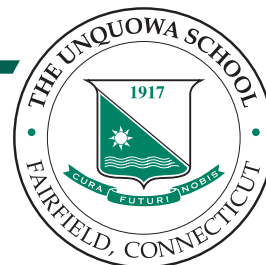


About U.S.



A Publishing Tradition
of The Unquowa School

Message from the Head of School

How does experience shape children as learners and - more importantly - as human beings? This is an essential question for parents and educators, and as Founders' Day approaches, I can't help but think of how the vision of our founding families speaks to it. The parents who began our small school in 1917 were committed to creating the sort of learning environment that values not only traditional knowledge and skills - so important to a strong liberal arts education - but also the experiential approach to acquiring that education which shapes children as thinkers and responsible individuals.

Children need to smell, feel, taste, and question. They need to interact with others, pose theories, make errors, build on the ideas of others and, most importantly, learn patience. They must acquire this disposition of patience because important lessons - both about knowledge and human relationships - take time to understand and absorb. We can certainly provide children with the opportunity to go beyond the text within the walls of our school; our classrooms are where this process begins. But there is a larger classroom beyond our walls. Our four year-olds play in the brook and watch for ducks, and as older students, they test its water's properties and see organisms that live in it under the microscope back in their classroom. But when they go out into Long Island Sound on The Maritime Museum's ROV to do the same, the understanding of the earth's water systems is imbedded in their minds far better than just reading about the Sound in their text. When children spend the afternoon as second graders finding and tagging a hundred horseshoe crabs on Sasco Beach after learning the crab's body parts in their classroom, the importance of the horseshoe crab to our ecosystem will not be forgotten. The resources of the Maritime, along with such other rich academic institutions as The Fairfield Museum and History Center and The Aldridge Contemporary Art Museum, offer us extended classrooms where our children - both young and old - can slowly and patiently interact with tangible artifacts and the adults who spend their lives passionately working with

them. Other places, like Sport Hill Farm and Giant Steps, the former where all of our students spend time planting and harvesting, the latter where our eighth graders spend service learning time each week with a partner student, equally reinforce the knowledge and insights that children need to become strong students and thoughtful human beings. It doesn't happen overnight, and it doesn't come from the textbook alone.

Experience reinforces understanding of both knowledge and people.

Greg Mortenson's book, *Three Cups of Tea*, provides the perfect metaphor for roles that experience and patience play in shaping our children as learners and as human beings. *Three Cups of Tea* tells the story of Mortenson's experience in the small Pakistani village of Korphe, whose people nursed him back to health after a climbing accident on



Max and Jeremiah discuss James Prosek's exhibition at the Aldrich.

K2. The title refers to the custom he learned there of drinking not one, but three cups of tea; the first you drink as a stranger, the second as a friend, and with the third you drink as family. One cannot just gulp down a cup of tea and run and expect to come away with understanding - be it of an academic concept or another person. The textbook lesson is the first cup of tea, the three-dimensional experience in the classroom is the second, and the lesson learned in the field - be it a history lesson learned by reading the original letters of a colonist, an art lesson learned by interacting with the works of living, exhibiting artists, or the life lessons learned by becoming friends with a student at Giant Steps, genuine experience over time is the third cup of tea for which a school must make time.

Many thanks to our founding families for acknowledging the importance of experience and patience in the lives of our children and to the headmistresses, headmasters and trustees who protected that "third cup of tea" over the years. I look forward to seeing you all at Founders' Day. Perhaps we'll share a cup of tea?

Sharon Lauer

To view upcoming field experiences, check out our new online calendar at www.unquowa.org/calendar

Costa Rica es Pura Vida!!



Pura Vida is a saying throughout all of Costa Rica that is translated to mean pure life. The people of Costa Rica use this expression when you ask them how they are doing or feeling. Their response is always, "Pura Vida!" Just imagine standing on the island of Tortuguero, in the Caribbean, in the middle of the night, watching a 200 pound green sea turtle lay her eggs by the light of the moon. That was just one of my many adventures in Costa Rica...and that is definitely Pura Vida!!

