

Countryside Trees



NEWSLETTER OF THE COUNTRYSIDE SCHOOL ALUMNI

Spring 2008

Letter from the Head



Cathie Webber

Dear Friends,

Greetings! I hope you have had a year full of joy and learning, good friendships and good fun!

And speaking of fun...last week over 25 alumni from 4 different high schools and 9 staff members gathered for a reunion at the Boat House in Crystal Lake Park. I can't tell you how exciting it is for us see you all again and to catch up on your news. Each of you leaves a lasting impression on the school and on us that we deeply cherish. Many thanks to alumni parents Wendy Bauer and Chifan Cheng for their assistance with refreshments.

We are also thrilled to see those of you who drop by the school. Please do so if you get a chance. It means a great deal to us.

Recently I received an email from Jackie Hedeman who, with four other students from her 2/3 class, is attending Princeton. While we know where many of you are going to school, we don't have information on all. We'd like to put together a photo gallery of our alumni and so invite (actually we BEG) you to send us a picture of you, perhaps in a shirt from your college or university, in front of some iconic campus building or location. Email them to me at:

webber@countrysideschool.org

This is a time of passages as graduations, retirements and moves occur. Sadly, we must say thank you and good-bye to four staff members who have contributed a great deal to our school:

Deanna Barthel, Extended Day Director since September 2001

Ana Dillman, 2nd grade primary contact

teacher since August 2003

Mary Breault, Middle School Literature and Writing teacher since August 1999

Sharon Henson, 4th grade primary contact teacher since 1994; retiring after 14 years at Countryside and 41 years in education!

A gala reception is planned for Sunday, May 18, from 4-6 p.m. I hope many of you can stop by for at least a few minutes or send a note or message for any of the four.

We invite and encourage anybody to come to Graduation which will be held on Friday, May 23 at 7:00.

The following people will be joining your ranks as alumni:

Kelsey Gallivan	St. Thomas More Centennial
Jessica Goode	St. Thomas More Centennial
Brianna Lillyman	St. Thomas More Centennial
Milee Nelson	St. Thomas More Centennial
Gabe Omo-Osagie	St. Thomas More Centennial
Hannah Piester	St. Thomas More Centennial
Luis Tian	St. Thomas More Centennial
Michael Wagner	St. Thomas More Centennial
Patrick Wagner	St. Thomas More Centennial

Those moving on to Uni are:

Chelsea Edwards	Matthew Meyer
Leif Hague	Liam Moersch
Brianna Hajek	Petra Rantanen
Nealay Kalita	Edo Roth
Sunjay Koshy	Freddie Stavins
Ryan Kuck	Juliana Trach
Alex Mestre	

Please look out for any who are attending your school. It always helps to see a familiar (and friendly!) face in the halls when you're starting out. Have a great summer!

Fondly,
Cathie Webber

Honors and Awards

- ODYSSEY OF THE MIND TAKES 1ST AND 2ND AT STATE
- MATH COUNTS WINS REGIONALS AND TAKES 12TH AT STATE
- CHESS TEAM BRINGS HOME TROPHIES AT STATE AND REGIONALS
- WE HAD SEVERAL OPTIMIST AWARD WINNERS

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Countryside Trees

Sharon Henson Retires



Sharon Henson
4th grade primary contact
teacher

Mrs. Henson retires after 41 years in education! She has taught fourth grade at Countryside for 14 years.

What are your favorite Countryside moments?

The White Elephant gift exchange at Cathie Webber's holiday parties for teachers.

My grand entrance into an annual P.E./Music Show wearing the cockroach costume that Kim File fashioned for me.

Watching many groups of 4/5 students participate in the Ellis Island simulation.

Meeting so many wonderful families with such rich and varied cultural backgrounds and traditions.

What do you love most about teaching?

I love spending my days with children because they are funny, optimistic, curious and honest. I love the thrill of seeing understanding in a child's eyes when he/she grasps a new concept or idea.

What do you love least?

Always being buried in an insurmountable mountain of student work that needs to be graded or evaluated.

What is the most profound thing you have learned from a student?

I learned that when a teacher believes in a child and offers only praise and encouragement rather than criticism and condemnation,

the sky is the limit as to how high that child will soar.

What is your favorite word? Solitude

What is your least favorite word? Television

What profession other than teaching would you like to attempt?

I would love to try my hand at becoming a published writer because I have enjoyed writing since I was a child.

What are you most looking forward to doing in the next year?

Downsizing, reorganizing and remodeling at home; spending the winter in Florida; and having time for the things I love: reading, sewing, cooking, gardening, biking, and friends.



Mrs. Henson dances to "La Cucaracha" as a scooter-riding cockroach in the "If the World Were a Village" P.E. show in April 2004.

