



About U.S.

Message from the Head of School

As the weeks of economic stress have turned into months and the world has gradually begun figuring out how to tighten its proverbial belt, I have paid special attention to that belt tightening in the nation's schools, from elementary through university level, and I have been concerned by what I've read. The first and obvious cost-cutter that is once more being bandied about is class size. A recent *New Yorker* article by Malcolm Gladwell and a *New York Times* article covering class size both broached the notion that, as schools look to save money, maybe small classes don't matter as much as we thought they did. The main premise of Gladwell's article is actually a recommendation for schools regarding hiring qualified teachers, and it's certainly an important topic. He makes the unlikely suggestion that if schools used the same hiring methods that football teams use to find good quarterbacks they might find better teachers, and a lot of what he says in that regard makes sense. At one point, however, he argues that a good teacher can even be given a big class and do better than a poor teacher could do with a small one - for the same pay. I would argue that this is fairly obvious; a good teacher can always do better than a poor one, but why should we ever have to choose between remarkable teachers and a class size that allows those teachers to have meaningful relationships with their students and the ability to thoughtfully teach and assess those students? In the related *Times* article, New York's Mayor Bloomberg is quoted as saying, "It's the teacher looking a child in the eye, and teachers can look lots of

children in the eye." Clearly, Mr. Bloomberg has spent little time teaching or he would not make such a naïve statement. Children need more from their teachers than eye contact, and a class that numbers above the teens offers only the remote chance that even the best teacher can do much more.



Third grader, Marissa, extracts DNA from broccoli at the DNA Epicenter Lab in New London on a recent third and fourth grade field experience.

Class size, however, is not the only educational component to suffer from budget crunches. Curriculum is undergoing the same scrutiny, from the early grades through college, and the humanities are having a tough time defending their worth in a money-driven world where folks are suddenly finding themselves with less money. Just as larger classes save dollars, so does short-sightedly stripping an educational program of the courses that do not prepare students for vocations. The liberal arts have, by definition, never intended to prepare students for careers. Rather, the humanities

provide the critical thinking skills, the historical perspective, the aesthetic appreciation and the ethical reasoning that prepare us all to live responsible, meaningful lives, no matter what our career choice. Unfortunately, however, from early grades through university, schools are reducing classes in the arts, history, literature, languages and philosophy to save money. Anthony T. Kronman, Yale law professor and the author of *Education's End: Why our Colleges and Universities Have Given up on the Meaning of Life*, sums it up beautifully. His book, which explores the benefits of "the life worth living," points out the irony of cutting liberal arts courses at a time in history when the need for the humanities is more urgent than ever, considering the widespread ethical irresponsibility and skewed values that led to our current financial meltdown.

The most valuable resource our world has today is the children who will become the next generation of adults that will lead it, guide it, and protect it. Interest rates rise and fall but the intellectual and ethical capital we instill in our children can never be taken from them. Our economy will eventually rebound, but if schools sabotage our children's education until it does by raising class size and eliminating the critical curricular balance of the humanities in a short-sighted effort to save a bit of money, we will find ourselves left with young adults who may know how to count a dollar but not how to create a life worth spending it on. We must consider education the last place, not the first, where we trim our budgets. It is the one investment truly worth protecting.

Sharon Lauer

Mathcounts

The nationwide Mathcounts program is now in its 26th year. Here at Unquowa, Mathcounts has been a part of the mathematics curriculum since 1991. On Saturday, February 14, after months of preparation, our math academic team assembled at Fairfield University for its one opportunity to compete against other local teams in the Mathcounts Chapter competition. The team was composed of eighth graders Kamau Burton, Brandon Hylton, Josh Knopf and Max Martone. Seventh graders Bailey Cooke, Charlie Haviland and Erica Meno competed as individuals.

And compete they did! After three rounds of written work, and a noisy pizza lunch, with proud parents and siblings in attendance, we held our breath while the names of the top 12 students were

announced, and we were thrilled to learn that both Brandon and Max would have the opportunity to compete in the stressful oral Countdown Round. Never before have we had two students in the Countdown Round.

