

Miracles and Wonder

by Phillip Moore

He stood up knowing what he had to do. His best friend lying in a coffin behind him had assembled a group of nearly 200 people. He took the podium and launched into his eulogy animated by the intense feelings of love, sorrow, uncertainty and loss. Even in death his buddy had pushed him into territory that he would have never chosen alone. He said that his best friend's body was unable to hold such a powerful, vital, irrepressible life force for more than 28 years. He sifted through possible stories. Should he tell the one about being turned back from the Canadian border because his car was caked with mud? Or the one about the night they lost all their money at a Windsor casino and ended up with only a dollar between them, knowing that it took \$2.50 to get back to the US? He was clear about one thing. Jeremy was a miracle. He transformed the lives of everyone he knew. Each person in that room felt the truth of that statement.

I remember the first time I met Jeremy as a nine-year-old boy. I remember his mom telling me how hard it was for him to sit in a classroom all day. I remember his dad gesturing vigorously as he talked about the boredom of a routine day of school. But most of all, I remember Jeremy's smile. It was a smile that went beyond lighting up a room. He was a beautiful boy. He



had a boundless energy, an enthusiasm for life and a deep need to be with people. He loved fast. Fast games, fast cars, fast motorcycles, and fast friendships.

I am forever grateful to the Landmark organization for helping me to understand the concept of Rackets. During one of their seminars, the facilitator stood up and announced that all of us were racketeers. She confidently asserted that each one of us was running one or several rackets. She then defined a racket as a continual complaint. Over the course of the next three hours she made it clear that we run rackets in order to prove we're right or to prove someone else wrong, or to avoid being dominated or to dominate. Once we all finally got it, she then went on to reveal the cost

of running our rackets. The cost was and is relatedness, health, and vitality.

Vitality. That's the first word that came into my mind when I was told of Jeremy's diagnosis. He was fourteen years old and about to go through a bone marrow transplant, countless rounds of chemotherapy and other related challenges. How would all this affect his vitality, I wondered? What would happen to that irrepressible life force? How would this disease change him?

Vitality is a rare thing these days. How many of us wake up feeling alive and raring to go? How many people do we know who possess this quality? When is the last time you felt absolutely vital?

continued on page 8



UHS 2005 WINTER CALENDAR

FEBRUARY	8	Tuesday	Arts Festival & JBP Performance
	14-15	Monday -Tuesday	2 nd Evaluations – NO SCHOOL
	16-18	Wednesday-Friday	Winter Break – NO SCHOOL
	26	Saturday 7 PM	Staff n° You karenJoy theatre
MARCH	18	Friday 7 PM	Eugene Friesen karenJoy theatre
	23	Wednesday	Spring Celebration-Staff & Students
	24-April 3	Thursday-Sunday	Spring Recess – NO SCHOOL
APRIL	4	Monday	School Resumes
	16	Saturday	miracles and wonder Auction
MAY	6	Friday	Deter Dan karenJoy theatre
	9	Monday	Karin's Group Beaver Island Trip
	26-27	Thursday-Friday	Final Evaluations – NO SCHOOL
	30	Monday	Memorial Day – NO SCHOOL
	31-June 3	Tuesday-Friday	Ted's Group Senior Trip
JUNE	6	Monday	Renaissance Festival
	7	Tuesday	All School Overnight-Staff & Students
	8	Wednesday	Last Day of School

UHS IS ON THE FAST TRACK WITH HIGH SPEED INTERNET

Our email addresses have changed:

info@uplandhills.org - for most school information

development@uplandhills.org - for Auction, Endowment, Annual Giving, Scrips and Spiritwear

KJT@uplandhills.org - for tickets and theatre information

alumni@uplandhills.org - for alumni communications

MI RACLE CONNECTI ONS

(Editor's Note: The theme of this newsletter is "miracles and wonder," also the theme of this year's auction. We knew it was going to be a special issue when amazing stories, letters and articles began to appear, almost magically, as soon as we had decided upon the theme. The following story exemplifies everything we had hoped for: a true story of the mysterious forces that connect us and shape our lives, written by Mary and Cliff Scholz, parents of Serena and new members of our wonderful community. I think you'll share my sense of wonder as you read this incredible tale.)

