North Shore OX Families

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Nov. Ad Deadline: Oct. 18!



In Memory of Stephen OCTOBER 2017

The LARGEST distribution local publication for parents on the North Shore – since 2007!

Family & Friends

Saying "Goodbye" to Stephen...

by Suzanne Provencher, Publisher/Editor

I met Stephen when I moved into the neighborhood just before I turned 7. He was the cutest, curly haired boy in his Sears huskies and



that little shock of white hair that was often mistaken for paint. I found myself constantly defending his unique look, his blue leisure suit and his chopper bicycle.

I guess you could say that I was his girl next door, and in 8th grade, we began the sweetest little love affair that lasted through most of high school and included daily walks on his paper route. We loved to walk, holding hands, catching snowflakes, making plans.

I can't remember a time in our lives when we weren't friends. And not just regular, run of the mill friends. We were the friends they write about in movies and

songs – and boy, did we sing our share of songs at the top of our lungs while walking along the beach or quarries or woods or orchards. We loved to just get in the car and drive – it didn't matter where – as long as we had a tank of gas, some tunes and each other. And every single time we'd pass a farm stand – we'd race into our routine, an homage to his maternal grandparents: "Ada! Look – 'blubry' pies!", to which I'd reply,



"Oh, George, pull over!" And we'd laugh and laugh.

An integral part of our friendship was music – and we liked to sing – a lot – and loudly – and dare I say? Sometimes...often times...he was out of tune. "Stay on your note, Stephen!" And we'd laugh. He didn't care. He just loved to sing. We saw more concerts and Broadway Shows than I could ever recall. We saw our favorites, like Barbra Streisand – The Indigo Girls – Carole King – James Taylor – Barry Manilow – Cher – Prince and so many others we admired over the years. We loved to take vacations and road trips together – every year – whether we were hanging out in Newport for the day or trying to find Taylor Swift's house like two middle-aged groupies. And yes, we did find it.

We liked to dance in the rain and walk in the snow and adventure

would find us wherever we'd go. We were Thelma and Louie. We loved our weekend drives where we would just see where the wind would blow us. We never tired of looking at beautiful homes, as Steve would verbally redesign the less desirable elements of each.

Steve had the kindest eyes that would crinkle into little smiles whenever he would grin. He had the nicest smile. He was kind, funny, happy, thoughtful, personable, loving, demonstrative, humble, loyal, authentic, irreplaceable. He is irreplaceable. He was always Steve. What you saw was what you got. He was a bit loquacious — which means he liked to talk. A lot. We mirrored this in each other's reflections.



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And trust me, if you asked Steve what time it was - you would learn how to build a clock. He liked to have fun. He epitomized joy. And he loved his Whoopee Pies. He loved to decorate his home and his parents' home for the holidays and seasons, something he had great talent



for. He loved his dogs throughout his life. But most of all, he defined and embodied and perfected the term "true friend". We brought out the very best we had in each other, for each other, and we left nothing on the table.

We laughed a lot. He had a great laugh – and a naughty laugh. We loved each other deeply. He was the yin to my yang – the Frick to my Frack – and my world just got a little bit smaller without him in it. But I feel him

in my heart and in my soul and I know I always will. We were soul mates and the very best friends for 50 years. I will so miss his hugs. I will miss him calling me "Suzie" and "Hey, Babycakes". I will just miss him. We will all miss him.

That Wednesday in mid-September began like any other Wednesday. Eddie dropped him off at Wonderland like he did every day and he headed off to work in the city. The late afternoon brought us news that he was not feeling well. None of us had any idea what was about to unfold. But in a matter of hours — we were all there. He was surrounded by his parents — his siblings — their spouses — his nieces and nephews — Eddie — and me. He was not alone. He was not in pain. He was blanketed in our love and we stayed with him into the early morning hours. We prayed over him,

I sang to him – we kissed him goodbye and we thanked God for the glory of the gift of Stephen George Perroni. I would love to tell you more, but I would need another 50 years.

The loss of Stephen is profound. It doesn't seem fair. He left us too soon. He left us so fast. But I find comfort knowing with all I have and all I am that he is at peace, reconnecting with his loved ones who passed before him. And I have faith that he will continue to watch over me. As long as I share our stories and my love of him, he will always be with

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North Shore Children & Families



www.northshorefamilies.com P.O. Box 150 Nahant, MA 01908-0150 781.584.4569

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Designed by Group One Graphics Printed by Seacoast Media Group

Please see page 3 for our upcoming deadlines.

