. All the credit for the creativity that happened as a result goes to the incredible volunteers who made every event happen virtually. The potlucks and all the social gatherings in the fall went virtual. At the potlucks, the volunteers had us break into small Zoom meetings so we could feel like we were around a table together. The 9th grade pie bake stayed alive; they baked over Zoom! I joined a virtual meditation session last week. It's amazing what volunteers have done without sharing the same space. We're reinventing “building community” despite physical separation.

RK: The big challenge was navigating how best to utilize our time and volunteers given so much uncertainty. We'd hear from **Kathi Webb '76 (P '10, '11, '14)**, the School's director of parent relations, about what other schools were doing and about how much our parents were

doing. Our mission was to figure out how to respect people's time, be efficient, and support creativity. The other challenge was we—all of the clerks and divisions—really wanted to focus on appreciating the teachers and administrators, who were dealing with logistics, health, and so many challenges. The amount of overtime they had to put in, and what a fantastic job they do, is unquestionable. We wanted to acknowledge that, even in little ways, and all the volunteers got behind that. It's part of the spirit and character of the community. We brought in treats and notes of appreciation. At Thanksgiving, we delivered boxes full of fresh veggies. We learned that carbonated waters are really popular at the Lower School. They weren't huge events, but we wanted to send the message as often as possible that we're so appreciative of all they do.

2. Is there something surprisingly good you'll take forward with you?

RK: Zoom has taught us something; we're more present somehow, and we aren't dealing with traveling and scheduling. It can be a really good thing. I hope we don't just throw that away.

CF: Doing activities over Zoom has opened accessibility. Zoom removed barriers for participation: People aren't worried about childcare; more events are in the evenings, when it's easier to connect; long commutes are not a worry. One of the biggest discoveries is just how many things can occur over Zoom. And it brought us closer in a way, because we join from our personal space, not from one of 20 chairs around a conference table. We log in and bring our whole person and life with us—the dog barking, the kids running around—all of that brings a human aspect to this work.

3. What's coming up next?

RK: Nomination season is now! I hope folks will get involved and get excited, because hopefully we're heading



for **CRISTINA FAZ AND ROBERT KANG**

toward a much better situation; people should enjoy getting back together and joining physically next year. Also, we're always looking for new volunteers; you can be out front, in the back, leading, organizing—whatever you want. We've also learned a lot from the next leaders: The vice clerks, **Kevin Bailey (P '27, '29)** and **Shannon Hill (P '23, '27)**, have been extraordinary. They have great ideas. Being a part of the PA, you get the opportunity to meet different people and really connect with them.

CF: Kevin and Shannon are invaluable. This was such a particular year with all the challenges of distance learning, and they're already envisioning great things under this environment or in person. And in the PA, you can work with each of the division heads, who are amazing.

4. Will you miss the PA?

RK: I'll miss the relationships.

CF: I've enjoyed meeting monthly with the executive committees, those moments where you stop and take time to review everything the committees are doing, and the deep, deep appreciation you feel. And I'll miss Kathi Webb! We meet weekly with her and she's a vital support for the PA.

5. Would you do it again?

RK: Definitely.

DF: I want to do it all over again now—but in person!

EVENT HORIZON

A look back at over a century of student journalism at Sidwell Friends.

BY LOREN HARDENBERGH

Sidwell Friends students have always had something to say. From covering the latest in School news, club activities, and sports to expounding on current events, causes, and culture, journalism has been a core part of the student experience since the School's earliest days. While the mastheads have changed, a commitment to publishing student voices has never wavered.



The 1920s board of *Quarterly*

1885

The Friends' Literary Club publishes the first and only issue of *Friends Literary Journal*; the editors request "a club-room wherein we may assemble to read up subjects for thought, prepare articles for the press."

1902

A second student publication, *Mercury*, launches and fails due to a lack of advertisers.

1903

The first issue of *Quarterly*, an all-School news and literary magazine, publishes—at a rate of 1 dollar per year or 25 cents for a single issue.

1955

Younger members of *Quarterly* publish *The Sideline*, a more frequent and less polished mimeographed newsletter covering clubs, sports, events—and breathless coverage of *Quarterly*: The "cover for this winter's *Quarterly* was nicely sketched and the contrast between the easy, free drawing and the finished lettering was quite effective. ... In the title, the 'Q' was very attractive."

1963

After receiving \$600 from the administration, students use offset printing to produce a full-size

four-page newspaper on slick paper. The first issue of *The Sidwell Friends News* features photographs of construction on the new Lower School campus. Meanwhile, *Quarterly* moves away from sports and news coverage, and focuses on creative writing and art.

1974

After a disappointing showing at the national student journalism conference, *The Sidwell Friends News* goes out of print and is replaced with *Horizon: The Student Newspaper of the Sidwell Friends School*. In its first year, editorial disputes between administrators and editors get heated.

1976

After causing distress over the lack of Middle School coverage, *Horizon* adds an 8th grade editor.

2001

Horizon puts out an online version for the first time: sidwell.edu/horizon.

2020

With COVID-19 eliminating in-person school for several months, *Horizon* publishes exclusively online for the first time.



Members of the 1937 *Quarterly*

Snapshots In Time

Journalistic headlines, rather than descriptive headers, started appearing in the 1960s, and offer a window into the changing world the students found themselves in.

1968

"Hippie vs. Athlete at SFS"

1969

"Leftist Movement Reaches Washington"
"SFS Debates Use and Danger of Marijuana"
"Sidwell Students Join Peace Vigil"
"War Strike Interests Many Friends Students."

1979

"Student Revolutionaries Battle 'State,' Each Other"
"Punk Rock Is Dead at Sidwell."

1982

"Statehood Is an Inalienable Right for DC."

1983

"Walkmans Needed for 'Escape'"

1984

"Breakdancing Swirls Students into Spotlight"
"Prince Proves Unworthy of Crown; Purple Shower Merely a Drizzle"

1986

"The Beat Goes Carnivorous: Fine Young Cannibals Triumph"
"Eighties Serve as Flip-Side to Sixties Liberalism"
"D.C. Go-Go Sound Grooves Across Nation"

1987

"Education About AIDS Tops List of Students' Concerns in School Poll"

1988

"Students Hold Demonstration at South African Embassy"

1991

"MTV, Sleeping Are Highest Among Senior Pastimes"

1992

"Nirvana: MTV Puts Underground Band Over Top"
"New Columbia Must Become 51st State"

1995

"Sidwell Students, Faculty March Against AIDS"

2005

"Sidwell Welcomes Katrina Evacuees"
"Admin. Bans Facebook on Campus"

2009

"Sidwell Students Call for Climate Action at Power Shift"

2010

"Snowpocalypse: A Second Winter Break"

2017

"Sidwell Community Participates in Women's March on Washington."

2020

"Coronavirus Sparks Panic; Sidwell Responds"

Check Your Attics!

The SFS Archives has almost all the student publications in the School's history, but we are missing a few critical ones! If you have either of these, let us know!

- *Mercury*: 1902, any issues!
- *The Sideline*: 1955, Vol. 1, No. 1



BY SACHA ZIMMERMAN

THE YEAR OF LIVING DANGEROUSLY

Sidwell Friends alumni journalists balance ethical reporting and critical thinking as they discuss covering the extraordinary events of 2020, while, like all Americans, living through them.

“2020 WILL BE ONE OF THOSE YEARS that will be etched in American history,” says Asawin Suebsaeng ’07, a senior political reporter at *The Daily Beast* and the co-author of *Sinking in the Swamp*. “You say, ‘1968,’ and so many people know what you mean by that. Looking back decades from now, when you say, ‘The year 2020 in American life,’ people will know exactly what you mean.” It means COVID-19, of course, but “2020” also conjures up so many other flash points. Author and journalist Anand Giridharadas ’99, who was once an ardent *Horizon* reporter, put it this way on the Sidwell Friends *Lives That Speak* podcast, “Five synchronous crises came to a head” in 2020: “coronavirus, the economic crisis, the racial uprising, the hovering crisis of the climate, and the democratic crisis.”

Those crises took a toll on all Americans: The pandemic deaths kept ticking upward and information about COVID-19 seemed to change daily; the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis and many subsequent visible acts of brutality gave the Black Lives Matter movement an immediacy that drove protests for racial justice to a fervent pitch; wildfires scorched the West Coast, leaving millions in a haze of smoke for months; businesses shuttered, unemployment soared, and the economy seemed to hit a new low every day; and, of course, it was a presidential election year, featuring a partisanship so piercing and bitter that truth itself became tribal. Though technically occurring in 2021, the insurrection of January 6 acted as a natural bookend to 2020, an awful exclamation point to a strikingly trying year. And through all of these unprecedented events, reporters leapt into action, often struggling to keep up as the ground shifted beneath them, attempting to ascertain where to look or what to write first.



“What gives some websites,
magazines, television stations,
or newspapers some standing
is that they correct mistakes.

They fact check.”

—ANNE APPLEBAUM '82,
staff writer at
The Atlantic



Ericka Blount Danois '90, a professor in the Media, Journalism, and Film Department at Howard University and a fellow in the Sundance Episodic Makers Lab, was reporting on the prison-industrial complex for a film project when COVID-19 hit. “We had so many different stories just within the prison system, it was overwhelming,” Blount Danois says. “Journalists had to figure out, What news do people need immediately? Then they had to balance that with analysis: Where will we be in a week? And we had to do both on the daily and the weekly.” For Zeeshan Aleem '04, a freelance political journalist, a contributing writer to Vox, and the publisher of the weekly newsletter *What's Left*, that meant learning to acclimate on the fly. “We’re observing and trying to make sense of a world that is rapidly changing and evolving and rupturing in ways that we couldn’t really even have fathomed just a couple of years ago,” Aleem says. “When borders of reality and norms are overturned, we have to rapidly adapt to new ways of being in the world.”

“It almost makes you numb,” Suebsaeng says. “And sometimes you have to make yourself numb to maintain some degree of sanity, when there are so many objectively horrifying and appalling things happening right around you. With this past year, where to even start? You have the massive death toll and suffering and families ruined from the global coronavirus pandemic that is still raging. There was the racial and civil unrest, and the administration’s counterproductive, ham-fisted response to it. You have the cratered economy that continues to ruin lives and make things harder for god knows how many families. And there’s all the people who are suffering from mental health issues, which can be exacerbated by the nature of having to social distance. It got to a point where there was just so much of it.”

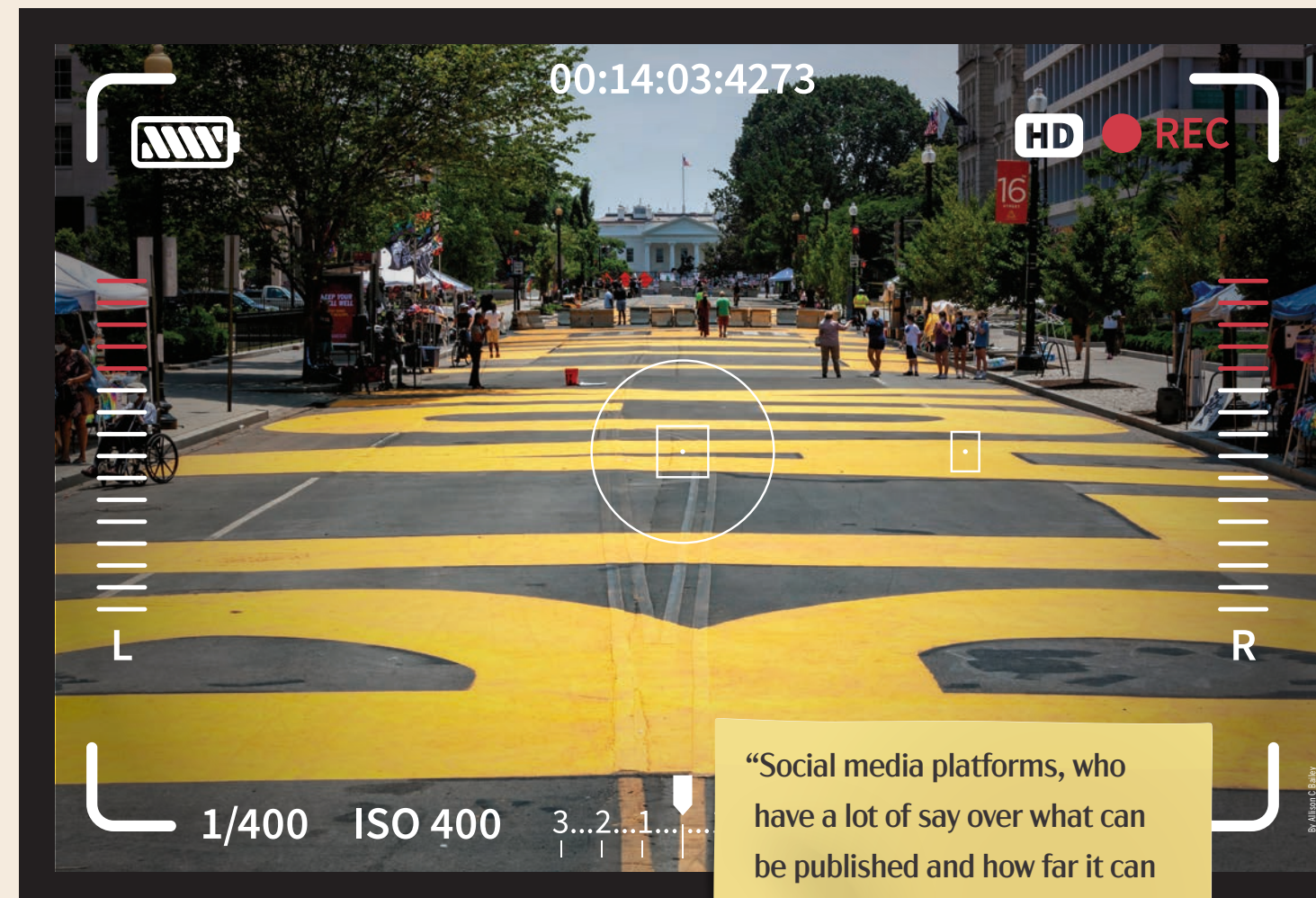
Of course, in addition to covering the news of the day in 2020, journalists were also living it. For many, it got personal. “You’re in the midst of it,” Blount Danois says. “When you’re at Black

Lives Matter protests, when you know people with COVID, objectivity is almost impossible.” Meanwhile, she says, reporters’ offices have been closed just like everyone else’s, and they have to learn to do everything via Zoom, too. “We’re all in the middle of it!”

For Anne Applebaum '82, a staff writer for *The Atlantic* and the author of *Twilight of Democracy* (see “Fresh Ink,” on page 38), being in the middle of it meant a dose of international intrigue. Her family lives in Poland, a nation that closed its borders just as the pandemic was becoming big news in the United States. Unfortunately, her son was en route to Europe from Johns Hopkins, where he’s a college student. He got as far as Berlin, Germany, when Poland shut down. So, Applebaum says: “He took a train to the border, he got off the train carrying his luggage, and he walked across the border into the country. There were big signs on the border and people in chemical uniforms. It was a very dramatic moment.” Luckily, he made it. “My husband picked him up on the other side,” Applebaum says, “and that’s how he got home from college this year!”

Sometimes in this dark year, there were also moments of transcendence. Blount Danois credits media coverage in 2020 with bringing Black Lives Matter out of the fringes. The media’s treatment of the movement and their “awareness of language” now as opposed to where it was in Ferguson, Missouri, in 2014, is dramatic. What’s more, people are watching more closely. “Everybody’s home!” she says. “They have time to pay attention in ways they wouldn’t have before. Plus, with the national existential crisis we’re in, everyone has a degree of suffering—and so empathy builds. We have to rely on each other in ways that we haven’t. People realize that divisiveness is not what is going to get us through.” She cites the on-air arrest of a Black CNN reporter, Omar Jimenez, as he reported live from Minneapolis as further evidence of how people can be viewed a certain way. “That incident awakened people, too,” she says, “and changed their perspective.” Aleem had a similar reaction to last summer’s activism. “I really was moved and excited by a number of the protests,” he says. “I’m based in Brooklyn, which was one of the epicenters of protest activity on the East Coast and the remarkable ideas that were being discussed, which really ended up going significantly beyond the set of demands that we saw during the Black Lives Matter protest in 2014.”

Suebsaeng, on the other hand, is less optimistic. Viewing the world day in and day out through the prism of the president will do that. “My beat during the past five years has been covering Donald Trump, his apparatchiks, his lieutenants, his administration, his inner circle,” Suebsaeng says. “To watch all of this happen to the country, when the person ostensibly managing all



“Social media platforms, who
have a lot of say over what can
be published and how far it can
reach, have raised really pressing
questions about regulation
of speech.”

—ZEESHAN ALEEM '04,
contributing writer
at Vox



the crises, is not only making the situation demonstrably, horrifically worse, but is just trolling and laughing and demagogue-ing his way gleefully through the entire thing—it’s wrenching.” He says that the feeling hasn’t left him, either. “Now that the Trump era has technically concluded, I do not feel like we’ve left it. The devastating reality right now in American political life, of political violence and mass deaths, still remain, have not left at all, and those are the two defining characteristics of the Trump era. So, until that stuff is vanquished or at least dealt with to certain degrees, to me as a political reporter, it doesn’t matter if Joe Biden is the hood ornament, we are still very much living in Donald Trump’s world.”

That trolling Trumpian worldview is all too familiar to Aleem, who found himself the object of a social media maelstrom last summer in what he calls “an attempted triple cancellation.” It all started when the internet’s zealous political left tried to get an abrasive Costco employee in Florida fired for refusing to wear a

mask. “I critiqued the idea of immediately trying to take the job of someone who is at the center of a two-minute hate video on the internet,” Aleem says. “I thought what this guy was doing was reprehensible and dangerous, but I was also trying to prompt reflection. I made an argument for why, for the left, it’s not the best way to go about pursuing justice.” It hit a nerve. “This alt-right troll retweeted it, and I end up going completely viral among all these people who think that Trump country is being persecuted by the fascist left,” he says. “They don’t agree with any of

my principles. They took my argument completely out of context, but it was tactically convenient for them.” People also were not engaging with Aleem’s ideas at all. To wit, the far-right group that took Aleem viral “ended up forming its own mob of online vigilantes,” Aleem says. This group targeted the job of a man on the left who had loudly denounced the Costco anti-masker. Though the right had initially heralded Aleem’s view about *not* going after people’s jobs, they were now doing exactly that. The irony, of course, was lost on the social media hordes careening down the Twitter rabbit hole. Ultimately, and perhaps inevitably, some on the alt-right then turned on Aleem and attempted to put malware on his computer. “I was inadvertently caught up in this bizarro world of people trying to dox each other and take each other’s jobs,” he says. “I was really shocked by how quickly I switched from observer to inadvertent participant in this.”



With so much bad faith, how do publications convince the world of their journalists’ objectivity? “I’m kind of a borderline nihilist on this question,” Suebsaeng says. He points out that the truth isn’t about ensuring a publication has, say, an equal number of left and right voices. It’s about facts versus the “complete breaks with reality that some people have taken,” he says. “We are so tribal and taxonomized now in the American political landscape. I have for years believed that we are at the point of no return on that. When Americans are asked, ‘Do you trust the media?’ The numbers are through the floor. It’s consistently lower than even Congress. And you’re not going to solve the problem by hiring 12 more conservatives for your newsroom at the *Los Angeles Times*.”