"These are the days of miracles and wonder..." ~Paul Simon

Mary: This has been a year of marvels for us. Both of us are the youngest children in our families, and we'd spent much of the last few years as the "sandwich generation," caring for our ailing moms and dad while raising our own family. We began 2004 with three parents between us, and by June all of them had passed on. While grief was a natural byproduct of these events, the wonder of it all was the gifts that we were able to take forward with us...

Cliff: For me it started when I delivered my part of my mother's funeral service last March. In my speech I suggested we would honor my mother best not by looking back on our memories but by taking what we learned from her and carrying it forward. As an example, I pointed out how my mom had always nourished herself on beauty, how she'd do anything to make beauty a part of her life, even if it meant enduring inconvenience and insecurity. That was a big lesson I learned from her: the value of beauty.

The example I gave was the house where I grew up. When I was in the 4th grade, we left a new construction colonial in Ann Arbor for a house west of Chelsea that had grown by stages from a cottage. It had a leaky flat roof, a cranky oil-fired furnace, a noisy pump, and a hill so steep and long that we had to carry our groceries up it all winter since it was too dangerous with snow or ice on it. Why the move? We had a treetop view overlooking a lake through a wall of four 6x6' windows. Beauty.

Strangely (and strange things will often happen on such emotionally intense occasions), at one point as I was delivering my speech, I could hear my own voice speak to me authoritatively from the back of my mind, saying, "If I ever get a chance like that, I'll do *exactly* the same thing!"

Then spring came, and our girl Serena was unhappy with school. Kindergarten was a chore: no time for recess, and ditto after ditto was turning her off. Daily, she purged the contents of her backpack into the trash can. We couldn't help but see the message: "school is meaningless." So...we started the search. One day during my lunch hour, I visited the Upland Hills website. With hopeful eagerness, I shot a quick e-mail to Cliff to check it out.

We were both especially impressed with the word "love" used in the school vision. It resonated with our own vision of community. We called and set up an appointment to come out and meet with Phil Moore.

The next day during a team meeting at work, I told one of my partners about the school and our enthusiasm at finding it. She remarked, "You know, we've got a house for sale about a mile from there!"

We scheduled a viewing of the house for the same day as our appointment at Upland Hills. During our school visit, everything we heard and saw added to our enthusiasm for the idea. Serena was up for it too. Though it seemed a little out of character, she was very ready to spend a full day at this unknown place among people she had never met, and it was arranged for the following week.

continued on page 4

continued from page 3

When we looked at the house, it was our dream! Woodsy outdoors, snug yet roomy inside. We also checked out some others in the area, as we felt we couldn't just buy the first house we looked at. Yet we did! Nothing we saw pleased us like the one off Indian Lake Road.

Between our school visit and Serena's, lots of friends and acquaintances seemed to pop up with UHS connections. We found out that a friend's two sons had fabulous experiences there, and a retired teacher spoke of how she'd sent her own child to UHS. A few days after Serena's visiting day, I shared what was going on with Dawn, the librarian at my school. She looked at me with wide eyes and said that she and her fiancée were going to the Upland Hills Auction that weekend! I told her about the gorgeous quilt we'd seen on our visit, and asked her to buy a raffle ticket for us. Over the weekend, as we were filling out the application, I called Serena's preschool teacher to discuss being a reference. It turned out her daughter was dating an Upland Hills grad, so she knew about the school, and said it would be a wonderful fit! When I told her about our new possible home, she was quite familiar with it – her brother lives across the street!

The following Monday, Dawn came into my classroom and handed me a bag. The quilt! We'd won the raffle! I still get goose bumps today remembering that moment. That night, the very night before Serena was to have her visiting day, she slept under the quilt that, stitch by loving stitch, incorporated all the care and sweet energy of the Upland Hills faculty.

Serena loved the school. She wanted to come back the next day! And each day she attends, she grows more into her true self: the child we know who loves to be engaged in the miracles of the world and in learning about her place in it all.

Plus, we got the house! Funny, but it was only when my sister and her husband came out to see it that I noticed something peculiar. I had grown up in a yellow, tri-level, vinyl-sided house surrounded by mature oaks on a hill overlooking a lake with a walkout basement and a two-car garage with an attached office space, a little wishing well, and a pear tree on the property line. This was precisely the description of the new place! Somehow, in only a few months' time, I'd kept the promise I made to myself at my mother's funeral.

