

## Middle School Visits Nine Partners Meeting House



Middle School students and faculty stand in front of Nine Partners Meeting House in Millbrook. The field trip was part of a special grant to produce a film about the Underground Railroad and the role of Quakers in the anti-slavery movement. The project was funded with a grant from the Friends Council on Education. See story on page 9.

## Oakwood FRIENDS SCHOOL

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#### 2007-08 School Calendar

Mar 27	Information Session
April 9	Freshman Class Dinner
April 18	Herzog Lecture
May 4	Information Session
May 15-17	Suessical: The Musical
May 16	Dash Davis Gleiter Lecture
May 16-18	Alumni Weekend
May 17	Hudson River Dinner Cruise
June 13	Commencement

#### On-Line Giving to the Annual Fund

Donations may now be made on-line  
through our website:  
[www.oakwoodfriends.org](http://www.oakwoodfriends.org)

**Parents of Alumni:** Please help us update our database with the current address of your son or daughter. Thank you.

# Oak Leaves

Winter 2007-08

NEWSLETTER FROM OAKWOOD FRIENDS SCHOOL • CELEBRATING OVER 200 YEARS OF FRIENDS EDUCATION IN THE HUDSON VALLEY

## Robert M. Collins '48 Makes Historic Gift to Oakwood



Robert M. Collins '48 at the dedication of  
Collins Library on November 4, 1990

Robert M. Collins, class of 1948, has inaugurated a remarkable new era of promise for Oakwood Friends School with a gift of one million dollars, the single largest gift in the school's history. In making his gift, Bob expressed the importance of Quaker values in the life of his family, stretching back to the years when the country was founded: "Oakwood Friends School instills these values by living them in its community. I feel very privileged to be able to contribute to Oakwood's resources so that it can further fulfill its mission and expand its programs."

Bob's spirit of generosity and deep commitment to Oakwood have benefited the school for many years. During his years of service on the Board of Managers, from 1994 to 2002, Bob helped to mobilize the

*"In receiving Bob Collins' extraordinary gift to Oakwood, I am deeply humbled by his generosity and awed by the transformative potential that it brings to our school community. Bob has graciously shared his time, wisdom, and resources over a period of decades, and he is again lighting our way as Oakwood takes its next important steps forward."*

**-Peter F. Baily**

school community at a critical time, focusing on the importance of financial stability while inspiring others with his belief in the school's untapped potential and possibilities for growth. Bob was a key member of the steering committee for the Moving Forward Campaign and continues to serve on the school's Investment Committee. His wise counsel in financial matters is often sought and deeply respected. Fellow board member, Elaine Warner, spoke of Bob's talent for service: "Bob's work on behalf of the school, the Board, and the alumni has been thoughtful but not timid, provocative but not inflammatory, weighty but not judgmental."

A visionary leader, Bob Collins has made transformative gifts to Oakwood twice before. His support made possible the building of Collins Library, dedicated in 1990, and the construction of Turner Math and Science Building in 1997. Both projects changed the face of the campus and accelerated the rebuilding of the school's core academic programs. With his new gift, Bob has again inspired us all with his confidence in Oakwood's vitality and the importance of its mission.

Bob Collins grew up on a farm in the Hudson Valley, in a small hamlet called Rock City,

near Red Hook. Bob and his four siblings, Ben '44, Sarah '51, Jack '53 and Richard '55, all attended Oakwood. Following graduation from Oakwood, Bob attended Haverford College and earned a BA in political science. He completed Officers Candidates School and served in Naval Intelligence. He attended the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania and earned an MBA in marketing. Bob went on to a distinguished career in the field of medical technology. In 1964, he co-founded COBE Laboratories, Inc., a medical device manufacturer, and built the company into a world wide organization. He retired as President and CEO of COBE in 1991. Service to the community is fundamental to Bob's business philosophy and he has personally served on numerous boards, both in the medical industry and for a variety of educational and cultural institutions.

Bob and Elaine Johncox Collins were married in 1954. They have three grown children, two daughters and one son, and six grandchildren. They live in Golden, Colorado. We look forward to welcoming Bob and Elaine back to campus in May to celebrate Bob's 60th Oakwood reunion with his classmates. □



The class of 1948 in their sophomore year

## Letter from the Head of School



Dear Friends,

In my sixteenth year of headship and in my eighth at Oakwood, I have been granted a new and different view of our school and our students. I have returned to my roots in the classroom and have become a part-time English teacher. I meet my 14 eighth grade students four times each week in Stokes, and, like my teaching colleagues, I assign homework, give quizzes and tests, read essays, and write progress reports on each student several times during the year. My classroom is bright with natural light; the desks are arranged in a circle around the perimeter of the room, and it is home to the Middle School Library. My immediate neighbors are a mathematics classroom, a computer laboratory, and Oakwood's weather station.

Sixteen years ago, when I last taught on a daily basis, my classroom at Bryn Mawr School in Baltimore looked very much the same. But my students' world was very different. Most of my students word-processed their essays, but email was nearly non-existent and Internet research was very limited. I typed my progress reports on an IBM Selectric. None of my students had a cell phone, nor did I. Emailing documents and text messaging with cell phones were unknown to us, and digital cameras were primitive and certainly not contained within phones. Facebook and MySpace did not exist. The idea of posting text or photos of oneself on the Internet was entirely foreign.

Now, my students are entirely comfortable with an array of technology, and it has become a natural part of their lives. Several of them bring laptops to class with them each day, and every one of them has a cell phone. They are all computer literate. Many of my students email me their essays, rather than giving them to me in paper form, and all of them are familiar with taking digital photographs and making simple videos. They know how to share files and how to post on the Internet. They communicate regularly by electronic means – with their friends, their families, with their teachers. They

are sophisticated consumers of technology in every respect, and they understand it and relate to it far more easily than I. Immediate access, immediate communication, immediate visual and aural feedback have become the norm for them, and they are uncomfortable with anything less.

What does all of this mean for an eighth grade English teacher? Literature is a "slow" subject. Great writing, whether fiction, poetry, drama, or non-fiction prose, takes time to read and to absorb. It is subtle and nuanced. It often rewards re-reading. Exploring the structure of literature involves asking questions, reading closely, examining individual words and phrases in relation to one another. It often involves examining the roots of individual words and the ways they have been used in multiple contexts. Similarly, the best student writing takes time to be developed, revised, edited, proof-read. It is entirely different, in substance and form, from a text message or email exchange. In certain fundamental ways, the speed and agility of technology are at odds with the stately, complex pace of literature.

It is my challenge each day to find ways to bridge this divide. I want my students to read slowly and closely, and I want their curiosity to be engaged. Yet I don't want them to lose interest – they are, after all, accustomed to rapid interactions in almost every area of their lives. I don't want them to see literature as irrelevant to their own teenage identities. I know that it is essential for them to write expository essays and to develop the ability to write lucid, well-organized prose, to express themselves with clarity and conviction. At the same time, I strive to treat them as experts in their own fast-paced world – experts in the constantly evolving forms of communication and exposition and self-presentation that technology allows. I have asked students to collaborate on an editing project by sharing electronic files. I have experimented with asking students to present their work in the form of electronic dialogues, videos, and pod casts. I have asked students to imagine how the presence of technology might have changed the plot line in a work of fiction, or how computers might affect the way writers approach their

craft. In all of this, I strive to encourage students to step back from themselves, to look at communication and literature in its many forms with a detached perspective, and to understand that their view of reading, writing, and the creative act grows from the particular lens of their experience in the year 2008.

Yet in spite of the revolution in technology of which today's students are a part, my eighth graders remind me in many respects of those I taught in 1978, in my first job as a teacher. They are bright, inquisitive, both mature and immature (sometimes within the span of five minutes!), concerned about learning, concerned about their place in the social order, striving to form authentic selves and life-long values. They are detaching from their families while simultaneously feeling great attachment to them. They bring their whole selves to school each day, and they are extraordinarily complex young people living in a rapidly evolving and high-impact culture. To the English classroom, they bring a readiness to examine important questions about how we communicate with one another, how we envision our lives through literature, and how we express what is fundamental in human nature. This is their great gift to a teacher. ☐

Sincerely,  
Peter F. Baily  
Head of School



Peter Baily with Willie Lonczak '06 & Geoffrey Gray-Cornelius '04 at Goucher College in November.

