

# Pine Point School

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### Opportunities and Announcements



#### **Brick Patio Update**

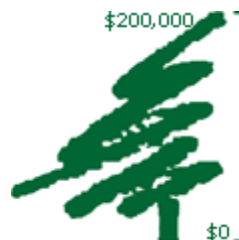


Over the spring and summer some 200 engraved bricks were purchased by individuals to help create two patios on the back of the Library/Technology Center overlooking the athletic fields.

The enhancement will provide additional opportunities for the L/TC's outdoor use while further beautifying the building and its surroundings. With colder temperatures right around the corner, we have determined that it would be best if the patio were installed in the spring. As a result, the opportunity to order an engraved brick to honor your child, a graduate, a favorite teacher, etc., is still available. You can [contact the Development Office](#) to learn more about this offering. Please note that the brick campaign is not a fund-raiser. It is solely designed to add a new element to the School's grounds.



#### **Annual Fund Update**



As of Thursday, November 16, 103 donors had made gifts and pledges totaling \$66,226. It's exciting to think that we're already over 1/4 of the way toward our goal of \$200,000! That said, we still have a *long* way to go before we can report on a successful conclusion to what is in fact a year-long effort.

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The success of the Annual Fund is critically important to the health of our school and the quality of program that can be offered to this generation of Pine Point students. Please consider lending your help. *Every* gift is appreciated and makes a difference. The easiest way to make a gift? Make an online contribution. You'll have the satisfaction knowing that your gift will be immediately put to good use by the School.



[I'd like to make a gift online to the Annual Fund.](#)

## What's Happening at Pine Point?

### ▲ Climbing Wall in Place to Support P.E. Program

A climbing wall has been installed in the Mitchell Gym and is being used by the students in their physical education classes. In this case, it is a sideways wall, meaning that students "climb" sideways rather than up. (Padding is lowered from the wall to the floor to provide protection even though the height is minimal.) "It's a great upper body workout and can be used by even our youngest students," says Athletic Coordinator Douglas DeLapp. If the wall proves to be a success, it will be extended upwards to provide a more challenging climbing experience. It has proved to be a hit with third graders. "It's hard work, but it's fun," reports third-grader Eliza Griffin. Her classmate, Mia Perry, adds, "It builds muscle."



The wall was partially underwritten through a generous gift made by Neal Bobruff '73 and Jane Lassen Bobruff '75, who directed their gift to the 2005-06 Student Government to support the students' philanthropic work at the School as well as in the local community and beyond. The students elected to use the gift to support the program at Pine Point. Additional funding was also provided through the Physical Education budget. The wall was installed by Director of Facilities Charlie Wright and the maintenance crew.



A second element will be added to the experience when the Flying Squirrel, a gift of the Class of 2006, is put in place. The device consists of a long rope, which runs through a pulley attached to the Gym ceiling. Harnesses are on the ends of the





harnesses are on the ends of the rope. One harness will be manned by six students as they raise to the ceiling a fellow student. The Flying Squirrel teaches risk taking and establishes trust among those engaged in the activity.

### ▲ Nathaniel Philbrick at Pine Point



Over 130 history enthusiasts packed the Music Room on November 1 to hear award-winning author Nathaniel Philbrick discuss his best-selling book, *Mayflower*.

Philbrick began his talk by giving his listeners the standard story of the Pilgrims and the first Thanksgiving, the story so many of us learned in school. (One fact that is not mentioned in the old texts is that the *Mayflower*, during its crossing, inched along at "an average of one and one-half miles per hour.") The 102 passengers endured a two-and-one-half month journey across the Atlantic, with their intended destination being modern day Manhattan. They carried a charter for a portion of land there, but ended up off of Cape Cod. Philbrick mused that the Pilgrims possibly "were the first illegal immigrants in America."

Philbrick went on say that, in many history books, the next covered event is the American Revolution. "So, nothing happened for a hundred and fifty years in America?" Philbrick posited. Over the next forty minutes, he related that, indeed, plenty took place. The first 50 years after their landing saw a tenuous peace between the Pilgrims and the Native Americans, which degenerated into King Phillip's War. The war, which went on for 13 months, killed more people per capita than any war in American history.

### ▲ Pine Point Welcomes a New Mr. Mitchell!

From 1969-1990 one of the fixtures at Pine Point was Dick Mitchell. Dick was a wonderful and beloved member of the faculty who went on to serve as Head of School from 1982-1990. (He would return to serve as Interim Head of School in 1998-99.) Pine Point is delighted to have a *new* Mr. Mitchell at the School. In this case, it is Jon Mitchell, who is teaching 8th grade science and now heads the School's much heralded oceanology program.