I was fortunate enough to have the most magnificent guide during my time in Costa Rica. His name was Oscar Vargas. He grew up in and around the city of San Jose, CR. It was wonderful to view CR through his eyes. He shared a wealth of knowledge about the 12 different kinds of forests in CR, animals, flora and fauna, people, economy, education, and the preservation and conservation of his beautiful country.

Costa Rica is a country divided into 7 provinces, each very different and unique. The one thing that all citizens of CR have in common is their determination to preserve and conserve the natural life and beauty of their country. All of the areas that I visited, including San Jose, La Fortuna, Monteverde, Tamarindo, and Tortuguero, use energy-efficient lighting, post water conservation signs, place recycle centers throughout properties, as well as room keys which act as electric cards so that people will remember to turn the power off when leaving their quarters.

Education is extremely important in CR. Even in remote areas such as in the mountains of Monteverde, children are mandated to attend school through high school. Both elementary and high school students wear uniforms at the public schools. The government provides uniforms, books, and supplies to families who may not be able afford this expense. Most schools outside the capital city of San Jose are very small with

few resources; however, the children and parents of CR value education highly and truly understand the importance of furthering education.

CR has a rich and growing economy. Tourism is not only their number one source of income, but has also helped CR in their efforts to lead a "green" lifestyle, with many of the tourism groups advocating sustainable tourism. CR also has one of the largest Internet technology companies, providing thousands of jobs and benefits for many in CR. The exportation of coffee, pineapple, bananas, and flowers, help to keep CR strong.

The animal and plant life in CR is indescribable! It is the greenest, most lush, healthy land I have ever seen. The animals are mandated to live free in their natural environment. CR has strict laws against hunting and trapping an animal. You will never find a circus (with animals) or zoo in CR. The only place where animals are kept in a restricted area is at Las Pumas where they rehabilitate sick or hurt animals found in nature. That being said, I was able to see animals living free such as toucans, macaws, howler and spider monkeys, two-toed sloths, giant iguanas, sea turtles, aningah birds, caymans, and vipers, just to name a few.

I cannot thank Unquowa enough for giving me the opportunity of a lifetime to further my curriculum this summer. I learned something new and was doing something exciting every minute of the day in CR. I hope to have the chance to return to CR very soon!

Check out some of my favorite memories below and make sure to look at pictures from my adventure in Costa Rica on my 1st grade website!

Hiking around Arenal Volcano and eating termites!

Safari rafting down Las Penas Blancas River during a rainstorm.

Relaxing in the natural Arenal Volcano hot springs at Tabacon

Hiking in Monteverde Cloud Forest Preserve

Zip lining at 45 mph over the rainforest canopy in Monteverde.

Paddling an outrigger in Tamarindo to a secluded beach near the Catalina islands and snorkeling!

Traveling through the canals of Tortuguero...there are no roads!

Howler monkeys as an alarm clock at 5 a.m. at Pachira Lodge in Tortuguero

Watching a 200 lb green sea turtle lay her eggs!

The most amazing people I met and friends I made in Costa Rica

PURA VIDA!!
Maureen Becker

Virginia F. Birdsall Faculty Award

First grade teacher, Maureen Becker, was the 2008 recipient of the Virginia F. Birdsall Faculty Award, created to allow faculty to pursue summer projects that go beyond the realm of expected summer work. Launched in honor of Virginia F. Birdsall, our school's first headmistress and someone who fostered learning in students and faculty alike. This award is given to one faculty member at Closing Ceremonies each spring for the purpose of unusual enrichment, research or travel.

Future Chefs

What happens when you mix yellow jello with blue jello? WOW... Did you ever drink jello before it turns hard in the refrigerator? Yum....

PreK-3 students have cooking classes at least once per week. Using liquids, solids, and mixing, measuring, tasting and following directions is part of our science curriculum in our classroom. We make lots of discoveries through observations and using our senses. When our chef hats come out it's bon appetit!

Janice Shannon



THE UNQUOWA SCHOOL'S

FOUNDERS' DAY CELEBRATION

Saturday, October 18, 2008
12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.