### 1995

**Forrest Rohde** - I recently made the grade to promote to Staff Sergeant and became a certified EMT last April. Meanwhile I continue to pursue my degree in Environmental Science through the University of Maryland. It's hard to believe my four years in the air force ends in April. My next destination is undecided.

**April Warren** - *Shiny Things*, an installation/exhibition of my latest very small paintings, was exhibited in New Paltz in December.

### 1998

**Mike Peters** - is currently a second grade teacher in Japan and was recently accepted into Waseda University to study International Relations. He also ran the New York City marathon as a training run and finished 880 out of some 39,000 starters. Mike still holds course records on three active cross country courses: Oakwood, NY Military Academy and Millbrook School. He set these records in 1997.

### 2000

**Sara Werden** - I am planning to graduate with an MS in publishing at Pace University in NY this spring.

### 2001

**Chelsea Greene Russell** - I was married in South Beach, Miami on June 9, 2007, to Oronde K. Russell. The wedding was attended by fellow Oakwood Alumni **Rebecca Gnessin '01, Ericka Martin '00, and Cristy St. John '01**. It was a beautiful sunset ceremony overlooking the beach. We had an entire weekend of events. I also own my own successful event planning business in NYC called CGR Events.



Chelsea Greene and Oronde Russell

**Kerry Schwarz** - Congratulations to Kerry on her upcoming marriage. She can be reached at chotamota@gmail.com.

**Cristy St. John** - I am in the process of applying to graduate school to pursue social work and working as a medicare counselor.

**Annie Willis** - will graduate from law school in May.

### 2002

**Ann Marie Shirley** - Congratulations to Ann Marie on her marriage to Ralph Ptasienski on November 23rd. They were married at Our Lady of the Rosary in Poughkeepsie.

**Emily Tordo** - I finally graduated from St. John's, Annapolis. During my last year of college, a couple of my photos (some of which I took while at Oak-

wood) appeared in the student community art show, and my junior essay (which was nominated for the annual essay prize junior year) was published in 'Engergia' the student literary journal. It's nice to be done with school though I don't think it's quite sunk in that unless I go for a masters or a PhD, formal education is over. Sometimes thinking about it like that makes me sad, other times it makes me positively gleeful. I now live with my boyfriend in Boston, just outside of the city, and work at the Lyman Library at Museum of Science, doing everything. But, I really enjoy it, which is what matters. Anytime anyone is in Boston and wants to come to the Museum of Science let me know and I'll dig up some free passes.

### 2003

**Mike Holdsworth** - I recently got engaged to Jen LaRose of Syracuse, NY. We are moving to Orlando, FL, for work and to get out of these cold winters. Jen is working at Disney and I will work seasonally as a sea turtle conservationist.

### 2004

**Megan Krause** - I am engaged to Troy Kelley. We met in December 2005 in a student suites apartment complex in Jacksonville, FL. Our wedding will be in Central Park, NYC, in about 1 1/2 years. I graduated from Remington College in November with an Associates Degree in Computer Networking. Troy is currently an employee of Grainger, an international company, in Mobile, AL. We can't wait to start the planning process!



Troy Kelley & Megan Krause '04

### 2007

Congratulations to **Ian Kratzke, Christine Pitner** and **Zerui Zhu**, for earning the designation of AP Scholar by the College board in recognition of their achievement on the college-level Advanced Placement exams. Ian Kratzke and Zerui Zhu qualified for the AP Scholar Award by completing three or more AP exams with grades of 3 or higher. Christine Pitner qualified for the AP Scholar with Distinction Award by earning an average grade of at least 3.5 on all AP exams taken and grades of 3 or higher on five or more of these exams.

### Friends

Congratulations to Geoffrey Craig (former Development Committee member) on the world premiere of his play, *The Medal*, at the Center for Performing Arts in Rhinebeck. The play will run from February 21 to March 2.

**Randi Chalfin** (art teacher) - This school year, Oakwood is getting more into the field of Quaker based art. Over the winter, Oakwood hosted a Quaker Art Teachers Conference and teachers came from Atlanta and Philadelphia to collaborate and do their own work. They created exciting linoleum block editions facilitated by Jamie Karp, a Hudson Valley artist. Kelly Thompson, Vassar Art Museum Education Director, spoke on the simplicity of the Hudson Valley painters.

Teachers reflected on queries in nature with an emphasis on simplicity. This event was supported by the Friends Council on Education.

**Peter Yoder** (English teacher, 1962-68) - I retired after eight years as a trustee of Olney Friends School, seven as clerk. (The board elected me as a trustee emeritus.) Still living in Penobscot, ME, and continue to enjoy gardening, reading and fly fishing. My wife, Carolyn, was recently recognized for 20 years of service as an ICU charge nurse at St. Joseph Hospital in Bangor.

### IN MEMORY

**Florence Dickerson Perkins '24**

June 4, 2007

**George Badgley '26**

February 26, 2008

**Robert Simkin '35**

October 31, 2007

**Gladys Wickes Knickerbocker '37**

February 2, 2008

**Lawrence Adna Heaton '41**

September 1, 2007

**Sally Caven Boland '43**

September 14, 2007

**Joan Brookings Breedon '48**

July 9, 2007

**Daniel Guzy '54**

October 11, 2007

**Loma Bishop Neeley '64**

June 2007

**Anna Buchholz**

November 2, 2007

New York Yearly Meeting

**Martha Kohler**

April 2007

New York Yearly Meeting

## Oak Leaves

Winter 2007-08

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**Lewis Shepard** - We moved to Chestnut Hill, MA, after 30 years in Worcester. Our older son, Dan, lives in Los Angeles and works in film production. Our younger son, Will, graduates from the University of NC in June 2008.

**1964**

**Pamela Tinnes Lord** - I have become a cyclist and ride for charities. I worked on a fund raising ride to benefit Domestic Violence Services of Cumberland and Perry counties in September.

**1965**

**Tess Coppoc Denies** - Not much change. My husband, Mark, and I have a successful private physical therapy practice. I am also taking care of my 94 year old mom. Our daughter is on her own.

**Pete Messimer** - I retired in August from Millersville University in PA, after serving there as an administrator since 1973. I've been working with students 34 years, most of those years as Associate Dean for Resident Life and Judicial Affairs Coordinator (the discipline guy). I'm looking forward to returning to the antiques business which I learned from my dad when I was student at Oakwood in the 1960s. See you all at alumni day in the spring! Email me: suzpete@comcast.net.

**1966**

**Pat Cicala** - Diane and I have taken ownership of the River Run Wellness Center in Milton, DE, where we now live. Yoga, Tai chi, plus other mind and body development services are offered. At our age we need all we can get.

**Deborah Eisberg** - Best wishes to Deb and her husband Arthur Von Preising on their recent move to Panama. Deb served on Oakwood's board of managers from 1994 through 2003 and was president from 1999 to 2002.



**Carl Reynolds** - Congratulations to Carl on his June 2007 marriage to Connie Valk. Carl is teaching computer science at the Rochester Institute of Technology and Connie works for Rochester Children's Institute, an organization devoted to developing programs for early childhood education. Carl tells us: "I enjoy my work, students and colleagues. It's an ideal job for me, and I feel extremely lucky to have been given the opportunity to return to academic life after 25 years in the computer and software industries. I have no plans to retire, as long as I can work in this capacity."

*"My days at Oakwood with the remarkable class of 1966 were among the most meaningful years of my education. I will forever be grateful to the wonderful faculty and stimulating cohort of my classmates for contributing to the richness of my life and thinking."* - Carl Reynolds '66

**1970**

**Theresa Riley Baron** - I am now a proud grandmother of Cheyenne McGowan. I thought my life was full with being a lab manager at BAE SYSTEMS, working with high school teams on robotics for FIRST (for Inspiration and Recognition of Science & Technology) and being the director of a local LEGO tournament. But being a grandmother is the most fulfilling. Hi to all the class of 1970.

**1972**

**Jody Mindell** - I am currently a senior loan officer with Priority One Financial Services located in NJ. My wife, Laura, and I keep very busy. We have a son at American University and a daughter in high school.

**Laurie Mufson** - I am serving my sixth year as chair of the fine arts department at Mercersburg Academy in Pennsylvania. I also chair the Katrina Project for the Association for Theatre in Higher Education.

**Juan Williams** - Congratulations to Juan Williams who served as a keynote speaker at the National Association of Independent Schools People of Color Conference in Boston this winter.

**1974**

**Anthony (Tony) Elting** - I would like anyone from 1971-1975 to call or write. I ride by campus every day to go to work; it still looks as beautiful as ever.

