

FOCUS



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In Remembrance: Linda Hensel, Beloved Teacher and Friend

By Keira Sultan '12

On July 5th, after a brave battle with cancer, our beloved Middle School Quakerism teacher, Linda Hensel, passed away. Her compassion and dedication to the community is recognized by all, especially the Middle School faculty and students she worked with daily.

When I was a Middle School student, Ms. Hensel was my Quakerism teacher. In the time that I got to know her, the thing about her that always stood out most to me was her dedication to instilling Quaker values into the community. She also carried this passion over into her Quakerism classes, where she challenged us to reflect upon our values and consider how our actions affect others, helping us learn lessons about ourselves that extend far beyond the classroom. Many of Ms. Hensel's students were strongly influenced by her and truly admired her compassion, dedication, and wisdom. During the Meeting held by Friends' Central in memory of Ms. Hensel, a seventh grade student, Lily Snider expressed this: "As a fifth grader, I always remember hearing her speak, and she always seemed to have something meaningful and insightful to say. I was always looking up to her and wishing that I could be wise enough to say something even half as

eloquent as she did."



Another key Quaker value that Ms. Hensel helped instill in the community was service. Ms. Hensel was the first to propose the idea of carrying out weekly service projects in the Middle School, and organized her own service project of knitting various things such as hats and blankets and sending them to children in Afghanistan. Mr. Ross, the eighth grade science teacher who worked closely with Ms. Hensel, explained, "Ms. Hensel often

worked behind the scenes instead of putting herself out front. So many people do not even realize all the work she has done for this community. She was like the glue that kept the Middle School together." Mr. Fifer also presented another image that came to mind when he thought of his close friend and colleague. He commented, "Although we have never had a Meeting House, I have always thought of Linda as a symbol of it --a presence that was so strong to the Middle School."

Through her work with the school and its community members, Ms. Hensel has left a great impact on Friends' Central and will be deeply missed by all who knew her.



Start the Fire: Q/A with Student Council President Michael Fires

By Sami Resnik '12

Sami: Do you have any major changes you want to make to the school or Student Council this year? If so, what kind of changes?

Michael: There are a lot of changes I want to make this coming year. On a large scale, I would like to solidify a concert night "no homework" policy. In addition, I would like to establish an official school rivalry day, "Phoenix Day," against another school. Lastly, I would like to make our school dances larger by officially inviting other schools. On a smaller scale, there will be monthly emails sent out to the school to update the student body on our progress. In addition, I want to establish a Student Council representative

"report" during grade meetings so that students can see what their grade representatives have been doing in Student Council.

S: What are some new assemblies that Student Council is going to put on this year?

M: We are trying really hard to get comedians to come for assembly instead of having a comedy night. Also we want to have more bands come play during assemblies. For in-school talent, we want to have assemblies for jazz band and orchestra if possible, student-teacher debates, and a faculty feud. The rest of the assemblies will be a surprise.

S: What's going to be your biggest challenge this year as president?

M: I think one of the biggest challenges this year will be instituting permanent school change for some of the things we want to accomplish as



a Student Council. It's not hard to have an idea about change; it's hard to make it happen and see to it that the change lasts. I hope that the ideas I mentioned above can be realized by the end of the

year.

S: Do you, Claire (Harris), and Rachel (Goodman) work well together? Are you a good team?

M: Yes, we definitely do. Also, Rachel, Claire and I are very good friends and have all been in Student Council since freshman year, so we are very familiar with the job.

S: Are you going to buy a new presidential wardrobe?

M: Most likely not, but you never know. I do like tuxedos.

S: How is this year's Student Council going to differ from past years? I want to focus this year's Student Council on what we can change as a

community and not have the year be focused solely on events and assemblies. Sometimes Student Council gets branded as an events planning committee and there is a lot more that Student Council can do for the school aside from planning social events. For example, if we can establish new and improved school policies, I think this year will be very different from prior years.

S: What are you most excited about this year?

M: I am most excited about the fact that Student Council has a clean slate to work with, and I can't wait to see what we can do.

S: Do you think you're

see Fires on page 2

Pura Vida, “Simple Living”

By Deborah Maraziti (Faculty)

Transitions. They are a standard, unavoidable part of our lives. Some occur as rhythmically as respiration—the melting of day to night, the movement through a morning routine. Others are infrequent but predictable—anticipated, even—such as the traditional annual celebration of a person's birthday. And some transitions mark (dramatically) the end of one life chapter, the beginning of another. Say hello to September and “welcome back” to school.

Do you approach this time with trepidation? Excitement? A little of both? Neither? It's a paradox that though all at FCS share this experience, we each encounter it uniquely.