“We are so tribal and taxonomized now in the American political landscape. I have for years believed that we are at the point of no return on that.”

—ASAWIN SUEBSAENG ’07, senior writer at *The Daily Beast*



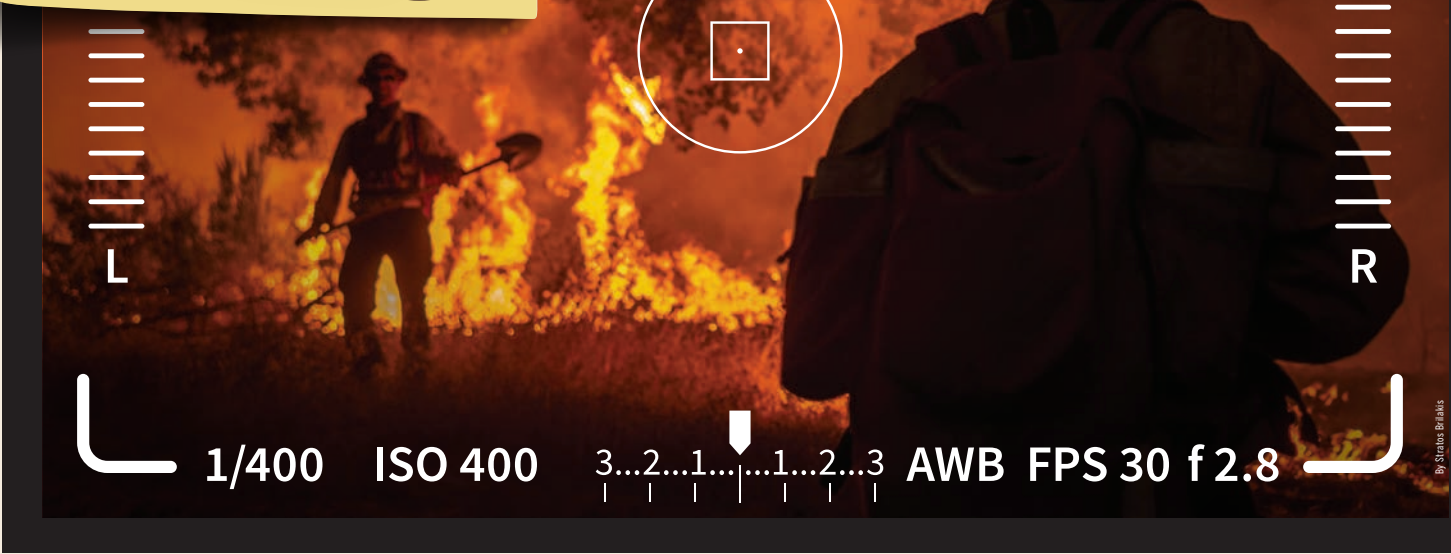
When asked how she convinces her readers she’s an honest broker, Applebaum says, “I don’t convince them.” All one can do, she says, “is try to provide evidence for your statements and rely on the reputation of the places that you write for. What gives some websites, magazines, television stations, or newspapers some standing is that they correct mistakes. They fact check.” And that, says Blount Danois, is critical. “If your mother says she loves you, check it out.” She says she tells her students to read several sources from around the world about the United States to round out their perspectives. “It’s more important now than ever that people have trust in the news.”

Unfortunately, social media platforms can obscure trusted sources, allowing content to be manipulated and weaponized. “We are developing new sets of norms regarding the value and the nature of free speech,” says Aleem. “A lot of that is being fueled by the changing contours in our immediate political environment. The rise of big and sometimes monopolistic social media platforms, who have a lot of say over what can be published and how far it can reach, have raised really pressing questions about regulation of speech.” In other words, how do platforms reduce speech that can “incite violence, harassment, and abuse but also not create the effect of ideological censorship or narrowing the range of acceptable ideas.” Trump’s track record of disinformation, Aleem says, has also prompted people to think about whether or not internet publishing platforms should be devoted to monitoring the spread of disinformation and misinformation.

It’s what Suebsaeng calls “the beauty and the terror” of the internet. “With the liberalization and democratization of media, if you don’t trust *The New York Times* or *The Daily Beast*, you can easily get your news and commentary from a whole other bunch of sources.” So, does the reputation and accuracy of the media even matter if people only read things that validate their own worldview? “There is very little that *The New York Times* or *The Washington Post* could do at this point to prove to the right that they aren’t liberal or left-wing hacks,” Suebsaeng says. “So, if you are a head honcho in legacy media wondering, ‘How do we fix this trust deficit?’ My personal opinion is there is no problem to solve; that ship has sailed long ago. They think you’re the enemy. Internalize that. And I bet the product you produce will be better off for it.” The mandate, he says, is to report the news—and that’s not a political mandate. “It does not matter if the people you are trying to break news and do reporting with sit ideologically to the right or left of you. It’s the same mission,” he says. “Some of the very best, most tenacious, and most accomplished and impressive journalists who I have had the pleasure of working with are oftentimes center right or people significantly politically to the right of me.” (That includes his co-author, Lachlan Markay. Their book was featured in “Fresh Ink” last spring.)

“I’m glad 2020 is over. But I feel good about the fact that so many students are still interested in journalism despite all the bad-mouthing it gets.”

—ERICKA BLOUNT DANOIS ’90, professor at Howard University



Still, 2020 had its excitements. “It is inherently intellectually stimulating to try to make sense of the world when the world doesn’t seem to make sense anymore,” Aleem says. “It’s pretty easy to keep yourself wrestling with the big questions these days.” Blount Danois agrees. She says 2020 brought big questions to America’s doorstep. “Is there such thing as too much freedom when it comes to the common good?” she wonders. “People use ‘America is the land of the free’ to their own advantage.” She thinks that 2020 heralds the end of American exceptionalism. “If they weren’t before, people around the world are now aware that we are not exceptional,” she says. “You can’t say, ‘America first,’ after 2020—because we are not that.” Unless, she quips, you mean first in rates of COVID-19.

Isn’t it going to be a little boring with 2020 over, though? “No!” Suebsaeng says. “Print that before you even finished the question, I just shouted the word no multiple times. I’m a human being first

and a journalist second, and both as a journalist and also as a regular human being, I pride myself on not being a sociopath.”

“I’m glad 2020 over,” Blount Danois agrees. “But I feel good about the fact that so many of my students are still interested in journalism despite all the bad-mouthing it gets.” She should feel good. Student journalism can be transformative. According to Baratunde Thurston ’95, an author, podcast host, and *Daily Show* contributor, being involved with *Horizon* at Sidwell Friends changed the entire trajectory of his life by jump-starting his writing instincts (see “Co-Creating the Universe,” on page 28). Blount Danois sees that same fire in her students today. She says 2020 has actually motivated young people to get involved in this vital component of democracy. “Kids realized we *need* it,” she says of journalism. “We need to know what’s happening.” That’s true especially now. “We’re at an existential moment as a country,” she says. “Who are we going to be?” For her part, Blount Danois is optimistic. After the travails of 2020, she says, the good news is: “Empathy has kicked in.” ✨



BY KRISTEN PAGE

CHALLENGE ACCEPTED

THE AUXILIARY PROGRAMS TEAM STARES DOWN THE INTRICACIES AND WONDERS OF LOGISTICS, TAKES CHILDCARE AND THE CAMPUS TO THE NEXT LEVEL—AND COMES OUT ON TOP.

THINGS WERE LOOKING GOOD for enrollment for 2020's Sidwell Summer, the School's seasonal programming. "We launch enrollment in December, and by March 15, we were on record to have a banner year," says Karen McCann McClelland, the director of Auxiliary Programs at Sidwell Friends. "Then we got stopped in our tracks."

The pandemic didn't just affect summer activities. Suddenly, everything the Auxiliary Programs department handles went up in the air: early morning care, aftercare, the Special Programs After Regular Classes (SPARC) enrichment program, the Fox Den. Everything had to be reinvented for a virtual world. "I took

that as a challenge," McClelland says. "Our team looked at the situation and said, 'Okay, what are the challenges for the Lower, Middle, and Upper School?'"

The first hurdle was adapting expected programming for the end of the 2019/20 academic year. All of the SPARC enrichment programs went online, as did aftercare. But this new world required new ideas. First, the team created the Lunch Bunch, which offered Lower Schoolers a chance to get in some much-needed casual socialization and conversation over the course of the spring. But for the Auxiliary team, summer still loomed, a great unknown chasm hurtling toward them: The School was going to need a lot more activities—activities that would work well online. That meant brainstorming, developing programs, finding counselors, and making it all happen fast. Help came from a somewhat surprising section of the Sidwell Friends community—one that also needed some help.

"There were Upper School kids who couldn't do their service learning, and the summer is when a lot of them get that done," McClelland says. "So we allowed them to do service learning by mentoring and working with Lower and Middle School students." They also asked the Upper Schoolers to tap into their own interests and create dynamic sessions for Lower and Middle Schoolers. Eventually, there were dozens of programs and options; to say they were varied is an understatement. "We did yoga. We did mindfulness. We did soccer," McClelland says. "We did virtual field trips to zoos, and they'd talk about the animals. We did book clubs, art activities, scavenger hunts. The Environmental Club did a whole environmental week." As a result, younger students were entertained and engaged, and the Upper School students collectively earned more than 850 hours of service learning.

In addition to summer initiatives designed specifically for Sidwell Friends students, the Auxiliary Programs department also sold more than 1,200 sessions of Sidwell Summer camps, providing virtual programs for over 720 campers throughout the Capital region, across the country, and even around the world.

But the challenge was far from over; the next looming blank slate was on the horizon: the opening of School. Over the summer, it had become clear that many faculty and staff members faced the same problem as millions of other parents across the country: balancing working from home with caring for children or helping them attend virtual classes. How could Sidwell Friends employees teach or work online while still supporting their children's distance learning? "We did a lot of town halls with employees who have kids, and what they needed was childcare, and in particular, school-aged childcare," McClelland says. "We were tasked with making that happen." It was a tremendous effort. The team had to expand the daycare center to include a classroom for 3- and 4-year-olds in addition to the babies and toddlers, and they had to create a learning space for employees' children, who attend different schools across the area. "We got the Early Childhood Learning Center opened up in mid-August. The school-aged childcare opened up right after Labor Day." With their kids in supervised,

safe learning sessions four days a week in small, socially distanced cohorts, Sidwell Friends faculty and staff could work without as many distractions. And it wasn't all work for the children: They participated in enrichment activities, like playing soccer or painting pumpkins at Halloween, too.

Meanwhile, with all of those balls in the air, the School as a whole was deep in preparations to move into hybrid learning. And so, the Auxiliary Programs department was back on the ground, handling pickups and dropoffs, subbing in for faculty, proctoring, pitching in during COVID testing, and delivering lunches. They were essentially helping to run two schools—the learning space and daycare for the children of employees, and the Sidwell Friends School proper.

The team also continued to develop programs to support students' emotional and social well-being. After the success of the summer programming that paired Upper Schoolers with young campers, the Auxiliary Programs team launched Friends Across SFS. Lower School students were matched with either Middle or Upper Schoolers. And Upper Schoolers were matched with either Middle or Lower Schoolers. (The 7th and 8th graders had the



For all the amazing Sidwell Summer programs, like the new Summer Equity and Justice Institute, check out sidwellsummer.org.

"WE DID A LOT OF TOWN HALLS WITH EMPLOYEES WHO HAVE KIDS, AND WHAT THEY NEEDED WAS SCHOOL-AGED CHILDCARE. WE WERE TASKED WITH MAKING THAT HAPPEN."



option of buddying with younger or older students.) The buddies meet mostly one on one (there are some small groups) once a week for an hour just to hang out and talk.

"Is there a way to meet both the needs of our younger students, who need some more meaningful connection time, and then also to meet the needs of our Upper School students, who need to do some service and can benefit from being trained as mentors?" wondered Alex McCoy '04, the associate director of Auxiliary Programs. There was a way: "We filled both those needs." Auxiliary Programs reached out to 60 Upper School students before expanding to the current number of 94 older students, all of whom receive training in online safety, how to build a rapport with their buddy, and strategies for talking to different age groups. Then the team sent out a call to find the younger kids.

"I was immediately excited by it, because I love the idea of the kids connecting with each other—especially during this time when we're so isolated, but even in normal times," says Heather Tatton-Harris (P '29 P '27), mom to Aidan '29. "Lower School kids and Upper School kids connected together during the pandemic just seemed like a beautiful idea." At first, Aidan did not necessarily agree. "I felt little bit scared," he says. "I'm only a 4th grader and he's an 11th grader—so that's seven grades away. He would be like a giant to me." Aidan wasn't the only one with a few cyber-butterflies in his stomach. "I was very anxious," says Thor Burkhardt '22, Aidan's big buddy. "I was excited, but I was worried. I wanted to make a good impression, because I really cared."

At first, Aidan wasn't sure if he wanted to have the first conversation all by himself and considered keeping his mom close. "Before the first meeting, he pushed me out of the room like, 'I'll do this by myself,'" Tatton-Harris says. "So I left and then I just listened in to see how it was going—and the chatter was nonstop. There was not a lull in the conversation." Aidan was pleasantly surprised, too. "He asked a lot of questions, so I liked that," Aidan says. "He started at Sidwell in 9th grade, so he doesn't know

anything about the Lower School, so he asked a lot about what's happening in the Lower School. And then for the last 30 minutes, I was telling him about this video game I like to play called *Marvel Contest of Champions*." Burkhardt remembers it well: "He told me all the dos and don'ts of which characters I have to buy, which characters I don't have to buy—he got very into it. My little buddy really likes Marvel, and he got a kick out of my name being Thor. The thought that went into the selection of the buddies—I'm impressed by that."

He should be. Matching buddies was a process the department took very seriously, and the amount of information they had to work with varied wildly. "Some people were very detailed, especially some of our Upper School students," McCoy says. "Some people wrote, 'Both of my parents are immigrants,' or, 'I come from a two-religion household.' For some of our younger students, it was as simple as, 'My child is an African American boy and would love to be paired with an African American older student.'" Then there were the Minecraft fans, the kids who like to play soccer, and the kids who like to bake. "So, it was a lot of keyword searching," McCoy says, "to pair kids off."

The Friends Across SFS program has also been a way to connect the DC and Bethesda campuses in a way that simply wasn't possible before the pandemic. "It's a shame that we have a preK-12 School, and we can't have Upper Schoolers who want to work with kids at the Lower School during aftercare," McCoy says. "We don't have collaboration among clubs or other opportunities like this because of our campus issue" (i.e., the challenge of being on two campuses). But when COVID hit, it seemed like a moment to capitalize on a student body untethered from their campuses. "I don't like creating anything that isn't sustainable, so there's been deliberate thinking about where this program belongs in the future," McCoy says. "Even if we're all back in person, full time next year, there's no reason not to continue a program like this." Burkhardt agrees. "I'm there as another resource, another outlet, and just another touch point," he says. That won't change just because the

< The Auxiliary Programs team engaged kids online, in person, and even over coffee—or Gatorade.

kids will return to School. "The primary goal is just to be another friend and another person to talk to," Burkhardt says. "I hope I'm bringing that."

Auxiliary Programs also had to reinvent the Fox Den. The shift began before the School moved into distance learning. "Starting in January 2020, we started off sanitizing all the areas in the Fox Den," Imani Tillman, the Fox Den's barista, says. "We were just constantly sanitizing because we didn't know what other procedures should be enforced—and then in March, we shut down completely." By the fall of 2020, the Facilities team had installed plexiglass throughout the café, creating individual plastic cubbies. Ever since, students have been able to once again grab some coffee or a muffin when they're on campus—even if it isn't quite the hangout spot it once was. "A year ago you'd come in, it would be packed to the brim: You'd just order, get your drink, and either hang around or leave," Tillman says. "Now we have plexiglass and stickers on the floor that are six feet apart. There can only be five people in there at a time. But it's actually really nice to have everyone come back in and get their normal drinks and at least kind of do their normal thing."

But what to do with all of the Fox Den's Sidwell Friends swag? When the Fox Den closed, the store didn't even have an online shop. So, the Auxiliary team created one, and Tillman managed the orders, which included both shipping and no-contact orders. In addition, the department started to stage pop-up shops during students' supply pickups or during days when the School is COVID testing on campus. "We did pop-ups where people could sign up for a shopping slot," McClelland says. "Families want that; they want to feel the connection with the School. It makes them feel a little bit normal to be able to buy a sweatshirt."

With every change, new program, and new responsibility, the School adapted. Sidwell Friends returned to hybrid learning in January, and depending on circumstances, the School will stay in hybrid through spring break, buffered by a week of distance learning, and then return to campus for in-person learning five days a week. With the expanded in-person learning schedule, the Auxiliary Programs crew is busy preparing for extra aftercare and SPARC programs. Uncertainties no longer faze McClelland and her team, who are ready to roll with whatever COVID throws at them. "Hopefully all the divisions know that we're here to help support the School," McClelland says. "We've got an entrepreneurial staff who's willing to think outside of the box."

Now, with vaccines more and more available, hopes are up for a Sidwell Friends summer in 2021 that looks more like 2019 than 2020. Whatever happens, Auxiliary Programs will educate, enrich, and, especially, play. "The magic of camp is not always the content," McClelland says. "Parents are often looking for that next specialty camp, but some simple programs and just letting campers play and be outside are so important." After a year like 2020, just being together will indeed be special. ✨



Check out all the foxy fashion and cool swag at the Fox Den! **sidwell.edu/student-life/the-fox-den**.

"FAMILIES WANT TO FEEL THE CONNECTION WITH THE SCHOOL. IT MAKES THEM FEEL A LITTLE BIT NORMAL TO BE ABLE TO BUY A SWEATSHIRT."

CO-CREATING THE UNIVERSE

Baratunde Thurston '95 on comedy, pain, and how to
make a better world through the stories we tell.

For the full *Lives That Speak*
podcast episode, go to
sidwell.edu/magazine.

Baratunde Thurston '95—the best-selling author of *How to Be Black*, host of the podcasts *How to Citizen with Baratunde* and *We're Having a Moment*, former Obama White House advisor, and former *Daily Show* producer—spoke with Head of School Bryan Garman and Director of Equity, Justice, and Community Natalie Randolph '98 on a recent edition of the School's *Lives That Speak* podcast.

Thurston explained how his experiences at Sidwell Friends shaped his writing, comedy, and sense of identity—whether through Black Student Union productions or by taking the long way to School. At the end of a particularly tumultuous 2020, Thurston offered a dynamic and even optimistic epistemology: He described how the narratives we're told and the histories we're taught come to define the kind of world we live in; thus, by creating new stories, every person has the power to change their world. For the full conversation, check out sidwell.edu/alumni/magazine/lives-that-speak.

BRYAN GARMAN: Your first book, *Better Than Crying*, includes an epigraph from comedian and activist Dick Gregory: “A man has two ways out in life, laughing or crying. There’s more hope in laughing.” You’re very effective at making people laugh and think. Who inspired you?

BARATUNDE THURSTON: I first understood Dick Gregory as some kind of tofu-eating hippie and not a brilliant comedian or potent voice for human rights and civil rights; I would learn some of those things later. But I found in his voice his path through comedy to something even higher. Then, of course, my mother is my primary influence and the model I had in my house. She worked her butt off and also had fun and was playful with me and my sister—and had high expectations, too. As a kid, I really looked up to Bill Cosby. From *Fat Albert* to *The Cosby Show* to *A Different World*, he was creating universes where I could see myself. Whoopi Goldberg was high on the list of entertainment voices that we would listen to. We’d

take her audio cassettes on road trips to the Outer Banks, Virginia Beach, or Chincoteague. In the same mix of audio: Garrison Keillor! Those are some of the folks who influenced me.