And I've kept my other promise, too: I continue to nourish myself and our family with beauty. Standing in the midst of it all in wonder and gratitude, we see the faces of the people in this community and it feels like a spell that's never going to break, because it's real. The magic, the beauty, and the reality—it's all one thing.

Thank you for welcoming us to Upland Hills!

Mary and Clifford Scholz

Upland Hills School Spiritwear

You can still order hoodies and vests -

Come to the "miracles and wonder" Auction
to sample and order Spiritwear

from the Spring Collection !



ALUMNI CONNECTIONS

11/16/04

Hi Phil-

Had to send you another writing that Jessica did for a composition class. She doesn't know I send these, but I'm sure she wouldn't mind. Her pieces are such a great tribute to Upland Hills and the wonderful people who teach there. I just think it is important for the teachers to know how much they have impacted their students' lives!

Hope all is going well!

Take care,

Becky Manderfield

Upland Hills School

A place of great wonders enjoyed by all,
Has valleys that fill themselves in color.
The breeze has scents of a beautiful fall,
The forests sway and speak to each other.

The adults are great friends with lots of knowledge.
They are the foundation of all we know.
Who love to go beyond the highest ledge,
So the children learn about the past and now.

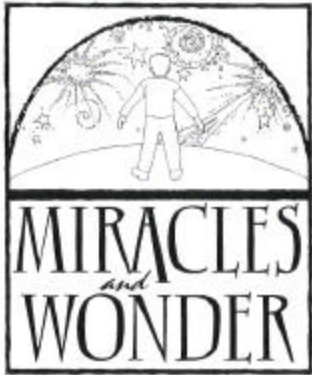
The faces of children fly by in a flash,
Their laughter and screams follow them closely.
For the children are enjoying the bash,
But the day ends and their smiles slip slowly.

For the kids, this place they love, holds the key.
It's home to them and forever will be.

Jessica E M

You know you were an Upland Hills student when...

Complete this sentence and send it to us, either by phone, mail or email (alumni@uplandhills.org). We'll post your responses on our Alumni Page on the Upland Hills website, www.uplandhills.org.



Auction 2005-April 16, 2005, 5:30 PM

Help support the high quality, low cost education at Upland Hills School by participating in our annual auction. There are many ways to get involved:

Donate an item - We need new, quality items for both the Silent and Live Auctions. The value of Silent items starts about \$50, while Live items begin at \$500. Some ideas:

Entertainment tickets - music or dance lessons - handcrafted jewelry - pottery signed books - travel package - photographs - sporting event tickets - dinner - body work - cottage rental

Start now to request donations from businesses that you patronize. Let them know that they will be featured in the auction booklet and the Upland Hills Business Directory. Check the Auction display at school to identify past donors that have not yet been personally contacted.

Advertisements - Place an ad in our auction Brochure. Businesses that can't donate an item will often buy an ad in our brochure, and get a listing in the Upland Hills School Business Directory. Families can also place an ad to celebrate their child and/or the school.

Patron Tables - Purchase a table for 10 at the Auction. You can fill it with friends and family for a memorable evening, or donate it back to the school and we will fill it for you! Patron Tables include ten (10) admission tickets to the Auction, a special reserved table for you and your guests with personal signage/logo display, Program Book acknowledgement including a half page ad and a listing in our business directory.

Sponsorship - Provide important underwriting for the evening by becoming a sponsor. Four levels of sponsorship include ten (10) admission tickets to the Auction, a special reserved table for you and your guests with personal signage/logo display, Banner recognition, Program Book acknowledgement including a full-page ad, Express Check-out, and a listing in our business directory.

- | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Philanthropist | \$7500 | <input type="checkbox"/> Champion | \$2500 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor | \$5000 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor | \$1500 |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Patron | \$500 | |

Business/Organization _____

Name to Appear on Signage/Logo _____

Contact Person _____

Phone _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Return this form with payment to: Upland Hills School, 2575 Indian Lake Road, Oxford, MI 48370 248-693-2878



Staff n' U

February 26 at 7 pm

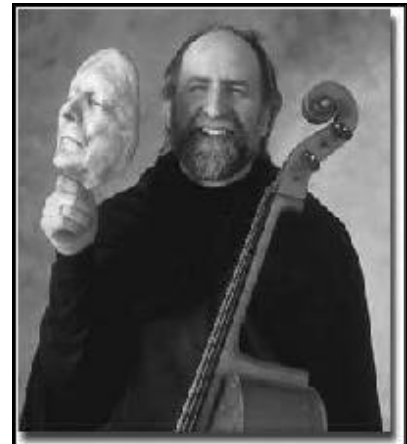
Staff, parents and alumni are showcased sharing their entertaining talents in this Upland Hills School version of a Variety Show. "STAFF N' U" is an opportunity to experience the hidden talents in our community. Join us for an evening of unparalleled magic, song, juggling and musical collaboration.