**1980**

**Keith Morgan-David** - Having in the last few years given up aviation, agriculture and marriage, I'm now settled in Whitefield, ME, and finally feel at home. Love to hear from old friends and classmates who might still be out there: kmorgandavie@gmail.com.

**1981**

**Lisa Ferguson Uchirin** - my watercolor paintings were included in an exhibition, "An Afternoon of Tea and Bubbles," from July to September at Visions Art Gallery in Clinton, NJ.

**David (Dawit) Zeleke** - I am the Director of Conservation for the Nature Conservancy's central valley and mountains region in California. Last summer I traveled to Namibia and South Africa to forge partnerships and share conservation strategies with local environmental groups.

**1983**

**Brian Dublin** - Our newest addition, Martin, was born last May. In August, we escaped from Moscow, and now live in beautiful Luxembourg. We are two hours from most of Europe, stop in to say hello if you are in the neighborhood. We plan to come to the 25th Reunion in May; be there or be square. badublin@aol.com.



Nathan & Martin Dublin

**1984**

**Lee Moore Conselatore** - I am living in northern Virginia with my husband and children. Would love to hear from any past friends: Blueocean38@juno.com.

**1986**

**Abigail Golden-Vazquez** - On August 26th I married Christopher Scott Brauss in Chevy Chase, MD, at the Audubon Society. My father, **Eric Golden '57**, and uncle, **John Golden '63**, were present.



Abigail Golden-Vazquez '86 & her father Eric Golden '57

**1988**

**Daphne Benedis-Grab** - I have a teen novel with HarperCollins coming out in June. It's called *Alive and Well in Prague, New York* and it's a coming of age story about a girl whose father has Parkinson's disease.

**1989**

**Michael Plugh** - my wife Ari and I are happy to report the arrival of Hiroto Matsumura on January 1, 2007 in Akita, Japan. He's a cheerful boy and a future Oakwood man. I'm back in NYC doing grad work at Fordham and hope all of you are happy and healthy. See you around!

**Linda Robinson-Mildwurf** - my husband Bruce and our three kids, Sawyer and EJ (both 4) and Marley (2), live in Mobile, AL. I have a private behavior therapy practice focusing on teenagers with ADHD. Contact me at: lindabruce10116@msn.com.

**1991**

**Loren Talbot** - Congratulations to Loren on the launch of her new specialty foods and gifts business, *Local Labels*. Visit [www.locallabels.com](http://www.locallabels.com) and check out great products all made in New York City.

**Georgia Tetlow** - I was so happy to read Peter Baily's end of year letter. Oakwood sounds alive and well! I will soon be a Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation attending physician, specializing in musculoskeletal and integrative medicine.

**1992**

**Dorothy Glusker** - My husband Phil and I are living in San Mateo, CA, expecting our first baby in May.

## Parents Get Together

In September, new parents received a special welcome from the Oakwood community at a reception hosted by Elizabeth Ryan, Hudson Valley farmer and mother of **Peter Zimmerman '09**. Parents of both new and returning students enjoyed mingling, meeting faculty and tasting delicious local foods.

A dessert reception was held for parents at the home of Peter Baily, Head of School, on October 19<sup>th</sup>, Parents' Day.

Preceding the student production of "The Tempest" on November 2<sup>nd</sup>, parents and grandparents joined faculty and students for dinner on campus served family style. The dinner was the sixth fund-raiser for the school's bus fund.

In addition, two new parent events were initiated this fall: "Breakfast with the Head" was held on October 31<sup>st</sup> and January 16<sup>th</sup> at 8:00am in the dining hall; grade level family dinners were held for the freshman class on December 7<sup>th</sup> and the junior class on December 11<sup>th</sup>. The sophomore class will gather on April 9<sup>th</sup> and the senior class on June 12<sup>th</sup> in a special evening preceding graduation. ☑



Patrice Heber, Elizabeth Ryan, Lenore Strocchia-Rivera on September 28th



Peggy Lewis, Marian Schoettle, Linda Kleinbenz on September 28th

## Silent Auction Benefits Annual Fund

Tim and Laurel Sweeney, parents of **Sean '09**, hosted our third annual parent dinner fundraiser at Cosimo's Restaurant on February 8<sup>th</sup>. It was a great success with over 70 people in attendance. This year, a silent auction was added to the event, coordinated by board member Liza Donnelly, parent of **Gretchen '09**. The dinner and auction raised \$5,814 for the Annual Fund.

Thank you to all who participated, especially our auction item donors: Vassar Alumnae House, Bardavon 1869 Opera House, William F. Bogle, Jr. '76, Cappuccino's by Coppola's, Susanrachel Balber Condon '80, Liza Donnelly, Fox & Hound Wines and Spirits, Laura Kellar '63, Richard Kleinhenz, Barry and Judy Lee, Martha's Vineyard Glassworks, Diane Matsakis, Mohonk Mountain House, Mohonk Preserve, Kelli Peduzzi, Bonnie Raitt '67, Jeff & Brooke Ruskaup, Leslie & L. Okladek Seff, Stone Ridge Wines & Spirits, The Three Arts Bookstore. ☑

### On-Line Giving

We are pleased to announce that gifts to the Annual Fund may be made on-line through our website: [www.oakwoodfriends.org](http://www.oakwoodfriends.org). It's fast and convenient! Thank you for your support.



Diane & Nick Matsakis, Julius & Kathleen McClain on October 19th



Tim and Laurel Sweeney with Liza Donnelly at Cosimo's Restaurant on February 8th

## Sporting News

by: *Charlie Butts, Director of Athletics*

This fall saw another banner season in terms of participation for our interscholastic teams. We had the most soccer players in recent memory with over 80 players divided among our 4 teams. This actually created some problems regarding playing time and having enough uniforms, but these were good problems to have and indicate the overall health of the program.

Boys Varsity Soccer led the way with an overall record of 9-4 and they were undefeated at 8-0 in the HVAL. The highlight was a 4-1 road victory over a Forman team that was also undefeated in the league at that time. This set the stage for a league championship match with Chase Collegiate, but OFS forfeited this game due to some sportsmanship issues in our preceding game. Such behavior was uncharacteristic of an Oakwood team, and some valuable lessons were learned. Individually, senior **Will Callaway** capped his long Oakwood career by being named the team MVP. Senior **Matt Rumack** was once again the leading goal scorer, notching 16 for the season. Matt and **Sung Bum Park '09** were selected as Western New England All-Stars. Sung Bum and **Han Sol Yim '09** were also recognized as Coach's Award recipients.

In other soccer news, the Boys JV team made terrific strides over the course of the season and exhibited tremendous improvement in their individual skills and team play. The team played with grit and desire all season and never gave up. One such game was the game against Marvelwood, in which they came from four goals down at the half to tie the score. Although the game finally ended with a 6-5 loss, they left everything on the field. **Jon Powers '09** was elected captain of the team by his teammates and the bulldog mentality was personified by Coach's Award winners: **Peter Zimmerman '09** and **Zach Missen-Jones '11**. A number of this year's players will be making positive contributions at the Varsity level next year. Girls Varsity had a very young team and played many close games in their 2-10 season. Keeper **Zoya Diaz '10** was stellar in goal and was selected to play in the Western New England All-Star game. She was joined on the squad by junior midfielder **Mariah Lewis**. The captains were **Amanda Millington '09** and **Celia Contelmo '08** and their leadership of this young team will pay dividends in the future.

Along with soccer, our other teams had success. Boys' Cross Country finished with a 7-3 record, and placed 6<sup>th</sup> of 11 schools in the HVAL Championship. **Nate Schoettle-Greene '09** in 8<sup>th</sup> place, and **Ben Vartanian '10** in 15<sup>th</sup> place were medalists. At the New England Championships, Oakwood upset the number 2 and 3 HVAL teams to crack the top 20 with a 19<sup>th</sup> place finish. Nate was



Fall sports award winners

the MVP for the season, and Ben was the Most Improved Runner. Returnees **Zach Coto '10** and **Ben Sicker '09**, plus newcomers **Curtis Roberson '09**, **Matthew Cho '10** and **Harrison Roberts '11** also figured in the team scoring throughout the season. **Clara Wilkinson '11** was the only girl on the team, but she medaled in the Oakwood Invitational (10<sup>th</sup> place), the Wooster Invitational (4<sup>th</sup>), and the HVAL Championship (7<sup>th</sup>). Clara was the recipient of the Coach's Award.

