

Storyteller Extraordinaire

TOY SAVAGE '71



As student or teacher, Toy Dixon Savage III has impacted the campus of Norfolk Academy in every decade since he entered the Little Red Schoolhouse on North Shore Road as a second grader in 1960. After graduating in 1971, he traveled north to complete his undergraduate work at Princeton. Eleven years later, after teaching at the Gilman School in Baltimore, earning a law degree in Charlottesville, and plying the legal trade for a while at his father's firm in Norfolk, he made his way back to Wesleyan Drive. In his 36 years as a faculty member, Toy Savage served as a teacher, coach, administrator, and the school's official historian. His blog, "The Savage Chronicles," explored Academy through the lens of history, tradition, and the school's signature aspect, teacher-student relationships.

While Toy is the author of *Norfolk's Academy: The Heart of Tidewater* — and rumor has it that Volume II is in the development stage — he is also the author of many other, more important works. He has had a hand in composing a significant portion of "the teenage story" of thousands of Academy students over the better part of the past four decades.

As are all great teachers of history, Toy is a storyteller *extraordinaire*, mesmerizing his charges with stories about Egyptian kings they would never find in textbooks. While I daresay that few of his students remember when Hammurabi wrote his code, I would bet that every one remembers pacing the front fields to measure the size of the Great Pyramid's footprint.

His students also remember his myriad small kindnesses, the "Attaboys" and "That's OKs" that signaled grace or approval or whatever was needed at the time to set an adolescent heart at ease. Savage has always brought to his classroom consideration and kindness, and, by example, he has taught civility as thoroughly as any other subject.

Toy's company is as highly valued by colleagues as by generations of adoring students. His mind, full of the knowledge that earned him distinction at Princeton and UVA Law School, is also the repository of reams of minutiae, through which he riffles effortlessly to find just the detail that would fit any occasion. To those of us who worked beside him, he served as listener, advisor, mentor, and golf partner. Friendship is his stock-in-trade. He has always considered the feelings and needs of others before his own.

Toy's influence on Norfolk Academy and on those of us who have walked its halls for the past half-century or so is inestimable. So is that degree to which he will be missed. ♦

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