A mutual friend of Jon Mitchell and Alan Banister (Mr. B) called Jon at the end of the 2005 school year to tell him that a science position would be opening at Pine Point School. He thought it over for a few minutes and then announced, "I'm not interested."

Fortunately, he was persuaded to come in and meet with Mr. Banister. Intrigued, he came back for another visit, this time with Head of School Paul Geise joining the conversation. According to Jon, "by the time the visit was over, Messrs. Banister and Geise had sunk their hooks into me."

The study of science and oceanology has been near and dear to Jon well before he started at Pine Point. Although this is his first classroom teaching assignment, Jon had been teaching as part of the Sea Education Association out of Woods Hole, MA. He also was granted his ocean-going Master's License, which allowed him to serve as Chief Mate on such large sailing vessels as the *Harvey Gamage* and the *Westward*. Clearly the *Quest* has a very able captain at the helm. Jon earned his B.A. at Colby College and his M.S. at the University of Rhode Island, where he continues as a Research Assistant.

In October, Jon was with the 9th grade as they each experienced for the first time the joys of the annual trip to Martha's Vineyard. Students looked at glacial formations and deposits, and how they created the Vineyard and Nantucket, paying particular attention to the cliffs at Gay Head and their various layers.

Welcome aboard Jon!  
[Martha's Vineyard photos>](#)

### ▲ Alumni Soccer and Field Hockey Games



[Slide show>](#)

Over 60 students and alumni returned to Pine Point on a beautiful fall day for the 10th annual Alumni Soccer and Field Hockey Games. In the history of the event it was by far the biggest turnout ever. The games were definitely played, but just as important were the many reunions between old friends who had gone their separate ways. In all aspects, it was a wonderful day!

### ▲ My Expedition to New Orleans for Katrina Relief, By Christine Kong '07

From October 26 to November 2, 2006, I saw some of the hardships that the citizens of New Orleans experienced. While I was there, I lived with minimal luxuries. I slept in a tent held together with duct tape, fought off mosquitoes and the cold at night, and witnessed the devastation of the storm. I worked from the early morning into the late evening, cutting out dilapidated



evening gutting out unapitated houses. I worked with many people including college students from Tennessee in taking out the debris from decaying homes. I was surprised to see that New Orleans is not even close to rebuilding. The city is still trying to clean up the muddle left by Katrina.

Scenes of the destruction in the wake of Hurricane Katrina still evident, over a year after the tragedy.

After awaking at 5:00 AM, we had breakfast and made lunches. By 6:30 AM, we had to do chores to maintain the campsite, such as cleaning garbage cans, port-a-potties, showers, and washing stations. Then, we left for our hour drive to the worksite near the Lower Ninth Ward. Imagine houses submerged in water eight feet high for two months, and afterwards uninhabited for fourteen months. Our job was to remove all of the unwanted material, sift through items for valuables, tear down the walls, and bring down the ceilings. We were all required to wear respirators to protect ourselves from terminal molds and fungi. Without a mask, the stench was overbearing because the houses have been left filled with brackish water for months, and the rats and cockroaches have infested the living quarters. It was difficult manual labor, but I had a sense of accomplishment afterwards. By 4:00 PM, we were on the road back to the campsite, and we washed up before dinner at 6:30 PM. After that, we had a meeting at 8:00 PM to discuss the work, and the emotions we felt during the day.

I became accustomed to life there very quickly: the minimal living amenities, the chores, and the manual labor in gutting homes. Our hard work reaped many rewards. First, it was a good feeling to see the house cleaned inside and out. Second, meeting the homeowners was one of the most satisfying parts. They were appreciative of the work that we did, and they became emotional when they saw their houses. For some of them, it was their first time seeing the house in months, and it looked so much better than before. Thirdly, it was good to see the number of volunteers taking time out of their schedules to come to New Orleans to work. The volunteers were from states all over the country: Washington, Oregon, New York, Tennessee, and Rhode Island. Many of the homeowners thought that people wouldn't remember or did not care enough to come down to help, and it was heart-warming for them to see the large number of volunteers, who were concerned about their welfare.



Thank you for letting me share my experience from New Orleans.

Christine Kong'07  
11/12/06

Christine (far right) and other volunteers in Louisiana.

Note: Christine, a ninth-grader at Pine Point, went to Louisiana as part of a trip organized by Dunn's Corners Community Presbyterian Church in Westerly. Her father, Dr. Insu Kong, accompanied her. A student at Pine Point since September 2002, Christine serves as Vice President of Student Government, and plays on the field hockey, basketball, and lacrosse teams.

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Pine Point School, 89 Barnes Road, Stonington, CT 06378, Phone: 1-860-535-0606, Fax: 1-860-535-8033