I confess the transition is extra hard for me this year. I'm terrified of stepping back onto the lightning fast carnival ride that the academic year always becomes, because I'm not even sure I've re-acclimated to the lifestyle here in the mainstream USA yet.

In early August, four FCS students and I journeyed to a small island, Isla Chira, off the Nicoya Peninsula in Costa Rica. Even as we

struggled to scrape our clumsy luggage along the rough sand to the small motorboat that was our ferry, we sensed that we were about to enter a world completely unlike our own. What we found



there was simplicity in its purest form—people who are grateful to live in houses of unpainted drywall with tin roofs that make rain sound like machine gun fire, who collect rainwater in barrels and buckets as a matter of course in order to flush the seatless toilets (and just in case the running water runs out, which it did), who rely on fishing for sustenance, who frolic joyously in roadside streams and dance unashamed on Sundays at church, who greet one another in the street with a “Huuuup!” or a cheery “Buenas!”, and, most importantly, live unencumbered by all the things we consider conveniences.

Our merging into that world was abrupt, but somehow easy because we knew we had to adapt to this difference in culture. Our outlooks were strangely altered there. While taking a walk,



our guide just happened to spy a termite nest and offered us some...to eat! It only seemed natural to partake. I can't imagine having the nerve to taste them here.

What I personally did not expect was how difficult it would be to re-enter the lifestyle here. Everything seems astonishingly overdone. I mean, the water runs in the showers here, and it's hot, for a start! It seems such a waste to let the water keep running when I'm in there—shouldn't I start and stop it to conserve it? There is so much going on here all the time—the days are no longer linear and simple: there, the rooster wakes you up at dawn (well, earlier: we had

an enthusiastic rooster), you eat, you work, you play, you work some more, you eat some more, the sun goes down, and you go to bed. That's it. And here, no one says hello as they pass each other; most everyone

is plugged into or looking at something electronic.

One day in Costa Rica I spent a delicious 1.5 hours washing dishes in the EcoLodge, looking out over a lovely green patch of forest while a large lizard crept around the rafters. Here, when I wash the dishes, the phone is ringing off the hook for playdates while my Blackberry

is beeping about txt messages and emails, and the neighborhood is screaming with people mowing their lawns obsessively. I don't just miss the simplicity of Isla Chira, I long for it. I don't think I want to transition completely away from it—can't I bring it with me? I would love to share with you the simple world where, when you take a walk through a forest, it's only natural to gently touch a boa constrictor, just because it's draped there over a tree.

So, let's keep it simple: welcome back.

from Fires on page 1

going to be loved most by the teachers or students?

M: Well, I certainly would like to be loved by both. However, Student Council's focus is on the students. Students have a direct say in Student Council activities and we need to be responsive to them. With that said, the students are my top priority.

S: If you had a million dollars for Student Council what would you do with it?

M: Well, although we don't have a seven figure budget, if we did I would like to do things for FCS and for Student Council. First for the school, I would improve the facilities by putting effective air conditioning and heating in the Language building and Wood building. Second, I would install stadium lighting on our playing fields so we could have nighttime athletic games in the fall and spring. For Student Council, I would love to bring the country's top bands, speakers and celebrities for events and assemblies. Lastly, I would love to make even more money available for clubs at FCS to borrow from Student Council's club fund.

S: If you could chose one famous person to join Student Council, who would it be and why?

M: Hands down, Chuck Norris.



The Down Low on the Debate Team

By Ben Fogel '13

A club that's always been popular in the FCS community is the debate team. With Mr. Morris as its teacher advisor, more and more members are joining this unique club every year. Dominant in the Friends League, the club has future plans for expanding its horizons and improving the team's skills. I sat down with one of this year's captains, Adam Posner ('11) to talk about the club's future.

Along with Adam, Mitchell Johnston ('11) is leading the charge for the 2011 team. Adam pointed out the clubs increasing seriousness as the years go on. This year, they plan for more serious practices and better utilization of the practice time, so we can have strong teams to lead the charge in debate. Also planned for next year, the FCS debate team will be joining the PHSL (Pennsylvania High school Speech League), which is a more serious league than the Friends league.

In preparation for

each debate the teams are given a resolve (the topic that they will be debating in the debate). The captains agree that with collaborative work as a team on the resolve, the debate team will take it to the next level this year. With different debating and speaking opportunities in competitions this year and improving the proper debating techniques, the debate team is sure to improve even more this year. Debate meets weekly in Mr. Morris' room in the FCC at 7:45 on Thursdays.

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See Jamie Ulrich,
Zach Barron, Jordan Lucoff

Impressions of China

By Benjamin Yahalomi ‘11

This summer, I had the opportunity to spend 10 days in China – 4 days at a local factory in Shanghai, and 6 days as a tourist in Shanghai and Beijing. I was an Environmental, Health, and Safety Intern at Vishay Intertechnology, a company based in Malvern, PA. I was charged with educating management and staff in their Asia plants in order to facilitate compliance with international standards. I spent the majority of my time in the Singapore office,



researching and preparing presentations.