Under the direction of first year coach Kyle Hopkins, the Girls Varsity Volleyball team went through a rebuilding year. It was a tough season with only one returning varsity player from last year, but the girls played hard and never gave up. As the season went on they became better and started to work together more on and off the court. Their final record of 2-14 does not truly reflect their improvement and hustle. The team was captained by **Manon Baily '10** who was also selected to play in the New England Volleyball Association All-Star Game at Philips Academy in Andover, MA. She was also named the team MVP. **Yue Liang '09** led the team with 87 service points and along with **Angela Cuneo '08**, earned the Coach's Award. Improvement was also shown by the JV Volleyball team. They did not win a game in their first 5 matches, but then closed the season winning 8 of their last 17 games. Freshman captain **Winnie Chang** was the high scorer for the team and was co-MVP along with **Silan Li '10**. The Coach's Award went to freshman **Julia Chowdhury '11**.

If you're ever in the area, feel free to attend any of our athletic contests. Schedules are posted on the school's website, but it's a good idea to check with the athletic office in case there are any late changes. See you there! ☑

## Ceramics Class

**Gillian Gelfand Jule '01** fulfilled one of her dreams: to return to Oakwood to teach a ceramics course. A graduate of New York College of Ceramics at Alfred University with a BFA in fine arts, she specializes in variable scale mixed media pieces – ceramics, wood, painting, photography, fiber art and lighting.

Presently working as an assistant to an artist in Saugerties, Gillian is the youngest ever recipient of the Kuniyoshi Award for Emerging Young Artists Showing the Most Improvement. Her work has been shown at juried and group exhibits and her latest venture is joining with her mother, Jennie Gelfand, also an artist, to produce fabric creations, especially handbags, available on the web.

Inspiration for Gillian's career began at Oakwood taking ceramics classes. In the photo below, Gillian works alongside **Sean Sweeney '09** in her fall semester class open to students and faculty. ☑



Sean Sweeney '09 & Gillian Gelfand Jule '01

## Class Notes



1927

**Marjory Barstow Corwin** - The older I get, the more I appreciate Oakwood and what it did for me. I am still auditing courses at Keuka College which is just a block from me. It is most enjoyable and keeps my 97 year old mind busy and interested in life.

1937

**Marjorie Glenn Thompson** - I just celebrated 90 by visiting my two great-grandsons in Chicago and my great-granddaughter in Quaker Hill, CT, going to both places from Ann Arbor, MI, where I was visiting one of my daughters.

1939

**Shirley Baumbusch Bergmann** - I'm leading a quiet life on account of age and arthritis. I recall fondly my four years at Oakwood.

1942

**Thomas Jabine** - My dear wife of 56 years, Marian Smith Jabine, passed away on November 22, 2006. In October 2007 I moved to the Riderwood retirement community in Silver Spring, MD.

1946



Henry Bohm '46 visited campus in September

**Frances Smith Feldman** - My husband passed away in February after a long illness. The adjustment has been difficult. There is good news: the National League of Women Writers named my book Rebecca's Quilt the second best book of the year. I'll try harder on my new novel!

**Janet Stone** - I am still living in an old house in Boli-var, WV, with dog and ducks. Contact me: janetstone@frontiernet.net.

1947

**David Kallen** - It was great to see everyone at the 60th reunion. I hope to see everyone again at the 70th.

**Peter Silveston** - In 2007, I continued my teaching activities in Thailand by teaching an engineering graduate course at Chelalongkom University. I also taught a short course at URV in Tarragon, Spain. Accomplishment of the year was to bicycle from Passau, Germany, to Vienna, Austria, along the Danube River.

1950

**Gladys Carnell Abrams** - Hi from South Florida. We lucked out this hurricane season. Hope 2008 will be the same, no storms. The best to all classmates in the new year.

**Charles Bergman** - I have been appointed as Senior Advisor to the Nonprofit Sector and Philanthropy Program of the Aspen Institute.

**Joan Guzy Gold** - My brother, **Danny Guzy '54**, attended Oakwood but finished high school elsewhere. He cherished his Oakwood years for the values he learned and talked of Oakwood often. He died suddenly on the tennis court in South Florida on October 11, 2007.

**Lew Resseguie** - Busy renovating local theater, playing lots of golf, performing in concerts in Florida and feeling great!

1951

**Thomas Griffing** - I'm now semi-retired and spending a lot of time on volunteer projects: Central Park, Wild Life Conservation Society, etc. Otherwise, am alive and well.

1953

**Taffy Thunick Hoffman** - My husband and I celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary this year and took our whole family to Club Med. We also celebrated the arrival of our 8th grandchild. We have a challenge ahead of us this year as my husband just had surgery for esophageal cancer and will be in the middle of chemo/radiation treatments when you read this. We are very optimistic.

**L. Keith Miller** - Celebrated 50th year anniversary with my wife! Still active professor of Applied Behavioral Science! Traveling to Greece summer of 2008.

1954

**Art Willis** - Congratulations to Art and co-author Marcia Greenberg on the publication of their book, *Heart of the Matter*. In the forward, Dennis Sullivan, Editor-in-Chief of *The Contemporary Justice Review*, calls Art and Marcia "courage-teachers." He describes the book as "a near-seamless artifact of inspiration by two well-seasoned wisdom teachers... an invitation to other teachers – young and old alike – students, school officials, and parents concerned about the well-being of children." The book can be purchased by going to the website: Publishersolutions.com.

1955

**Robine Andrau** - To celebrate our retirements, my sister-in-law and I took a cross-country road trip to Colorado, Utah, Wyoming and were dazzled by this amazing country. Now I'm back and working on my 4th career-that of a writer. Several projects are brewing, the main one being my family's experience as prisoners of the Japanese in WWII. Stay tuned!

1957

**Cynthia Benson-Adams** - In memory of my big sister, **Barbara King Ludwig '54**, whose gentle spirit and encouragement helped me see that I could do far more than I ever thought possible.

**Delia Wheelwright Moon** - I received my doctorate degree in the field of Depth Psychology on September 20th and celebrated the Solstice Christmas holiday with 22 members of my family including my son-in-law's parents who came to Seattle from Zim-Babwe!

1958

**Holly Clarke-McAlary** - Looking forward to the big 50th reunion in May! A chapbook of my poems, *River Tracks*, appeared this year. We've been traveling to visit grandchildren in Middlebury, VT, and upstate NY, enjoying retirement.

1959

**Richard Rosichan** - We're still in our house in Miami Beach after 24 years, with our two dogs, cat and lovebird. I'm retired; wife Ellen is still a non-lawyer department manager for a large Miami law firm. Daughter Amy, 39, and husband Will, in Ft. Pierce, FL have a 2 1/2 year old daughter, Liana Rose, and are pregnant with identical twin boys - wow! Daughter Lori, 37, works for a state agency which helps brain and spine injured people, and lives with son, Avery, 7, in their Atlanta, GA home. Daughter Rebecca "Becky," 33, and husband, Sean, now have a 2 month old son, Harrison. They live in Santa Monica, CA. Becky is a casting producer for CBS; her latest project: "Kid Nation." We've had many interesting travels, and are planning to see the August 2008 solar eclipse in central Russia. I always enjoy hearing from other alumni: Corona70@aol.com.

**Susan Stein Stephens** - Many changes going on in our lives, but I am happy to report that Jim and I are still dancing. No more golf, but tai chi three times a week has been wonderful for me.

1960

**Carol Cober Reid** - I have been retired from teaching for four years and am enjoying being on the school board in that same district. My husband and I enjoy traveling and visiting kids and grandkids. Life is good.

1961

**Maureen McCann Sanchez de Tagle** - I work as a social worker in Orange County, CA. My children live in Mexico, New York, Boston and Washington DC. I had two granddaughters in November, one in Mexico, my son Alyandro's second child, and the other in Washington DC, my daughter Rebecca's second girl.

1962

**Susan Brown Nebesar** - Charlie and I are grandparents for the first time. Our daughter Darren had twins in March, Annabel and Elliot.

1963

**Linda Kenney Miller** - Congratulations to Linda on the publication of her book, *Beacon on the Hill*, in January 2008. The book is the story of John A. Kenney, MD, an African-American hero of the 20th century who, as the son of ex-slaves, raised himself up to become the personal physician to Booker T. Washington and George Washington Carver at Tuskegee Institute. See www.lindakennymiller.com.