Eugene Friesen & Friends

March 18 at 1 & 7 pm

The Cello/Piano Project

Teaming up with Tim Ray, pianist for Lyle Lovett, Eugene Friesen presents a celebration of new compositions and arrangements which redefine the chamber duo as an elegant, swinging contemporary act. The second half of the concert will feature the works of 13th century poet, Jelaluddin Rumi. The poetry will be read by Wallace Smith, John Yavruian, Karen and Phillip Moore.



Theatre Playshop presents

Peter Pan

May 6 at 7 pm

To request tickets or more information, call the Karen Joy Theatre Box Office at Upland Hills School at 248-693-2878 or email us at KJT@uplandhills.org.

continued from page 1

Jeremy, noticing that the nurse's station was temporarily abandoned, took the opportunity to grab the microphone and start singing, "I'm too sexy for my shirt too sexy for my pants." Doctors, nurses and patients heard this strange voice over the intercom and with the exception of a few tired docs, smiled. Jeremy fought cancer and won. He didn't win by living to a ripe old age; he won by keeping his love for life intact. From what I could gather at his funeral he loved life even more towards the end, and would tell anyone who would listen how important it is to live each moment as fully as possible. He didn't give in and become a racketeer.

Jeremy was full of wonder. Just before we left for his funeral I searched the loose picture file for factual proof of his time with us. I found a picture of Jeremy with his group on Beaver Island. There he was in the bottom row, holding as many snakes as he could in both hands, smiling at the camera.

The Beaver Island Trip is a rite of passage that Karen Moore created almost twenty years ago. The idea behind the trip is to study Michigan flora and fauna throughout the year and then to travel north about four hours, board a ferry and journey to a place left behind by time. The island has its own story. This story is laced with wonder. Under the guidance of a Central Michigan University professor, our children (usually 16 eleven and twelve year olds) explore the sand dunes, Native American sites, geological formations, and the jail of the former King of Beaver Island. They attend evening lectures complete with an enactment of the mating rituals of the tuatara (a reptile from New Zealand). Dr. Jim Gil-

lingham, the guide for our kids, is one of those rare and wonderful souls who love learning and thereby make great teachers. Karen Nanos and a few lucky parents join the kids on this adventure. Because Jim's expertise is in the field of reptiles, he leads our group around the island, poking into holes and under rocks, revealing the homes of the five varieties of snakes that inhabit Beaver Island.

Looking at the picture helped me to remember the specific year and Jeremy's classmates. There in the front row was Odd Pradit Wachioh, our teacher from Thailand. Odd (pronounced oot as in hoot without the h) lived with us that year. I had visited Thailand a few years before and fell in love with the people, the place and the food. Odd lived in the north and had always dreamed of coming to the States. He had left a wife and family behind to journey to America. He wanted to learn everything he could about our country and bring it back to his village, his school. He taught us songs, stories, and crafts and we laughed many times, sharing the differences and strangeness of our two worlds. Throughout the course of our living together, I learned many things about Odd, his tastes, his talents and his fear of snakes. There are many poisonous snakes in his native land and he had developed a healthy fear and respect for the legless ones. However, by the time he reached Beaver Island, his transformation had begun to take hold. So there he was in Jeremy's picture with a big smile, holding a snake. If not a full blown miracle at least a healthy dose of wonder and science.

Our school believes that 'every child is a genius,' or in other words, that every child is completely unique. Each person is born with an

identity and purpose that has never been and will never be again. This purpose is called by some a soul print. Like a fingerprint or a snowflake that doesn't melt, this soul print is embedded in each of us. If we are listening, if we are open, if we trust our inner promptings, we journey towards expressing this uniqueness. Ray Charles listened. Nelson Mandela listened. Bob Dylan, William Blake, Rumi, Margaret Mead, Harriet Taubman, and Eleanor Roosevelt all uncovered their soul print and expressed it in the world. When this happens the world is made a better place because each expressed soul print leads to the experience of joy.

