

School News

Connection Or Disconnection?

When my children were small, leaving them home with a babysitter, 45 minutes from my Nashua office, was normal. I'd call home intermittently to check on them, confident a mature, responsible person was in charge. The ER was a distance, and few child-caring adolescents had their own cars. Cell phones were not a reality, so naturally parents didn't know what we were missing.....

Or were we missing something? Certainly, my commuting time was spent listening to NPR or in quiet reflection. It was valuable, coveted time. I was captive to no one. When my children were with me, the car was noisier, providing special time to talk, sing together, address important issues, fielding questions. We were in transit, without risk of intrusion on our insulated car space. Cell phones were not a reality.....

I look back on that period, wondering how different the landscape of my children's early years would have been with cell phones. Leaving them with other child care people would have brought less angst? I could have talked to them anytime, coaching them through challenges, homework, tough questions. Parents would certainly have been more accessible, connected through unforeseen emergencies. No longer relying on "land lines," the potential changes in parenting were numerous. Those coveted car rides with my children, listening to our Raffi cassette tapes (dated reference!), may have been quite different, with possible intrusions from others....

Of course, it's all about how we frame the issue. For parents of grown children, cell phones were not part of our lives. Now parents of young children would miss the convenience of instant connection. Separation from our children requires only a quick phone call. In stores, cafes, professional offices the various familiar tunes ring out a chorus of connection: family members and friends everywhere are availing themselves of instant gratification: "where are you? When will you be home? Please pick up milk. Which brand of pasta sauce? I need help with a math problem." No one would dispute the range of convenience, with immediate, around-the-clock access, is indeed a blessing. Less so for teens and young adults. Texting friends is crucial, while receiving texts from parents is quite different!

The dichotomy is 24-hour connection to my children without mutual availability. While my 20-year-old son was traveling this past summer, his liberation was often punctuated with frequent texts from me, anxious to know he was safe, his location...By avoiding my intrusive attempts to connect (a quick call would have assured me he was still breathing), he increased my sense of urgency! At one point, calling my husband, he mentioned "mom keeps texting me." He suggested we reflect on communication we had with our own parents at his age. We may have stopped at a phone booth along the way, calling home once a week. Our parents wouldn't know our daily location, activities, etc. Yet now we stay connected to our kids all the time, compromising their freedom. Consider how small the world has become. Sir Edmund Hillary's successful ascent of Mt. Everest is a far cry from today's cell connection on the summit!!

Disconnection comes from what we create. Our ability to talk with friends and family at any time, anywhere, means we miss what's around us. We may have less solitude. We pass opportunities to greet strangers as we move through cafe or store doorways. While talking on cells to someone else, we risk more disconnection from our immediate surroundings, avoiding eye contact with those around us. Personal boundaries are compromised, with intimate, sometimes volatile conversations conducted by cell in a grocery store. We become unwitting intruders in strangers' lives.

Recently, I observed a mom, talking and laughing on her phone, as her young son watched, fidgeting and restless. The sadness in his eyes, longing for something so important: his mom's attention, was compelling. With or without cell phones, our strongest human connections are with those in front of us.....

Judith Orme has a private practice in Amherst, KIDS & FAMILIES FIRST, with 26 years experience working with children, couples, and families. A psychotherapist, parent educator, child development specialist, and coach/consultant, she facilitates educational and support groups, and provides a board range of specialized divorce services. She is also a NH certified marital mediator, providing Comprehensive Mediation Services. Judith can be reached at 672-0179.

BY JUDITH H. ORME,
MSW, LICSW



Going Public

Teacher-Students

Grumbling about homework isn't always confined to our students, as many staff members pack their own book bags at the end of a long school day to head to the other side of the desk for the evening. Enrolled in a variety of graduate and post-grad. programs, these paraprofessionals, teachers, and administrators constantly juggle the competing commitments of Souhegan and graduate school with the added responsibility of families and homes. It is a grind.

Marina Capen, studying for an MA in Educational Leadership at the University of New England, believes that her coursework helps her to "look carefully at all of the structures and people who work to improve student learning in different ways." Dean of Students Bob Thompson, completing a Certificate of Advanced Study (CAGS) at UNH, believes that her perspective changes when he sits on the other side of the desk. Keely McGovern sees a direct benefit between her on-line courses on Behavior Intervention in Autism at UMass Lowell and her daily work with students with Autism. A true masochist, Keely plans to receive her CAGS in December, immediately begin a Masters' program in special education and get married next summer.

John Young groaned a lot while beginning his Masters in Educational Administration at Rivier. "Not being in school for 20 years killed me at first—that and all the new technology." Sarah Laurent spent six weeks in Mexico last summer as part of her graduate work at Rivier.