## Alumni Weekend 2008 Opens with Caroline "Dash" Davis Gleiter Lecture on Social Justice

by: Elaine Miles, Director of Development & Alumni Affairs

Alumni Weekend 2008 will begin on Friday, May 16th, 2:30 pm, with the presentation of the Carolyn "Dash" Davis Gleiter Lecture on Social Justice in A.H. Lane Auditorium. This lecture series was established by the class of 1951 in memory of their distinguished classmate, Dash Davis Gleiter, an attorney whose life work and passion were devoted to civil rights issues and social action. Dash's friends wanted to create something of lasting value to honor her life and spirit and her deep affection for Oakwood.

Now in its fourth year, speakers have included Dr. Andrea Kandel of the National Conference on Community and Justice, journalist and Oakwood alumnus Juan Williams '74 and



Washington, DC Alumni Gathering  
November 10, 2007

Judy Nelson '54, hostess, with  
Evelyn & Andrew Novins '65

Dr. Walter Leonard, former president of Fisk University. This May, it is our pleasure to welcome William T. McDaniel, Professor of African-American and African Studies and the Director of Jazz Studies in the School of Music at Ohio State University. Professor McDaniel is a specialist in African-American music, jazz history, and jazz performance.

Ted McDaniel is also Dash's nephew and enjoyed a close relationship with her all his life: "Dash was so full of life and I miss her so very much. Her spirit and love will always be a part of my thoughts and being. She would be very pleased that the theme of the lecture series is social justice. We often spoke on the phone for hours at a time, and much of that time, after talking about family, was spent discussing the "politics" of the country and the burning issues of the day. Social justice resonated inside of Dash in every way."

On Saturday morning, Libby Moroff '54, will lead the Annual Meeting of the Alumni Association, followed by the presentation of the Distinguished Alumni Award and Meeting for Worship. This time together never fails to be a moving experience. As Steven Vogel '57 noted last year: "One didn't recognize everyone at first glance. But when we were gathered and talking, if one closed the eyes, the years disappeared. Same voices, same turns of phrase, same social attitudes, and so forth- to an eerie extent."

Peter Baily will host two special receptions at his home: one for the 50th reunion class and one for members of the Oak Tree Club - all



William T. McDaniel, nephew of Dash Davis Gleiter

alumni who graduated in 1957 or prior. The day will end with a Hudson River Dinner Cruise aboard the *River Rose*, departing from Waryas Dock in Poughkeepsie. The boat is reserved exclusively for Oakwood alumni, parents and faculty. The views are stunning and dinner delicious. Don't miss it!

For those who are able to stay until Sunday, a perfect close to the weekend is a leisurely hot breakfast in the dining room, followed by a unique experience - meeting for worship at Nine Partners Meeting House in Millbrook. As our students discovered on their field trip this year, you are immersed in history at the meeting house and feel the strength and wisdom of those who came before us. ☐

All this came together for me recently at (imagine that!) a funeral, where the person who had died wanted these lines of T.S. Eliot to be read (they are from "East Coker"):

I said to my soul, be still and wait without hope  
For hope would be hope for the wrong thing;  
wait without love,  
For love would be love of the wrong thing;  
there is yet faith  
But the faith and the love and hope are all in  
the waiting.  
Wait without thought, for you are not ready for  
thought:  
So the darkness shall be the light, and the  
stillness the dancing.

I know it's the Shakers who dance, not the Quakers. But remembering Quaker meeting, and in my own Zen practice, I see us all - Oakwood friends and all our lovers, Oakwood people past and present, all the wide world of people who greet silence with hope - I see us all linked, dancing, alone together. ☐

## Oakwood Memories: The Gift of Silence

by: Kay Memelsdorf Johnson '54



Oakwood gave me many gifts, among them the knowledge, new to me at the time, that I wasn't a pariah and wasn't doomed to spend my life pressing my nose against the window of other people's lives, aching to be allowed in. It also gave me

friendships that are, amazingly after 50 plus years, being restored. But the gift that comes to mind to talk about is the gift of silence.

Not that I appreciated it at the time. Biweekly Meeting for Worship was something to get through as best as one could. My roommate, Suzy McClain, and I found many things to giggle about during Meeting, and I believe I developed

strong abs by learning to hold in my laughter. But by the time I had left Oakwood, I had learned that silence is precious and holds much that is holy.

Since my husband of 46 years died in March of 2006, after a long illness, I have been asking a lot of questions. I can't really wrap my mind around the fact of death. How can it be that someone who was, no longer is? Where did he go? Where is he now? Anywhere where I can ever reach him? And me -- am I really going to die too? What is Not Being like? How can I, who am so real to myself, who am my source of all reality -- how can I Not Be?

I link, in my mind, silence, mystery, and waiting. In Quaker silence, as I understand it, we wait for the Spirit to speak in us. That Spirit -- whether you call it God, or Holy, or something like "the spirit of life" -- whatever it is, that spirit that speaks to us out of some deep place if we will sit still and wait for it, speaks of mystery. It is what connects us to the unanswerable questions, and if it doesn't answer them, it at least reminds us that we are not alone in our questioning, are joined with all people in our (patient?) ignorance. For me those words of mystery are themselves a comfort.

## Performing Art News

by: Elaine Lifter, Department Head

Performing Arts began the 2007-08 school year with Open Mic night held in the library. The event was hosted by **Curtis Roberson '09** and **Caroline Pitner '10** and featured musical acts, skits, vocal performances and lots of laughs. Highlights were piano solos from Helena Fleig and **Caroline Pitner '10**, musical jams from **Jonathon Goldpaugh '11**, **John Stevenson '09** and **Matthew Burstein '08**, and **Kimberly Roberson '10** impressed us with her vocal ability.

The fall play was "The Tempest" by William Shakespeare. The cast remained dedicated



Najab Mubammad '10 & Haley Langford '10 in the role of Ariel in "The Tempest"

through a very challenging process and worked hard to achieve a polished performance. Performers included: **Russell Smith '10** as Prospero, **Chelsea Petito '08** as Miranda, **Han Sol Yim '09** as Ferdinand, Chibuzo Urukpa as the boatswain, **Erin Paterson '09** as Alonso, **Sunita Graham '08** as Gonzalo, **Wilton McClain '10** as Sebastian, **Hannah Condon '11** as Caliban, **Angela Cuneo '08** as Trinculo, **Corbett Storyk '09** as Stephano, and **Jessica Cuneo '10** as Iris. In the role of Ariel, **Najah Muhammad '10** and **Haley Langford '10** worked beautifully together to play the different facets of the Ariel character. Their physicalization, vocal work, and overall expression was compelling to watch and a highlight of the play.

The technical components of the play were also impressive, bringing a unified and cohesive presentation to Shakespeare's final play. Congratulations on superb work to **Celia Contelmo '08** and **Dan Schwartz '09** on lights, **Max McCabe '10** on sound, **Jamie Lee '10** for her wonderful costumes and Kathryn Singer, Technical Director. In December we held a holiday Meeting for Music, allowing silence after each performance. This created a peaceful and reverent atmosphere, punctuated by some outstanding musical performances, led by Guest Music Director Bob Emry. **Yue (Gina) Liang '09** and **Silan Li '10** began the evening with a duet, followed by a vocal group of middle school students including: **Saige Greenwell '13**, **Ozi Matthews '13**, **Joey Whalen '13**, **Maya Battle '13**, **Claire Dahlem '13**, **Zane Mandel-Michalak '13**, and **Isabella Staniscia '13**. **Gretchen Sachse '09** sang a Schubert piece and Chibuzo Urukpa sang "O Little Town of Bethlehem." Other noteworthy performances were **Greg Pitner '08** on piano, Nancy Doolittle on



Food procession from "The Great Tablecloth" staged by the Arm-of-the-Sea Theater Company

piano, **Kimberly Roberson '10** on vocals and a range of poetry readings from Peter Baily, **Byung Kyu Choi '09**, **Matthew Cho '10**, **Arianna Lester '11**, **Harrison Roberts '11** and **Eli Nobiletti '11**.

Several students participated in a residency with Arm-of-the-Sea Theater Company. Under the direction of Artistic Director Patrick Wadden, students worked with elements of music, drama and storytelling to present an interpretation of the poem, "The Great Tablecloth" by Pablo Neruda. The performance was lively, colorful and ripe with the message of equal rights for all.