Published and distributed monthly throughout the North Shore, 10x per year, and always online.

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Saying "Goodbye" to Stephen

Continued from page 3

me. His last Facebook post was to share my September issue. He was always my biggest fan.

And he has been sending me signs, the kind that warm me and make me smile... On the morning of his funeral, my sister called to me from downstairs. As I descended the stairs - I noticed something obviously out of place. It was a brass G clef laying in the middle of one of the stairs. It had been hanging on my



banister for over 20 years. There are actually a few G clefs hanging there, as I collect G clefs – but I think this brass one was from Steve.

So on the morning of his funeral, when I would be delivering the eulogy I wrote for him, it "magically" appeared in the middle of a stair... And both of our initials are SP - and a G clef looks like an S and a P. It was like he was letting me know he liked the word picture I so lovingly painted of our life-long friendship.

The next day, I notice that my slate heart – the one that hangs above my kitchen sink on a leather cord – and which reads "Friends are the Family We Choose" - somehow ended up in a big ceramic bowl I keep on the counter with potatoes and squash. And it was standing upright, facing me. This heart has probably been hanging there for 16 years. It's fairly big and heavy. There is a mark on the right rim of the bowl where the falling slate heart made an indent - so it probably should have shattered the bowl. I have had several other "Godwinks", signs - but these have been the most profound. So far.

All of my tears won't bring him back. And he would want me to be happy. And I am happy. And grateful. We had the best of each other and left nothing on the table. No regrets - no "if onlys...". I'm sure I will have my sad moments - like when I take a drive along the coast or to the mountains. But I know he'll be there.

I'd like to end with some words from two of our favorite Indigo Girls songs:

> So we must love while these moments are still called today Take part in the pain of this passion play Stretching our youth as we must, until we are ashes to dust Until time makes history of us

You know the things that I am afraid of I'm not afraid to tell And if we ever leave a legacy

It's that we loved each other well



May you rest in peace, Stephen.

Forever in my heart, Suzanne

October is Bullying Prevention Month

7 Ways Parents Can Raise Awareness During Bullying Prevention Month



by Dr. Kate Roberts, PhD

October is Bullying Prevention Month. Awareness months exist to help raise consciousness about the presence of bullying and to identify actions that can be done to stop bullying.

The child anti-bullying laws, the rise of cyber-bullying and our media driven culture have raised awareness of the bullying problem in youth. Bullying

prevention tends to focus on children as they are defenseless and vulnerable to the damages of bullying.

However, bullying occurs in all walks of life and this impacts bullying in children, although more indirectly. We all know the bullying boss, girlfriend, spouse and friend. Many of us are uncomfortable with the idea that we live in a culture of bullying, and yet we watch bullying behavior in reality television and some adult comedy cartoons. And sometimes, we find this behavior on television funny. We justify our reactions, by telling ourselves it's just television and it's staged or it's all in jest, right? But it's only funny when it's about someone else. When the bullying humor is

directed at us or our culture and race, we may laugh along to save face, but most of us are hurt inside and don't find it so funny at all.

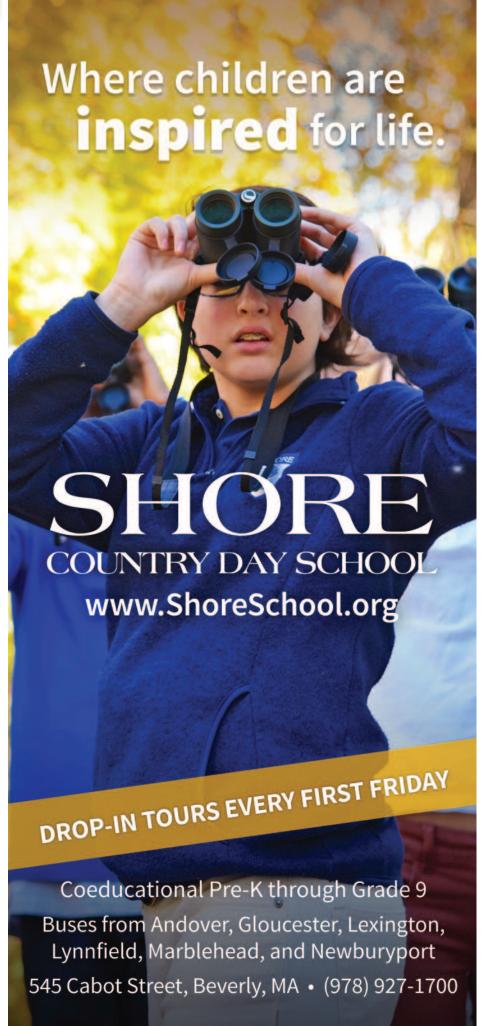
It's important to educate children about bullying and discuss that it hurts people's feelings, even when it's said in humor. Anonymous bullying occurs through cyber bullying and that