BG: You came to Sidwell Friends School in 1989 as a 7th grader. What was it like to be in the School then?

BT: It was weird, man. I got to see a different scene. Born in '77, raised between 14th and 16th Street on a little street called Newton. I would walk to elementary school, four-ish blocks to Bancroft Elementary. Everybody in that school lived in the neighborhood—everybody. We played together; we ate dinner in each other’s places; we played basketball in the alley. There were, by my recollection, two white children in this school: William and Willa. They literally shared a root name! No one was rich. We were probably poor-ish, but no one really knew, because you just lived in your neighborhood; that was your context.

I visited three private schools, and they all blew my face off because they were so different from my experience. When I showed up at Sidwell Friends, there was a campus. Who has a campus for a 7th grader? That’s crazy. At Bancroft, we had a very large building, and our “playground”—generously titled—was the parking lot. The physical layout of Sidwell blew my mind: the design of the buildings, the amount of light. So much whiteness, which I had not been around, and so many resources. It was jarring, it was magical, it was exciting, it was tense.

I had some cultural confusion and run-ins. I remember nearly getting into a fight with these kids because they made fun of the way I spoke—because I said, “I want to ax you a question.” They just mocked me relentlessly. “Oh, you’re going to take out your hatchet? You’re going to chop it into little pieces to get information? You’re going to ax us?” No one had ever made fun of the way I spoke before; that felt shameful, embarrassing, and infuriating. Bob Williams, the principal of the Middle School at the time—this glorious Black dude with the baritone-ious, bass-iest voice—was an anchor in a sea of change. I think my mom felt okay sending me to Sidwell because she felt okay about Bob Williams, that he would have my back and watch over me.

That first year was a little wobbly. But then I had fun. Marcus Shaw was assigned to me as my welcome buddy, another member of the Class of '95, Black dude, lifer. He started showing me the ropes, and we had a little crew. I remember walking down the hallway with Marcus, and we saw a sign for an audition for the Black History Month Show. I did a little singing in the audition, there was a positive response, and I found myself in theater. So that’s how I remember entering Sidwell: awkwardly, with acne and chubbiness, with a lot of ignorance, a lot of hope, with some helpful guidance, and some guardian angels to help me through it.

NATALIE RANDOLPH: Once you were acclimated to the Sidwell culture, did you merge that

with the culture you had at home with your friends on Newton Street?

BT: Sidwell didn’t leave a lot of room in my schedule for merging with anything other than Sidwell. The word that comes to mind is “family.” I developed a bit of family through Sidwell and especially through Black Sidwell. I remember coming home by bus one day and somebody saying something to me like, “Oh, you going to that white School?” or maybe, “Why do you talk that way?” It’s really interesting to get criticized at Sidwell for talking like I’m from Newton Street and to be criticized on Newton Street for talking like I was at Sidwell.

The way I physically got to School is a powerful metaphor for the distance traveled. My mother worked for the federal government, and she had to go to work early like any reasonable adult. She would drop me off at a bus stop a little bit south of where we lived. I would take the H2 across town, and it would cut down by the zoo and go up Porter Street. I could either get out and walk the rest of the way or, if I’m feeling lazy, take another bus up Wisconsin Avenue to drop me off right by the tennis courts. Along that journey, I met Neferre Brooks '96 and her mom. They happened to be driving to School where I waited for the bus. I would regularly get driven to school on certain days because Neferre and her mom would pick me up. We got this little Black car to Sidwell; these working moms driving their little Black kids to this other universe.

I got up so early; we were out the door by like 7:00 a.m. I was usually the first kid at School, and I would eat my breakfast out of Tupperware on the steps of the Middle School. Then kids start to trickle in. You start to see the fancier cars dropping kids off literally on time, as opposed to me: I had to take the early bus from across town. Then after School, you get the extracurriculars. Track in Middle School and Upper School, the newspaper, and the BSU. I just didn’t see neighborhood people is the honest answer. I was in the world of Sidwell pretty



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WE LEARN WHAT THE WORLD IS BY THE STORY OF THAT WORLD, AS TOLD TO US. THERE'S A GREAT FREEDOM IN THAT. A STORY CAN BE CHANGED.

”

full time. I’d get home at dark. There’s no merging of cultures.

BG: From there, you go to Harvard and are a philosophy major. Then you become a public intellectual. How does that happen?

BT: A lot of roads lead back to Sidwell, and I’d be remiss if I didn’t briefly acknowledge some of the pain and trauma of my time there, which forged me in a certain way to make these other leaps. Sidwell was a bit tritely the best of times and the worst of times, and I found so much of myself there. I found my capacity to lead, to be indignant, to articulate ideas on stage and on page. All of that found its first expression at Sidwell—at *Horizon*.

Another Sidwell kid saw something in me I didn’t yet see in myself, which was, “I think

you could write, you should do the newspaper.” My mom didn’t tell me to do that. My sister who was becoming a journalist herself, nine years older, she didn’t tell me to do that. It was just a Sidwell kid who was like, “You should do the newspaper.” That changed my whole life. The whole trajectory of my story is altered by this one kid, and I remember where I was when he said it. There was a big tree out in front of the Upper School we used to all hang out at, and it was under that tree—like the tree of knowledge. So, I lived the *Horizon* life, going to the printer’s and being out till 4:00 in the morning.

I got to Harvard University, and I went into a semi-advanced calculus class there. I get the textbook, and it’s the same textbook I used at Sidwell. The head of the Math Department at Harvard wrote the textbook I used at Sidwell. I get into my expository writing class at Harvard University, and I don’t think I’m a good writer. My English teachers at Sidwell thought I could use some work. I write this essay, and they’re like, “You should get this published.” I publish my essay in a campus magazine, and I win an award—judged by Malcolm Gladwell—my freshman year. Sidwell set such a high standard that it made writing and math at Harvard easy. I had confidence and some freedom. I saw other students get to Harvard, get whacked in the face, and run into a brick wall because they didn’t know what was coming, and Sidwell prepared me.

I did a newspaper at Harvard, thank you *Horizon*, stepped it up to *The Crimson*. My freshman year, I started writing a comedic email newsletter. It built off of an email newsletter I started at Sidwell, where I shared comedy that I found on the early internet. I was a curator, as they would say today. Then I started writing satirical news and sharing it with my friends. I started an email list, and more and more people signed up for it. That gave me a little pocket to develop my voice—to merge some of this philosophizing with some of this activism-ing with some of this

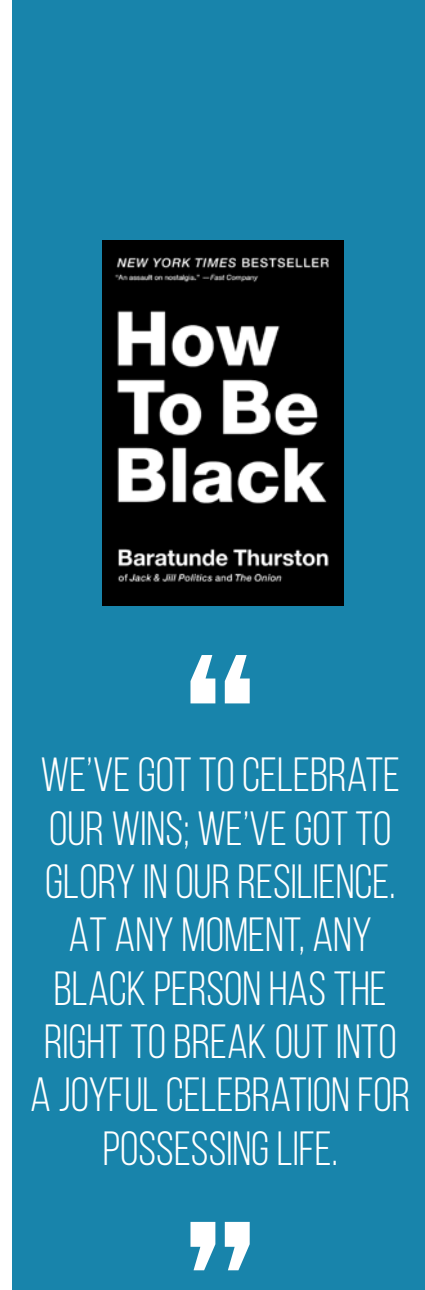
emerging comedic thing to process it all. I would watch Whoopi and listen to Eddie Murphy and *Lake Wobegon*. I'd read all this internet humor and share it—and I'd write. I took my little reporter's notebook that I got from *Horizon*, and I just started writing, writing, writing. The winds were at my back at that point; everything else is just a continuation of that.

BG: You've talked about living a lie: Whiteness is a lie; race is a lie. How do we move forward from a lie that has very real consequences on how people live their lives?

BT: I've learned to naturally interrupt my story with an aside. It's a check in to say: "I'm still with you. I'm one of you. I'm on this train, too. I don't actually know everything. I'm not the king of Blackness or wokeness or anything. I'm on the journey, too." Technique-wise, I throw jokes in and throw asides in to humanize myself, because I know what it's like to be preached to by somebody who seems to know everything, and it's very hard to identify with because they seem to be on a different level. I try to sympathize and empathize with the struggle, the plight. I've learned to share my version of the thing I'm asking other people to do. I tell this story about the idea of "privilege"—including my own privilege. I can't be asking you to take some journey I'm not willing to take myself.

I don't remember Superman ever wallowing, complaining about his "flight privilege." It didn't happen. He out here saving kids, catching school buses, trying to reverse time—using the power he has, however he got it, to help others, to help the many, not just himself. He's not out here just robbing banks with his flight, justifying it because he can't help how he was born. He's trying to serve with it. So how are we trying to use whatever we got to serve? That's a part of the transition.

The other big piece is that we are living inside of stories mostly. The philosopher in me has come to the conclusion that the idea of the "real world" is slippery. Most of us don't interact with the



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real world, per se. We don't have direct experience with all the things we know to be true. We're in a faith-based existence. I've never been to most places in the world, yet I agree that they exist. How do I know they exist? Because someone told me. How do I know this is how I'm supposed to operate in the world? Because someone told me actively, through words and instructions, or implicitly, through their own behaviors and through incentives and punishments. We learn what the world is by the story of that world, as told to us. Then we get invested in that story, and we repeat it to the next generation.

There's a great freedom in that. A story can be changed. We can edit it. It's a Google Doc. We've been living in this tiny, tiny

story, which has privileged a few at the expense of the many for at least a couple hundred years. We can first acknowledge that: Okay, historical facts, boom, let's establish that. Then we can honor what it's gotten us. It helped me become who I am. It is a part of my story. Now it's time to write some new stuff. Now it's time to grow beyond it. Collectively, we can look at our past and not be held hostage by the shame associated with it.

I like to think about all the greatness that our species has achieved, that our nation has achieved, with most of the talent not even in the game. Take the white supremacist argument: "Well, the white man went to the moon." Barely. You might have been to Mars by now! I'm going to look at these achievements as half-empty, because you left out your most talented players. You locked them up. You made them stay at home and raise your kids. You threw them into wars you didn't want to fight. You made them believe they were less than, such that they didn't even push as hard themselves. Imagine if you unlock that. And it's not finite; the "real world" is just what we imagine it to be. We can consensually, collectively, delusionally agree on things like money and Apple computers. Those aren't real. We can generate so much more if we free ourselves.

That's the invitation to white people, broadly speaking, white men, more narrowly speaking: This change doesn't have to be a threat. What a lot of people fear and seize on, what the former president exploited masterfully and heinously, is that this change is going to lead to your destruction, that the only story possible is a story where one person is on top of someone else. So the moment Black people get freed, they're going to do to you what you did to them, or what your ancestors did to them, so you can't trust it. I want people to feel like there's another option: that change is possible, and it doesn't need to lead to vengeance and petty smallness. There's a bigger story possible. You can live in a tiny world where a male executive exploits

a female employee for sexual gain and power dynamics, or you can live in a bigger world where he mentors her, and as a result, they both make more money and achieve their creative passions.

It's not easy. And doing it for the downtrodden, doing it for oppressed people—charity and altruism only go so far. I need people to realize they're going to get something out of it, too. Don't do it for me, do it for you.

NR: When I talk about allyship, white folks always ask the question, "What can I do? How do I serve as an ally?" But they should look at it not as "What can we do for these brown people?" but "What would help me, too?"

BT: The good news is, there's plenty of work to go around. Anything and everything can contribute. I like to tell folks: Extend your time line, and humble your expectations. What we are up against is every industry, every practice, every institution. There is not an institution that has thrived in the past 50 years that hasn't benefited from this subjugating, oppressive system, because that's how the whole system was set up. To undo that will take a lot of time. We're not going to wrap this up by the next fiscal quarter so we can get back to brunch. Folks want to cut right to: "Who do I write a check to? Do I give all my money to Bryan Stevenson's Equal Justice Initiative or to NAACP or Stacey Abrams? Who can I outsource my allyship to in a transactional way?" But I want people to explore themselves. I want people to look at their family history, look at their financial transactions, look at their associations, and think about what you were taught. Who taught it to you? How do you react? And just be honest with yourself.

Don't perform it for a person of color. I'm not asking you to flagellate yourself publicly like some puritanical person; do it just for you. Dig into that historical truth for you. I want people to think about their power. I have this podcast, *How to Citizen*

with Baratunde, and we have this premise of what it means "to citizen" as a verb, as opposed to some legal status, which can be weaponized against people. "To citizen" is to show up and to participate. It's to build relationships with other people, to understand your power, and to do this for the benefit of the many. I know people pay attention to me. So, who am I citing, elevating, sharing? When I put my newsletter together, who are the authors of the pieces? What sorts of publications am I generously offering traffic to? That's how I have power. It's not to be ashamed of; we should only feel bad if we're misusing it or not using it to the best of our ability to contribute. Where do you make decisions? Are there places where people listen to you more than another person? That's an opportunity. Feel into all these choices. I'm working on it with money. Where do I bank? I'm giving somebody the power of compound interest with these assets, do they have my interests at heart? Can I make a different choice? Start researching. Understanding your power is a critical step for the person who wants to be a good ally.

The last piece is that I want people who want to be good allies to expect to mess up and not be deterred by that. That feeling of awkwardness, embarrassment, or shame when you say the wrong thing or show up in the wrong way—great, you have erred. To err is human. So, let's allow for that and keep moving.

NR: Finding balance between understanding that systemic change takes time and that we want to do something right now is difficult. How do you deal with that?

BT: This is all significant work. It is political work; it is emotional work; it is spiritual work. I handle hazardous material every day. You can't just be grabbing nuclear material with your bare hands. I want us to remember that there's more to us than struggle. We need to not just define ourselves as the oppressed, the downtrodden, the strugglers. That's exhausting. We've got to celebrate our wins; we've got

to glory in our resilience. At any moment, any Black person has the right to break out into a joyful celebration for possessing life. We don't need an excuse to have a block party; every day is a frickin' block party, because we're here. If you're in a Sidwell-type space, all the more. You take everything that institution has to offer, and don't burn up all of your time feeling bad about the way the thing is set up. You grab what you can, you party like a rock star, and you nudge and you change. You do the wokeness thing, but it's not your responsibility to be a full-time agent of change for all these institutions. Cut yourself some slack. I want everybody to be forgiving with themselves. Because it can be toxic and exhausting. Remember how great you are.

BG: What is your spiritual foundation? How do you reverse systemic oppression and still find a sense of joy?

BT: I aspire to and often feel a sense of marvel at existence. It's crazy that we get to live; we get to experience things; we get to struggle; we have emotions. And we are not just passengers in the experience; we get to drive it. We are not consumers of life; we are co-creators of the universe. This energy that's in us has flowed through countless others and continues to right now and will after we no longer have a conscious awareness of our existence. That's inspiring to me. I consider myself part of something great. I have felt at times my own ability to contribute to that greatness, to that thing that's not just me, and that keeps me in the universe. I'm not an observer; I'm not strapped to a table, people experimenting on me like some aliens on a ship. I'm helping the pilot in some small way, for some short period of what we call time.

To renew, I lean into appreciation. I have enough awareness of the relative comfort of all human beings who have ever existed to know that I'm in the top 1 percent of people who ever lived. I'm just so damn lucky. ✨

Reading *Horizon* in the 1980s.



Dear Friends,

Over the past year, I've discovered new ways of experiencing Sidwell Friends: dueling Zoom classrooms as my sons, Colin '31 and Grayson '28, participate in distance learning; ceiling-rattling stomps that let me know they're in PE class; the utter stillness when they are centering themselves in Meeting for Worship; service projects from our kitchen table; and cultural celebrations in our living room.

And yet for all the obvious ways that my sons are currently experiencing a different Sidwell Friends than I remember, it is clear they are still learning to listen carefully, think deeply, and act empathetically. In other words, I see the Sidwell Friends education that shaped me in their distance- and hybrid-learning classrooms. While so many things have changed, there are many that thankfully remain much the same.

Like many of you, I find that there are ways both large and small that my Sidwell Friends experience encourages me to pause and reflect, especially during strange and stressful times. While we are all eager to once again be able to gather safely in person, let us not overlook the power of the many opportunities we have to connect virtually—opportunities that allow us to see and hear each other, to support one another, and to make connections across class years and geography.

I hope you enjoy diving into this issue's "Lives That Speak: Co-Creating the Universe" feature (on page 28) and hearing from the incomparable Baratunde Thurston '95. And be sure to listen to his full episode of the *Lives That Speak* podcast at sidwell.edu/magazine. As anyone who was at Sidwell Friends in the early to mid-'90s will remember, Baratunde is famous not only for his incredible sense of humor but also his inquisitive perspective.

I love that Baratunde recognizes the need to discuss what can be uplifting in difficult times. In the podcast, his call for a wave of kindness—"Let the kindness pandemic wash across the land"—really struck me, especially in a post-January 6 world. His encouragement "to show up and participate," whatever that might look like for each of us, is powerful, as is his reminder that on the long road to equal justice and becoming better versions of ourselves, we will all inevitably make mistakes. I'm deeply grateful to know Baratunde, and I thank him for sharing his insight and humor with us, for uplifting us, and for truly letting his life speak.

As we inch slowly (too slowly perhaps) into the spring and gain a little extra sunlight each day, may the promise of warmer temperatures, renewal, and growth help refresh your soul and keep you grounded. And, as Baratunde puts it, may we all "lean into appreciation" to find joy in the everyday.

On behalf of the Friends Alumni Network Advisory Board, I send each of you my very best.

In friendship,

Marika Cutler Meyer '94
Clerk, Friends Alumni Network Advisory Board

ALUMNI ACTION

Conversation Pieces

Brett Dakin '94, KK Ottesen '89, and Anne Applebaum '82 discuss their latest books.

BY NATALIE CHAMP

Throughout the year, Sidwell Friends hosts “Conversation with Friends” events to connect community members and to have meaningful discussions about everything from current events, history, art, and science to professional advice, volunteerism, and personal expertise. Recently, the School hosted three conversations with alumni authors, all of whom have also been featured in “Fresh Ink” over the last year. Below is just a sample from each. sidwell.edu/conversationwithfriends

Fighting The Good Fight

Brett Dakin '94 on lessons from an *American Daredevil*.