Now, back in the United States, it seems almost surreal to have been in a Communist country only a month ago. Basic freedoms guaranteed in our constitution, such as free speech, are ignored in The People’s Republic of China. In Shanghai and Beijing, I became acquainted with an entirely foreign culture and governmental system. I met locals through 4 days of work in a factory office in Shanghai, and after a few days of touring

the city, traveled to Beijing, excited to see China’s capital and the Great Wall and its surroundings.

I vividly remember the conversations I had with Rebecca, a young local activist I met. I was impressed with her social-consciousness. At only 25, Rebecca had already traveled to Nepal, Tibet, and rural Chinese villages for aid work. Her kindness was especially motivating considering her budget. Rebecca’s income, while perhaps average in China, did not even allow her to fly home to visit her family, for a fee, she told me, is around \$200 round trip. Instead, she took a 20-hour bus ride.

When she took me to the World Expo in Shanghai, we toured the Tibet hall in the Chinese Provinces Pavilion. Whispering, Rebecca told me how sad the current situation is for Tibetans. Having traveled there three times, Rebecca saw the effect of Chinese capitalist intentions; the wilderness is increasingly marginalized by a heavy mining industry. Instead of respecting the Tibetan local customs, the Chinese are moving their dominant “Hun” into the territory. Chinese business intentions marginalize local culture and wildlife.

While in China, I was impressed with the incredible optimism I observed in

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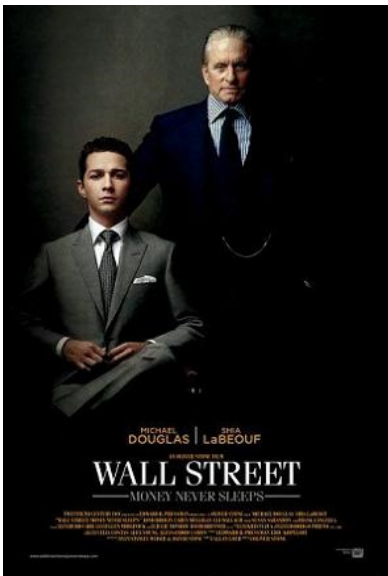
September and October Movie Preview

By Louis Lesser ‘11

SEPTEMBER

Easy A (9/17) – Friends’ Central Juniors read Nathaniel Hawthorne’s *The Scarlet Letter* each fall, and while this film is very loosely based on the plot of that novel, it looks to entertain teen crowds with its cast and high school setting. Emma Stone (*Superbad*) and Penn Badgely (*Gossip Girl*) star in this smart-mouthed romp.

Wall Street: Money Never Sleeps (9/24) – While the original film was released in 1987, this follow-up is set in modern times, amongst the current economic climate, telling the story of a young man and his rise to financial power. Michael Douglas won the Academy Award



for his role as Gordon Gekko in the first movie, so expect another fiery performance.

The Town (9/17) – Ben Affleck returns to the director’s chair with his adaptation of the novel Prince of

Thieves by Chuck Hogan. A gripping crime thriller set outside of Boston, this film tells the story of four bank robbers pursued by the FBI, enhanced by romance.

Also Playing:
Resident Evil: Afterlife (9/10)
Never Let Me Go (9/15)
You Again (9/24)

OCTOBER

The Social Network (10/1) – David Fincher and Aaron Sorkin combine their creative talents to direct and produce, respectively, a movie about the creation of Facebook. Surprisingly, neither Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg nor his partners were involved in the making of the film, but it still tells the true tale of one of the biggest phenomena in modern culture, and aims to appeal to all 500 million Facebook users.

Saw 3D (10/29) – Yes, there really is another *SAW* movie. The seventh installment of the slasher franchise is also the first film in the series to be shot in 3D, and will be released just in time for Halloween. Due to considerably cheap production costs, *Jigsaw* has made a substantial profit over the last decade, but since *Saw VI* saw a dip in its gross, this has been said to be the final *SAW* film.



Also Playing:
Secretariat (10/8)
RED (10/19)
Paranormal Activity 2 (10/22)



Sports Poll of the Month:

FOCUS surveyed the 9th-12th grade and the Upper School Faculty and asked:
Who should the Eagles pick as starting quarterback this season?



Michael Vick: 64%
Kevin Kolb: 32%
Mike Kafka: 4%

Data as of Friday, September 17, 2010

Below are a few comments:



“Mike Vick is very talented, but over several seasons he has shown that he is not fit for winning a Superbowl. Although his game could mature, the priority goes to Kevin Kolb because he is the future of the franchise. We have invested a lot in Kolb, and he has not been given ample opportunity to prove that he can be a very effective quarterback. Also keep in mind that Kolb played horribly for one half against a great defense, but many great quarterbacks have horrible first years.”