In other news...9<sup>th</sup> grade drama students under the guidance of professional storyteller, Mary Platt, presented Story Theatre to the residents at Manor at Woodside for the third year in a row. Senior **Matthew Rumack** had a staged reading for his original play in A.H. Lane Auditorium. The play was well received and we hope Matt will submit his play to an upcoming playwrighting festival. ☐

## Visual Arts at Oakwood

by: Randi Chalfin, Visual Arts Teacher

I believe that every child has something creative to offer. As art teacher, my goal is to draw it out. At Oakwood, we have the flexibility to respond to the unique needs and suggestions of each student. If someone has a project idea, we discuss it. That's how our first annual fashion show came about in January. If I see students with particular talents or needs, I try to tailor the class to accommodate them or even create a new class. One outcome this spring is our first Graphic Novel class.

Graphic Novels have more words, more story than cartoons. After the success of previous cartooning classes, I thought students were ready for the greater verbal challenges of the graphic novel. So we kick started the year and prepared for the new class with a visit from cartoonist and author Mark McKenna on September 28th. A cartoonist who will have inked over 7000 pages by retirement, Mark taught students in art class and critiqued some of the work that students had done on their own after taking cartooning class.

Juniors **Gerry Laureus**, **Sarah Powers**, and **Lindsey Havranek** enjoyed Fashion Class so much that they asked me if we could continue it into the winter term. So we did. **Wilton McClain '10** asked me if we could do a fashion show, so we put one on for the entire Oakwood community in January with students doing all the makeup, hair, lighting, music and production. As Will said, "I always felt like I had a little artist in me. The fashion show unlocked my inner artist and is helping me find my true potential with music in art."

To broaden their perspective in Fashion Class, students went on a field trip in January to the Fashion Institute of Technology. They met with teachers and students and visited the museum exhibit, "Overview of Fashion."

A new element in our art program this year is the use of a live model, Rosemary Grabowska, a former Savannah College of Art and Design School graduate. Students are working through the challenges of life drawing, which takes a lot of practice to let

go of the mental dialogue and learn to see without judgment. As the sessions continue, their skills are improving, making for an interesting exhibit later this year. ☐



Mark McKenna critiques the work of  
Stephen Strocchia-Rivera '11


## Fine Art Photography at Oakwood

by: Michael Gallo Farrell, Photography Teacher

This year, fine art photography has an unprecedented presence at Oakwood Friends School. There are currently three galleries filled with 60 photographs by students.

Seniors **Molly Doherty-Vinacor**, **Oliver Roberts** and **Imani Schectman** are working on their portfolios and plan to major in photography at the college level. Molly had one of her photographs published in the *Poughkeepsie Journal* with an article on Regional Portfolio Day held at the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Library in Hyde Park. Oliver Roberts had two photographs exhibited at the Kingston Museum of Contemporary Art.

Works by seniors **Molly Doherty-Vinacor**, **Sarah Thrall**, **Natalie Varrallo** and sophomore **Ivy Rose Cardillo '10** are part of the Art Institute of the Mill Street Loft's annual, "Best of Show, Teen Visions

'08" at the Palmer Gallery at Vassar College. This exhibition of mixed media art features 125 pieces from high schools students throughout the Hudson Valley. 



Julia Chowdhury '11

## Expanded Community Service Program at Oakwood Friends School

by: Julie Okoniewski, Community Service Coordinator

In keeping with Oakwood Friends School's mission of educating and strengthening young people for lives of conscience, compassion and accomplishment, community service plays an integral role in the life of students and faculty. Whether it is through our bi-annual Workshare Day, grade level community service retreats, or weekly volunteer rotations off campus, students are finding ways to reach out beyond Oakwood's campus and make an impact on the surrounding community.

### Workshare Day

Each fall and spring, the entire Oakwood community spends a day volunteering at both off and on site locations helping with projects varying from gardening and working with children to spending time with senior citizens and painting in low-income housing units. Students and faculty then reconvene on campus and attend Meeting for Worship to reflect on the day's service work.

### Grade Level Retreats

Each grade takes part in a retreat at some point of the school year which includes a community service component. The 9th grade volunteers locally, the 10th grade travels to NYC to work with the homeless, 11th graders volunteer in various locations during their trip to Washington, DC and the seniors take part in an end of the year service week where they also get involved with local community organizations. These retreats, which are designed to gradually increase in both time and independence, give students an opportunity to learn more about the issues facing both our local community, and the state and nation as a whole.

### Weekly Volunteers

A relatively new component of the community service program at Oakwood is the weekly volunteer program. Each Wednesday, students not involved in team sports have the opportunity to volunteer either off campus at a local pre-school and senior community, or on campus making sleeping bags for Hudson River Housing's shelter program. Every weekend, 7-day boarders can volunteer locally as well. Currently there are approximately 20 students volunteering at four sites; Vassar Brothers Hospital, Beulah Baptist Church soup kitchen, The Manor House at Woodside (a senior community), and Sprout Creek Farm.

### Senior Service

In addition to their end of the year service week, each senior is required to complete 20 hours of independent community service at the site of their choice. Locations/volunteer assignments this year include working as a camp counselor at a Koreancamp, assisting as a tour guide at a local historic estate, and volunteering with a family dog at a senior center. Seniors also complete journal entries about their experiences which become part of Oakwood's permanent community service archives.




Robbie Kleinbenz '10, Jacob Leach '11, John Michael Foster '11, Fatima Sarassoro '11 and Yu Hua Cheng '10 on Workshare Day.


## Student News

College counselor Lauren Hoyt accompanied Oakwood students to the "Students of Color" college fair at Westtown School in Philadelphia on October 20th: **Wilton McClain '10**, **Amanda Millington '09**, **Curtis Roberson '09**, **Imani Schectman '08**, **Dan Schwartz '09**, **Nary Som '10**, **Chris Yeadon '10**.

Senior **Imani Schectman** had an exhibition of her photographs and collages in a small café in New York City in conjunction with the Harlem School of Arts. Imani takes courses with that school to broaden her knowledge and skills in art.

**Julia Chowdhury '11** has been selected to represent Oakwood at the People to People Leadership Summit at Columbia University in NYC in July. All students accepted in the program must meet rigorous academic and leadership requirements. Chowdhury was nominated and accepted for the honor based on outstanding scholastic merit, civic involvement and leadership potential. The program fulfills the 1956 vision of President Dwight D. Eisenhower to foster world citizenship. 

### Service-Learning in New Orleans


New to the community service program last year was a service-learning trip to New Orleans to assist with the rebuilding efforts. From March 8th through the 15th, 12 seniors and 6 faculty chaperones will travel together to New Orleans to help with rebuilding efforts and wetlands restoration, and to volunteer in a local elementary school affected by Hurricane Katrina. Students take part in a series of mini-sessions before the trip covering such topics as the science of hurricanes and the arts and culture of New Orleans to help them contextualize the trip ahead of them. Upon their return, they will share their experience with the Oakwood community as a whole through a community meeting. Students are currently in the process of raising money for their trip and for donation. Opportunities to assist them include a Creole fundraising dinner in March and taking part in the 5K Race to Rebuild on April 22nd. 

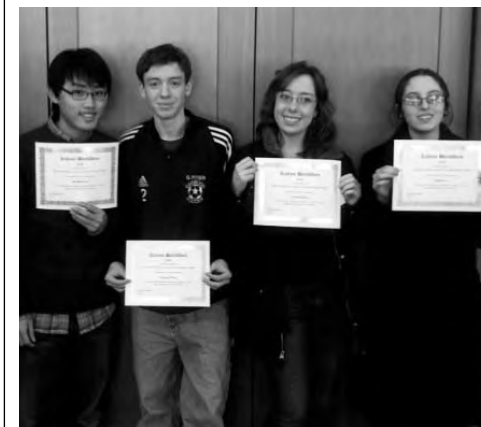
## Oakwood Places 2<sup>nd</sup> at Academic Competition

by: Gregory Pitner '08

"In 1994 Brazil instituted a plan which pegged its currency to the US dollar and eventually decreased its 5,000% inflation to about 2.5%, what was this plan called?" Hmmm... I think that was the Plano Real, or Real Plan." On December 14<sup>th</sup>, a team of Oakwood Friends School students answered questions like this at the Fourth Annual Academic Worldquest regional competition at the FDR site. Sponsored by the World Affairs Council of the Mid-Hudson Valley, this program tests students' knowledge in international affairs, the global economy, geography, world history, general knowledge about the world and current events.