For those who loved superheroes like Daredevil, Silver Streak, and Crimebuster in the 1940s and 1950s, Lev Gleason was the hero they didn't know they had. A comics publisher whose books endorsed progressive, anti-fascist themes, Gleason found himself on the wrong side of the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) and branded an enemy of the state.

But to **Brett Dakin '94**, the author of *American Daredevil: Comics, Communism, and the Battles of Lev Gleason*, he was “Uncle Lev,” a “magical figure” he knew from his mother's stories and photos. As Dakin told former Upper School teacher and coach **Dan Entwisle (P '08, '10)**, writing this book gave him insight into how Gleason ended up in relative obscurity despite years of publishing success. “The book is really about his battles on two fronts,” Dakin said. “One, his battles on the political front, because of his anti-fascist, progressive, and perceived Communist affiliations and beliefs; the other, the forces that were very unhappy with his comic books and were really pushing for the government to step in and censor comic books.”

Almost as soon as he began his research, Dakin was surprised to find words like “espionage” and “treason” linked to his great-uncle's name in newspaper archives. Gleason was deeply patriotic: He served in both World Wars. And he wasn't shy about his politics: He wanted to fight Nazism and fascism, something his comics, like *Daredevil Battles Hitler* (1941), highlighted. Yet it was not his comics but his board service on the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugees Committee, where he helped displaced refugees of the Spanish Civil War, that drew HUAC's notice.

Dakin talked about finding the primary sources for the book: FBI files, materials in the National Archives, press clippings, and more. He explained how he pieced together Gleason's story from public records—rounding out his life beyond the Uncle Lev his family knew. Dakin realized his uncle would recognize in today's world many of the struggles he faced in the 1940s; as Gleason put it in 1947: “We are in a period of reactionary swing in this country, a very dangerous swing which holds many of the elements of potential fascism.” Its relevance to 2021 is inescapable. “It was eye-opening for me to realize that a lot of the issues he faced are with us today,” Dakin said. “And while we've made such extraordinary progress, this is a battle—as Uncle Lev would say—that we need to keep fighting.”

Action Figures

KK Ottesen '89 on the intimate “portraits of courage” in her recent book, *Activist*.

Harry Belafonte, Dolores Huerta, Billie Jean King: well-known activists, all. But Clyde Bellecourt? “I didn't know who he is, and everyone should know who he is,” photographer and author **KK Ottesen '89** said. “He is a Native American activist behind the so-called Red Power movement. It's an important part of our history, and it's not known nearly as much as it should be.”

She and Upper School English teacher **Hayes Davis** discussed her recent book, *Activist: Portraits of Courage*, a series of intimate black-and-white photographs with accompanying



first-person narratives. “I did it that way, with the photos and interviews,” Ottesen said, “so the reader feels like they can have that privilege of sitting down and talking to those individuals.”

Ottesen began the project five years ago, as the Black Lives Matter movement was growing in response to racial injustices, activists at Standing Rock Indian Reservation were protesting the Dakota Access Pipeline, and the 2016 election cycle was in full swing. “I was feeling frustration with the world and the country,” Ottesen said. “So I talked with activists who had been through horrific times in our national past and found a way to take action to do something to try to change the trajectory.”

One photograph in the book shows a pensive John Lewis with his eyes closed, an image she captured as he transported himself back to the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama. Lewis described his thoughts as he was beaten by police officers that day, and how his inviolable belief in nonviolence helped him move forward in the decades to come without bitterness or hate. “You cannot be at home with yourself,” he said, “when you see something you know is not right.”

Ottesen spoke with people across the political spectrum: Grover Norquist, Edward Snowden, Gabby Giffords, and Alicia Garza. “There will be some people in the book with whom you will disagree, probably strongly,” Ottesen said. “The point is that we understand where people are coming from, to really to see their humanity, and try to repair this discourse that is so fundamental to making any sort of progress.”

Even with such a broad cast, uniting all the activists is their sense of agency and belief that they can make a difference. Ottesen's collection illustrates that when you take action, “you are in harmony with yourself, because you are acting in a way that is fundamentally right to you.”

At Twilight, Optimism Endures

Anne Applebaum '82 on “the seductive lure of authoritarianism.”

Twilight of Democracy opens in Poland on December 31, 1999, at a party **Anne Applebaum '82** and her husband hosted for journalists, diplomats, civil servants, and friends. Applebaum recalls the “great optimism and cheerfulness” of that moment, 10 years after the Cold War and with Poland on its way to the EU and NATO. Her guests seemed unified in all but their tastes in music. Yet reflecting on that night 20 years later, Applebaum realized she no longer speaks to half of those friends and colleagues. The group, once bonded around democratic, center-right, anti-communist beliefs, was fractured along a deep political divide, with many now part of a radical, nationalist right.

The book, Applebaum told **Elsa Walsh (P '94, '15)**, attempts to explain why so many have gravitated to populist authoritarianism: “How did they become disillusioned with the democracy so many of them had fought for?” During a career in conservative journalism, Applebaum has had a front-row seat to the split in conservatism. She discussed the ways Reagan and Thatcher cultivated national identity during their tenures; the deliberate construction of Spain's Vox as a party of identity rather than ideals; and how Trump is a product of a “loss of faith in American democracy and the growing use of disinformation.”

Applebaum also discussed the 2020 election, saying the international community saw Trump's post-election tenure as an attempted coup d'état. She noted the effect of that. “The attempt is to create a political base who will always believe the election was stolen,” she said, “and whose voice, votes, energy, and anger can be used in the future.” Still, Applebaum said it's irresponsible to be pessimistic. “We are neither condemned to become an autocracy nor are we guaranteed to remain a democracy,” she said. “History doesn't give us any guarantees. I find that to be optimistic. That means that there's always space for a new generation to come up with new solutions.”



FRESH INK



Grand Plans and Quiet Epiphanies

The foundations of democracy are under attack worldwide, and wealth disparities are all too real. Luckily, there are leaders in the C-suite and in political families who know how to grin and bear it. The latest books by Sidwell Friends alumni move from the grandeur of the global stage to the intimacy of the deeply personal.

Fake Smiles: A Memoir

By Tony Rogers '58

TidePool Press, 2017

"I decided, then and there, that I would stay out of the Washington fishbowl as much as possible while still being supportive of Dad. When he was attorney general in the Eisenhower administration, I had gone through the usual teenage struggles of establishing an independent identity, which had been made harder by his position. Every time I argued with him—which I did frequently about almost everything—he held the trump card of not only being my father, but also being attorney general. Who was I to argue with the attorney general of the United States? Now he'd hold an even higher position, upping the ante. ... I could safely bet I'd be the only cab driver whose father was secretary of state. Nixon assumed office on January 20, 1969, and to my surprise the Republic did not fall, nor did I revert to the days I felt totally eclipsed by Dad. What did change was my access to the secretary of state. I could harangue him in his house, by his pool, in his limo."

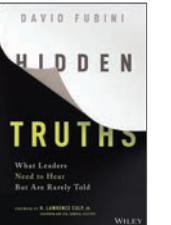


Hidden Truths: What Leaders Need to Hear But Are Rarely Told

By David Fubini '72

Wiley, 2021

Keep in mind that when people become CEOs, they face two transitions at once: dealing with their own personal adjustments to a very new role, while simultaneously helping the organizations they run adjust to new leadership. This is especially daunting for first-time CEOs, even if they have enjoyed enormous success in other executive positions. The CEO occupies a role that is like no other in a company, making the stakes, the responsibilities, and even the mechanics of decision-making truly novel. The highly distinctive nature of the job can be challenging not only during the early part of their tenure, but also for years afterward. Today, most CEOs need to be aware of the realities of the job. They need resources that address issues that are complex and confusing and for which their previous positions haven't prepared them. They need the insights of CEOs who have gone before them, who speak honestly and sometimes provocatively about the challenges they met—and in some cases didn't meet.

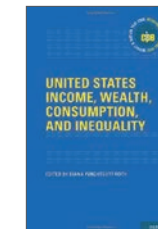


United States Income, Wealth, Consumption, and Inequality

By Diana Furchtgott-Roth '75

Oxford University Press, 2021

"The global pandemic that emerged in early 2020 in the form of COVID-19, the novel coronavirus, has had a dramatic effect on the world economy on the world economy, incomes, wealth, and. Income distribution. In the United States, the initial flash of data for April 2020, the first full month of the country's shutdown, gave new meaning to the description of the economics as 'the dismal science.' As this volume was going to press, the economy lost over 20 million jobs in one month, the unemployment rate rose from 4.4 percent to 14.7 percent, and 23 million people were receiving unemployment benefits. Average weekly and hourly earnings, however, both increased by 5 percent in just one month. If this trend continued for the entire year, this would be approximately an 80 percent increase. If average earning were a measure of well-being, the country would be better off. But the increase in earnings came about because the individuals who lost jobs were primarily low-skilled. Their restaurants, retail stores, and personal service establishments were closed to stop the spread of COVID-19. In June 2020, protests against inequality and mistreatment of minorities convulsed cities in the United States and elsewhere. Addressing inequality is not merely an academic pursuit; it captures the imaginations of people globally."

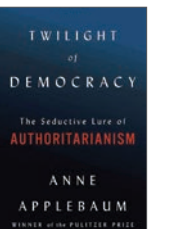


Twilight of Democracy: The Seductive Lure of Authoritarianism

By Anne Applebaum '82

Praeger, 2019

"Although they hate the phrase, the new right is more Bolshevik than Burkean: these are men and women who want to overthrow, bypass or undermine existing institutions, to destroy what exists. ... The people described range from nativist ideologues to high-minded political essayists; some of them write sophisticated books, others launch viral conspiracy theories. Some are genuinely motivated by the same fears, the same anger, and the same deep desire for unity that motivates their readers and their followers. Some have been radicalized by angry encounters with the cultural left, or repulsed by the weakness of the liberal center. Some are cynical and instrumental, adopting radical or authoritative language because it will bring them power or fame. Some are apocalyptic, convinced that their societies have faded and need to be reconstructed, whatever the result. Some are deeply religious. Some enjoy chaos, or seek to promote chaos, as a prelude to imposing a new kind of order. All of them seek to redefine their nations, to rewrite social contracts, and, sometimes, to alter the rules of democracy so that they never lose power. Alexander Hamilton warned against them, Cicero fought against them. Some of them used to be my friends."



Friends Alumni Network

The Sidwell Friends Alumni Network is an inclusive community guided by Quaker values whose mission is to enhance and foster connections with fellow alumni, faculty, and current students. We let our lives speak through friendship, service, and learning opportunities, generating goodwill and support for each other and the School.



The Sidwell Friends Alumni Network is about connection and never has the value of our network been more apparent: for advice, centering, and comfort at a time when we are feeling isolated and challenged in ways we could not have imagined. Connect with us at sidwell.edu/alumni or email us at alumni@sidwell.edu.

CALL FOR CLASS REPS!

Become the primary liaison between your classmates and Sidwell Friends! Class representatives play a critical volunteer service to the School. They help collect Class Notes, share news, and promote the amazing work and life lessons of their classmates.

THE FOLLOWING CLASSES NEED A REPRESENTATIVE:

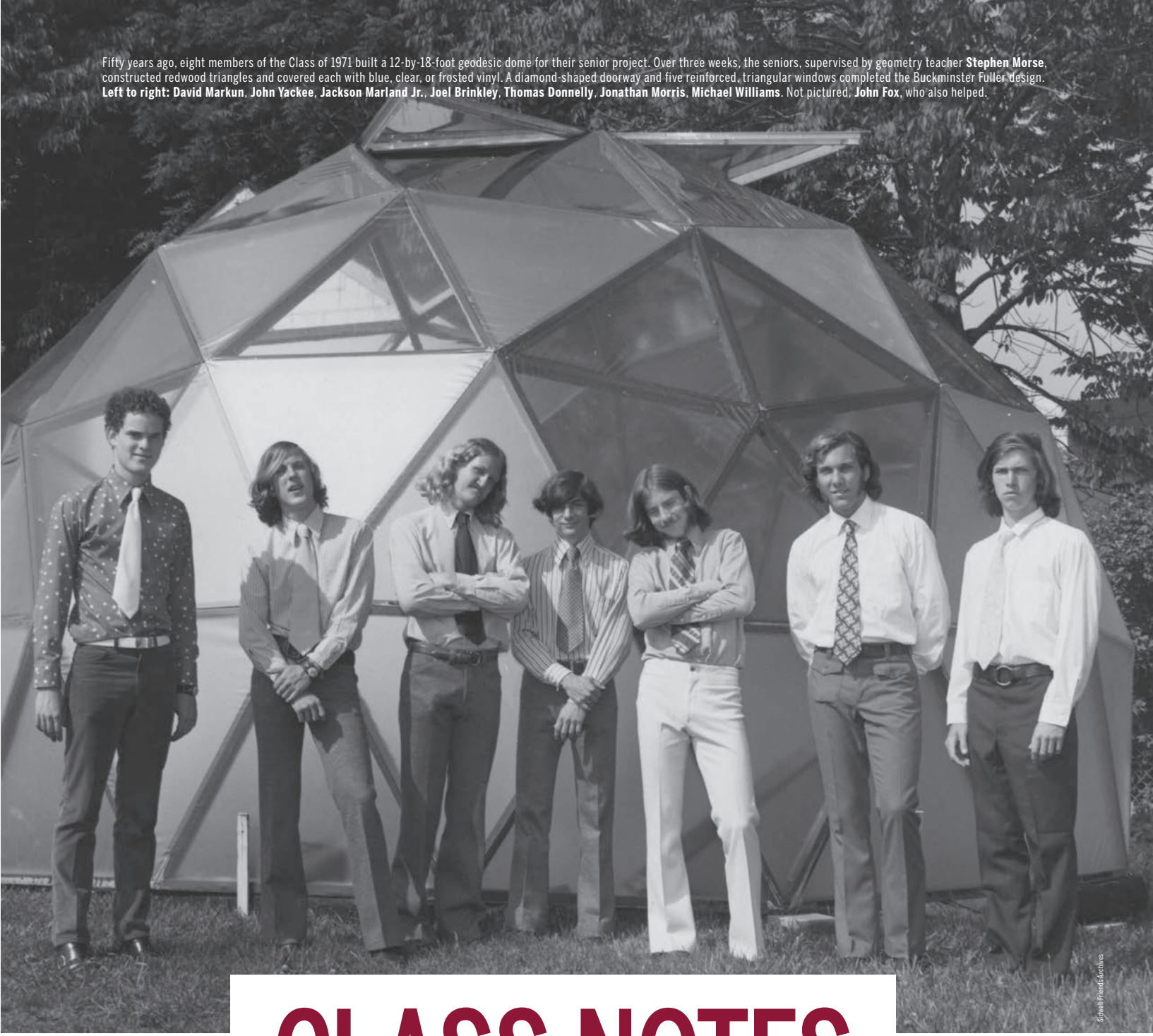
1951	1969	1990	1998	2012	2017
1952	1976	1992	1999	2012	2018
1956	1979	1993	2000	2013	2019
1957	1984	1995	2008	2014	
1965	1988	1996	2009	2016	

“My favorite part about being a class representative is getting to know my classmates better. It has been very gratifying for me. My main focus as a class representative is to try to get my classmates to talk to each other. Sometimes, I try to energize my classmates by sending out an email with a theme—for example, name four Elvis Presley songs that were popular in each of our four years of high school. It’s important to keep trying to find something that will capture people’s attention.”

—PETER ENMARK '62

Interested? Email us at alumni@sidwell.edu.

Fifty years ago, eight members of the Class of 1971 built a 12-by-18-foot geodesic dome for their senior project. Over three weeks, the seniors, supervised by geometry teacher **Stephen Morse**, constructed redwood triangles and covered each with blue, clear, or frosted vinyl. A diamond-shaped doorway and five reinforced, triangular windows completed the Buckminster Fuller design. Left to right: **David Markun, John Yackee, Jackson Marland Jr., Joel Brinkley, Thomas Donnelly, Jonathan Morris, Michael Williams**. Not pictured, **John Fox**, who also helped.



CLASS NOTES

At a moment when social media often overwhelms, proselytizes, or vanishes before your eyes, Class Notes humbly offers respite. Here, you have a lasting, curated, and quirky window into the lives of your fellow alumni. Whether you knew them then, follow them now, or never met, you are all Friends.

1935

Want to be a class representative?
Contact alumni@sidwell.edu.

In Memoriam:

Anne Turner Henry '35
December 26, 2020

1945

Want to be a class representative?
Contact alumni@sidwell.edu.

In Memoriam:

George Earley '45
October 28, 2020

1946

Want to be a class representative?
Contact alumni@sidwell.edu.

In Memoriam:

Sylvia Turlington O'Neill '46
October 11, 2020

1947

Want to be a class representative?
Contact alumni@sidwell.edu.

ROBERT ASHTON: “As a representative for what remains of the class of '47, I hereby submit that I am alive, surprisingly well, and wish I could still visit the School. Not quite up to a trip from where I now live in Portland, Maine. Otherwise, communicating with the internet, Zooms, telephone, and all too much TV. Life is good.” (See photo above right.)

In Memoriam:

James Cafritz '47
December 22, 2020

1948

Want to be a class representative?
Contact alumni@sidwell.edu.

In Memoriam

Barbara Giddings Michelena '48
July 16, 2020

1950

TOBY RILEY
tobyrileyq@gmail.com

TOBY RILEY: “Our Class Notes this spring 2021 consists of classmates who have not been mentioned for years. With a school our size, all classmates remember well their other classmates, and at our ages, that really brings back old memories. If you want to talk with one of them, Sidwell Friends and I can give you their contact information.”

BETS CHAPMAN HOOSS: “I enjoyed talking with **Patty Atwood Millard**, **Anne ‘Bumpy’ Bumstead Zabriskie**, and **Catherine ‘Kitsy’ Winslow Priest** recently. We all seem to be in a happy place, with family and friends nearby to keep us occupied during the pandemic. Patty and her husband still enjoy California, though without the golf. She has a view of the mountains. I do, too, with a field and woods behind my cottage; deer come up to my windows. This view does a great deal for my state of mind. Ann lives in Wilmington, Delaware, near the ocean with her son close by. As a matter of fact, her daughter is closer to me, so maybe a visit could be in the future. Kitsy remains in her home in Rehoboth, Delaware, where she continues to paint (recently, portraits) and do needlework. She told me that she is the oldest in her family—I know that feeling—but still has plenty of the younger generation to keep her busy.”

HELEN CALHOUN GRIER now has three children with M.A. degrees (a columnist, a geologist, and a computer scientist). She has traveled widely; her favorite



Bob Ashton '47 after four months of COVID seclusion.

country is Morocco. Having recently fractured her spine, she is mostly recovered by now.

DAVE PETERSON reports that he is in good physical and financial health. He expressed great concern about the number of American children going hungry, some only getting fed at school. He hopes that the government and the private sector will address this sad situation. He would like to hear from classmates.

JOANNE GILBERT SCHWARTZBERG is still working as a scholar-in-resident for a national medical education council. She was an M.D. pioneer in the new medical field of home health care. With her lawyer husband, Hugh, they have two children and two grandchildren, and they have traveled much of the world.

1951

Want to be a class representative?
Contact alumni@sidwell.edu.