Then they announced the names of the top six teams that would continue on to the State competition on March 14 - Middlebrook MS, Brunswick Academy, Ludlowe MS, Coleytown MS, Scofield Magnet MS and finally The Unquowa School. No group screamed louder than we did!

It is a joy to work with these talented and enthusiastic students, and they have done an outstanding job of representing Unquowa. Congratulations!



Lisa Haseltine

7th Graders Visit The Audubon Center

Seventh graders traveled to The Connecticut Audubon Center in Fairfield at the end of January. Equipped with binoculars and field guides, they were challenged to identify common species of northeastern birds like American goldfinches, downy woodpeckers, white breasted nuthatches, and tufted titmice. Students also took an investigative hike through the Larsen Wildlife Sanctuary with naturalist, Carol Kratzman, where they observed a variety of habitats and evidence of abundant wildlife. Carol taught students how to identify witch hazel and beech trees and pointed out skunk cabbage just beginning to emerge along the trail. When students returned to the Center, they had the opportunity to get a close-up view of some of the wildlife that has been rescued by the Audubon. They observed the unique characteristics of a European barn owl, a red-shouldered hawk, and an eastern box turtle, learned interesting facts about their adaptations, and discussed what makes each a predator. Thank you, Carol Kratzman, for providing 7th graders with an interesting outdoor and indoor field experience at the The CT Audubon Center in Fairfield.



Mary Curran

An Outstanding Basketball Season!

On Friday we celebrated our basketball season at the awards dinner and what a season it was!

The **JV team** finished their season undefeated. They were led in scoring by Danny Leszczynski and Sisso Makhraz. Ian Chapin and Jaeden McKenzie provided stellar defense. The **Green Varsity** players all developed their basketball skills and we look forward to them being strong contributors next year. The **Girls' White Varsity** lost their first game and finished the season with 7 straight wins. Nadia Makhraz and Chelsea Byrd led the team in scoring while Taylor Lopez-Balboa did most of the "board" work. Kai Burton and Rajane Brown provided strong defense and Nicole Derek was a key contributor off the bench. The **Boys' White Varsity** finished with a 5-4 record and were led by the inside presence of Kamau Burton, Javante Cameron-Sheffield and Chris Taylor. Marc-Thomas Greenawalt provided strong defense and rebounding off the bench and Matt Watson developed into a strong offensive weapon.

Thanks to everyone for an awesome basketball season!

Al Boccamazzo



Basketball Awards

Unquowa School Spirit

Peta-Gay Clayton

Kamau Burton

Most Improved

Marissa Leggiadro

Nicole Derek

Grace Carapezzi

Matt Watson

Outstanding Performance

Chris Taylor

Nadia Makhraz

Chelsea Byrd

Javante Cameron-Sheffield

Defense

Rajane Brown

Marc-Thomas Greenawalt

Andrew Godfrey

Josh Knopf

Good Sportsmanship

Taylor Lopez-Balboa

Peta-Gay Clayton

Kai Burton

Matthew Kresch

Congratulations

Our Unquowa Geography Bee winner this year, Alex Burdo, has qualified for the State Geography Bee. He will be competing at Central Connecticut University on Friday, April 3. Good luck, Alex! We're all rooting for you!

The Unquowa Express to Appalachia Rides Again

This will be our Eighth Annual Drive to help our Appalachian neighbors. From **April 1 until April 14**, we will have a storage bin in our parking lot so we can drop off any gently used donations. Donations of clothing, books, working electronics, baby equipment, toys and even furniture are as welcome as they are deeply needed. A particularly helpful contribution is any kind of camping gear because many of the people we hope to help live in tents all year long.

Our donations go directly from our school to Charleston, West Virginia. They enjoy a thirteen hour drive on the back of a fifty foot tractor trailer that is packed by our students. For this reason, among others, we ask that your donations be boxed and labeled. While we appreciate any donation you are willing to give, open shopping bags tend to spill out and all the contents scatter. If you don't have boxes, CONSTRUCTION bags work as well. These are the debris bags that contractors use.

Many of us saw the Appalachian presentation on 20/20 recently and may have learned for the first time how desperate the poverty there can be. These people are working poor who spend the days in the coal mines to provide heat for other homes, and then spend their nights sleeping on the ground in the cold. The children routinely go to sleep hungry and even a warm bath is an unheard of luxury. That's why our School gets involved. Your kindness and willingness to help over the years has literally provided the first pair of shoes to a four year old and the only cup and plate an old gentleman ever had.