Come join us for a Farm-to-Fork Barbeque at noon, an afternoon of activities for kids run by our eighth graders, and an alumni and student soccer game at 2 p.m. Food and fun for everyone!

Please note, the parking will be tight. To insure the safety of all, please do not park on Stratfield Road in front of the school. Once our lot is full, park along any of the side streets and enjoy a short walk to school. Carpool, if you can!

Help us get to 100!

Welcome back to school! Thanks to our community's generosity, last year's Annual Family of Funds campaign raised \$139,000 and had 76% participation from Unquowa families, and the Board, staff and faculty were at 100% participation.

The success of our Family of Annual Funds campaign each year allows us to support projects and programs that may be seen as extras elsewhere but that at Unquowa we consider essential parts of an excellent liberal arts education. Our commitment to the arts, foreign language and frequent, meaningful field experiences at all ages has a cost. The cost, however, to our children if we eliminated these programs would be far greater in the long run.

The Annual Fund is a critical component of our school's budget. Our goal is to have 100% participation from families this year, so please help us to achieve this goal by making your pledge today.

From the Library

October is National Book Month. This annual event encourages readers of all ages to enjoy books. Here at Unquowa we do just that every day. We can experience adventures beyond our imagination and learn about our past by opening up the pages of a good book.

October Book Fair

This year we are very excited to announce that we will be having a book fair from October 14-October 16. Booksmart of New York City will be sending the highest quality of literature with award winning titles in both fiction and non fiction, including most recently published books. We have worked with the owners throughout the summer to guarantee a selection that will suit every family. Detailed information about the fair will be sent home in the next weeks.

Author's Day

On Wednesday, October 15 author Tony Abbott will visit with grades 2-8. He is the author of the exciting series *Secrets of Droon*, *Time Surfers*, the upcoming *The Haunting of Derek Stone*, and the novels *Krinkle*, *Firegirl*, (which won the Golden Kite Award for fiction) and *The Postcard*. Students have had the opportunity to get to know his books during their library classes.

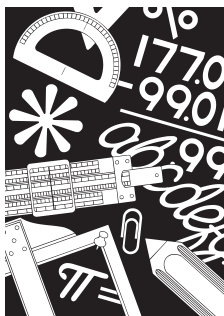
Happy Reading!

Debbie Lietuvninkas, Librarian

Puzzled?

Family Math Night for students in grades 4, 5 and 6, and their parents, is planned for 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 16.

Join us for an evening of entertaining puzzles and activities, all designed to strengthen mathematical thinking skills.



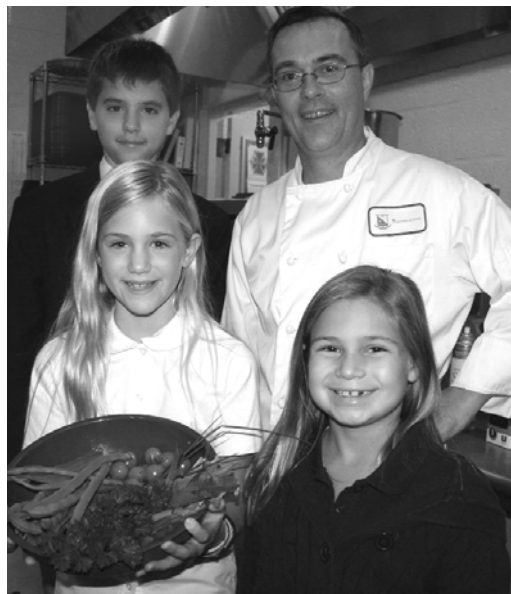
Unquowa Garden

Did you know that Unquowa has raised beds of organic vegetables, herbs, and flowers growing behind the school? There are cherry tomatoes, plum tomatoes, and a volunteer heirloom tomato surrounded by marigolds and a large pot of nasturtium.