What our school tries to do on a daily basis is to create an environment that is conducive to encouraging this uniqueness to express itself. When we, as teachers, see it happen, we experience joy. This year, our first trimester concluded with the fall play. That night the theatre was full. We needed to bring in chairs to accommodate the overflow. Over thirty kids were in the show and as soon as it began it was completely in their hands. They not only acted, changed scenes, and costumes, but they ran the lights, and sound. Empowered by great teaching and a healthy dose of trust, they entertained us, and just before the play ended, taught us all a valuable lesson. In the last act a boy sets off a smoke bomb during his middle school's play of "Romeo and Juliet." Because I was in charge of the technical crew, I breathed a sigh of relief as the bomb went off on schedule. We had practiced three times before and had no back up plan if it didn't work. As I watched the smoke rise I thought, "good job Luke!" Almost as soon as I thought it, though, the fumes drifted into the smoke alarm and triggered a strobe

and siren. The audience thought it was part of the play. I knew different and ran to the control panel. Without any suggestion from Karen Moore (the director), our Juliet had the poise to continue, stabbing herself with the rubber knife, getting the laugh and completing the scene while we figured out how to stop the alarm. The play closed to an audience that was wide awake (strobe and siren awake) and we all marveled at how focused and flexible the kids were.

Jeremy loved the plays. He chose roles that had lots of action. I can't help but think that he had something to do with this moment of alarm. Each blast of the siren, amplified by a blast of light, transformed an evening's entertainment into a lesson of being in the moment. Audience and cast and crew joined together in this alertness to become one. Jeremy had learned through his fight with cancer to celebrate every chance we can. His parents and his best friend trans-

formed his funeral into a collective appreciation of life's irrepressible force. Jeremy's mom and dad literally hugged and thanked every single soul in that room. They gave their full attention to each person and like their son, let each one know how thankful they were. In this way they made it clear that Jeremy had delivered his soul print to this world. And the world is a better place because it was touched by Jeremy Leech.

STUDENT CONNECTIONS

Did you know.....

Ted's group recently donated \$100 from their class treasury to the American Red Cross to support relief for the victims of the tsunami.



Karin's Greenhouse Class is experimenting with growing food in the winter. They are journaling with Alice Waters, founder of the Edible Schoolyard Project, sharing their progress and benefiting from her wisdom.

There is a new member in **Holly's group** - Yoooper! He is a 6 month old male guinea pig from the U.P. He fits right in because he eats constantly and loves to jump and squeak. Unlike some of his classmates, Yoooper loves to eat green beans.

PARENT CONNECTIONS

K.T.P. (Kids Teaching Parents) By Robin Michel

One of the most repeated phrases I've heard parents say is, "I wish I had gone to Upland Hills School when I was a child." I, too, was drawn to the school for its magical formula of love and creativity. Even as I write that phrase, I wonder, is that what it was? Is that the exact reason why I picked the school? While I have consciously picked out attributes I like about the school, I have always hesitated to voice the things I didn't like about the school. It is similar to what I have liked and disliked in parenting. I loved the snuggles my daughters have given me at night as we read stories and I have hated the tantrums they have thrown in public places. It took a long time to realize it wasn't always about their behavior but my own reactions to their behavior.

My husband and I picked Upland Hills because we experienced harshness and felt our own creativity shut down in our school years. We didn't realize we were also trying to heal our own wounds around education and life. Every parent wants to be a "good" parent, but what does that exactly mean? The most difficult lessons I've had over the past 7 ½ years concern acceptance and humility. Because of my own background in growing up in an alcoholic home and attending parochial schools, I wanted my children to learn self discipline. Consciously or unconsciously I saw those qualities at the school. Yet I didn't know I had to heal a chaotic authoritarian "parenting" model that popped its head up every time my children did something less than what I expected or wanted. I didn't start to get my own lesson of humility and acceptance until this fall when my daughter started showing up as less than a perfect angel on a regular basis.