Please call with any questions and, as always, thank you so much.

Marilynn Halas

Meet our Board

This month we introduce you to two more of our board members:

Jennifer Gianinno was appointed to the Board in 2007. She is a kindergarten teacher at Long Lots Elementary School in Westport. Jennifer has been teaching kindergarten for 16 years, and she started her teaching career here at Unquowa. She graduated from Central Connecticut State University with a BS Degree in Education and continued her studies at Sacred Heart University where she received her master's degree in teaching reading. Jennifer was born and raised in Stratford and is currently living in Norwalk.



Mary Lou DeRosa was appointed to the Board in 2006. Currently, she is the Dean of University College at Sacred Heart University where she has served in higher education administration for the last 13 years. Mary Lou graduated from the University of Dayton with a BA Degree in Communication Arts and from Sacred Heart University with an MBA. She serves on the Board of the Fairfield County Chapter of the Financial Planning Association. She is also a member of the University Continuing Education Association, Association of Continuing Higher Education, and Society of Human Resource Managers. She has lived in Fairfield for 24 years with her three children: Francesca, a graduate of Loyola College and Fairfield University, who attended Unquowa for two years; John David, a graduate of St. Joseph's University; and Dominic, who attends St. Louis University.



From the Library

A period of American History came to life when author Frances Evan visited our fifth and seventh grade classes. She is the author of *The Forgotten Flag*, a historical fiction novel which was read by both grades. Ms. Evan's shared her well researched and vivid description of colonial Fairfield, which was caught up in the struggle for freedom from Great Britain. The students were able to visualize where the British troops landed and forged their way up to Round Hill. Ms. Evan, a British native, moved to Fairfield and found a lost flag in her attic which was the stepping stone to her story about Ben and Thomas protecting their independence from Britain and their struggle to also protect their family and home.

The seventh graders continued their research of Fairfield residents for their own historical fiction story. When they went to the Fairfield Museum and History Center they were excited to find names that had appear in Ms. Evan's book. We all look forward to reading their captivating stories.



Debbie Lietuvninkas



Elk 101, the "game" night dinner, was a culinary delight thanks to Chef Peter and his crew!

Buen Provecho

Seventh grade students practiced their Spanish skills by enacting a skit set in a Mexican Restaurant. They wrote the script and designed the menu for the restaurant they named "La Sombrilla." Chef Peter helped them prepare the food for their restaurant. The students, Peta-Gay Clayton (owner), Marc Greenwalt (host), Kai Burton (waitress), Tristan Schietinger, Mackenzie Murray and Davis Baer (customers), practiced their roles at home and



in school before presenting their skit to the class.

This type of activity helps students improve their verbal skills in Spanish in real-life situations. The group worked well together and enjoyed presenting their skit to the class — and their classmates enjoyed the Mexican feast!

Migdalia Gonzalez

Welcome Interns

Julie Satterthwaite

I am working with Mrs. Shannon as an intern in PreK. I am a senior Psychology major at Sacred Heart University and in the undergraduate education program. After I graduate in May, I will begin my 5th year of study at Sacred Heart for a master's in reading and certification in elementary education. I enjoy working with children and I am very excited to be interning at The Unquowa School!



Sarah Fletcher

I will be graduating in May with a bachelor's degree in psychology. After graduation, I will be starting my grad work at Sacred Heart to get my master's in elementary education. I have done volunteer work in the Bridgeport and Trumbull schools. This past summer, I worked full time at a daycare in my home town of Middletown, CT. I am very excited about having the opportunity to intern here.



Lauren Beier

I am a Senior at Sacred Heart University, majoring in Psychology and attending their Grad School to earn my master's in teaching: elementary education. I love music and spending time with my friends. I am in three choirs at school and I am the Sacred Heart University Choir President. I also work at United Congregational Church in Bridgeport, where I assistant teach the Children's Choir. I am very excited to do my internship at Unquowa. I have found it to be a wonderful place for learning, not only for the students, but for myself as well.