In Memoriam:

Robert Flory '51
February 7, 2019

Barbara Gavin Fauntleroy '51
December 6, 2020

1952

CAROL BLACK
carblack@comcast.net

FLETCH WALLER: “We wish you a happy, prosperous, and fruitful 2021. We don’t need to tell you what a purgatory this year has been, so just a smattering of news: Between her four-mile walks and the Chamber Society, Ann took up watercolors. (See photos below. These are but a 10th of her output!) As for Fletch? Reading, writing Northwest Ruminations (trusteecoach.blogspot.com), working with the Olympic Club, making new friends via Zoom, volunteering at Pratt, and waiting to get back into the stone yard. The good news is... we still like each other—a lot! So, here’s to better times for us all. Cheers!”

1953

GLORIA GIRTON
ggat58b@orange.fr

1954

RICHARD NICKLAS
rnicklas@mfa.gwu.edu

JANE HOUGH: “The highlight of last year for Peter and I was visiting Morocco and then a week later being evacuated. Arriving back home March 26, 2020, we found ourselves in a very different world. Fortunately, we are retired and living in a small town, Easton, on the Chesapeake Bay. We spent the summer either on the porch or along the Bay, but being boxed up this winter has been no fun. Fortunately, vaccines are coming soon. We found a simpler life is also good as we took up different projects, such as birding and watching the near-collapse of democracy. To vary my routine, I had a shoulder replacement. The big question is, When will the virus quit, vanish, or just bury itself? Despite life’s challenges, we are happy to be here no matter what.”

In Memoriam:

Thomas Kenworthy '54
December 28, 2021

1955

NANCY ABOLIN HARDIN
nahardin@aol.com

ANN WINKELMAN BROWN: “How busy can I be during this boring time? I am the queen of Zooms—attending political and musical events. I even attended one with President Obama live. I was very active in the Florida elections, especially with the Jewish vote (to no avail). I have enjoyed getting to know my new friend, Dr. Ted Poretz, who lives with me now. Love to all.” (See photo on next page.)

LOCHANA GUNARATNA: “With excellent cooperation from my team of experts, my work on the project that I described in the last Class Notes as the preparation of an international Policy Statement on Third World Urbanization was completed.”

NANCY ABOLIN HARDIN: “Given what has been going on in most places worldwide, I feel grateful to have been leading a pretty comfortable and interesting life in confinement. It’s amazing how one can adapt to what’s required in changed circumstances: Pilates sessions as well as UCLA art classes, lectures, and webinars on



Watercolors by Ann Waller, the wife of Fletch Waller '52



Ann and Fletch Waller '52



Ann Winkelman Brown '55 with her 15-year-old dog, Rosebud.

Zoom, plus too much time spent watching Netflix and TV and looking at various feeds on my phone (less of that since the election). California's been pretty hard hit so socializing of any kind has been almost nonexistent, but to compensate there are long walks in beautiful surroundings, great weather, and stunning sunsets of late. I can't, and usually don't, complain." (See photo below right.)

BILL KERR: "Given what's been going on, I had been glued to the television—until Inauguration Day provided the antidote. My memory of the Capitol was shaped during two summers working there in the early 1950s. The building gets into your head, and it creates a sense of both awe and reverence. Whether looking for a senator to meet with constituents, running a message over to the House side, or on quiet days, just wandering freely in the temple of our democracy—everywhere you felt a priceless sense of place and belonging. I worry about what happened on January 6 at each end of Pennsylvania Avenue."

TOM SIMONS: "Our lives are not much changed from 2020. Peggy's October PET scan confirmed her cancer-free status, so we've been poking our heads above the parapet and exploring new things to do. We ventured down to Philadelphia for Christmas with kids—both of whom got bigger new jobs in the pandemic—and their kids, with negative tests thereafter.

But otherwise I do my scholarly odd jobs, we stay safe, we walk, and we wait for the Massachusetts vaccination schedule to catch up with us."

JUDITH HELLER ZANGWIL: "Not much news. Life is pleasant on Florida's Sunshine Coast—lots of sidewalk cafés, parks, and almost all stores and businesses are open as usual. I do miss live theater and concerts and other social and volunteer activities. All that is virtual now. Hopefully, we will enjoy good health by spring."

In Memoriam:

Dale Rogers Marshall '55
January 14, 2021

EDITOR'S NOTE

Dale Rogers Marshall '55 was profiled on page 50 in the fall 2020 issue of *Sidwell Friends Magazine*. She was a 2020 Distinguished Alumni Award recipient.

1956

CHARLIE HOLLAND
sshrink@cox.net

In Memoriam:

Allen Fay Thurman Mink '56
September 2020



Nancy Abolin Hardin '55 on one of her many walks in Santa Monica

1957

Want to be a class representative?
Contact alumni@sidwell.edu.

In Memoriam:

James Hughes '57
November 7, 2020

1958

CRAIG MORGAN
craighmorgan@gmail.com

EDITOR'S NOTE

The Class of '58 held vigorous email and Zoom discussions for this issue's Class Notes. Class rep Craig Morgan reports.

CRAIG MORGAN: "In our class email, we remembered our science teachers, in particular in 4th grade, Mrs. Ashton, who had on display a human skeleton named Susie Bones, and who led the class in dissecting a frog, a cow's eyeball, and—**Helene Rosenfeld Feldman** remembers well—a chicken, after which the cafeteria served Chicken à la King for lunch.

"And in a discussion about the role Chain Bridge has played in our lives, one of us asked, 'Was it not a frustrated commuter who came up with the alternating three-lane scheme to relieve congestion?' **Mary Elizabeth Wahrenbrock Hoinkes** then revealed: 'The *frustrated commuter* was in fact my father. He was a pretty damn good lawyer, but he was also a bit of a frustrated engineer. As a daily commuter into town, he became quite interested in the increasing traffic. He ended up getting out his measuring devices and writing and calling Congressman Joel Broyhill, and lo and behold, it happened.'

"In discussing McCarthyism, **Bob Myers** described how his father had narrowly escaped being a victim, under suspicion merely for being a prominent Keynesian economist: 'The process was extrajudicial. The acquittal process consisted of getting letters from people in your past attesting that you weren't a Communist and hadn't participated in any Communist activities throughout your life. It was best if these letters came from friends already cleared by the McCarthy mill.' Bob then went on to describe his father's courage: 'Writing clearance letters was fraught with danger—if, for instance, someone you vouched for was later successfully fingered as a Communist. After my father was cleared, he was asked by friends/colleagues to write clearance letters for them. After he died, I was cleaning out his files and came upon a file folder with about 200 carbon-copy flimsies (remember them?) addressed to the House Committee on Un-American Activities or others in the McCarthy mill, which said something like, From such-a-date to such-a-date, I knew so-and-so and never knew him/her to participate in any Communist activity.'

"While on the subject of McCarthyism, **Tony Rogers** recounted a creepy experience, also detailed in his memoir, *Fake Smiles*: 'McCarthy came to our house for dinner early in the Eisenhower administration when my father was deputy attorney general. Eisenhower wanted to see if McCarthy could be reached or if he was hopeless. McCarthy struck me, as soon as he walked in the house, as the closest thing to a thug as anybody my parents had invited to dinner. After dinner, McCarthy

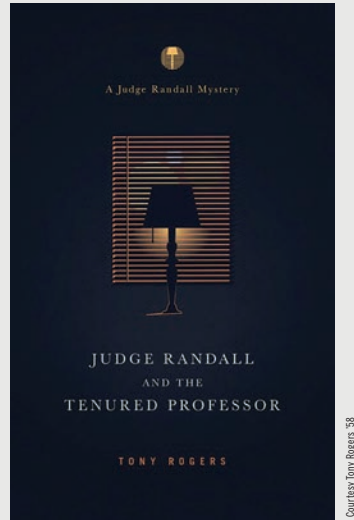
took me into our living room and taught me how to box. I kid you not. I was a skinny, cowardly 13-year-old, McCarthy was a thick, beefy, thug-like bully. He showed me how to stand, how to block blows with my arms, how to dodge his feints. All the while I was thinking, What am I doing here, and how did I get here? Some moments in life are indelible.' (For more, see "Fresh Ink," on page 38.)

"In one of our class Zoom sessions, **Dave Price** found it ironic that Donald Trump had done so much to help Americans reexamine race relations. **Annette Eisenberg Stiefbold** recommended reading Robin DiAngelo's *White Fragility*. She and **Reid Chambers** remembered attending the 1963 March on Washington. This triggered remembrances of race relations in DC when we were teenagers, some of us not always noticing segregation in various aspects of DC life. But **Peggy Pabst Battin** remembered well wanting to go to the movies with one of our classmates, only to be turned away at the theater because the classmate had acquired a suspiciously dark summer tan.

"Our class has lost the ranch, so to speak. Ranch maintenance had become too much. And so **Steve Stovall** and his wife, Denise, along with their cat and two dogs, downsized east to Denver. Their two horses made the trek to a farm nearby, enabling frequent visits. We all had to bid farewell to the source of many beautiful pictures and intriguing tales. As well as bid farewell to the Hesperus 2021 Olympic Training Center."

JOHN COX reports that he has almost completely recovered from the physical impacts of his stroke. He is still receiving speech therapy—this is taking longer than anticipated—but he still hopes to make a complete recovery in this as well. He looks forward to all the upcoming class Zooms. He and Mary will be getting their second COVID-19 shots in early February.

TONY ROGERS: "Since I finished my memoir, *Fake Smiles* (TidePool Press, 2016), about growing up in a political family in the '50s and '60s, I've been writing a mystery series featuring a retired judge as the recurring main character. The first, *Judge Randall and*



The new novel, *Judge Randall and the Tenured Professor*, by **Tony Rogers '58**.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Read more about *Fake Smiles* in "Fresh Ink," on page TK.

the Tenured Professor, is now out on Amazon. (See photo above.) The story: Newly retired Judge Jim Randall is invited to be on a panel at the Harvard Divinity School with Melvin Watson, a fiery evangelical preacher, and Sara Vincent, an MIT professor of philosophy. During the panel discussion, Melvin Watson loses his temper and assaults Judge Randall, an incident that goes viral on social media. When Watson is found dead in a construction ditch behind the Divinity School the next morning, discovering the killer becomes personal for Judge Randall."

1959

CLARK GRIFFITH
ccgpa@ccgpa.com

CLARK GRIFFITH: "A large number of classmates have been joining together for regular Zoom calls. Present on most of the calls has been **Keen Stassen Berger**, **Suzie Kroeger**, **Phoebe Meijer**, **Martin Myers**, **David Prentice**, **Elizabeth Crook**, **Milly Welsh**, **Doug White**, **Bernhard**

Glaeser, Charles Mallory, Cynthia Johnston Deutermann, and Geoff Lewis. (If I missed you, complain at the next call). Our calls occur on the last Sunday of each month at 2 p.m. *central time*. The time has been adjusted several times as we have to accommodate the West Coast of the United States and *Mittleuropa*. So, 2 p.m. *central time* is the chosen time, and the last Sunday of the month the chosen day, March 28 and April 25—enter them on your calendars. Our Chats cover the spectrum of COVID policy, politics, and Sidwell Friends memories. These chats, as you can imagine, are instructive and informative. The sessions go for just over one hour, but there is no time limit. I have heard from several nonparticipating classmates who tell me they are aware of the Zoom call! I find that intriguing, but the real benefit to the group is from participation. One person told me they never received the link to the call. I think some people just ignore the email. So, when you get an email from CCGPA, that’s the Zoom link. Zoom is our new Senior Shack and is a very pleasant way to meet with classmates. All that is necessary is to have a Zoom-capable platform—a smart phone, tablet, laptop, or desktop built in the 21st century—click on the highlighted link in blue, and you will be admitted to the call. See you, I hope, in March!”

In Memoriam:

Nancy Turner Park '59
December 29, 2020

1960

JODY HUTCHINSON
mjodyh@yahoo.com

1961

LINDA DEMING RATCLIFF
ldratcliffe@comcast.net

KEEP IN TOUCH!

Go to sidwell.edu/classnotes and let us know what you’ve been up to.

1962

PETER ENEMARK
peter.and.meme@gmail.com

PETER ENEMARK: “In January 2021, many of the members of the Class of 1962 became eligible for COVID-19 vaccinations. When you read this, most of us will have gotten two doses of the vaccine. During the pandemic, we have been spending a lot of time on Apple TV, Amazon Prime, Disney+, Hulu, and Netflix. And many of us enjoyed *The Queen’s Gambit*. Some older movies, however, evoked disturbing memories.”

JOAN DAVIDSON: “I remember watching *The Day the Earth Stood Still* during the summer it came out in 1951 at a drive-in movie at the beach in Oregon and being scared out of my wits. I never have liked science fiction since, either in movies or books. It scarred me for life.”

ART HILL: “I also was terrified when I saw *The Day the Earth Stood Still*. It was during someone’s birthday party. I can’t believe that allegedly responsible parents would take a bunch of 6-year-olds to such a movie. I was scarred for life, too. Not only did I spend most of the movie sitting next to the refreshments stand, I’ve never been a big fan of birthday parties since. I think the reason it was so terrifying is that it took place in Washington, DC, at places we all knew about and had visited.”

CHETT BREED: “I’ve just spent two weeks exploring a neighborhood nearby filled with the elderly, the retired, and the working poor, most of them living in what 50 years ago would have been mobile homes but which have been on blocks in the soil for so long they’re as good as permanent, if a little tipsy and crazed. A phone company has proposed building a cell tower among them, and I’ve been talking with residents and leaving flyers on doorknobs

in opposition. It’s all over tonight—a letter of opposition with their signatures is attached to the original filing with the FCC! What lingers is the affection and even admiration that has grown as I’ve been busy with the project.”

GLENN MCCLELLAND: “‘Some hae meat and canna eat,/And some wad eat that want it;/But we hae meat, and we can eat,/Sae let the Lord be Thankit!’ That’s the English version of Robert Burns’s ‘Selkirk Grace,’ which has become a McClelland family tradition at Thanksgiving and Christmas. ‘Some have meat but cannot eat,/some have none that want it;/But we have meat, and we can eat,/So let the Lord be thanked!’ We should never forget that most of us can afford to feed ourselves, and we should never forget that there are many less fortunate who need our help and concern.”

OWEN OAKLEY: “Toki and I enjoyed an elegant duck breast for Thanksgiving and, like so many others, had a Zoom call with family around the country. Thankfully, everyone is well and hanging on for the vaccine. Some rain for California would also be nice. We do miss family and friends, but we are not homeless in Oakland, in a hospital in El Paso, or in a Syrian refugee camp. We have so much to be thankful for. Charitable giving is good any time of year, but Thanksgiving is an excellent reminder to do more.”

STEVE WOOLPERT: “Hello classmates. Last month’s attempted coup underscores the need for deeper democratic understanding and engagement. So I am inaugurating a new course concentration at Saint Mary’s College of California, where I teach, that I’m calling a Certificate in Practical Political Leadership. It is designed to prepare students for a wide range of public-sector careers both in and out of government. I hope it will enhance students’ voices and give them hands-on practice in addressing challenging public problems in concert with others different from themselves. Stay well, dear friends.”

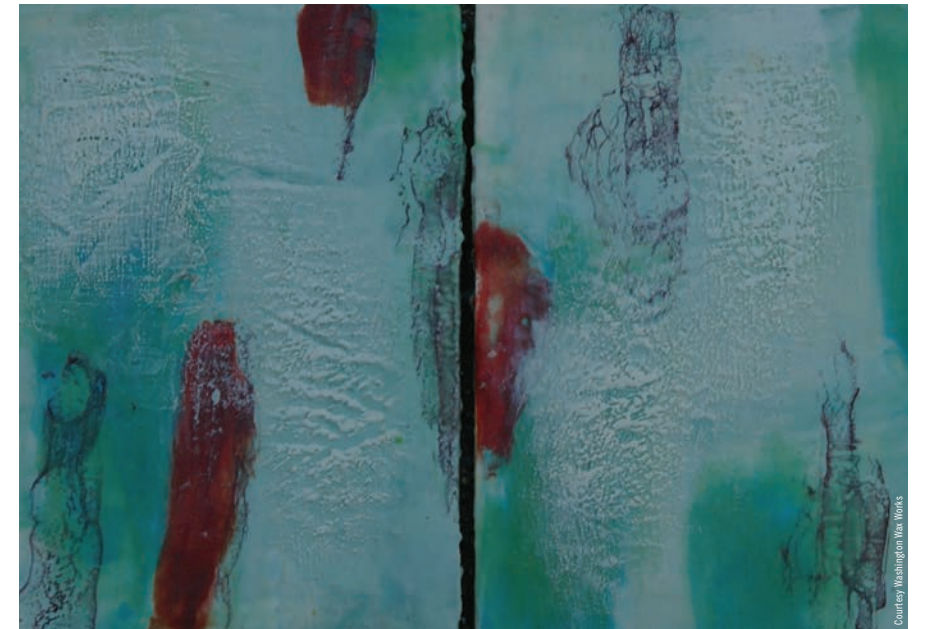
1963

MARGO LEE HOFELDT
margo10022@aol.com

KATHY ANDERSON: “It certainly has been a strange year remaining inside our homes due to this virus. Despite this, my art group is having a show in Frederick, Maryland, in February and one in May in Rehoboth, Delaware. We are *washington-waxworks.com*. There are six of us all using wax as our medium. The Frederick show is at the Delaplaine Arts Center and will feature a live webinar, which you can see here: prezi.com/view/4rgvHc72luqc7dYFO-SIF. Hope all is well with everyone.” (See photo at right.)

PAT CROSS BRADLEY: “During the long COVID quarantine, **Lucy Hilmer** and I were fortunate to have been taken under **Bobby Goldman**’s protective wing. The idle hours of the quarantine gave us the time to recapture our Sidwell friendship. With weekly calls and reassurances from Bobby, Lucy and I managed to survive the isolation of COVID, as well as the chaos and uncertainty of the election. The ongoing email repartee between Lucy and Bobby would often make me laugh out loud and brought back memories of our lively banter of 50-plus years ago. The only thing missing was Lucy swooning over Cary Grant while Bobby’s eyes rolled back into his head. With rigid masking and careful social distancing, I have attended nearby agility trials with my young cocker spaniel. The college student who runs her for me was home with Zoom classes so weekends were free for us to compete. We qualified for the much-anticipated American Kennel Club National Agility Championships in Tulsa, Oklahoma, at the end of March, and now, being able to get the COVID vaccine has made that a reality for us. We also qualified for the random draw for the Westminster Agility Trial, which has been postponed until mid-June, so you might even be able to see my little freckle faced, tricolor girl on TV!”

JOHN BRALOVE: “Suggestions given for topics for possible Class Notes were weddings (none), babies (heavens no), new jobs (retired), new houses (in the same



Walking in the Rain, an Encaustic Diptych by Kathy Anderson '63

one since 2007), retirement (love it—should have done it sooner), adventures (life these days is an adventure), travel (not since December 2019), and meetings with old friends (don’t want to risk it or them). That leaves the topic “the common Sidwell Friends threads in your life.” The 2020 election brought these to the forefront. So did my conservative acquaintances who wanted to know where I got the values that so favored one candidate over the other. My answer: my religion and Sidwell Friends. And my teachers, like Harvey LeSure, Rod Cox, Miss Rosebrook (it would be blasphemy to use her first name), Peter Scott, and Charlie Wannan, just to name a few. Thanks to all!”