While I no longer expect a "perfect" school year, I do feel connected to her in a new way. I also feel clearer about my own role as her parent because I pushed away some of those cobwebs that were obscuring my view of her and what she needed from a parent. Someone who knows both she and I well, said, "She's dancing out your own shadow. Who is the one that is going to lead next?"

I want to share an excerpt from a new book called, *Educating Tigers* by Wendy Sand Eckel. It is about a parent's discovery of herself through her daughter's struggles in learning to read. "The first lesson in parenting is humility. Parenting requires adults to realize children are separate individuals, with their own ideas, personalities and destinies. It is humbling for parents to acknowledge and accept that their child won't become the person they had expected or planned for. A child's uniqueness will display itself in the most unexpected ways."

What is the unique way your child is showing up in your life? I'd like to hear your stories. It is in sharing our stories that we build a community of support for ourselves as well as our children. The Friday coffee hour at the Big Apple Bagel shop is a good place to start.



JOIN US!
Friday morning
coffee at Big Apple Bagel on
M-24 in the Kroger Plaza

How Am I Doing?

By Cathy Zucker

Recently a mother at church asked me if Theo would mind “hanging out” with her four year old daughter during a program we were both planning to attend. She said, “Hannah’s an only child, too, and I want her to be with girls who are strong and have lots of interests.”

I don’t know why, but this surprised me.

I began to remember some things.

When Theo was five or six, her dad arranged a kid sitter for her once a week. It was Bethany Childs who then was twelve or thirteen years old. Over the years, I have come to know Bethany in different ways and Theo has developed such a love for her. Their times together are really special. Though Theo is quickly moving past the age of needing a “sitter,” we continue our weekly night with Bethany. Why? Because she’s strong, has so many interests, she’s fun, kind, respectful, and is a great influence and inspiration.

Could it be Theo’s turn to begin to love and inspire a younger person?

I remember when Theo was a toddler I was expounding to our pediatrician about what an amazing and wonderful child she was. He answered simply “The apple doesn’t fall far from the tree.” That surprised me too. She came to us this way. Did I actually have something to do with her being such a great, cooperative, pleasantly-tempered child?

I look around me at parents and children and see how committed we are to each other. We parents want so much for them – a good life, work they enjoy, friends and family to care for them. We want them to grow in love, that deep love that shows itself in their relationships with themselves, others and the earth.

Our children want to grow and learn. They’re so curious, so full of life. They want so much to please us. Their energy seems unending.

Both parents and children want to do the right thing. Most of us work really hard at it too, whether it’s in our jobs, at school, or in service to others. My days are filled with work, chores, errands and yes, reflection, wonder, love.

I often stop to ask how I’m doing as a parent. The fruits of my labor are all around me and I see they’re beautiful. Theo and I work together in many ways and I see her gifts. She’s resilient, fun, kind, respectful. Her perspective seems so wise. She has an ability to see to the core of things. I could go on but I don’t want to embarrass her too much. My point is we’re doing fine. And I bet you are too.

How do we know? Are we more kind, more patient, a little less critical than we were last year? Are our children laughing? Do they have time to wonder at life? Are they creating things? Do we take the time to listen to each other?

This column is a new, regular *Connections* feature. We invite parents of current or former students, including teachers, staff, and alumni with kids to share their stories, to give advice, to show off their expertise. There is so much wisdom in our community—please consider passing on some of what you’ve learned. Do not worry about being polished or perfect, just be yourself. Some possible topics include surviving preschoolers or adolescents, dealing with picky eaters, finding balance in a crazy world, fostering children’s friendships, becoming an Upland Hills parent, living through auction stress or anecdotes of your children’s school days are also welcome. Be creative or straightforward—just dare to share! Please send submissions to Lisa Maruca at lisa.maruca@wayne.edu or drop off hard copies at the UHS office.

2575 Indian Lake Road
Oxford, Michigan 48370
248.693.2878 Fax 248.693.4317
www.uplandhills.org
Email: info@uplandhills.org

UPLAND HILLS SCHOOL

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 6
Lake Orion, MI

**Do you know someone
That went to Upland Hills School?**

We are searching for alumni from all 33 years at Upland Hills school.
Please help us find them! Look on the UHS website, www.uplandhills.org
for our list of missing persons, to see if you know where they are!

We are offering special reserved seating for Alumni at the
"miracles and wonder" Auction on April 16, 2005.
Call the office for details—248-693-2878.