happens when a teen or tween posts something "funny" on

their fake Instagram
account, also known as a
"finsta" account, about a
peer. When a person is
a target through this
medium, it is bullying.
Some cyber bullying
occurs as an attempt to
dominate others in an online

social circle. Cyber bullying involves saying unkind things online or sharing pictures with others of a person in compromising situations. Indeed, cyber bullying is such a problem that there was a case in which an adult woman harassed a teenager online repeatedly and eventually the teen went into depression and committed suicide. What can start as one simple post can mushroom into a posting fiasco that takes on a life of its own and really hurts another person. Some say it's

Continued on page 6



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Bullying Prevention Month

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easy to bully another through social media because it occurs through a distance and the person seems remote and less human to the bully.

Here are seven ways parents can raise awareness about bullying and attempt to stop bullying in their homes and amongst their children.

- Nole Model. In today's busy world, it's easy to get frustrated with incompetence, long lines and day to day life misgivings. But as adults, our reactions to these should be positive and we should not put others down because of our disappointments and frustrations. Instead, we should teach our children that frustration is natural and taking the high road of managing negative reactions is the only healthy way to deal with it.
- 2. Be honest with yourself. Use your own past lapses into bullying behavior as examples of what not to do when teaching your children about bullying. Discuss remorse and the reason that you feel badly

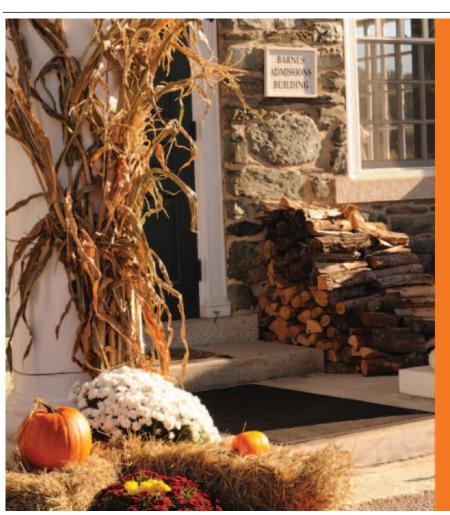
- when you hurt another by engaging in bullying behavior.
- 3. Be intolerant of bullying. When you as an adult or parent witness bullying in children around you, make it a point to teach them other ways to interact and discuss why bullying is bad because it's harmful to others.
- **4. Teach empathy.** The more empathic a child is, the less likely they are to bully others. Being sensitive to others feelings would help stop bulling and create a more caring culture.
- 5. Talk about bullying bystanders. Bully bystanders stick up for those around them who are being bullied. They confront the bully in a gentle and firm manner, calling him or her out on their bullying behavior and letting them know that it's not acceptable to hurt another. Bullying bystanders are rare because they have to be confident and they don't want to be a bully themselves, dictating to others how to act.



6. Be aware of sibling bullying. A study published in 2014 in the journal *Pediatrics* found that adults who reported being physically assaulted, having their toys stolen

- or broken, or endured emotional abuse by a sibling as a child, had an increase in mental health symptoms as adults. Recognize the difference between rivalry and bullying. Bullying occurs when there is a clear power differential between two siblings and when the two siblings almost never share any kindness. Try to teach siblings about empathy and sticking up for each other, even when they don't have to because there is no outside threat.
- 7. Be a kind spouse. The way spouses treat each other in front of children directly impacts bullying behavior. If one spouse bullies another, then it sends the message to children that it's okay to act that way. How spouses treat each other regarding differences, their likes and dislikes and how they generally respect one another will impact the way your children treat others who are different.