INTERVIEWS
WITH DEPARTING
TEACHERS AND
STAFF

Mary Breault Farewell

Mrs. Breault leaves Countryside after teaching Middle School Literature and Writing for nine years. She joins her husband who has a new job in Madison, Wisconsin.

What are your favorite Countryside moments?

One from my early years was when the staff took part in "The Wizard of Oz" P.E. show. Bill Fallon and I were supposed to exit the side gym door and re-enter from the main door a few minutes later to deliver an impor-

tant line. We stepped outside and started to chat about how well the play was going. Then we realized that it was almost time for us to return to the stage. We ran breathlessly around the building to get back in, but unfortunately, the front door was locked and neither of us had remembered a key. Our scene came and almost went, but Susan Richardson managed to holler from backstage: "Look! It's a twister!" and the show went on without us.

Mary Breault Farewell (continued)

What do you love most about teaching?

My favorite thing about teaching is the students, of course! I love reading aloud to my classes, laughing with them, and getting to know them better through their writing. I especially love reading students' poetry.

What do you love least? Grading papers

What is the most profound thing you have learned from a student?

Many of my students have amazed me with their courage, but none more than Ben Petersen, who had such a warm, kind spirit and an open-hearted enjoyment of life. He made

the most of every minute.

What is your favorite word? Binky

What profession other than teaching would you like to attempt?

I'd love to be a librarian. I worked in libraries all through high school and into college. I miss the old card catalogs with their wonderful wooden drawers and yellowing cards. I love getting lost in the stacks.

What will you miss most about the school?

I will miss the people at Countryside more than anything else. Especially Susan Richardson. (She told me to write that.)

Ana Dillman Farewell

Mrs. Dillman has taught at Countryside for five years as our second grade teacher. She leaves now to join her husband who has a new job in San Francisco, California

What are your favorite Countryside moments?

Memorable: "If the World Were a Village" program; working with Mrs. Richman; Camp Countryside; and reading beloved stories to my beloved 2nd graders.

Funniest: Me attempting to build structures in my first years here!; Mrs. Henson as a cockroach dancing to "La Cucaracha"; and Miss Jones dressing up as Leif Ericson.

What do you love most about teaching?

The kids, of course! It is an amazing thing to spend your time with such young, vibrant, curious people everyday. I love it when they get excited about something new, and how they make the everyday things that we adults take for granted new and exciting.

What do you love least? Paper work

What is the most profound thing you have learned from a student?

Didn't learn this from one student, but from all

of them over time: We are all beautiful because of our differences, not in spite of them.

What is your favorite word? Schwa

What is your least favorite word?

None. I love language and think words are fascinating.

What profession other than teaching would you like to attempt?

A dance instructor and performer, because I love to dance. Or I would love to do seasonal work on an organic farm. I know next to nothing about plants, but have always had a secret desire to work the earth.

What will you miss most about the school?

The people. Everyone here in this community is what makes it so special and unique. Most of all I will miss my students!

What are you most looking forward to doing in the next year?

Living with my husband again. Experiencing the natural beauty of California. Continuing to teach. Taking dance classes.

FAREWELL
RECEPTION
SUNDAY,
MAY 18
4-6 P.M.
AT THE SCHOOL



Ana Dillman
2nd grade primary contact
teacher

Countryside Trees

Deanna Barthel Farewell



Deanna Barthel
Extended Day
Director

Deanna Barthel has been the Extended Day Director for seven years. She will be a full time graduate student next year in the U of I College of Education.

What are your favorite Countryside moments?

April Fools tricks were always very cute - "Miss Deanna there's a spider on your nose....April Fools!" I also loved how the Extended Day kids thought it was such a big deal to wave at cars and get them to honk - their record was 102 honks!

What do you love most about working with kids?

Standing back and watching them solve a problem, create a game, discuss a serious issue, or anything that displays how self-sufficient, judicious, and creative they can be when given the opportunity.

What do you love least? Germs!

What is the most profound thing you have learned from a student?

That you can never predict what a person might be able to do - all people possess enormous potential.

What is your favorite word? Defenestration

What is your least favorite word? Can't

What profession other than teaching would you like to attempt?

A chef - I love to cook unique foods and being a chef would provide me the opportunity to do so on a regular basis. Plus, when you're a chef there is always someone there to clean up after you...

What will you miss most about the school?

Extended Day - being part of the Extended Day program has allowed me to watch many of the students grow up - it is going to be very difficult to say goodbye to people that I have seen every day for 7 years! I will also miss Binky, Susan, and Cathie - they've been my 3 surrogate mothers the entire time I've been part of the Countryside Family.