GARTH DOCHERTY: “Anne and I haven’t got the vaccine yet. Since Iowa went for Trump, maybe the distribution is slower. Thinking of moving into a nursing home to get it quicker. We both got COVID 19, but very mild. I thought the test was worse than the virus. Classmates, tell your grandchildren not to marry a person from Iowa: zero degrees last night, five inches of snow this weekend. Besides, I got the last great girl from Iowa. One good thing is the exercise from shoveling the snow, 10 minutes outside, half an hour inside with a glass of wine. Repeat if necessary.”

LUCY HILMER: “What a wakeup call this year

has been! May we continue to learn from it and transform ourselves and our country for the good of us all. For me, creativity is the way forward, and I feel blessed to be in good health. I’m currently assembling a book of poetry as a companion piece to my yet-to-be-published book of self-portraits through time. I’m also making short, personal videos using my archive of photos. The first was based on a poem I wrote in response to the murder of George Floyd. I feel truly blessed by my Friends Forever, some on Facebook, others on the phone. **Bobby Goldman** calls weekly and sends a picture a day from his art collection. **Pat Cross Bradley** always cheers me on. **Lucy Jaspersen** called New Year’s Day, **Margo Lee Hofeldt** texted. **Steve Griffith** sent an article, and **Bob Zweben** is always there for support. How lucky I am!”

SHARON SMULL HINCKLEY: “I am currently teaching two watercolor painting classes online for the San Diego College of Continuing Education and a third watercolor-painting class for Wesley Palms, a Front Porch Retirement Community. My painting, “Fruit Basket,” was accepted into the San Diego Watercolor Society February Show (sdws.org). (See photo on next page.) I also teach a monthly “Love Rocks” (painting on stones) online workshop for the Bravo School of Art. The next workshop is on February 13—just in time



"Fruit Basket," by Sharon Hinckley '63 and "Love Rocks," a new painting class from Sharon Hinckley '63



for Valentine's Day (bravoschoolofart.squarespace.com/workshops/love-rocks-feb)! (See photo above.) My free painting classes are only open to California residents. The "Love Rocks" classes are open to anyone anywhere who would like to register. Who would have ever thought that I would be teaching school on a computer from my "Zoom Room"? Funny, when we built this house, we thought it was a dining room!"

MARGO LEE HOFELDT: "Oh, it must be Groundhog Day—or was that 2020! Actually, it hasn't been so bad, and I can't understand why I'm always so busy. Yes, there is sort of a routine, and yes, we do go out, but the days fly by and I'm never bored. Besides the usual grocery shopping, banking, pharmacy, post office, and dry cleaner, we occasionally eat outside (well, it is Miami) at restaurants and in close friends' gardens while socially distanced. Then there's the Garden Club! I recently went on a field trip that included a guided walking tour of a famous garden and then a boxed lunch. There were 15 of us split into two groups. We have also had our monthly meetings outside at the Miami Beach Botanical Garden and on Zoom for those who stayed home. There has been a lot of Zoom! And a lot of Netflix. And a lot of cooking, which I am improving at. I cooked Thanksgiving just for the two of us, but Christmas was with our daughter at a restaurant, and New Year's Eve was with friends outside on their patio. We're very grateful to be in Miami and healthy so we can enjoy it."

JEANNE PERKINS HOFFERKAMP: "Hi! I took a little time from my busy schedule to let you know what is going on. After I came back from my world tour, I have been so busy! HAHA! Steve and I are fine. No virus, just a little bored with staying home. We are being cautious and limiting our activities. We just signed up with the health department to receive our shots—just got the ball rolling; who knows when it will be. All the children are good. Olivia, my oldest granddaughter, has been accepted to University of Wisconsin, Madison, School of Engineering. Obviously, her mom, Sandy, got the smart genes of the family! Carina will be 16 in February. Sharon's son, Evan, just turned 7. I haven't been able to see them, which is kind of a bummer, but I would rather be safe than sorry. Hoping all is well with everyone and looking forward to a good summer! If we have to be shut-in, better in the winter when there really isn't much to do anyway. Last year at this time, Steve and I were getting ready to go to Kauai—just got that in under the wire. It was fantastic! Ah, memories."

ALISON FEISS KRIVISKEY: "Bruce and I stay home as much as possible to be safe, but we've found plenty to keep us busy. Bruce builds ship models and is currently rigging the *USS Constitution*. This is the seventh ship he has built, four of which he made since the onset of COVID. He has run out of antique furniture and banjos to restore, so he's keeping his hands busy with smaller projects. We're running out of table space for models, so I hope COVID goes away soon! Technology helps me through the

isolation, especially Zoom, Audible, and all my iPad's resources, including Kindle books. Don't worry—I buy many books from our local independent bookstore, so not all my book money goes to Amazon! One of our favorite Zoom groups comprises fellow retirees from the Fairfax County (Virginia) Department of Planning and Zoning, where Bruce and I met. We talk with our kids and grandkids via Zoom; they're scattered from Oregon to Wisconsin to nearby in Massachusetts. I still raise orchids, a perfect hobby during a pandemic: They need regular care, and I need time to learn more about their idiosyncrasies. Knitting keeps my hands busy and serves as a nice meditation during this time of multiple stressors. My friends and I are keeping the local knitting stores in booming business, including WEBS, one of the best-known sources of materials for the fiber arts in the United States. (For my fellow knitters, WEBS is in Northampton—no wonder there are so many knitters, weavers, and spinners here!) When all else fails, I scour the house for things to recycle, throw out, or give to charity. I love simplifying our life! I hope everyone and their families are doing well. When life is normal again, we'd enjoy visitors."

JOHN LUYKX: "What a relief; five years of lies, crimes, and corruption are over, hopefully. Bless the new administration. We are still distancing from life but see the light at the end of the tunnel. Imagine going to the movies again! Meanwhile, we're getting by on cable news, jigsaw puzzles, *The New Yorker*, and BookBub.

Also, I read all of James Herriot and the Nicholas Rhea *Constable* series. Both set in Yorkshire, England. Let's go!"

DAVE OGILVY: "January 20 was a really great day. Liz and I got our first Moderna vaccinations after an over two-hour wait. California! Life since last March has been much the same as that of everyone else in the class—boredom, reading, quarantining, walking the dog, etc.—nothing much to report, although a weekly game of golf for the last four or five months has been therapeutic!" (See photo below.)

CAROLYN LADY REDMON: "As you may know, President Biden has a vacation home where I live in Delaware. Our little resort town is used to lots of activity, but the construction of a helipad and a lot of Secret Service presence makes it all the more active! Like everyone, we are coping with COVID the best we can. It has been devastating to our area, which relies heavily on the tourist and hospitality industries. I have managed to get shot number one and am hoping supply will get better so I can get #number two on time. In the meantime, I am reading like crazy, watching certain MasterClasses that interest me, and taking walks. Hope all of you are safe."

PETER RICE: "For nearly a year, Echo Hill has had no campers and only a few students. It is peaceful and quiet here, and



Dave Ogilvy '63 with his grandson Ryan

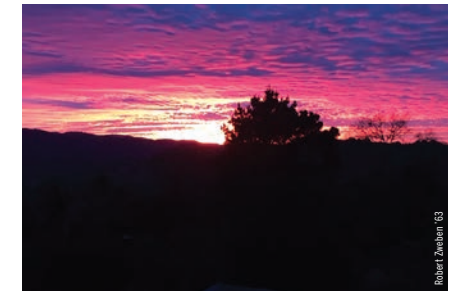


Robert Zweben '63 captures the view from his deck.

there is plenty of fresh air. If you want to get out of the city or suburbs for a long walk through the swamp on our boardwalk, or take a hike in the woods, or build a campfire on the beach, call me up! 410-708-0782. Former Echo Hill camper, Representative Jamie Raskin, is my hero in Washington."

SANDRA ROBERTSON: "I'm still working on my MFA and looking forward to life post-COVID."

ROBERT ZWEBEN: "Random thoughts: In a concession to older age, Elaine and I decided to sell our rural house between Monterey and Salinas, California. We felt that going back and forth, managing two houses, and dealing with fires, drought, and now some flooding got to be too much. Ironical that we sold a rural property when many are trying to leave the urban centers. Elaine, my two kids, and three grandchildren are healthy. Virtual home-schooling is a drag, but Seth, Bonnie, and their kids are doing pretty well at it. I am glad that the fake-news prez lost a fair election. I am not hopeful that our country will recover from the invasion of the Capitol. Everyone involved, including elected officials and some wealthy archconservatives, are America's fascists. The failure to prosecute and to hold those responsible and accountable will only embolden them to take future actions. There was never a coherent plan to fight the virus. American deaths and suffering are too high. COVID has taught that our healthcare system needs an overhaul. Bailouts to the wealthy and big corporations only contribute to economic and political inequality. Be safe and healthy. America's democracy is in trouble!" (See photos above.)



In Memoriam

Jacqueline Geschickter '63
January 4, 2021

1964

LOUISE BERRY STRAIT
lbstrait@gmail.com

1966

CHRIS DEMATATIS
cdematatis@aol.com

1967

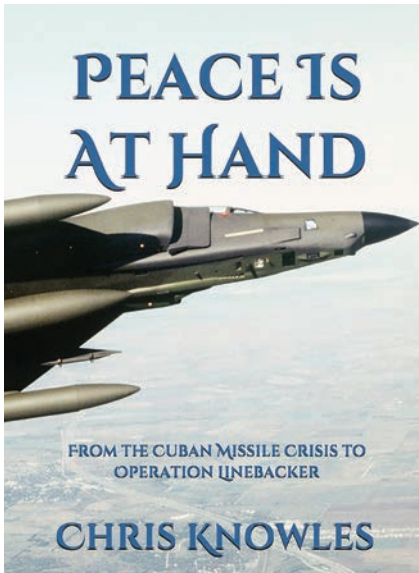
STEVE BATZELL
swb.abacus@gmail.com

PHILIP KHOURY: "I remain a member of MIT's senior administration and faculty, and among my writing projects is a memoir that includes a long chapter on my Sidwell years. Beth, who is a member of Smith College's senior administration, and I have been involved with our respective institutions almost entirely on Zoom since March 2020. We look forward to returning to our offices and resuming our travels for work and pleasure. In the meantime, we move between our houses, one in the woods near Amherst and the other on a lake in the Berkshires. I haven't been to Lebanon in a year but I remain close to the American University of Beirut, whose Board I chair. The country has imploded in the past year; the political class wallows in corruption, the economy

is in shambles, COVID-19 is rampant, and the massive explosion in Beirut this past summer, the fourth-largest in an urban area in history, killed and maimed many and displaced 300,000 from their homes in an instant. The university remains one of the few institutions left that manages to operate effectively.”

CHRIS KNOWLES continues to live and write on Martha’s Vineyard. After writing 19 novels, 19 of which were either murder mysteries or geopolitical thrillers, he broke down and wrote what he has referred to as “autobiographical reminiscences.” They span from his age at 13 (8th grade during the Cuban Missile Crisis) to age 23 (when he was instrumental in the conclusion of America’s involvement in the Vietnam War). The recollections are very personal and offer insights not only into his life but that of the nation. They include the demonstrations and burning of Washington to Martin Luther King’s assassination to the Counter-Inaugural Ball on the National Mall after the inauguration of Richard Nixon in January 1969. The book is *Peace is at Hand*, after the Kissinger speech in October 1972, and is available as either a paperback or Kindle book at Amazon. (See photo above.)

LOUISE THORSON: “My experience with COVID: This fall, I wanted to visit my sister who is battling cancer, but of course I didn’t want to inadvertently give her COVID. Fortunately, Rhode Island has good testing facilities, so in late October, I got the highly predictive PCR test. Imagine my surprise when I came back positive; I had no symptoms and about the riskiest thing I did was walk outside with friends (socially distanced of course). I called all of the people with whom I had walked and none of them got sick. Two of them got tested as did my husband, and all were negative. After 10 days of quarantine, I got retested and was negative, so I drove to DC for the visit. In December, after returning to Rhode Island, I was tested for antibodies and found out that I didn’t have any. So, the question is: Did I have a false positive? Or is there a chance I had such a low dose of the virus that I didn’t get sick, pass it along, or get antibodies? Apparently, both outcomes are highly unlikely. It’s a mystery. Above all, I hope that all of you and



The new autobiographical book by **Chris Knowles** '67

yours are as well as possible during these difficult days, both in body and in spirit.”

1968

ROLLIE FRYE
rolliefrye@gmail.com

CHARLIE DONOHUE: “I am fine, happy, retired from 40 quixotic years as business manager for architects. That leaves me plenty of time to sail, ski, day hike, and do the odd chore around the house, which is another way of saying that I am amazed at my ability to do almost nothing useful. My wife, Elizabeth, is not working right now, which is fun and a relief in these times of COVID. I hated to miss the 50th, but my schedule at the time didn’t allow it. Still, I’m keeping my eye on the 55th!”

MERLE LADD SILVERMAN: “After 9th grade, I transferred from Sidwell Friends to Winston Churchill High School in Pottomac, Maryland. During senior year there, I attended a Sidwell football game and re-met **Roger Lowe**. He invited me to a dance in the winter, and we dated over the rest of the school year. We went our separate ways, but I often wonder where he ended up. He wanted to be a veterinarian, I think. **Kate Waits**, **Kay Burgunder Stevens**, and I went to Cornell, where I studied architecture and met my husband. He

was (among other things) a test pilot for the Navy and United Airlines. I worked in architecture wherever we lived, until San Diego. There, I taught a computer lab in a K–8 school and loved it. Next, I had a 10-year career in publishing elementary math materials. This ended in 2000 when my company was sold, and I didn’t want to move. Since then, I’ve dabbled in various part-time jobs. We have three married children and nine grandchildren. When our daughter got married and started a family, early childhood education became my passion. I took courses at the junior college and have been applying what I learned since. I’m a GREAT grandma!”

DAVID THOMSON: “I recently attended an online Friends meeting, the first in a long time. The query asked us: ‘What do we now want to see happen in our country and what is our role for that?’ It was an echo of Gandhi’s ‘Be the change you want to see.’ Our current culture views those who are different as the enemy, but as Friends, we are called to look for what binds—our common humanity and shared souls—to dwell in what unites us rather than what divides, to disagree with respect and love for brothers and sisters, however ‘wrong’ their point of view seems, in the same manner in which we would want to be treated. Rather than bemoan what is wrong with others, find what we can individually do to make a better world. I find reward in volunteering at hospice care, Habitat for Humanity, and mentoring students in preparation for careers. Many of you shared similar callings. If we take our individual steps of opportunity, we’ll move collectively to that better world we all want. Rake leaves for the elderly lady who can’t anymore! Use the snowblower to clear the driveway for the neighbor who doesn’t have one! The ripples spread further on our planet’s pond than we ever imagine. Friends forever!”

1969

Want to be a class representative?
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MARI HILDENBRAND THOMPSON: “I sold my home in St. Cloud, Florida, and am

KEEP IN TOUCH!

Go to sidwell.edu/classnotes and let us know what you’ve been up to.

moving back to Bend, Oregon, driving across COVID Nation at the end of March. Although I’m taking the southern route for the majority of the way (stinky, huge cattle ranches in parts of Texas and Arizona along I-10), I’m hoping the snow conditions currently bashing Texas will only be a memory. I’ve gotten both doses of the Moderna vaccine; I’ll still be taking safety precautions by masking, hand sanitizing, and social distancing, so I’m not overly concerned about the long drive, and I’m looking forward to being back in the Pacific ‘Northworst’ among pine trees, Cascade Lakes, the Deschutes River, and the high desert again. My co-pilot, Tildy (my ACD/blue heeler), and I will be ‘on the road again,’ to quote Willie Nelson, for likely nine to 10 days. It’ll be interesting to be back in Bend with Michael after being stuck in Florida since October 2019 and living the solo life. I’ll very much miss living close to son Jeremy, daughter-in-law Kristina, and granddaughter London, who are in Orlando, but it’s time to be out West again. The good news is I’ll be able to fly in to visit my sweet family a few times a year for a couple of weeks at a time to see them. Life is good, so onward ho! Blessings for good health to all Sidwell friends.”

1970

MARGARET WEAVER KRULL
mwkrull@me.com

REBECCA “ALLISON” GORDON: “I was fortunate to spend three months in Reno, Nevada, in the fall of 2020, working with UNITE HERE (the hospitality industry union) on their door-to-door electoral canvass. With 90 percent of their workers laid off because of the pandemic, the union still managed to mount in-person campaigns, employing out-of-work cooks, caterers, and casino workers in Nevada, Arizona, Florida, and Pennsylvania. In some of those states, we were the

only people on the ground. Our canvassers braved danger—levels of smoke from California and Oregon wildfires, guns, racist taunts and threats, and, of course, COVID-19—all to have often wrenching personal conversations with voters about why this election mattered to them. It was an honor to provide backroom logistical and tech support for the campaign. Oh, and we won every state but Florida. In the rest of my life, I continue to write for *TomDispatch* (and you can often find my pieces at *The Nation*), and I have a contract for a new book on the central role of torture in the construction of major U.S. institutions. I swear the one after that will be a lesbian comedy of manners!”

JEFF MAZIQUE: “Currently, I’m the COVID doc on the Sault Ste. Marie Reservation in upstate Michigan, five miles from Canada.” Jeff also offers this quote from *The Plague*, by Albert Camus: “Sometimes at midnight, in the great silence of the sleep-bound town, the doctor turned on his radio before going to bed for the few hours’ sleep he allowed himself. And from the ends of the earth, across the thousands of miles of land and sea, kindly, well-meaning speakers tried to voice their fellow-feeling, and indeed did so, but at the same time proved the utter incapacity of every man truly to share in suffering that he cannot see.”

CHRIS TUFTY: “The only news I’ve got to report all year is the sale of my parents’ house in DC as well as their weekend cabin in West Virginia. Amazingly enough, I was able to do it all from California! No need to attend an open house, supervise the repairs, etc. It’s sad losing them from our family, but since none of us kids were using them, it was time to pass them on to the next owners. Can’t wait to see everyone once we’ve all been vaccinated and are safe!”

1971

MARY REYNER
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1972

JOYCE JACOBSON
joyce@brastedhouse.com

DAVID FUBINI: “After graduating Sidwell Friends and studying at the University of Massachusetts and Harvard Business School (HBS), I joined McKinsey & Company for over 35 years. After steeping away from my consulting career, I have been a full-time member of the HBS faculty and have joined several corporate boards. Bertha and I have all four kids (and a few boy-friends/girlfriends) in the social pod that we have formed, and we’ve been hanging out in Boston and in Vermont. I just released my third book, *Hidden Truths: What Leaders Need to Know But Are Seldom Told* (Wiley, December 2020). (See “Fresh Ink,” on page 38.) This book builds on my years counseling CEOs with McKinsey and more recently teaching CEOs and leaders at HBS. I wanted to provide a practical, behind-the-scenes look inside the job of becoming a leader. I have kept the length short and the writing full of case examples to make it more readable and, I hope, more memorable.”