I was one of a four member team along with **Jamie Lee '10**, **Jin-Hyun Lee '08** and **Caroline Pitner '10**. We are pleased to report that we finished in 2<sup>nd</sup> place out of 14 teams, the school's best finish ever. We out-scored teams from nearby schools: Spackenkill, Washingtonville, Ketcham, and Marlboro. This was a huge accomplishment. All of the competing schools are much larger than Oakwood, and our strong finish caught them by surprise.

One reason we did so well was the hard work we put into preparation. We spent hours studying economic principles, reviewing the history of United Nation peace-keeping operations, learning all we could about the Organization of American States, looking closely at maps of the world, and, most of all, reading the news from several sources nearly every day. But there was another factor that contributed to our success: The student body here at Oakwood is special. We all have diverse backgrounds and unique interests. Because of this, our team began preparation with a pool of information gained not by studying, but by spending time doing things that mattered to us, things we would have pursued with enthusiasm anyway. 



Jin-Hyun Lee '08, Gregory Pitner '08, Caroline Pitner '10, Jamie Lee '10

## Oakwood Teachers Serve as Envoys to China



Li Guo '07, Cathy Cigna, Xudong Lu '08 & Ed Cigna in front of the Shanghai soccer stadium


Two Oakwood teachers, Cathy and Ed Cigna, visited China last summer as part of the United States - China Cultural Exchange program. Cathy is a Middle School science teacher and Ed teaches math in the Upper School. Nineteen teachers were selected from around the country to study Chinese culture and education as both nations seek to improve understanding between their citizens.

Cathy and Ed visited five major cities, highlighted by a visit to the BODI School, a private residential school in Xian, one of China's ancient capitals. Through meetings with Chinese educators, they were able to see how students are motivated to study, how teachers are prepared for teaching, and how schools are structured for success. Chinese efforts to improve both its economy and education programs are evident, and American influence can be seen in several areas. However, China's division of rich and poor is also clearly evident, so it is not easy for individuals to improve their standards of living without cooperation from countries like our own. Even though the government is working hard to reduce the separation of the classes, success through the educational system provides the best way to improve a family's standard of living.

One of the most striking features of the education system is how students leave high school and move to college. Students take a three-day examination at the end of their senior year. Based on their scores, they may be admitted to one of China's numerous universities. If their scores are not high enough, further educational opportunities are severely limited. Faring well on this test far outweighs GPA, rank in class, and teacher recommendations. Unlike the US where many students go on to college but few complete it, only about 25% of graduates from Chinese schools will go on to college, but about 90% of those students will complete a university program. Also as a result of the admission criteria, Chinese students study very hard for this test, which explains why students who attend American schools work so diligently preparing for SAT's. College means a good

job, and a good job means better income in a highly stratified society.

Another interesting feature of Chinese education above middle school is that all students pay tuition. "Public" schools cost less than private schools, but still require tuition. Elementary and middle schools charge fees which can be pretty high. Only the poorest receive any subsidy to attend school. Private schools are not sponsored by religious or other group sponsorship, but depend on tuition. Private schools often provide a better chance for college acceptance. Chinese curriculum emphasizes English language, math, and science, with students sometimes studying calculus by the time they reach early high school. Not all students attend academic high schools, either. Based on an entrance examination and since high school education is not compulsory, some students may go to trade schools or work if their scores are not high enough to continue academic study. New Chinese policy now permits students to attend college free if they graduate and become teachers. The country has a state policy trying to strengthen itself through science and education.

On the last day of the visit, Cathy and Ed had lunch with two Oakwood students, **Li Guo '07** and **Xudong Lu '08**, who live in Shanghai. Gentlemen in every way, Li and Xudong were perfect hosts, and made Cathy and Ed proud to think that these young men represented Oakwood's educational influence in China. Our students also provided insight into the reasons why international students select internationally welcoming schools such as Oakwood. High quality, including the strength of the instructional program, was mentioned as a key reason for Li and Xudong to make an Oakwood decision from all of the options available. Li and Xudong both acknowledged that the friendliness and openness of the admissions staff were particularly attractive, and provided reassurance in what we can all imagine was one of the most difficult family decisions for them. Both Li and Xudong as well as their families have been very pleased with the outcome of their choice. 

## Young Alumni Return for Winter Reunion



Hester Sachse '05 visits younger sister Gretchen '09



Kira Grennan '04, Deana Stuart '05, Heather Hightower '05, Irene Yee '05, Hester Sachse '05, Jamie Stevenson '05



Lillian Shad, Christine Pitner, Ella Maslin, Clarissa Baez, all class of 2007



Ed Purtetz '07 & Sierra Suris-Kruppa '07



### Winter Reunion, January 11, 2008

**Front:** Tony Martino '03, Walter Scarborough '03, Alex Anderson '04, Adam Anderson '06, Jason McGann '03

**Middle:** Sarah Clark '07, Anya Aliferis '06, Tanya Salamanca '06, Elizabeth Hanka '04, Christine Pitner '07

**Rear:** Olivia Mitchell '06, Richard Distel '07, Adam Benzinger '07

**Not shown:** Clarissa Baez '07, Matt Berchtold '07, Alex Bowman '07, Caroline Brevetti '07, Wes Buley '07, Kristian Dalland '07, Kira Grennan '04, Heather Hightower '05, Ella Maslin '07, Mauro Parra '07, Ed Purtetz '07, Hester Sachse '05, Lillian Shad '07, Chryselles Simmons '07, Jamie Stevenson '05, Deana Stuart '05, Sierra Suris-Kruppa '07, Josh Wauchope '07, Irene Yee '05

## Welcome!

**Emily Boronkay** – joined the Upper School Academic Support Center this fall. She is a graduate of Westtown Friends School, holds a BA from Eastern New Mexico University and a master's degree in Special Education from Chapman University. She has taught special education preschool, elementary remedial, middle school humanities, high school and adult special education and adult ESL. Emily grew up in Medford Lakes, NJ, and lived in San Diego for 26 years. Last year she was drawn back to the east coast and currently resides in the woods "across the river" in Highland with her dog, Bella, and assorted wildlife. Her children, Bekkah and Josh, are university students in California.

**Helena Fleig** – is a new upper school history teacher. She is a summa cum laude graduate of Fordham University and is completing a Master of Divinity degree at Harvard. In conjunction with this graduate work, she has been involved in a program in secondary education coordinated through the Divinity School.

**Kyle Hopkins** – is the new night watchman. He is also dorm parent in Craig and coach for girls varsity volleyball, boy's JV basketball and assistant coach for varsity baseball. He is a graduate of Springfield College. Currently Kyle is working on his master's degree in physical education with a concentration in coaching pedagogy at SUNY Cortland. Before joining Oakwood, Kyle was a long-term substitute for physical education at Spackenkill High School in Poughkeepsie, his alma mata.

**Barbara Lonczak** – became Associate Director of Admissions in May. Barbara is known to many of us as the mother of **Will Lonczak '06** (now at Goucher College), **Kip '11** and **Ted '08**. Barbara has had extensive experience working with a variety of non-profit organizations. Over the span of the past decade, she has worked for Historic Hudson Valley in Tarrytown, Kingston-Newburgh Enterprise Corporation, and the Liberty Partnership Program for Youth Development at Orange County Community College. Barbara studied in both Spain and Mexico during high school and college, and is fluent in Spanish.

**Susan Masciale-Lynch** – became Director of Admissions and Financial Aid in July. Susan is in her tenth year at Oakwood, and she has served the school as Director of the Academic Support Center and in college counseling, admissions work, advising, dorm parenting, and coaching as well. Her education includes work in psychology, biology, special education, and clinical neuro-psychology, at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Susan and her husband Sean, art teacher at Cheshire Academy, have two sons: Eamon and Finn.

**Pat Meade** – takes over from Susan as Coordinator of the Academic Support Center. A member of the ASC team for the past



**Seated:** Emily Boronkay, Helena Fleig, Christine Whiting  
**Standing:** Stephen Miller, new faculty mentor, Jeremy Robbins, Camisha Oates, Kyle Hopkins, David Whiting

four years, she has been particularly engaged in a variety of professional development activities related to teaching strategies for students with learning differences. She holds an undergraduate degree from Siena College in American Studies and English Education and an MS from SUNY New Paltz in Special Education.

**Camisha Oates** – teaches technology courses, provides software, website and database support for administrative offices and helps oversee Craig Dorm. Camisha previously provided technical support, taught technology courses and served as a dorm parent at Oakwood while employed with Computer Management Enterprises. She is currently working on two bachelor's degrees, one in Commercial Art (graphics design) and one in Theology.