Dr. Kate Roberts is a licensed child and school psychologist and family therapist with offices in Salem and Wenham. She can be reached at kate@drkateroberts.com and www.drkateroberts.com.





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Raising Compassionate Children



Teaching Kids to Give Brings Happiness, Healing and Purpose

by Leah Okimoto

We are so excited for this year! We just had our *Project Mentor* training with all 5 of our very dedicated staff mentors, and they are going to enable a lot of kids to participate in *Aaron's Presents* this year. On the North Shore, our Regional Director, Kim LaBonte-Kay, will work with kids in Danvers, Peabody and Beverly, while Ebony White will mentor kids in Lynn. In the Merrimack Valley, our Executive Director, Leah Okimoto, will be working with kids in various towns, Katelyn Adams will be mentoring at after-school programs in Lawrence and Nana Younge will focus on after-school programs in Lowell. We are so grateful to be expanding our reach because of these amazing mentors who love to support children and their generous ideas!

Our first three projects of the year got underway this past month. First, 3rd graders from Sanborn Elementary School in Andover, Brooke, Shruthi and Shrinidhi, planned a fun *Water Party* for 2-5 year olds. They made flyers and planned all of the activities. The day was beautiful and warm, and they took the little kids under their wing with such kindness and positive energy. Not a single child whined for 2.5 hours, which is no small feat for that age group!



They loved the attention of the "big kids" and could not have been happier, which was also a gift to all of their parents.

Second, four 8th graders from the Wetherbee School in Lawrence, Dezani, Glenny, Gianni and Jadeyshka, have set up a *Penny Wars* competition among all the classrooms at their K-8 school to raise money for hurricane victims in Puerto Rico and other areas devastated by the recent historic storms. They started collecting coins this week and have already raised \$777! Please

Continued on page 8

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Ann Reis, at admissions@heronfield.org or 603.777.1336.

www.heronfieldacademy.org

Aaron's Presents

Continued from page 7



consider giving supplies or donations to a relief effort, as the situation is very dire in many places right now.

Our third project this year was a beach-themed party led by 8th grader, Lizzie Montes, from an amazing after-school program called *Si, Se Puede*, in the Merrimack Courts housing project on Essex Street in Lawrence. She planned the food, decorations and activities, and many of the 300 families who live there came out, cooked, danced and shared some conversation, laughs and community. It was a beautiful day, and never would have happened without Lizzie's initiative. Many of the residents are going through challenging times, and this event created a lot of joy and togetherness for the day. Many thanks to Executive Director Lorie Mendoza and the staff of *Si, Se Puede* and Merrimack Courts for all the help and support in bringing it together!

We look forward to meeting more of your families this year and empowering your children to discover the truly meaningful and memorable impact they can have on others, at any age, because of their unique qualities. Please visit www.aaronspresents.org to learn more about what our organization offers and how a child you know can apply to participate. We welcome the opportunity to present our program to your school, team or youth group.

Leah Okimoto is the Executive Director of Aaron's Presents, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that she founded in 2014 in memory of her infant son, Aaron. Feel free to contact us: Leah at lokimoto@aaronspresents.org or (978) 809-5487; Kimberly LaBonte-Kay, North Shore Regional Director, at kimberly@aaronspresents.org; Ebony White, Lynn Project Mentor, at ebony@aaronspresents.org; Kate Adams, Lawrence Project Mentor, at kadams@aaronspresents.org; or Nana Younge, Lowell Project Mentor, at nana@aaronspresents.org.

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Children's Book Review

The Amazing Animal Atlas

by Dr. Nick Crumpton and Gaia Bordicchia

Published by Flying Eye Books 2017

by Michelle Mullett

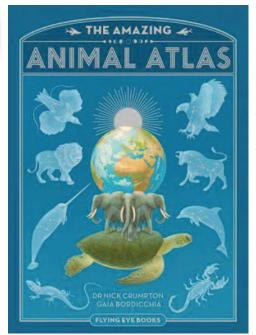
"Open up this super-sized atlas and prepare to be immersed in the beauty of our natural world." So, the back cover of this book beckons young readers to be astounded by the tree of life and all its biodomes.

Upon first inspection, this book reminded me of another oversized educational book called *Animalium*, published by local powerhouse Candlewick Press in 2014. If you're a parent or teacher, you've seen this book proudly displayed on many local library shelves. I'm always leaving my copy opened to various pages just to simply enjoy the illustrations. Now with this new *Amazing Animal Atlas*,

kids can wonder about the same content presented through the eye of a different illustrator. The new atlas gives readers a more infographic format, rather than a museum catalog format that *Animalium* provided a few years ago.