Fun on the Slopes

Unquowa's second annual ski club was a huge success. Returning to Ski Sundown in New Hartford, it was refreshing to see so many newcomers this year join some of the older, returning students. I consider skiing to be one of few "life-long" sports and it makes me happy to see so many enjoying my favorite hobby. The students always impress me with their independence, responsibility and positive attitudes. The ski club has proved itself to be a great way for students to get together outside of school, without their parents, engaging in a fun, outdoor activity. Thank you to fellow chaperones, parents, and most importantly, the students for your support!

Stefanie Leavy



New Arrivals

Zachariah and Sophia Mughal, grades PreK-3 and K, have a new baby brother! Nathim Mughal was born on Saturday, January 31.

Ben Leitner, grade K, also has a new brother! Max Leitner was born on February 17.

Congratulations to the Mughal and Leitner families.



Colby Lopez-Balboa's team Vavala's Deli won the 2008-2009 Darien youth hockey house league championship on Sunday, March 7 at the Darien Ice Rink. Colby scored 3 goals and had 3 assists in the finals.

THE UNQUOWA SCHOOL'S 3RD ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

Great River Golf Club
Milford, CT
www.greatrivergolfclub.com



May 18, 2009

Shotgun Start @ 10:00am
Registration begins at 8:30am

*All proceeds will go to
The Unquowa School Endowment Fund*

Thank you to those who have so generously donated to this year's Annual Fund ...

PreK-3 33%

Gina & Stephen Jones
Julie & Imran Mughal
Joan & Steve Panagos

PreK-4 61%

Mary & Al Faulkner
Deborah & Josh Garskof
Genevieve & Stephen Halloran
Kristin & Carl Horton
Gina & Steven Jones
Milia & Youssef Makhrasz
Blake & Luke Schnirring
Christine & Don Siegel
Mary & Terrance Sullivan
Alla & Serge Vash
Ciara & Joel Whidden

Kindergarten 65%

Joanne & Glenn Blanchette
Irene & Timothy Brennan
Lynne & Geoff Chapin
Marilynn & Stephen Halas
Donna & Kristopher Hansen
Milia & Youssef Makhrasz
Julie & Imran Mughal
Joan & Steve Panagos
Kimberly & Michael Proto
Lisa & Forrest Rubenstein
Laura Baytos & Val Stalowir

First 63%

Lilly & Ralph Giacobbe
Genevieve & Stephen Halloran
Sally & Patrick McNeela
Joan & Steve Panagos
Nancy & Allan Vare

Second 79%

Irene & Timothy Brennan
Susan & Steven Calzone
Lynne & Geoff Chapin
Kristin & Carl Horton
Maria & Randall Hughes
Andrea & Paul Pinto
Ann & Mike Riffice
Mary Jean Basileo & Dan Solaz
Julie & Paul Spodnick

Third 67%

Kimberly Stevens & Thomas Abate
Joanne & Glenn Blanchette
Robert Baer
Sally & Peter Cadoux
Marilynn & Stephen Halas
Monica & Michael Murray
Kimberly & Michael Proto
Tara & Robert Sires
Laura Baytos & Val Stalowir
Maureen Doyle Stuhlman & Gerard Stuhlman

Fourth 56%

Irene & Michael Brennan
Lynne & Geoff Chapin
Lilly & Ralph Giacobbe
Kate & Sandy Haviland
Lisa & Fred Knopf
Monica & Michael Murray
Joann & Ade Omisore
Andrea & Paul Pinto
Mary Jean Basileo & Dan Solaz

Fifth 33%

Joanne & Glenn Blanchette
Krystyna & Dan Leszczynski
Milia & Youssef Makhrasz
Kimberly & Michael Proto

Sixth 60%

Gabrielle & Gerry Burdo
Sara & Mark Greenawalt
Marilynn & Stephen Halas
Donna & Kristopher Hansen
Maria & Randall Hughes
Marcie Lapido & Alton Kremer
Krystyna & Dan Leszczynski
Ruth Sommers
Julie & Paul Spodnick
Laura Baytos & Val Stalowir
Maria & Kevin Taylor
Anne & David Tetenbaum
Ann & Sidney Weiner
Elin & Scott Weiss
Joan & Alpheus Winter