Chris Lavoie is working towards a Certificate as a Master Athletic Administrator through the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators' Association. This program provides courses tailored to his work and opportunities to interact with other athletic directors.

Dean of Faculty Kris Gallo is almost finished her CAGS in Educational Administration and Supervision at UNH. She has found that her program has grounded her in matters of policy and law, and that her certification as a principal and superintendent expands her career options. Garon Smail expressed a common theme among our adult students when speaking of the benefit of being able to discuss educational issues with other educators in his CAGS program at UNH

Jen Luoma has just begun graduate studies at Rivier. Science teacher Chris Balch has changed disciplines and is completing a certification in Special Education. Susan Carr is earning her certification as an on-line instructor.

Our adult students bring their new learning into their classrooms and into discussions with peers, particularly on issues of leadership and school law. Students enjoy knowing that their teachers are also students. "Chandler Wallisch, (09) believes that "it is inspiring to know that [teachers] want to continue educating [themselves] on topics that will also help my education. Adam Hanson, commenting on Marina Capen, agrees. He says that, "Far too many people in the world believe that there comes a time in life where it is simply 'too late' to pursue passions and follow dreams. Through her desire to further education, Marina is a living example of how it is never too late to become the person you truly want to be."

These teachers exemplify our Mission's Statement aspiration to be a "community of learners."

Peggy Silva is the writing coordinator and literacy coach at Souhegan High School

Souhegan High Film Seminar presents:

Classic Film Series

(All films begin at 7:30pm Admission Free)

November-- Friday, 11/14	High Noon
December-- Friday, 12/19	It's a Wonderful Life
January-- Friday, 1/23	Rear Window
February-- Friday, 2/6	The Deer Hunter
March-- Friday, 3/13	The Sound of Music
April-- Friday, 4/10	Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid
May-- Friday, 5/29	Raging Bull

Amherst PTA News

November Meeting of the Amherst PTA

Due to the Veteran's Day, the PTA's November General Meeting will be held on the third Tuesday, November 18th at 7:30 p.m. in the Wilkins Library. Special guest Nancy Head will speak about the next phase of construction at all three schools and answer questions from parents. Our General Meetings also feature reports from the school principals and information about our various committees and volunteer opportunities. All members of the community are welcome to attend.

Holiday Story Time

Take time to celebrate the holidays while sipping hot chocolate and enjoy listening to teachers and community members read holiday stories! All families are invited to attend the Holiday Story Time on Friday, December 5th from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. in the Clark School Multipurpose Room. Pajamas and blankets are encouraged!

Reflections Program Information Session

There will be a Reflections Info Session for parents and their children on Thursday, November 13, 2008 in the Multipurpose Room at Clark. This will be held in two different sessions: 11:00-11:45 a.m. and 3:00-3:45 p.m. ** Please note - If you are attending the 3 p.m. session, please do not arrive prior to 3:00, as buses will still be departing from the school. Also, please be mindful of this when parking. If you aren't familiar with Reflections, it is a National PTA Arts program for students grades K-12 to showcase their talents in 6 categories: Visual Arts, Literature, Photography, Musical Composition, Dance Choreography, and Film Production. Each year it is based on a different theme. This year's theme is "Wow!" There will be books to inspire your children and tables set up with art supplies so your child can start working on his/her project. If you have any questions, please contact: Shelly Kasyer at skasyer@hughes.net or Wendy Conway at mconway0427@comcast.net. For more info on rules and to print entry forms, please go to the PTA website at: www.amherstPTA.org/reflections. All entries are due to your school office by December 3.

SHS Ski & Skate Sale

NEW LOCATION! The Souhegan High School Boys Varsity Hockey team is hosting their annual Ski & Skate Sale November 14-15 at Souhegan High School in the school cafeteria. Items can be dropped off for consignment on Friday evening, November 14th from 4:00PM - 6:30PM and on Saturday, November 15th from 7:00AM - 8:30AM.

The sale will be held on Friday night from 7:00PM - 9:00PM and Saturday 9:00AM - 12:30PM. Both new and used items are available for purchase; items may include hockey skates, figure skates, cross country skis, downhill skis, snowboards, boots, poles, roller blades and limited outerwear.

Students in the News

Birchard Studies in India

Jacob C. Birchard '10, of Amherst, participated in St. Lawrence University's International Study Program for the fall 2008 semester.

St. Lawrence, a coeducational liberal arts and sciences institution of 2,000 students in Canton, New York, operates programs of study in Australia, Austria, Canada, China, Costa Rica, Denmark, England, France, India, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Spain, and Trinidad/Tobago. Birchard graduated



Jacob C. Birchard

from The Derryfield School in Manchester. He is studying in India.