Kids will enjoy the beautiful tri-fold pages that extend this oversized book even further across the kitchen table. Italian illustrator, Gaia Bordicchia, does an incredible job of offering children close up views of both strange and familiar animals such as the Common Wombat or the Pink Fairy Armadillo. Yes, there is such a thing and no, you can't keep it for a pet!

If you have pre-readers like me, then sometimes you will hesitate to buy a book like this. But I would encourage you to have a lot of books like this in your home library for several reasons. One is that this kind of sturdy,



oversized, well-made book will last generations and so it may even become a treasured hand me down in your family's library. Another reason is that it's a terrific way to just leave something open for bored eyes to linger on, even in between activities. They may not be reading it, but they are certainly soaking up all the luscious imagery and dreaming about all those funny shaped continents.

As someone who enjoys *National Geographic* photographs and documentaries, I love this book for its simplicity and playful use of scale in placing different animals beside their corresponding environments. The fonts are easily readable and never too small. Descriptions are straight forward, without a lot of fluff, and paragraphs are bite-size blocks of information, perfect for a few minutes of bedtime conversation.

Going through this book, I realized that even though I'm middle aged, I still enjoy little fun facts. As a native Texan, I'll leave you with a fun fact from the *Did You Know?* section of this book:

The nine-banded armadillo gives birth to one of the strangest families in the animal kingdom: not twins or triplets, but always quadruplets, and all identical!

Michelle Mullet is a local mom to two young boys and a published writer living on the North Shore. She is currently working on several picture books. You can follow her on Twitter @michelle_mullet.



OCTOBER IS...

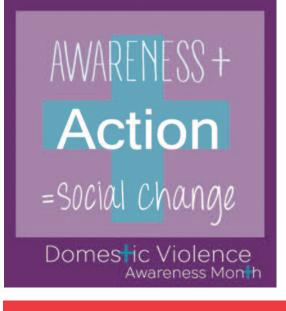
Breast Cancer Awareness Month **Bullying Prevention Awareness Month**





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THE FALL 2017 INDEPENDENT SCHOOL SHOWCASE PART 2 OF 3



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Schools: Join us next month for Part 3! All school ads receive an editorial bonus.

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www.christchurchparishdayschool.com

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THE FALL 2017 INDEPENDENT SCHOOL SHOWCASE PART 2 OF 3



approach, enhanced by a 7:1 student:faculty ratio, prepares young people to be the thinkers and doers who can make our world a better place. The 23-acre GUS campus is designed to promote environmental awareness and appreciation and features nature trails that wind through woodlands, vernal ponds, open classrooms and past a 7,000 square-foot greenhouse and historical architecture. GUS offers before and after care, afternoon enrichment programs, summer camp and bus transportation to surrounding communities. A North Shore Nature Fair will be held at the GUS campus on Sunday afternoon, November 5th and open classrooms will be held Wednesday morning, November 16th. Contact Director of Admission, Kristie Gonzalez, at kgonzalez@gus.org or 978-927-1064 x115 for more information or to schedule a campus tour. Learn more about our school community at gus.org.

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THE FALL 2017 INDEPENDENT SCHOOL SHOWCASE PART 2 OF 3



Continued from page 13

school so special is what lies at the heart of any excellent school: the teachers. They are seasoned, confident, skilled and blessed with a love of learning that they impart to their students.

Heronfield offers an academically challenging curriculum while simultaneously nurturing the Core Values of Honesty, Respect, Diligence, Celebration and Caring. The school takes a wide variety of students, not just one profile of learner – all of whom love school, love to learn and have a passion for something, be it figure skating, drawing, science or fishing. Teachers focus on all aspects of growth at this level with an eye to giving students a healthy balance in a busy world. Heronfield is truly a unique learning community because the school understands that creating a nurturing culture is of the utmost importance. When young learners feel safe, they thrive. At Heronfield, they soar!

In the words of Head of School, Martha Shepardson-Killam, "What we do here matters. This is a critical time in your children's lives. We have built a school around their academic, social, emotional and spiritual needs. We have built a school that honors student voice. We have built a school that puts an emphasis on joy: joy in learning, joy in sharing and joy in just having fun being together."

www.heronfieldacademy.org

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To see our current issue, advertising rates, sizes & more, please visit us online at www.northshorefamilies.com.