Marigolds and nasturtium are considered beneficial because they protect many plants from garden pests. Nasturtium flowers and leaves are even edible! There are also small raised beds of lettuce, parsley, and Swiss chard and a tepee of Italian green beans. Our herb garden has many varieties including basil, sage, oregano, thyme, rosemary, and chives. A student favorite is chocolate mint. There is even a large tepee covered with birdhouse gourds, heavenly blue morning glories, and scarlet red runners...a perfect hideaway for reading a book.

Come tour our garden. If you come early in the morning you are likely to see students picking fresh vegetables and herbs for Chef Peter and Chef Dan.

Mary Curran



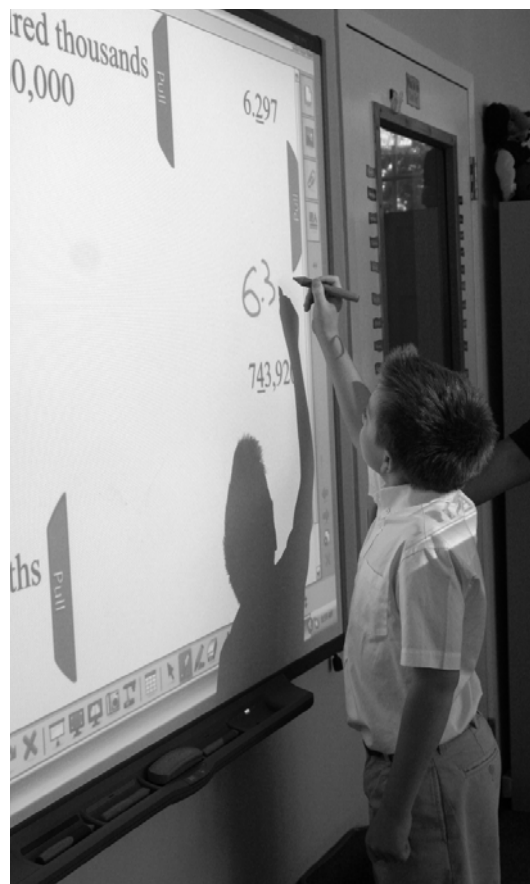
Stephen, Elysse, and Olivia delivering green beans, tomatoberries, lettuce, chives, and parsley to Chef Peter. Chef Dan used them to make a delicious soba noodle salad for that day's lunch.

Using Technology Smartly

Fifth grade students are learning that rounding whole numbers and decimals can be fun, especially when using the Smart Board. As they reviewed the definitions of rounding, sum, and difference, they were amazed as the confirmed answers to these questions were revealed with the swipe of an eraser.

Each student was given the opportunity to go to the Smart Board several times to review their knowledge of place value, rounding, and estimating sums and differences. After solving problems, sliding a pull tab across the board revealed the correct answer. As a child approached the Smart Board, students who waited their turn, remained focused, eager to see the correct answer revealed. It was great to hear from all the students about how much fun they had in math class!

Mary Faulkner



Starting our School Year

A lot of "firsts" ... our first day of school, our first assembly, our first birthdays, and the very first day of school for our PreK-3 (the class of 2019) students!



2008

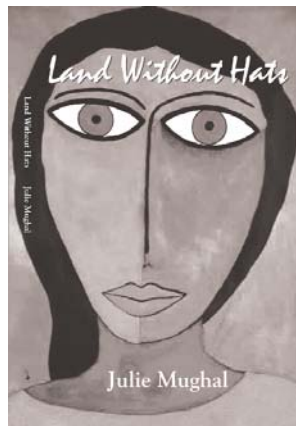


Land without Hats

Land Without Hats is a moving memoir by Julie Mughal which explores the difficulties faced by widows in the developing world and their courage in the face of adversity.

Julie is mom to Sophia in our kindergarten and Zachariah in prek-3. We are honored that she will be doing a book reading for us on Tuesday, October 21 at 7:00 p.m. in the library.

Her book will be available for purchase starting Monday, September 22 in the Main Office for \$15.00 cash or check. Partial proceeds will be donated to Save the Children.



Excerpt from *Land Without Hats*:

My life is clearly delineated - life before Swissair 111 crashed into the Atlantic and life after. My first husband was killed on the flight. As I struggled with this devastating loss, I sought meaning and a sense of purpose.