**Jeremy Robbins** – is the new Dean of Students. Jeremy works on programming, advising and campus conduct issues while also teaching in the middle school. Not a new face on campus, Jeremy taught in the middle school from 2001 through 2005, then left to obtain his master's degree in private school leadership at Columbia University. Jeremy continues to play in the Riverbank Banjo Band. He and his wife, Melissa, live in Fishkill.

**Christine Whiting** – is a member of the Upper School Academic Support Center and also teaches 6th and 7th grade English. She has a BA in psychology from St. Lawrence University. Prior to coming to Oakwood, she worked at Rippowam-Cisqua School and Rumsey Hall School. Christine and her husband David live on campus with their two year old son JD and a yellow lab.

**David Whiting** – is the new Dean of Residential Life and history teacher for 7th and 8th grades. He is responsible for all activities and organizational structures associated with

the residential life program. Dave grew up in independent schools and is a graduate of Cate School near Santa Barbara where he was a boarding student. He holds an undergraduate degree from Middlebury College. For the past seven years, he worked at Rumsey Hall in Connecticut where he and his wife Christine were dormitory supervisors. ☐

## New Additions



Congratulations to Aimee & Aaron Lieberman, music teacher, on the birth of Delilah & Milo on November 4, 2007.



Congratulations to Dave and Tine Whiting and older brother JD on the birth of Jackson Sturgis (Jake) on February 7th.

## Students Attend Model United Nations Conference

by: Stephen Miller, History Teacher

This past November, 12 students from Oakwood attended the prestigious Brown University Simulation of the United Nations in Providence, RI. Oakwood represented Argentina and Colombia, with two students sitting on the Organization of Islamic States. This year's conference saw over 600 students from all over the country – and even Israel and England – arrive to debate issues of current events. Oakwood students debated AIDS policy, nuclear weapons nonproliferation, weapons in space, refugees, development, women's rights, discrimination against Muslims, terrorism, civil wars, the international drug trade and many, many other issues. Despite the fact that Oakwood was among the smallest schools at the conference, we were able to become prominent delegates on even the biggest committees. **Greg Pitner '08**, was even awarded a coveted "Distinguished Delegate Award." The most exciting news of all, however, was the fact that the Oakwood delegates actively joined in successful efforts to draft legitimate solutions to some of the world's most pressing and long-standing problems. Upon arriving back, they immediately began plotting for the next conference. ☐



Oakwood's Model UN delegates

## BioTour Bus Visits Oakwood

by: Jeremy Robbins, Upper School Dean of Students



Alan Palm with JD Cronin, 6th grade

A school bus powered by vegetable oil and solar panels stopped by Oakwood Friends School during a national tour. The Bio Tour Bus made its appearance on campus on October 15th when the bus and its crew visited school to promote their message of using alternative and renewable energy sources. In addition to using vegetable oil

supplied from restaurant fryers throughout the country that would normally be thrown away, the school bus features solar panels that provide electricity within the bus. The "BioBus" travels across the United States, stopping at colleges, high schools and community events to educate and excite Americans about the sustainable energy movement. The visit brings people together to discuss the issues of global warming, peak oil, renewable energy and sustainable living, and works to generate excitement about possible solutions. Powered completely by renewable sources, the BioBus is an interactive visual example of alternative energy in action.

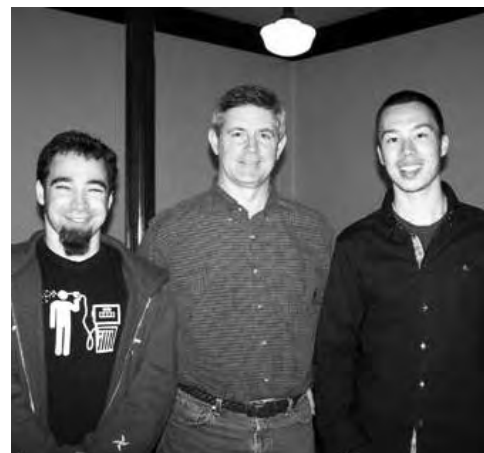
During Community Meeting, Alan Palm and Ethan Burke, the drivers of the bus, discussed the mechanics of the conversion to biofuel as well as addressed issues regarding dependence on fossil fuels and alternative fuel production. They stressed that each person can make a difference by his or her own actions.

Later, Alan and Ethan met with science classes to look under the hood of the bus and continue the discussions in greater depth. Throughout the day there was a throng of students touring the bus and asking questions.

I felt it was important for students to see young people who are passionate about a vital environmental issue actually doing something on their own about it. ☐

## Young Quakes 2007

Oakwood hosted "Young Quakes 2007: Living A Revolutionary Faith" in October, a gathering of high school Friends. The purpose of the conference was to help nurture and deepen faith and witness, have fun together, and come to better understand who we are. It was an opportunity for young Friends in the unprogrammed tradition to explore with like Friends what it means to live faith boldly today. ☐



Classmates Noah Zerkin and Mike Peters '98 visit with Bill Doolittle in November.

## Middle School Film Project: "The Underground Railroad"

by: Nancy Doolittle, Middle School Head

The Middle School is completing a film on "The Underground Railroad in Dutchess County" which will be submitted for the Bridge Film Festival sponsored by Brooklyn Friends School in April. This project was supported by a generous grant from the Friends Council on Education for the purchase of cameras and other equipment.

Last year as part of the "Hudson River Exploration" program, students learned about the history, culture and environment of the Hudson Valley. Building on that knowledge, we have narrowed the focus of the program this year to the Underground Railroad.

The fall term's highlight of the program was the Workshop Day field trip on November 16th to Millbrook, NY, to do research and filming for our video, primarily at Nine Partners Meeting House. To prepare children for the trip, Kathy Moyer, Associate Director of Development & Alumni Affairs, made a presentation on the history of the Meeting House and Nine Partners Boarding School and how Oakwood evolved from that school.

Outside the Nine Partners Meeting House, we were greeted by our host for the day, David Greenwood, historian for Millbrook and the town of Washington, and his wife Nan. We entered the Meeting House in silence, the girls through the women's door, the boys through the men's door and sat in our respective sides for Meeting for Worship.

Sitting in silence in the Meeting House, which is almost 230 years old on the same benches where many thousands of Friends sat to worship over the years, was a powerful experience. We all felt very connected to our past and I think even more reflective.

After our traditional handshake to end the meeting, David elaborated upon what Kathy had taught the students, sharing history and stories about the Meeting House, Nine Partners Boarding School and Jacob and Deborah Rogers Willets. The Willets met at the school, married, became head teachers of such high caliber that the school was known far and wide during their tenure. Both the home of



Middle School Field Trip, November 16, 2007: Middle School students experienced Meeting for Worship at Nine Partners Meeting House in Millbrook

the Willets and the Meeting House were stops on the Underground Railroad.

After students explored the Meeting House, we took a walk in the cemetery where David explained about Quaker burial customs and showed us the graves of the Willets and the oldest graves in the cemetery which are those of the Philip Hart family. Next was a bus tour to the site of the Nine Partners Boarding School, the Willets house and a tour of the house built by Philip Hart in 1800 which is owned by Nan and David. Nan showed a Nine Partners Boarding School sampler made in 1799 by Mary Collins. David also talked about Quaker traditions associated with the house and showed other items associated with the school.

Before lunch in the Village Hall there was a reading from *Stealing Freedom*, by Elisa Carbone. The book tells a true story of a family, particularly

a 13 year old girl, who escaped to freedom on the Underground Railroad. After lunch David talked about the Underground Railroad and the role played by Lucretia Coffin Mott, abolitionist and Nine Partners alumna. We finished our day at the Millbrook Free Library where David showed us a painting of Jacob Willets.

The students came away with an appreciation of our school's rich history and the importance of the early Quakers in the Hudson Valley in the anti-slavery movement.

Since then, students have finished reading the Carbone book, written a script and are now editing the film. I am grateful to the Friends Council on Education for helping to provide this memorable experience for our students. ☐



Nan Greenwood shows students a prized sampler, made by Mary Collins at Nine Partners Boarding School in 1799. Mary is an ancestor of Oakwood alumnus Robert Collins '48.



Cassidy Teagle '12, Ozi Matthews '12 and JD Cronin '14 with David Greenwood after his talk on "Quaker Support of the Underground Railroad"