“He has more experience then Kolb. They should be working Florida’s pre-Tebow game plan of working Kolb in for 20-25 snaps a game until he gets comfortable, because right now he’s just too nervous to play good football.”

“We know what Vick offers, and even at his best, it isn’t good enough. The offense is not designed for him either. Finally, and maybe of equal importance, is the unappealing prospect of anointing him as the offensive leader. Fine with him as a sometime contributor but hard to swallow him as the face of the franchise. Forgiven, maybe, but not forgotten.”

To view detailed results and more comments please visit <http://ourfcs.friendscentral.org/focus>.

Phoenix In the Phast Lane by Jamie Ulrich '12

Maureen Donovan – Girls’ Cross Country

With Germantown Friends as FSL Champions 8 years running, there is a new face on the Upper School campus looking to change the trend. Maureen Donovan has only been in high school a few weeks and is already impressing coaches with her performances. “We can’t wait to see what she does with the rest of her season,” said Coach Nina Morton. Maureen ran her first race of the season with an exciting 24:24 mark. Perhaps more impressive for the girl who’s been running since 6th grade was her 6:35 first mile split. A long career of winning lies ahead for the Friends’ Central Girls’ Cross Country team, thanks in large part to Maureen Donovan.



Samuel Siegel-Wallace – Boys’ Water Polo

Hopefully everyone on campus is aware of the aquatics success of Friends’ Central. Varsity Boys’ and Girls’ Swimming have developed into local powerhouses, capturing league titles on a yearly basis. A sport that has yet to bring home the hardware in the pool has been Varsity Water Polo. The winds of change are blowing in the Shimada pool, however, and the team is looking to capture its first win of the season. Playing a large role in the team’s competitive streak has been Sam Siegel-Wallace. Sam brings a passion to the sport no one can deny. He explains, “My brothers both played, and I fell in love from the first practice.” Sam is a spark plug on offense and is enjoying a break out senior season. He had a career-high three goals against Pennington and is looking to continue his success. Teammate Mike Fires praised him, “Sam is an excellent player, who brings a lot to the team. He is a threat from the outside to shoot and is one of the best swimmers on the team.” Fires added, “Out of the pool, Sam is also a great leader and carries tireless spirit to the games and even practices.”



Surprise, Surprise: Eagles Choose Vick

By Wesley Kaminsky ‘11

Remind me again why the Eagles traded Donovan McNabb? In a sudden turn of events, Andy Reid has shocked the NFL world by naming Michael Vick the starter over Kevin Kolb. Yes, the same Kevin Kolb whom the Eagles groomed for three years to be the starter only to give up on him after one bad half of football. When Kolb went down with a concussion that forced him to miss week

two against the Lions, little did he know he would be losing his starting job as well. It’s not that I am opposed to Michael Vick; it’s the fact that the Eagles have been clearly stating all along that Kevin Kolb is their quarterback, instilling confidence in him, only to have his confidence shattered.



This team invested so much in Kolb, going as far as trading the best quarterback the Eagles franchise has ever had, Donovan McNabb. This leads to the big question---why did the Eagles trade McNabb if they did not have confidence in Kevin Kolb? Now, take your pick, Michael Vick or Donovan McNabb? Somewhere, McNabb is grinning, knowing the Eagles have a giant mess on their hands.

Spanish Exchange Students Visit New York City



from China on page 3

Rebecca and others. Such optimism has been unseen in our country for many years. While we witness a spiraling recession, and high unemployment, China has barely been affected, with tremendous annual growth rates of around 10%. At this pace, China’s economy will double in size every 10 years. Even with such optimism, economic disparity and inequality is very apparent. Touring around Beijing, I witnessed incredible material wealth in contrast with stark poverty. Browsing around the hotel lobby, we walked into a Giorgio Armani store, to find they were selling dresses for \$15,000 US, the income a Chinese laborer can earn in 15 years. The next day, we headed to a shopping center to find a luggage bag for the gifts I had acquired. While walking with my parents, only a block or so from the hotel, I saw a little man without legs begging for small change. The sadness of his condition, however, was not what struck me the most. As I looked towards his legs, I noticed they were simply bandaged, and he had inadequate crutches to support him while walking. This young man was not only

without his own legs, but also without any artificial replacements. He clearly was receiving no medical care for his condition, and was living off of what he could get on the street. Just outside a luxury mall, I was among the few that gladly gave him a few Yuans, In a city with thousands of luxury cars and multi-million dollar condos, his legs weren’t important enough.

FOCUS

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