As a way to heal, I began to speak with widows from the many countries I visited through my work with Save the Children. Their courageous stories inspired me to dig deeper into what it meant to be a "widow" in different cultures and to try to make a difference.

Land without Hats is a collection of oral histories gathered from some of the places I visited. I've spoken with many exceptional women who continue their journeys-widows from Haiti to Afghanistan and beyond -who have been faced with the struggle of re-creating their lives and raising their children following the death of their husbands.

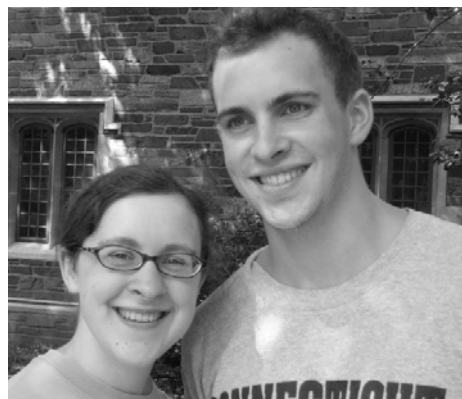
In Haiti, I met three women whom I've thought of many times in the years since I first began this journey of self-exploration and outreach. They lived in devastating poverty but their dignity belied this fact. They were strong and determined to continue to raise their children in circumstances few of us can imagine. They missed their husbands terribly but held onto the hope that they were now in a better place-the land without hats. In this land, their husbands-hats in hand-were welcomed into the kingdom of heaven. There they wait to be reunited with their loved ones one day.

Ten years ago, the burden of my loss was too heavy for me to bear. In reaching out to these extraordinary women, I discovered a world of widows-much different from my own-one I never imagined existed. I hope that through telling their stories, I can begin to give back to remarkable women such as the ones I met who many years ago gave me the strength and encouragement to heal.

Alumni News

Nat Proctor, class of 2002, has just returned to Scotland to begin his sophomore year studying history at the University of St. Andrews — a fairly large, very old university in a village on the Scottish coast. After a year in a dorm, Nat is now sharing an apartment with a couple of classmates. His flat is just a few blocks from a ruined castle, a ruined cathedral, a wind swept beach and some beautiful golf courses.

Maggie Proctor, class of 2000, is closer to home this year. She just began a master's program in Near Eastern Studies at Princeton University. After studying French at Unquowa and Deerfield, she switched to Arabic to satisfy her language distribution requirement at Wellesley College. She fell in love with the language and the rest is history; she graduated magna cum laude from Wellesley with a double major in English and Middle Eastern studies this past spring.



Musical Notes

After school and before school music programs have begun!

Guitar: Mrs. P is teaching guitar to beginner students (grades 3-5) on Mondays and advanced students (grades 6-8) on Thursdays.

Chorus: All students in grades 5-8 are welcome! Chorus meets on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday mornings from 8:00 - 8:30. Students can join for any morning or all three!

Mrs. P is working on dates for the groups to share their gift of song in the community this winter and next spring!

Musically yours,
Mrs. P



Congratulations

Chelsea Byrd was awarded Most Valuable Player (MVP) Awards at both The Future Stars Sports Academy in Trumbull and The NIKE Girls Basketball Camps at Sacred Heart University this summer.

It was her leadership on both ends of the court that helped make an impact and refine her basketball skills. These programs were geared toward fundamental development in shooting, passing, dribbling, defense, rebounding, team play, and sportsmanship.

Chelsea averaged 20.5 points, 6.0 rebounds, 10.0 assists and 6.0 steals per game and helped lead her team, NCAA - Duke at Future Stars to victory. She averaged 12.5 points, 4.0 rebounds, 8.0 assists and 4.0 steals per game at the NIKE Girls Basketball Camp.

Congratulations to Chelsea for her outstanding efforts.



A note from the UPA ...

It was wonderful to visit with many of our returning families as well as with the new families at the Welcome Back Coffee. Chef Peter and Hospitality did a marvelous job with their beautifully displayed table and tasty breakfast treats. There was plenty of Gator Brew Coffee being poured, yummy treats and great conversation buzzing within the gym. What a great sense of community we have here at Unquowa!