1973

APRILLE KNIEP SHERMAN
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REGINA DESSOFF KESSLER
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JEFFREY MUMFORD: “The past year has been challenging for everyone in so many ways and uniquely for the arts. I completed three works since June: ‘fleeting cycles of layered air’ for solo violin, written for Miranda Cuckson, a brilliant violinist who specializes in new music; ‘revisiting the window’s view’ for cello and harp, written for Julia Bruskin, an amazing player who is a member of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, which has seen its members out of work since the pandemic; and ‘for Clare,’ commissioned by pianist Clare Longendyke, presently an artist-in-residence at the University of Chicago, for her project, *UnRaveling*, in which commissioned composers write works inspired by Ravel. I’m also



The Class of '74 Holiday Party on Zoom



Barky Jones '74 welcomes his first grandchild, Lyle Barclay Jones, to this world!

happy to report a number of streaming performances, including a collaboration between the Phillips Collection and the Boston-based Castles of Our Skins, which promotes the works of composers of color. The work performed, 'eight aspects of appreciation II,' was a duo for violin and cello, featuring Gabriela Diaz and Francesca McNeeley, two of Boston's brightest young players. A Manchester, England-based ensemble named Psapha streamed this same work. Another highlight was the performance of my 2015 piano concerto 'becoming...' by Xiaoya Gao and the New York University Orchestra, which Wayne du Maine conducted. My daughter, Blythe Coleman-Mumford, is living in Atlanta and doing well, as is my wife, former Sidwell Friends faculty member Donna Coleman, who has had several exhibitions of her paintings. Hope all is well with my classmates and look forward to better times!"

ROBERT SHARPE: "I have received my second vaccine and will be celebrating having survived the pandemic by taking a ski trip to Jackson Hole. I love my work with a highly underserved population in a psychiatric emergency room in Milwaukee, surrounded by a team of dedicated and talented physician colleagues and nurses. I'm looking forward to a return to some semblance of normalcy as the year progresses as I have remained in self-quarantine due to my work. I also am looking forward to being able to visit the New York City area again where I'm expecting the birth of my third grandson in July."

1974

PAUL MARKUN
pmarkun@gmail.com

LESLIE WOLF CREUTZFELDT: "We had nearly 40 attendees who shared updates and news from around the world at the Class of '74 Holiday Party on Zoom. (See photo above.) Friendship and goodwill are the best medicine for the pandemic blues! I continue to work as the executive director of the China-US Women's Foundation (cuswf.org), organizing virtual Zoom sessions about health and financial topics to help women to thrive. We are planning a trip to Shanghai to celebrate female creativity and wellness in October."

BARKY JONES and Sara Fox Jones are thrilled to announce the birth of their first grandchild. Lyle Barclay Jones—8 pounds, 4 ounces—was born to **Caitlin Barclay Jones '06** and Elliot Woods on January 22, 2021. (See photo above.)

1975

ALAN DRUMMER
alandrummer@hotmail.com

BOB JEFFERS: "Riding out the Pandemic on the French Riviera. Could be worse."

1976

Want to be a class representative?
Contact alumni@sidwell.edu.

On the fourth anniversary of her passing, January 22, 2021, a number of **Kathy Ozer's** friends and family gathered via Zoom to reminisce and celebrate her life. Joining the gathering were Kathy's '76 classmates **Cate Livingston Fernandez**, **Susan Hilton Labovich**, and **Fred Thys** along with **Soye Kim '73** and Kathy's brother, **Mark Ozer '82**. The gathering also served as a fitting occasion to celebrate the achievement of the full endowment of the Kathy Ozer '76 Memorial Fund at Sidwell Friends School. The endowment will provide students and faculty annual funding in perpetuity to engage in experiential educational opportunities in food justice and farming, issues Kathy dedicated herself to with passion. Prior to her passing, Kathy served as the executive director of the National Family Farm Coalition, an organization with a mission to help family farmers, fishers, and ranchers. Kathy's family and classmates wish to express their gratitude to everyone who has generously contributed to the fund and helped to realize the goal of honoring Kathy in a way that permanently memorializes the things that she fought so hard for in her life.

1977

ADAM STERN
adamcstern@aol.com

1978

PETER MACDONALD
pmacdona@skidmore.edu

ALMON BURKE: "We are all doing well. Staying positive and testing negative. Love to all. Looking forward to the next Reunion!" (See photo below.)

ZOE FITZGERALD CARTER: "After working as a journalist, teacher, and author for many years, I've turned to writing and performing music full-time. I've played with various Bay Area bands, including a band of journalist/musicians, The Deadliners, and an Americana/roots band, Sugartown. Three years ago, I released an album of my original songs, *Waiting for the Earthquake*, with Sugartown. And on March 26, 2021, I'll be releasing my first solo album, *Waterlines*. (More information about the album can be found at zoecartermusic.com.) It's been an exciting evolution as both a writer and performer. And while COVID has not been kind to musicians, I'm looking forward to getting back out there soon. I also look forward to hearing from Sidwell classmates and finding out what they've been up to!" (See photo above right.)

DAVID GARRITY: "One year into the COVID pandemic, I can only imagine the cautious sense of relief we all feel with signs that vaccination efforts are gaining traction. I hope we can keep our guard up, so as not to succumb in the pandemic's final days.

As importantly, I trust we'll have a sense of stewardship in working to make the post-COVID world better than what existed before, as the sense of discord in society has grown only worse over the past year. On a personal front, I'm fortunate that my family and friends have stayed healthy over the past year. Despite abundant challenges, the organizations I work with have made surprisingly good progress: Friends Seminary School has met the education needs of its almost 800 K–12 students, Pennington Friends House has continued its 124-year-long mission to be an intergenerational Quaker cooperative residence in Manhattan, and my colleagues at BTblock have grown our firm's cybersecurity practice and launched a digital health practice. Meanwhile, my 14-year-old son, Will, is enjoying 8th grade at Friends Seminary and is participating in extracurricular programs, albeit virtually. I'm looking forward to his performance this weekend as *The Geographer* in the school production of *The Little Prince*, presented via video. I've opted to increase my social distancing this winter by renting a house in Gorham, New Hampshire, a small town north of the White Mountains. Best thing is, it's close to Wildcat Mountain, where Will and I ski despite the brisk weather (–30 degrees Fahrenheit with wind chill). Stay healthy, stay safe, and look forward to better days." (See photo on next page.)

HILLARY NELSON JACOBS: "I received an MFA in creative nonfiction from Antioch University, Los Angeles, in December. I'm so

The latest album, *Waterlines*, by Zoe Fitzgerald Carter '78

thrilled to have accomplished this at the age of 60 that I enclose a photo of myself in cap and gown and pearls from our Zoom graduation! I am continuing to work on a memoir—stay tuned. Bob and I spend much of our days writing—and we have managed to spend (masked) time with our kids, who live close by. A big change in our family in the past year is that our child Charlie (née Clara) has identified as trans. They had a bumpy first 25 years—and are thriving as a trans adult! Hope to see you all soon, somewhere, somehow." (See photo on next page.)

CHRIS KRAMER: "Good news and bad news: I was named chief of the Cardiovascular Division at the University of Virginia in August 2019. The bad news is that it was just before the COVID pandemic hit, which quickly changed the nature of the job. More good and bad news: I am treasurer of the American College of Cardiology (ACC) for the next three years and won the 2021 Distinguished Mentor award from the ACC. The bad news is I had my right hip replaced a few weeks back for a genetic condition. However, my recovery has been quite smooth. My family has thankfully stayed healthy during the pandemic, and I have been keeping up with a few Sidwell friends by phone/Zoom."

MELISSA PELHAM: "How refreshing was it to turn the calendar page this year to welcome in 2021?! My news is I've relocated to St. Petersburg, Florida, and I am thriving in the Sunshine State! No more nor'easters for me! I continue to work from home and teach online yoga classes."



Almon Burke '78 with his children Back row: Tancy, Trevor, Carter Front row: Sabrina, Ronny, Almon Burke '78



David Garrity '78 and his son, Will, ski in New Hampshire.

1979

Want to be a class representative?
Contact alumni@sidwell.edu.

LAURIE REYNOLDS RARDIN: “Hoping everyone is staying healthy and relatively happy! What a year and a half it has been! But better on Earth perhaps? And more hope to save our planet. I continue at Dartmouth College as a science communicator focusing on the threats from naturally occurring arsenic in water and food. Our daughters, Marta (23) and Brynne (25), are home and are taking up the charge to save the Earth. Brynne is launching a new rash-guard business that will donate proceeds to marine conservation organizations (brynerardin.com, ofauna.com), and Marta is building a sustainable, ecologically based food system from the roots up. Jed is at 20 years with his congregation here in Concord, New Hampshire, and pushing the climate-action message along with building purple bridges. We are so grateful to live where we can be in the woods in a heartbeat. Be in touch if you need a stop-over or a place to stay on your way to hiking or skiing in the Whites!”

DAVID WIRTHS: “Jamie Lehrer and Leslie Mayers Shroyer organized a wonderful, almost impromptu Zoom call on January 30. (See photo on next page, just one

of many screens of people who joined the conversation!) I’m living in Irvine, California, as I have since 2003. I’m coming up on seven years working with Google, based out of the Bay Area, but of course that has been largely irrelevant for a year while we all worked from home. I’m always glad to hear from other Sidwell Friends folks whether in person or virtually!”

1980

WILLIAM RICE
williamrice63@gmail.com

LESLIE COX '83 writes in: “Christine Gail Cox passed away peacefully on December 27, 2020, after fighting a long illness. We are heartbroken. She left behind her two adult children, Anna Hill and Christian Hill. She also was survived by her mother, Marie-Louise Swenson; her sister, **Leslie Cox '83**; and her brother, **Kenneth Cox '84**. We will miss her generosity, her thoughtfulness, and her gentle spirit. She was a wonderful mother, a dear sister, and a true friend. Donations in her name may be made to the Breast Cancer Research Foundation.”

MICHAEL DAVENPORT: “As most who know me are aware, I ended up graduating from a British boarding school and not Sidwell Friends. I missed the prom and the football and basketball games, the cheerleaders, and pretty much all of the parties. I didn’t graduate from Sidwell Friends but have stayed in touch. As I mentioned in a tribute for **Christine Cox**, our early school friends fuse a foundation of love and form a portion of our characters and personalities. It’s difficult not to feel your pain and loss as well as your happy moments and times. Although I wish I could have been part of a closer interactive group during our collective family-raising years, it’s not too late to rekindle and reunite. Many of us are either retired or will be soon enough, and more of us have kids who are about to or have flown from the nest. So what’s my point? Let’s have a party! (After the pandemic.) I’m looking forward to the Sidwell Class of 1980 cruise! It could happen! It’s been great hearing from many of you and actually seeing some of you.”

ANDIE DONOHUE: “We have lost one of our

own. Christine will forever be remembered for the ease of her smile and laughter and her talents for drawing and painting. She was the artist for the cover of our 1980 yearbook, *Philos*, and many other objects of beauty. She possessed the rare gift of always making everyone feel at home and welcome, even as a young girl. This transcended into how she was as an adult, welcoming all of us into her lovely home for our 25th Reunion. Each of us undoubtedly has a fond memory of her to share with each other, and I hope you will. God speed, my dear friend. May the wind always be lifting you up and carrying you to where you want to go.”

LOUISA SCHNEIBERG HOLLMAN: “The Class of 1980 mourns the loss of our dear classmate Christine Gail Cox. Christine was a lifer at Sidwell Friends, and many of us remember her from Lower School to graduation. She was athletic and beautiful, and she hosted many parties for our class at her parents’ lovely home off Massachusetts Avenue. She was always in attendance at our reunions, and she hosted our 25th at her home in Georgetown. Christine was a dedicated and loving mother to her two children, Anna and Christian. They were the light of her life. She often wrote about their accomplishments in her Class Notes. She died in late December after a long illness. We will miss her always, but she will never be forgotten as she was a shining light in the Class of 1980. Rest in peace.”

LISA IANNUCCI: “I was not a close friend of **Christine Cox**’s, but I will always



Hillary Jacobs '78 after receiving her MFA in December



The Class of '79 meets on Zoom.

remember her bright smile, gentle manner, and kindness. Outgoing and vivacious, she always seemed to be surrounded by friends. In my mind’s eye, she is standing in one of the Upper School hallways in front of her locker, laughing and gossiping, her eyes aglow with the joy of being young. My heartfelt condolences to her friends and family.”

ROSHINI PONNAMPERUMA: “I remember **Christine Cox** fondly. She was a gifted artist (descended from a Scandinavian painter), a superb athlete, and beautiful at an age when most of us are decidedly not. We first met in Middle School and then reconnected for a time, years later, dining regularly with a few Sidwell Friends alumni. Although gregarious and friendly, Christine also had a sensitive, reflective side. Her adult interests were wide-ranging: biology, art, cuisine, gardening, fashion, and travel and were reflected in her tender and tolerant nurturing of her children, her beautiful home, and her work at American Plant and at Nathan’s (Georgetown). Many memories come to mind: Mrs. Hoagland’s art class, Team II camping trips, French with Madame Barcion, varsity lacrosse, Christine carrying her own exquisitely polished wooden skis on the Team II ski trip, and Christine as King Arthur in a costume of her own creation—complete with (hobby) horse! I can still hear her singing: ‘There’s a web like a spider’s web,/Made of silk and light and shadows,/Spun by the moon in my room at night./It’s a web made to catch

a dream,/Hold it tight ‘til I awaken,/As if to tell me, my dream is all right.’ Sweet dreams, Christine.”

WILLIAM RICE: “Quarterly updates seem ill-suited to the frantic pace of consequential events these days. No telling what the world will look like when these words find print. Anyway, as this is written in the early weeks of 2021, most of us felt weary relief at having dodged the worst possible political and social outcomes of the past few months, while looking forward warily to further struggles. My professional life has been changed by those better results, with the current power lineup here in Washington more open to dramatic tax reform than anyone expected it to be after November’s general election. My wife, Cathy, continues to increase reciprocal understanding among different neurotypes through her nonprofit—a process made harder by everyone in her groups being in a small box on a screen. My stepdaughter, Sophie, is still pursuing her dual and related interests of neuroscience and theater at the University of Michigan. My stepson, Walter, is moving purposefully toward greater independence. The loss of such a sparkling presence as **Christine Cox** is a blow even to those of us not fortunate enough to know her well. Let’s hope our future is not only clearer but brighter the next time these alumni notes are composed.”

PAUL SPORN: “I’m riding out the pandemic in Boston. I live in the city, my home since



Christine Gail Cox '80

1986, apart from a detour to Russia for several years in the early-to-mid-1990s. I am an attorney and have a fractional general counsel practice servicing small companies, a mixture of consulting, hand-holding, and lawyering. My parents departed Bethesda years ago, and although I am grounded in New England, my eldest (son Jake) ended up at Georgetown, where he is a junior at its “SFS” (School of Foreign Service). This has brought me to DC on several occasions, and I am hopeful that an in-person graduation will be possible in the spring of 2022. My youngest (daughter Katrina) is a freshman at the University of Vermont, which has somehow managed to pull off in-person classes on a limited basis, providing some semblance of normalcy. I have enjoyed connecting with many of you on Facebook and was planning to attend our 40th before the world changed. I remain deeply saddened by the tragic news of **Christine Cox**’s death. As so many have noted, she was kind and genuine. Wishing the Class of 1980 all the best.”

SIGNE WILLIAMSON: “I was blessed beyond belief to have Teenie (**Christine Cox**) as my beloved partner in crime. We grew apart, yes, but in the last few years, we grew back together, and it was special, more grounded, and a true delight. We always shared a sense of the absurd—fantastical aspects of the day—just an arched look (with those magnificent eyebrows) could say, ‘This can’t be real...’ But, sadly, life can get pretty real. I will miss my forever



Front row: Cindy Howard Kelly '80, Louisa Schneiberg Hollman '80; Back row: Patti Spady Ross '80, Christina Cox '80, Izette Maccoby Folger '80, Michael Williams '80

friend, and I am praying hard for comfort for her and her family, including all of us. Love to us all."

MICHAEL HELLER: "I just published *MINE! How the Hidden Rules of Ownership Control Our Lives*, co-authored with Jim Salzman (P '13). The book explores who gets what and why. If you enjoyed *Freakonomics*, *Nudge*, or *The Tipping Point*, we wrote this book for you. My website (minethebook.com) has cool videos, a free downloadable eBook, audio excerpts, and more. Please check it out and let me know what you think. In other news, my family and I spent most of the pandemic in the Hudson Valley—a break from New York City apartment living—and we got the most adorable puppy. Also, **Arshad Mohammed** and I had a Conversations with Friends alumni event about the book: [youtube.com/user/sidwellfriendsschool/videos](https://www.youtube.com/user/sidwellfriendsschool/videos)."

In Memoriam:

Christine Gail Cox '80
December 27, 2020

1981

VIDISHA DEHEJIA PATEL
drv4kids@yahoo.com

ANNE MINITER MCKAY: "Glad to reach out to my dear Sidwell Class of '81 friends! I'm very busy working especially intensely

recently in my private psychotherapy practice to support so many in crisis with the COVID-19 pandemic and the overwhelming political stress that the nation is currently facing. I wish we could all be getting together for the Class of '81 Reunion. Good news in the midst of the above is that my middle daughter got married in fall 2019 in Annapolis to a wonderful young man. In attendance were my family, **Margaret Miniters Paulsen '83**, **Madeleine Paulsen '17**, **Amelia Paulsen '19**, and my brother, Syl Miniters, who many of you know from our fun high school years together! **Ruth Rainey '81** was there as well and says hello to you all! Be safe and happy." (See photo on next page.)

ANDREW SZANTON: "My maternal grandfather, born in 1896, was a doctor in training during the flu epidemic of 1917. During my early childhood, he used to talk about how the 1917 epidemic had supercharged his medical training; it really sent him out into the world as a doctor before he was fully ready. He was sheepish in describing how the epidemic grew, how slow people were to realize what was happening, how poorly organized the authorities were, and how many of the general public wore masks only intermittently or refused to wear them at all. I took in these reminiscences of his with a certain condescension, thinking: 'Those were the old days. That could never happen again because we're so much more civilized now.' I wince at those assumptions of mine."

In Memoriam:

Meigs Hodge '81
September 29, 2020

1982

TED MORROW-SPITZER
tspitzer@marketventuresinc.com

1983

LINDA GAUS
gaushaus1965@verizon.net

In Memoriam:

Lloyd Webber '83
October 6, 2020

1984

SARAH WILLIAMS
sarah@propelcapital.org

ANN CLARK ESPUELAS
aespuelas08@gmail.com

LIZ BERNSTEIN NORTON
lizbnorton@gmail.com

1985

HILARY DAYTON BUSCH
hcdayton@gmail.com

TODD HOFFMAN: "Our new documentary, *Crime of the Century*, about the horrific opioid epidemic and the unforgivable crimes of big pharma, premieres in May on HBO. Academy Award-winning filmmaker Alex Gibney directed it. Please tune in!"

1986

LAURA LONDON
lauramlondon@yahoo.com

1987

TIP COFFIN
tip@teamcoffin.com

1988

LOUISE ANDREWS
louiseandrews@me.com

1989

ELIZABETH WYATT
ebwyatt@aol.com

MARA BRALOVE: "Two very important Sidwell Friends-related activities have helped me get through the pandemic! Every Saturday morning, **Carmina Cuadro Passino** and I take a social-distance walk in our adopted McLean neighborhood. And, many Sundays at noon, our amazing class has a Meeting for Worship. I've been doing both since April and feel grateful for



Anne Miniters McKay '81 saw her daughter get married this fall; Margaret Miniters Paulsen '83, Madeleine Paulsen '17, Amelia Paulsen '19, Syl Miniters, and Ruth Rainey '81 attended.

the incredible connections, especially during this time."