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Kimball Union Academy, Meriden, NH: While watching Anthony Bourdain's *Parts Unknown*, I was intrigued by the following question: is free press a people's, a nation's, undeniable right? In an ordinary American high school classroom, this question would be met with nods of perplexed unanimity. How could anyone question the central role played by a free press? Indeed, I have taught in such classrooms. In my KUA classroom, six hail from the US. Others from across the globe: Pakistan, Zimbabwe, Azerbaijan, Croatia, Lithuania, Vietnam, South Korea, Canada, Kazakhstan, Saudi Arabia, Turkey. For this group, such a question is infused with complexity. "Raise your hand if you have a free press in your country? Raise your hand if you believe you should have a free press in your country?" Hands up, hands down – such nuance; a conversation informed by young people with unique perspectives and life experiences. What an extraordinary exchange ensued. I cherish each day with this class – the ideal learning community. That's KUA; the best environment for learning. www.kua.org

Written by Dan Weintraub, History Department Chair and Girls Varsity Soccer Coach (whose team picked up the NEPSAC Championship last fall). A graduate of Brandeis University and Tufts University School of Education, Dan has taught in Massachusetts, Texas and California. Dan's interests stretch far beyond the classroom and the soccer pitch. He has worked as an actor in professional theater, is a singer-songwriter and has published on the importance of compassionate youth sports coaches in America. Dan is also a former storm-chaser and college meteorology teacher.

At **The Pike School** in Andover, we believe positive energy makes everything possible. In fact, our school runs on it. It fuels our campus and ensures our students are happy, confident, curious children – who, not surprisingly, go on to be very successful adults.

Your kid can do anything. That's what you believe. And the beauty is, at Pike, we believe it, too. That's why we surround every child with positive energy – including a team of teachers dedicated to providing encouragement, support and endless opportunities for developing strength and overcoming weaknesses.

There is a certain sort of joyful exuberance that permeates everything we do. And yes, it's contagious. We create an environment so welcoming – and so filled with the thrill of risk-taking – that even our youngest students think learning is the most natural thing in the world. That's the power of positive energy. That's Pike.

Join us at our Open House on Sunday, November 5, from 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

The Pike School is an independent, coeducational day school located on 35 woodland acres in Andover, Massachusetts. Its comprehensive and sequential program provides education to students from Pre-K through Grade 9. Small class size and individual attention allow for social, emotional, physical and intellectual development of the students within the context of the school community. Visit www.pikeschool.org or more information.

Pingree School in So. Hamilton is an independent coeducational day school for grades nine through twelve. Dedicated to academic excellence and



THE FALL 2017 INDEPENDENT SCHOOL SHOWCASE PART 2 OF 3



development of high personal standards, Pingree believes that a love of learning flourishes best in a diverse community that respects truth, curiosity, creativity, humor and independent and imaginative thinking. Above all, Pingree strives to instill in its students integrity, decency, compassion, self-esteem and commitment to one another and to the world at large.

We invite you to consider the many advantages of a Pingree School education. Our community values the life of the mind and fosters an ambitious, nimble and innovative learning culture that keeps all doors of possibility open. At Pingree, students are encouraged to explore new areas, take risks and thereby discover new interests. Our dedicated and skilled faculty challenges and inspires students to grow and lead as scholars and global citizens with kindness, confidence and a sense of purpose. Through a demanding and balanced course of studies – enriched by our *H Block* elective courses and *Senior Project* program – students develop the ability to think critically, creatively and compassionately, to take intellectual risks and to examine their assumptions and underlying values.