Our inaugural UPA meeting was held on September 10 following assembly and was well attended. We have many activities and enrichment programs planned for the students. The room representatives stopped by and met later that week. Everyone present was given a handbook that clarifies his or her room rep roles during the year.

Our family "Fun"raiser on September 26 was in the planning stages. The inner Olympian spirit to be exhibited in our gym will even make Michael Phelps proud. Our thanks and gold medals go to the team of Monica Murray and Peggy Scianna for coordinating this event.

We appreciate the generosity of those families that participated in the Jeannine Gift and Wrapping Paper fundraiser. Thanks to everyone!! These funds will be utilized to underwrite our annual Winterfest production, which is a joy to watch. Announcements will go out prior to the Jeannine orders coming in so keep an eye out for the upcoming emails. We thank Jessica Ryan for heading this event.

On October 15 Unquowa will welcome our first author of the year, Tony Abbott. He is an extremely talented writer who

is the creator of the magical Droon series. Mr. Abbott will be visiting with groups of students, discussing his works as well as the art of writing. His books will be available for purchase and autograph. The Book Fair which is being coordinated by Andrea Pinto, and our Librarian, Debbie Lietuvninkas, will take place on October 14 -16. We will be looking for volunteers to help with set-up as well as throughout the duration of the event. Look for sign-up sheets in the hallway.



Kudos go to both Tami-Lyn Morse and Lynne Chapin for their tireless efforts in running the school's gift shop. From the selling of gym uniforms to organizing the beautiful Gator Kiosk, they have been available to all those who have needed clothing, hats, coffee or Gator gifts. Tami-Lyn and Lynne will be there each Wednesday at assembly. Stop by, say "hi" and see the great assortment of Gator Goods that are available.

Please join us for our next UPA meeting on October 8 after Assembly. It is a great way for you to become familiar with the goings on here at the school as well as meet other Unquowa parents.

Joan Panagos and Marcie Lapido
UPA Co-Presidents

October

Wednesday, October 1

Assembly, 8:45 a.m.

Thursday, October 2

Upper School (grades 5-8) Back to School Night, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, October 8

Assembly, 8:45 a.m.
UPA Meeting after Assembly

Thursday, October 9

School Holiday, Yom Kippur

Friday, October 10

School Holiday

Monday, October 13

School Holiday, Columbus Day

Tuesday, October 14 - Thursday, October 16 - Book Fair

Wednesday, October 15

Assembly, 8:45 a.m.

Thursday, October 16

Math Night (grades 4-6), 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Saturday, October 18

Founders' Day

Tuesday, October 21

Land Without Hats Reading, 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, October 22

Assembly, 8:45 a.m.
BOG Meeting, 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, October 23

After School Social (gr. 4 & 5), 3:30 - 5:00 p.m.

Friday, October 24

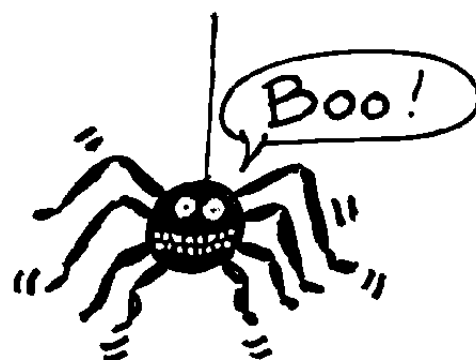
Upper School Social (gr. 6-8), 6:30 p.m..

Wednesday, October 29

Assembly, 8:45 a.m.
Coffee with the Head after Assembly

Friday, October 31

Pancake Breakfast, 7:30 a.m.
Halloween Parade, 8:45 a.m.
Field Day
Noon Dismissal



981 Stratfield Road, Fairfield, CT 06825-1697

THE UNQUOWA SCHOOL



Ms. Becker, 2008 recipient of the Virginia F. Birdsall Faculty Award, and some of her adventures in Costa Rica this summer.

See page 2 for details.