What are you most looking forward to doing in the next year?

Being a student again - it will be so much fun to learn more about the field of education and apply what I've learned at Countryside.

15th Anniversary Celebrations



15th birthday party
sack races

Happy 15th Anniversary Countryside! Some of you have been with Countryside from the very beginning. Many of you may remember the cramped store front school, the move to the big new building, and later the expansion of the middle school. Countryside has evolved from an idea at a kitchen table to a school that inspires students to learn and grow.

The Countryside community celebrated this milestone with two wonderful parties. We hosted a 15th Birthday Party for families this fall. Children and adults alike played games, bounced in bounce houses, and ate gobs of cotton candy. Despite the below normal temperatures, and a "little" wind everyone had a great time.

The 15th Anniversary Gala was held on February 2, 2008 at the Champaign Country Club. The event was an adult's only affair, with delicious food and beautiful ambiance. Several founding families, alumni, and alumni parents attended to reminisce and support the school. Over \$17,000 was raised to benefit Countryside's Endowment Fund.

As we look forward to the next 15 years of "Joy in Learning, Excellence in Education", we hope you, as alumni, will come back to visit, get involved, and support Countryside. We would not be where we are without you, and we need your help to allow Countryside to continue to grow.

Alum Visits



Mrs. Kirby with former CS student Annie Liang—now a student at MIT.



Mrs. Webber with CS graduate Sarah Korellis. Sarah went to Centennial and is now a freshman at Rice.



Mrs. Henson with Tara Paranjpe. She moved to Ohio after her sixth grade year and is currently a freshman in high school.

Alum Updates

Jenny Bartlett is getting her masters in Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences and continuing on for her PhD. She is getting married in May 2008. Jenny is Countryside's first alum to serve on our Board of Trustees.

Alison Beck is in the PhD program in Accounting at the University of Tennessee.

Byron Beck is completing a double major in Accounting and Finance at the U of I.

Stephanie Beck is a freshman at the U of I in Advertising.

Balint Bognar is a designer with Armani in NYC.

Zsolt Bognar, concert pianist, played Kranert Center March 2008.

John Flynn has been a financial analyst and junior banker at an investment bank. He is moving to London to join an investment firm in private equity.

Sarah Jones is a junior at U of I in Psychology and Speech Communications.

Emily Manganaro graduated December 2007 from U of I in Kinesiology.

Kate Manganaro is graduating in Glassblowing from the University of Hawaii. She is engaged to the manager of the Honolulu Art Museum to be married this fall.

Kali Smith graduated August 2007 in Theater from USC. She lives in Hollywood and is engaged to be married October 2008.

Eric Smith graduated May 2003 from U of I in Computer Engineering. He works for Microsoft and is engaged to be married in spring 2009.

Tyler Stein is performing in NYC. He is in "Cupid the Musical" (a new musical to be released on the Internet) and recently portrayed a young Merv Griffin in "Trump the Musical".

Ruth Welch will spend next year on a Rotary Exchange in Guadalajara, Mexico.

JENNY
BARTLETT:
FIRST ALUM
ON OUR
BOARD OF
TRUSTEES!

GRADUATION
FRIDAY, MAY 23
7 P.M
AT THE SCHOOL

Countryside Trees

Alum Reunion 2008

TO SEE THIS NEWSLETTER IN COLOR, CHECK OUT THE ALUMNI SECTION OF OUR WEBSITE.



Students return for the Alumni Reunion at the Crystal Lake Boat House: Emily Chu, Erin Gelke, Lila Berlin, Katie Bauer, Michelle Wong and Ericka Belmont.



Evan File, David Weisbaum, Jonathon File, Tim Colombo with Middle School social studies teacher Michelle O'Brien.

A Year in Italia

Note: This article was submitted for last year's alumni newsletter; however, no newsletter was published.

Hello. To many of you my name has no meaning. I only attended Countryside for two years. However, the memories and the passion for learning which I acquired there remain with me. I moved at the end of my third grade year to Charlotte, NC. Last year, I decided to get out into the world and experience it from a new perspective. Having spoken with a couple of exchange students at my school, I decided to look into various exchange programs. Although I looked into many programs, the Rotary International's Youth Exchange Program stood out from the rest. Before I knew it, I was embarking on a plane sent for a year in Italia.

I arrived in Milan, Italy having traveled 24 hours straight. My tutor, Marco DiPrisco, picked me up and drove me to my first host family's home in Erba. I spent the entirety of my sophomore year with that family and two others in the quiet mountain valley just north of Milan and east of Lake Como. With roughly 10,000 inhabitants, the town soon became my stomping grounds. I quickly made friends with people who had never before met an American and spent many of my hours hanging out at the local café. At 2 meters (6' 7") tall, I stuck out like a sore

thumb. I have to say that I do not think my Italian basketball coach minded!