What do you seek to achieve? How will you get there? Let us help you forge your path. We look forward to sharing our community with you. www.pingree.org

At **Shore Country Day School** in Beverly, extraordinary teachers and a transformative approach inspire children for the rest of their lives. Deeply grounded in the liberal arts, and enhanced by curriculum-wide emphasis on inquiry and creative expression, Shore's rich program and caring community help each child find their spark. Shore faculty members are recognized by parents year after year for their ability to engage every learner in adventurous education; they are proud to see themselves as guides and coaches placing students of every age at the center of their own learning. But the Shore education emphasizes emotional growth and social responsibility just as much as academic achievement. Recess, physical education and team sports are core to Shore's program, and the school's Community Code exemplifies a deeply felt dedication to the well-being of the whole child. Inside the Center for Creativity, robust offerings in studio arts, music, drama, design and engineering prepare students to thrive in a changing world that values flexible, agile thinking which crosses old boundaries with ease. Shore's stunning Innovation Lab is a model that top schools come to study, and its renowned outdoor education program – from day trips in Pre-K to week-long expeditions in Grade 9 - is the most extensive in the region. Whether inspired by a caring teacher or coach, inspiring an audience through the arts or finding inspiration in a risk taken or river crossed, students at Shore discover the excitement of experiencing the world with curiosity, compassion and courage. www.shoreschool.org

Waring School is a Coeducational Day School in Beverly for Grades 6-12. Waring offers a full program of intellectual, aesthetic and physical activities for its students. The program balances academic rigor with breadth and asks all students to work not only in Humanities, Math, Science, French, Art and Writing, but also in Theater, Athletics, Music, Travel and short-term intensives like Camping Trip and the Endterm program. In Convocation and Graduation speeches, Waring students often describe the growth they experienced when the program asked them to take risks and engage with subjects and activities

outside their comfort zone, from an art assignment or writing piece to a physics project, and this speaks to the school's commitment to helping students find their voices and build their skills in many different ways. www.waringschool.org

Fall 2017 Open Houses:

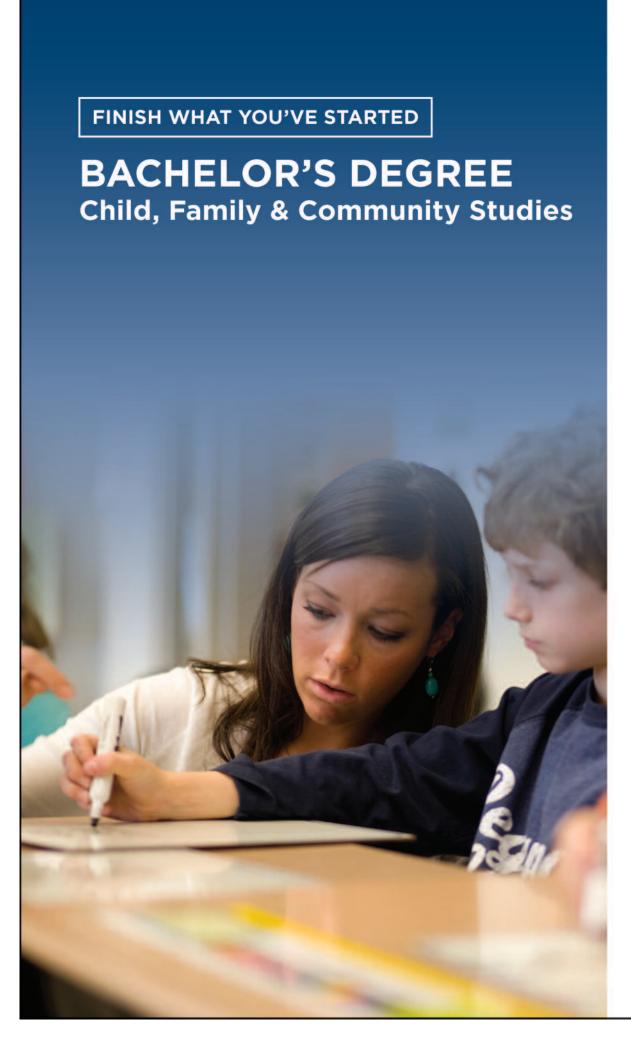
Cairn Hill Nature Preschool, Oct. 28 & Nov. 18, 10:30am
Christ Church Parish Day School, Nov. 13 & 21, 9:30am
Clark School, Nov. 4, 9-11am
Glen Urquhart School, Nov. 5 & 16
The Governor's Academy, Oct. 28, 8:30 & 10:30am
Heronfield Academy, Oct. 12 & Nov. 14
Kimball Union Academy, Oct. 9 & Nov. 4
Middlesex, Oct. 7
Pike School, Nov. 5, 1-3pm
Pingree School, Oct. 21, 10am-2pm
Shore Country Day School, Drop-In Tours Every 1st Friday
St. John's Prep, Sept. 23 & Oct. 29
Waring School, Oct. 21 & Nov. 10

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