Seventh 68%

Robert Baer
LaVern & Chris Burton
Sally & Peter Cadoux
Newell & Ron Carapezzi
Deborah & Donald Cooke
Donna Cope
Sara & Mark Greenawalt
Kate & Sandy Haviland
Debra & Gary Meno
Monica & Michael Murray
Rita & Paul Schietinger
Maureen & Scott Watson
Ann & Sidney Weiner

Eighth 75%

Kenee & Rashid Brown
LaVern & Chris Burton
Elena & Charles Cameron-Sheffield
Grace Derek
Lisa & Fred Knopf
Leslie Miller & Barry Kresch
Patrice & David Leggiadro
Milia & Youssef Makhrasz
Lynn & Karl Martone
Sally & Bruce McDermott
Sally & Patrick McNeela
Cameron & Tom Thornton

Alumni

Christopher Anderhaggen '70
Brooks Barrett '47
Robin Beach '61
Karen Block-Nichols '93
Jonathan Brew '72
Jennifer Cain '02
Shannon Cain '00
Helene R. Epifano '67
Edith Walker Filliettaz '40
Kristin Lucas '00

Samuel Perez '02
Kenneth S. Savin '64
Linda & William Shelton '55
Keirsten Sires '06
Noyes Spelman '36
Henry H. Sprague, '48
Ryan Taylor '06
James Van Valkenburgh, '44
Brad Topar, '99
Jean W. Winton, '34
Jilliana Marie Zikaras '03

Past Families & Friends

Gina & Andrew Arnold
Lisa Baytos
Joan & Richard Brew
Pat & Jack Blessington
Elizabeth W. Brew Boyd
Janet & Christopher Brogan
Karen & Scott Brownlow
Camp-Younts Foundation
Deborah & Robert Colantuoni
MaryLou DeRosa

Mary & Frode Foss-Skiftesvik
Jennifer Giannino & Marty Gibson
Frank Gulden
Joyce & Robert Hobbie
Karen & Robert Lucas
Sharon & Brian Miles
Linda & Louis Novitzky
Ruth Powell
Peternelly Speer

Grandparents (In Honor Of)

Ruth & Frank Abate (Claire Abate)
Joan & Don Allen (Danielle & Marc Thomas Greenawalt)
Millette Alexander (Charlie McGlinsky)
Patricia & Bryan Barry (Morgan & William Hansen)
Anne & Samuel Badger (Douglas Brown)
Carol Baytos (Stalowir children)
Judith & Martin Cohen (Jack Weiss)
Daphne Cope (Peta-Gay Clayton)
Jean and Sylvester Filancia (Chris Taylor)
Marjorie Hackett (Abigail Winter)
Suellen & William Hansen (Morgan & Will Hansen)
Phyllis & Arthur Kresch (Matthew Kresch)

Lori Liptak (Max Martone)
Nancy & Enrique Lopez-Balboa (Taylor & Colby Lopez-Balboa)
Angelina & Michael Martone, Jr. (Max Martone)
Mona Mulvey (Katherine Viteretto)
Ruth Munson (Blake & Walter Erenhouse)
Josephine Osso (Michael, Marissa & Julia Proto)
Nancy Schwartz (Rachel McDermott)
Jacqueline & Richard Solaz (Carson & Spencer Solaz)
Shirley Stevens (Claire Abate)
Nancy Weiss (Jack Weiss)
Marion Winter (Abigail Winter)
Miriam & Thadeus Zalenski (Chloe Lyn Zalenski)

In Memory of S. Sheffield Eaton, '34

Jean Carpenter Winton, '34
Noyes Spelman, '36
Mary Helen & Arthur Williams
The Country Club of Fairfield

In Memory of Harry Walker, '35

Camp-Younts Foundation

In Memory of Georgiana Beach, '26

Joan and Alpheus Winter
Marjorie Hackett

Donate online via PayPal at
www.unquowa.org
Pledges are due June 30, 2009

Donations are tax deductible and may be matched by your company's matching gift program.

From the U.P.A.