Many people ask me how my year went, or what my favorite memory was. My response varies. Through both good and hard times, I grew as an individual through many experiences. Although my host parents would quickly point out the ten hour Christmas dinner, I cannot pinpoint one part of the trip where I was the happiest. What I can remember is one moment of *serenita'* when I was sitting outside of a café baking in the sun listening to my Italian friends talk and just letting it soak in. I was not happy per se, but I was peaceful. A wise man once told me, "*Quando si parla un'altra lingua, tutte le porte si aprirano.*" (When one speaks another language, all the doors will open.) I have had the opportunity to exchange my culture with other people and in turn share the Italian culture. I sincerely hope that all of you will consider taking a year away from high school and going off into the world in order to let the doors open.

Martin Hoppe

Contact me: MartinItaly@gmail.com

or visit my website to read more about my experience: www.martyhoppe.com

ALUMS:
SHARE YOUR
E-MAIL
ADDRESS
WITH US!

Greetings from Oberlin

I will be graduating in May from Oberlin College and Conservatory after five years here. I am graduating from Oberlin's Double Degree program and have spent my time earning a Bachelor of Arts in Biology with an Environmental Studies minor and a Bachelor of Music in Historical Performance on recorder with a minor in Baroque flute. I came to Oberlin after Uni High because I knew I wanted to do biology and Oberlin has a great Biology program. What I didn't know until I visited is that I wanted to keep up with music too, and Oberlin is perfect for that combination. In fact, I'm one of three recorder playing biology students here.

Oberlin is a small school, only about 2,500 students, but the small size means I've had a lot of great opportunities. I've been able to play recorder and flute in a Baroque orchestra and in opera performances. I've also been able to work on studies of sexual selection in goldfinches and chewing lice on cat-birds. The community is friendly and I have met some wonderful friends here, other stu-

dents, professors and staff, though being in a five year program means most of the students have already graduated and left. I also found a wonderful boyfriend who has graduated but not left (and has won familial approval, lucky him). On one of my visits home I took him to visit Countryside and I think he was suitably impressed.

This fall I will start graduate studies at Stony Brook University's Department of Ecology and Evolution. Hopefully I'll have time to keep up with my music with the Stony Brook Baroque Players. It will be funny going back to Stony Brook. I was born there, and my dad taught there for 22 years before he and my mom came to Urbana when I was a baby. It will be fun, too, and I expect to be doing lots of exciting research. Hopefully my classes will be exciting too! I'll mostly be studying lemurs, and I'm going to Madagascar for the summer to start a research project on habitat use in nocturnal lemurs. I'm really looking forward to it.

Elise Lauterbur

HAVE A STORY
TO TELL?

LET US KNOW
WHAT YOU
HAVE BEEN
DOING SINCE
COUNTRYSIDE.

Former Faculty Updates



Doey Gordon with Lenny Pitt, his sons Michael (sophomore at Brandeis), Brian (junior at Centennial) and Colin (6th grade at Countryside). All attended Doey Gordon's retirement party in May 2007.

Doey taught Kindergarten at Countryside for 13 years. She is now completing an internship as a Child Life Specialist at Cincinnati Children's Hospital. She will return to Champaign to take a job at Carle.



Bill and Jennifer Fallon with their children Naomi and newborn Liam. Bill taught Middle School Social Studies at Countryside for 3 years. He is the Upper Division Director at St. Hilda's and St. Hugh's School in NYC.



Countryside School

Joy in Learning, Excellence in Education

NEWSLETTER OF THE COUNTRYSIDE SCHOOL ALUMNI

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www.countrysidesschool.org



Congratulations to our
alums now in college!

Note: Since many of our alums are in the process of deciding where they will attend college and university this fall, **College Bound 2008** will be printed in the next newsletter.

College Bound 2007

Jonathan Baron — University of Chicago
Stephanie Beck — University of Illinois
Michael Belmont — Princeton
Amelia Breault — Haverford
Evan File — Illinois State University
Divya Gai — University of Illinois
Rose Gaylen — Millikin University
Jackie Hedeman — Princeton
Nico Hualde — Reed College
Sarah Korellis — Rice University
Jonathan Kuck — University of Illinois
Paige Martin — Harvard
Hilary Pope — DePaul
Kenneth Price — Brigham Young University
Hannah Pride — St. Louis University
Josh Wilcox — University of Illinois

Alums in college and beyond:

Send us a photo of yourself in front of your college's landmark or place of work. Take a group photo with other CS grads attending your college or university. We'd love to see where you are now!

Send to: countryside@countrysidesschool.org