PIPO BUI: "I live in Seattle with my husband, Sebastian Simsch, and our children, Blair (21) and Elie (18). After 15 years working for a global environmental restoration organization, I 'graduated' at the end of 2019. Sebastian and I celebrated our long-postponed wedding in Saigon on December 31, 2019, along with our children, my parents

and relatives, and Sebastian's sister and children. It was a well-timed group trip/honeymoon! Since March, we've been navigating the pandemic by pivoting our family's direct-trade coffee business, Seattle Coffee Works, to focus on online sales—sending fresh-roasted coffee worldwide, including to many Sidwell Friends alumni! Our kids are both in online college at the University of Washington, and so far, we've all stayed COVID-free. Wishing

SPOTLIGHT: Art Against Injustice



Sonya Clark '85

SONYA CLARK: "In March, the National Museum of Women in the Arts in DC will host my first museum survey art exhibit, *Tatter, Bristle, and Mend*. That means I am getting old. In April, the deCordova Museum in Massachusetts will host two of my exhibits, *Monumental Cloth*, about the little-known cloth that ended the Civil War, and *Heavenly Bound*, about the ancestral call for freedom. I am also deeply honored the deCordova Museum granted me a Rappaport Prize and the American Craft Council named



Afro Abe II, 2012, National Museum of Women in Arts



The Solidarity Book Project

me as an American Craft Fellow. These acknowledgements are signs to keep on keeping on. I know I don't do any of this alone. We are apart but also together in fighting injustice. I just launched a new collaborative artwork, *The Solidarity Book Project*. It stands against the brutal legacies of settler colonialism and white supremacy in the daily injustices perpetrated against

Black and indigenous people. As a book project, it centers the power of text to shape thinking. As an art project, it shapes books into iconic solidarity symbols. Artistic participation is matched by financial support for Black and indigenous communities in need of books. It's art and community in action. OK, back to work!"



Anna Stein '93 has a new office in County Cork, Ireland.

everyone health and mental wellness. Our class Meetings for Worship have been a real blessing during this time and have helped to keep me grounded and motivated.”

ALEXANDER KERN: “My brother, **Deane Kern '90**, mother, Montague Kern (a former Sidwell Friends trustee), and our family are so grateful for the support of Sidwell folks following the death of our beloved Charles E. Kern II in August. We send our love and support to all who are living with loss. In this year of tremendous challenges, the biweekly Class of '89 Zoom Meetings for Worship have been a great gift. I continue my Northeastern University chaplaincy/interfaith/creative endeavors, which have expanded to include editing a new publication, *Pensive: A Global Journal of Spirituality and the Arts* (pensivejournal.com). Readers and submissions most welcome! Our son, Elias, is a first-year student at Northeastern, while our daughter, Ruthanna, began high school. My how they grow. Take good care, Friends. Shine on.”

1990

JUSTINE WRUBLE FAHEY
justinewfahey@gmail.com

1991

TIM HANRAHAN
tim.hanrahan@gmail.com

1992

Want to be a class representative?
Contact alumni@sidwell.edu.

SUTTON STOKES: “Sutton Stokes still—STILL!—lives in Elkins, West Virginia with his wife, Amy, and their two children, Coen (11) and Maya (9). Sutton was the Elkins city clerk until 2016, when he returned to freelance writing and consulting. In January 2020, he reentered city service as the first full-time spokesperson/public information officer for Elkins City Hall. “This should be a fairly mellow job,” he thought. Within a month, he was attending conference calls with local emergency and public-health officials, hearing all the bad news first, and strategizing about communicating with the public about the on-rushing pandemic. Mellow it was not, but Elkins turned out to be a good place to ride out 2020. Here’s hoping everyone (who wants one) has gotten their vaccine by now. If you’re ever passing through West Virginia, make sure to get in touch!”

1993

CASEY COLEMAN HASSENSTEIN
caseycoleman30@hotmail.com

JULIA DAVIS: “I am feeling lucky to be living in Brooklyn with my husband and 12-year-old son. Welcoming the end of 2020, I’m excited about our work at the Children’s Defense Fund on youth justice, as well as learning from the powerful

teenagers who led the protests nationwide in response to the death of George Floyd. If you’re interested in supporting our work or just connecting, email me: jdavis@childrensdefense.org.”

ANNA STEIN: “I’m moving with my family to the countryside of County Cork, Ireland! After spending over 30 years in New York, my husband realized how much he wanted to move home—and it took only a few months of the pandemic in Brooklyn to convince me, too. Please come visit! I’m attaching a photo from my future office (see photo above left).”

1994

BETSY STOEL
estael@gmail.com

1997

ELLEN CORNELIUS ERICSON
eccornie@gmail.com

1998

Want to be a class representative?
Contact alumni@sidwell.edu.



Basil Alexander '98 with three of his children

BASIL ALEXANDER writes that after a few years on a farm in Richmond, Virginia, he and his growing family moved to Dallas, Texas. Basil is a director at a pediatric hospital system, Children’s Health, and his wife, Conamore, recently started a nonprofit, Daughters Equestrian Ministry. They are homeschooling four kids, ages 1 to 12, and also tend to two cats, a dog, and a mare named Snickerdoodle. (See photo on previous page.)

2000

Want to be a class representative?
Contact alumni@sidwell.edu.

MERISSA NATHAN GERSON wrote her first book, *Forget Prayers, Bring Cake: A Single Woman’s Guide to Grieving*, anticipated for July 2021. She is over the moon. For a dose of content, she was featured in “Modern Love” in *The New York Times* with a piece called “My Unlikely Pandemic Dream Partner,” about 53 days of quarantining with her mother as together they navigated the loss of Allan Gerson on December 1, 2019. Merissa lives in New Orleans, where she teaches alternative journalism at Tulane University. She misses DC and is grateful for every one of her Sidwell friends.

2001

ELIZA ORLINS
eorlins@gmail.com

2002

CAMILO ACOSTA
cbacosta@gmail.com

2003

NAABIA OFOSU-AMAAH
n.ofosuamaah@gmail.com
KATIE MATHEWS
katiecmathews@gmail.com

MEREDITH KARAM and her husband, Craig Nilson, welcomed their first child, Kyle Karam Nilson, to this world on December 28, 2020, at 3:10 p.m. Kyle arrived a bit earlier than expected so he is spending a few weeks at Georgetown University Hospital’s Neonatal Intensive Care Unit growing and gaining strength before coming home. Mom and Dad are doing well, feeling encouraged by all of Kyle’s progress so far, and enjoying every moment with him. (See photo below.)

EDITOR’S NOTE

Kyle is now out of the NICU and happily at home!

2004

CAT DAWSON
catherine.v.dawson@gmail.com

THOMAS GRIFFITH and Tolly Wright got married this past October in the backyard of Thomas’s parents’ DC home with their immediate family in attendance. He hopes to celebrate with the Sidwell family in 2021! (See photo below.)

2005

RANDA TAWIL
randa.may.tawil@gmail.com



Meredith Karam '03 and husband, Craig Nilson, welcomed their first child, Kyle Karam Nilson, in December 2020.

NASSER MUHAMMAD
nasser.muhammad.1@gmail.com

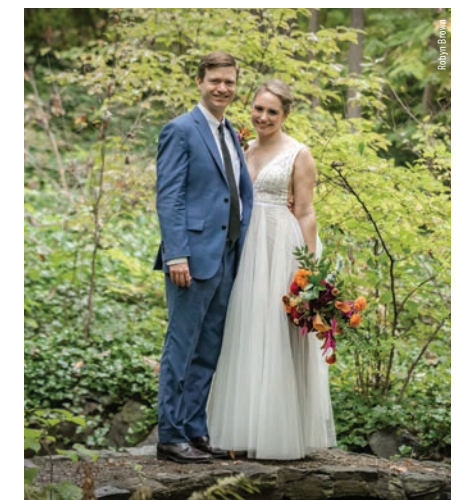
JOANNA SLOAME: “This July, in the middle of the pandemic, my partner, dog, and I decided it would be a good time to move from LA to Longmont, Colorado (outside Boulder). We’d been wanting to move to Colorado for a while, and after I got a job offer running creative for a Denver-based direct marketing agency, we just couldn’t pass up the opportunity. Now, for the first time ever, I’m surrounded by nature, quiet, and just a little less COVID. It’s refreshing and may actually be turning me into a chill person. My pet-portrait small business, The Painted Bark, is also continuing to grow, and I’m excited to debut my new website in the coming months.”

2006

JOHN SANDERS
jsanders36@gmail.com

2007

ALEX AKMAN
Akman.alex@gmail.com



Thomas Griffith '04 and Tolly Wright in the Tregaron Conservancy in DC.



Julia Lemle '07 and her husband, Stephen Fishbach, welcomed their daughter, Margot, in October.

JULIA LEMLE and her husband, Stephen Fishbach, welcomed their daughter, Margot, in October. (See photo above.)

2008

DELANEY KEMPNER
dckempner@gmail.com

2009

MARIELLE "ELLE" YOUNG
xmaliex@gmail.com

2010

KAI ZHENG
kaihuazheng@yahoo.com

2011

KIKI OCHIENG
akinyi.ochieng@gmail.com

2012

SALENA HESS
salenahess@outlook.com
JOHN VERGHESE
jjv2116@columbia.edu

2013

CECILIA LAGUARDA
xenia.cecilia.laguarda@gmail.com

2014

Want to be a class representative?
Contact alumni@sidwell.edu.

LESLEY CHEN-YOUNG IHIONKHAN: "I got married on September 5, 2020! My husband, Ehi Ihionkhan, and I had a beautiful ceremony with just our siblings and parents due to the pandemic. (See photo below.) We are now living in Chicago, where we've purchased our first home, and would love to connect with any alumni in the area."

2015

EMILY MILLER
emillerusa@gmail.com

2016

TALHA JILANI
jilani-talha@live.com



Lesley Chen-Young Ihionkhan '14 and husband, Ehi Ihionkhan.

2017

Want to be a class representative?
Contact alumni@sidwell.edu.

MILAN VIVANCO is completing his final year at Yale, majoring in ethics, politics, and economics, or "EPE." On campus, he was elected president of the Yale Political Union, one of the oldest debate societies in the United States. He also works as a research assistant to former Secretary of State and new climate czar John Kerry. Vivanco has developed his interest in geopolitics by contributing research to the Economist Intelligence Unit and the Inter-American Dialogue. He has also worked with both the public and private sectors, including Congress and McLarty Associates. As an incoming Schwarzman Scholar, he hopes to enhance his knowledge of China's increasing global influence, especially in Latin America. At Sidwell Friends, Vivanco led the Democrats Club and the Latin American Society, and he was active on the Model UN and debate teams. His favorite memories include frantically skimming through *The Great Gatsby* at the Fox Den before racing to class and playing handball in the Wannan Gym. (See photo below.)



Milan Vivanco '17

GRACE NOTES

MESSAGES FROM FORMER FACULTY AND STAFF

KIT BASOM: "I remember with pleasure the years I taught Middle School science at Sidwell Friends (1978–1984): the vivarium, with residents like a snapping turtle, a chameleon, and a boa; the electric feeling when students leapt to explain why Gertrude (on top of the train, going near the speed of light) and Omar (standing next to the tracks) can't agree on whether two flashes of lightning were simultaneous; the 8th grade spring canoeing-camping trips, exploring the ecology of the Pine Barrens, Potomac, and Chesapeake Bay; and, mostly, the warm feeling of community.

After reading *Sidwell Friends Magazine*, I note how many of you have enriched your lives and the lives of others during the pandemic. I'd like to share what I've been doing in another vibrant community. For 20 years, I've lived in Orchard Grove, the most culturally and racially diverse neighborhood in Boulder,

Colorado, with some of the warmest people I've known. The pandemic has left many of my neighbors either out of work, working reduced hours, or working as essential employees and worrying about bringing COVID-19 home to their families.

This community of people are hard-working, resilient, and generous. But these are tough times: Groceries, medical bills, and monthly rent loom large. And people have new needs, like the technology necessary to look for work or attend school—many neighbors don't even have access to the internet. To help, I worked with the city of Boulder to establish the Orchard Grove Support Fund, which accepts private donations for Orchard Grove Mobile Home Park residents with pressing financial needs.

The neighborhood has a history of standing up for itself and partnering with the

broader community to create positive change. That's why my friend Sandra and I recorded a presentation about Orchard Grove's history of activism and collaboration. The video tells a story of community resilience and vision: In tackling challenges and protecting their rights, Orchard Grove neighbors have helped make Colorado's laws better for thousands of mobile-home residents statewide, too. The video is also about the importance of good government: It's critical to find and collaborate with leaders who can solve immediate problems and who can recognize when new laws are necessary—and then champion them.

As we're battered by news of the oppressive effects of racism, classism, and anti-immigrant sentiment, this work is a refreshing reminder that thoughtful, committed people can make a difference. Watch the video here: sites.google.com/view/orchardgrovemhp."



Photos from Orchard Grove, Colorado



JOIN US!

The Parents of Alumni Steering Committee is composed of representatives from different classes who support the continuation of parents' connection with the Sidwell Friends community.

Are you an alumni parent interested in participating in virtual programming, attending on-campus events, organizing off-campus gatherings, and contributing to the life of the school now that your student is part of the alumni community? If so, we invite you to join the **Parents of Alumni Steering Committee** and become an ambassador for other parents of alumni.



2020/21 POA STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Barbara Delaney P '08, '11, '11
Barbara Mulitz P '13
Liz Feldman P '13, '16
Bob Levey P '00, '05

Ming Lowe P '09
Fatim Haidara P '13, '17
Michael Karam P '03
Melinda Pierce P '14, '20

June Das Gupta P '13
Judith Thompkins P '99
Laura Handman P '04
Raina Fishbane P '14, '16

Interested in serving on the committee for the 2021/22 School Year?
Email alumni@sidwell.edu

Words with Friends:
Fresh Start

ACROSS

- 1 Lie
- 5 They may be French or English in a pit
- 10 Participates in a 3-Down
- 14 Playfully roguish
- 15 Speechify
- 16 "Nope"
- 17 Okay
- 19 Name for a fictional captain or a fish
- 20 Very long time
- 21 They're made by Devils Backbone, among others
- 22 Loathe
- 24 "Yeah, you wish!"
- 26 Offers a certain sleepover challenge
- 27 Where you can find Peter, Paul, and Mary
- 31 "Big Brother" host Julie
- 34 Eurasian grazers
- 35 Yes, in Brest
- 36 Did some cursing?
- 38 Apples run on it
- 39 Small and cute, perhaps
- 41 Tolkien horror
- 42 Purina rival
- 44 Skin conditioner brand
- 45 "Big Bang Theory" prequel
- 50 Omega alternative
- 51 Photographic, as a memory
- 55 Clay targets
- 57 Concern after a car accident: Abbr.
- 58 Brian of electronic music
- 59 Oft-forgotten implements
- 60 What you might get in 2021, or a hint to three answers in this puzzle
- 63 Langston Hughes poem
- 64 Just as expected
- 65 Summertime treat
- 66 "Adjective" is one
- 67 Cold voices?
- 68 Writers of dissertations, briefly



Puzzle by Aimee Lucido

DOWN

- 1 Threw a fit
- 2 Goof
- 3 See 10-Across
- 4 It's definite
- 5 Like a toilet paper roll
- 6 Set straight
- 7 Some cleaning supplies
- 8 Utmost degree
- 9 Predetermined time
- 10 Gale relative?
- 11 Annoy
- 12 Goes bad
- 13 Opportunity
- 18 Tag, in a way
- 23 Clean a chalkboard, perhaps
- 25 Oscar winner Hathaway
- 26 Brit. mil. awards
- 28 Uneven, as a leaf's edge
- 29 Contraire du jour
- 30 Elizabeth Fey, on stage
- 31 Bok ____
- 32 Sub sandwich
- 33 "Watch where you're going!"
- 37 1 or 2, say
- 38 Lead in to a texter's take
- 40 Carpoolers often have one
- 43 Requests
- 46 Actor Liam of "Schindler's List"
- 47 Slackens
- 48 Food holders
- 49 Statistics subjects
- 52 Enlighten
- 53 How some tests are graded
- 54 Doves' dwellings
- 55 Apple covering
- 56 Low-carb diet
- 57 The Rock can make his dance, briefly
- 61 Genetic messenger
- 62 Money that might be dropped in a jar

Celebrate your
REUNION

APRIL 30 – MAY 2, 2021

Reunion Weekend is going virtual!



Save the Date!



Art Imitates Art

Angela Ding '26 painted an extraordinary—and extraordinarily precise—homage to artist David Driskell, a seminal voice for African Americans in the fine arts and a distinguished university professor of art at the University of Maryland. Driskell, who died last April from the coronavirus, was known for working across media, from gouache to watercolors to collage. "One thing I really like about David Driskell's work is how he can incorporate so many different mediums and art styles into one single piece," Ding says. "It particularly stood out to me during the emulation process, as it forced me to think of different ways to manipulate the materials around me—using acrylic paints at one moment, gluing ripped pieces of paper at another, then adding color pencils as finishing touches. The experience enhanced my appreciation for every single little component that together creates Driskell's masterpieces." Interestingly, Driskell's painting, *Homage to Romare* (1976), is itself an ode. It was Driskell's hat tip to Romare Bearden, a Black artist who focused on the Southern Black experience. The story of art is one of pastiche and layers on one hand, and searing originality and the deeply personal on the other. For Ding, it is also her story. "Art appears every instance I envision some sort of future," she says. "For some time now, I've been able to say art is an extremely significant part of my identity."

THE FOX DEN

SLY STYLE

The Fox Den's online store has all of your Quaker spirit gear and merch needs covered. You need masks? We've got 'em. Plus, scarves, plush blankets, backpacks, water bottles, sweatpants, ornaments, PJs, hats, onesies, and more!

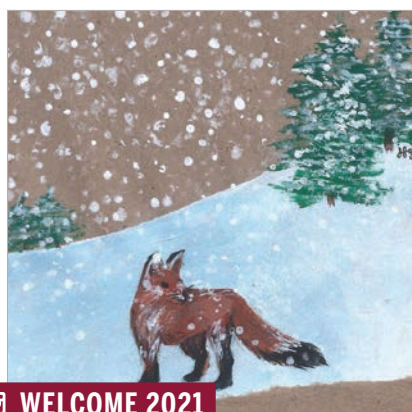
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WELCOME 2021

The PA repurposed their holiday card into a New Year's post with Quaker themes. Art by Jimena Faz Garza '20.



NEW YEAR, NEW QUERY

The Lower School prompted a lot of reflection on the Sidwell Friends social media channels in January.



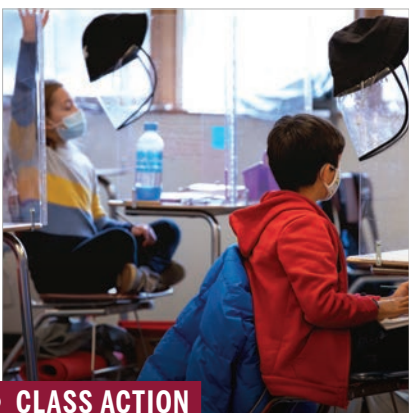
SNOW FUN

A collage of photos submitted by parents shows off the early February snow days.



BE SIDWELL!

Students line up for an in-person day at the Lower School this winter.



CLASS ACTION

Once in the classroom, students learn inside their plexiglass stations.



FIELD OF THOUGHT

A photo links to an essay about leadership by Abby Ezickson '22 for the USA Field Hockey website.