Local student spending fall semester abroad

Brendan Julian of Amherst is participating in the Bates College Junior Semester Abroad program. Julian, an anthropology major, is studying in Fortaleza, Brazil, through the School for International Training. Julian is the son of Bob and Robin Julian. He is a 2006 graduate of Souhegan High School.

Souhegan Grad Competes in "Rock, Paper, Scissors" World Championship



Left, Colin Hettinger and his sister Marcella Hettinger at the 2007 World Championship Rock Paper Scissors tournament in Toronto, Ontario as team Roshambones. Because of the championship's proximity to Halloween, the siblings dressed appropriately.

TORONTO, ONTARIO – Colin Hettinger, Souhegan High School Class of 2004, competed for the second year in the World Championship Rock Paper Scissors tournament in Toronto on October 25.

Colin, 23, previously of Amherst, competed with his sister Marcella Hettinger, 27, has Team Roshambones. Rochambo or rochambeau is another name for the popular kids' game, where players "throw" a rock with their fist, scissors with their fingers, or paper with their hand to determine a winner.

In 2007, Colin and his sister made it to the top 25% and first round, respectively. This year Colin made it into the top 6% of players; his sister made it into the top 25%.

Marcella Hettinger lives in Toronto where she's the finance administrator for the Hard Rock Cafe

and volunteers for Hospice Toronto. She graduated from Florida State University in 2003.

Colin Hettinger graduated from Florida State University in Tallahassee in 2008 with two bachelor degrees: a B.A. in English and a B.A. in history. He lives in Chicago where he has a soccer blog: <http://www.trueamericanfootball.blogspot.com>.

While at Florida State his jobs included archiving letters and photos for the Institute on World War II, and archiving and restoring the records of the late Senator Claude Pepper. At Souhegan High School he was one of the 2004 winners of the Amherst Historical Society scholarship awarded to high school graduates pursuing a degree in history.

Colin and Marcella Hettinger are the children of Scott and Mary Ellen Hettinger of Amherst.

Brain Health Through Good Nutrition

WILTON – Pine Hill Waldorf School presents "Brain Health through Good Nutrition," with Rodd Stockwell, MD, on Wednesday, November 12 from 7:30 to 8:30 pm. This will be a dynamic presentation on how nutrition influences children's capacities for learning. \$5 suggested donation. Call 654-6003 for more information.

Rodd Stockwell, MD is the school doctor at The Waldorf School of Lexington. He is board certified in Family Medicine and Holistic Medicine. Dr. Stockwell has a practice in Middleton, MA, where he uti-

lizes conventional and alternative treatments including homeopathy, anthroposophical medicine and holistic neurology.

Pine Hill Waldorf School serves children from nursery to grade 8. The school is in its 36th year, and is accredited by the Association of Independent Schools in New England and the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America. Financial assistance is available.

To reach Pine Hill, take route 101 to Wilton. Turn up Abbot Hill Road and drive 1.7 miles to Pine Hill's driveway on the left.

Volunteer Families Needed for the Host Homes Program

The Host Homes Program has been offering respite, referral and intervention services in the Souhegan Valley for over 10 years. There is an immediate need for homes in the Amherst area. This volunteer based program supports teens and their families in times of distress so that teens may stay in their schools and

community. Mediation and counseling are offered to the teen and their family in order to bring about a peaceful family solution. If you are interested in finding out more about the program, or how you can train to become a host family, please call Mary Pat Jackson, Host Homes coordinator, 672-1069.

Holland Flooring

WAREHOUSE CLEARANCE SALE

Saturday, Nov. 15 9 am. -2 p.m.

Tremont St., Wilton

- Carpet & Vinyl Remnants
- Carpet pad
- Pre-finished Hardwood
- Cleaning supplies
- Setting material
- Transitions
- Ceramic
- Area Rugs
- Laminate
- Sundries
- Grout & Caulking
- Office Supplies

Two Parent-Child Open House Events at Pine Hill Waldorf School

WILTON – The Children's Garden, Pine Hill Waldorf School's parent and child program, will have two open houses: Friday, November 14 and Friday, December 12, from 8:30 to 10:30 am. We invite parents and children, ages birth to three years old, to visit and learn more about our Children's Garden and other

early childhood programs. Meet our wonderful teachers and explore the warm and inviting environment of a Waldorf early childhood classroom. Pine Hill Waldorf School is located on Abbot Hill Road in Wilton. These events are free and no registration is needed. Call Deb at 654-6003 for further information.