Can everyone say, "BINGO"? **Bingo Night** was held and what a wonderful evening it was. From the tasty food to the decorations and the prizes, it was a fantastic Unquowa Family Night. Our many thanks go to Nancy Vare and Gen Halloran for chairing the event, Daneen and Doug Grabe for their generosity in donating the clocks (which, by the way, were quite a hit!). Additionally, a great round of applause goes out to our two emcees: David Dworski and Steve Jones for keeping the games interesting and fun.

Mark your calendars on April 23 for the 4th & 5th grade **After School Social** as well as April 24, for the **Upper School Social** that will be held at the Easton Community Center. These socials are great fun and the children appreciate getting together with classmates outside of school. Particulars of these events will be emailed as the time draws nearer.

Lastly, as most of you are aware, we are approaching the Unquowa Parent's Associations' major fundraiser of the year, which is our **Annual Spring Auction**. Profits raised from the auction bring many enrichment programs to the school including our well known Author's Day. This year our auction will be featured online from **April 16 - 24**. We will be linking the auction to Unquowa's homepage (www.unquowa.org) for ease of accessibility. There will also be a computer located outside of the school's office for parents to view live demos as well as to check their bids.

This year's offerings for the auction are nothing short of spectacular! Who wouldn't like to see David Letterman or bid on a beautiful bedroom set or a painting, in addition to those highly sought after parking spots? Oh, did I hear sporting tickets? How about being the head of school for the day? Ms. Lauer is always looking for a helping hand. We will also be offering our memory making teacher experiences.

We are currently accepting items for the auction and greatly appreciate those families who have already generously contributed. If you do have an item that you would like to suggest, but not limited to, restaurant gift certificates or tickets for: theatre, music, or sports don't hesitate to contact Jessica Ryan, our Ways and Means chair.

Remember that our auction is open to the Unquowa community at large, including relatives, friends, and even co-workers. We have also linked our online auction's site to BiddingforGood which host's numerous online auctions throughout the United States for non-profit foundations as well as K-12 educational entities. This will enlarge the number of bidders for our school's items.

Please join us for our next UPA meetings on April 1 after assembly. Happy Bidding!

***Marcie Lapido & Joan Panagos**
UPA CO-Presidents*

Auction 2009



an on-line event
**April 16-
April 24**

Watch for details
on how you could
be bidding on
spectacular items
to support
our school!



Alumni News

Jill Kelly, Class of '45, received the 2008 Yvette MacDonald Award from the Greater Fairfield Board of Realtors. The award is given to members who have provided outstanding service, both to the board and to the community.

Eric Haseltine, Class of '99, treated our Upper Schoolers to a special presentation on graphic design and the Internet at the end of January. Eric works at The Chopping Block (www.choppingblock.com), a graphic design studio in New York. He showed us a number of projects his company has worked on including websites for Rachel Ray, Bravo, and Guitar World and gave an introduction to the fundamentals of the Internet.



Condolences to the family of **Georgiana Brewer Mathews Beach, class of '26**, who passed away on February 10. Georgie was born, raised and lived most of her life in Bridgeport and Easton. After graduating from Unquowa she attended Wellesley College and Boston University. Prior to her first marriage, she worked as a preschool teacher and subsequently showed a joy for sharing humor and wonder with young children throughout her life. She had two wonderful marriages, to Jasper Slaymaker Mathews, Jr. for 35 years, and to Herman Beach, Jr. for 23 years. Georgie's parents, Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Brewer, were founding members of The Unquowa School, and Georgie was a member of its first kindergarten class. A memorial service will be held at the Congregational Church of Easton in late spring.

981 Stratfield Road, Fairfield, CT 06825-1697

THE UNQUOWA SCHOOL



April

Check our online calendar for the complete and constantly updated schedule, but dates to note include:

Friday, April 10

School Holiday, Good Friday

Monday, April 20 - Thursday, April 23

ERB Testing

Thursday, April 23

After School Social, Grades 4 & 5

Friday, April 24

Upper School Social, Grades 6-8

Tuesday, April 28

HS Placement Meeting for 7th Graders & Parents

Wednesday, April 29

Spring Chorus Concert, 7:00 p.m.

**Go to www.unquowa.org
and click on "Calendar"**



Class of '99 Reunion

Thursday, May 21 - 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. - Southport Brewing Company