

The Unknown

by Phillip Moore

First there's the number 36. You indig the number (add the digits together) and you get nine. Nine is the number of times I was instructed to repeat the mantra I received in India. This mantra, known as the traveler's mantra, was given to me because I was frightened out of my mind. Our taxi driver thought that he would impress us by driving 60 miles an hour while dodging farmers drying rice, human rickshaws, sacred cows, and pot holes the size of Delaware. The cumulative effect was that I was in desperate need of a strategy to cope with traveling in India and my prayer was answered when a fellow seeker gave me my mantra.

Thirty six years of Upland Hills School. Three twelve's. Three whole measures. Three equal portions of night and day, light and darkness. I wonder is it darkness, light, darkness, or light, darkness, light? Thirty six years was an impossible thought when we began this experiment on the conceptual frontiers of education in 1971 in the unlikely place of Oxford, Michigan. Thirty six years of this co-creative work. When I look at my high school friends who graduated in '66 I realize that not one of them has remained at the same job or in the same location for all this time. This complex, unpredictable work has led me into the territory of the unknown, which is the irony of doing the same work over a long period of time.

Think of the time periods: 1971 to 1983, 1983 to 1995 and 1995 to 2007. From 1971 to 1983, the parents who chose our school were troubled by the war in Vietnam, concerned about the environment and determined to pass the Equal Rights Amendment. There was a movement called the Free School movement, complete with articulate writers like Herb Kohl, John Holt, and Jonathan Kozol, workshops and conferences, innovations, and the start of thousands of experimental schools. Somehow these parents found us. It was all word of mouth back then; the internet wasn't even an idea. They were courageous people who did their own thinking and they were determined to preserve the brightness and curiosity of their children. They came from as far away as Grosse Pointe and as close as Leonard. They paid between \$1000 and \$2500 a year and they were mostly educators.

Contents

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Editorial Note: This early fall issue of Connections is provided as a wrap-up of last year and a peek at what is to come. From an enormous thank you to all of our supporters to the 5th Anniversary of the Karen Joy Theatre, we hope you can appreciate what a great year 2006/7 was and the promise of the year to come.



Phil and Glenn

What A Great Year!

by Linda Bowers

This issue of the Connections newsletter was created as a recognition of and thank you for all you have done this past year. Upland Hills School had a phenomenal year for personal involvement, volunteering, and financial abundance during 2006-7. Despite the economic challenges we faced in the Detroit area, our school was blessed to receive the time, talents and generosity that you all provided.

Two important events heralded a new level of financial abundance for the school: the Dimensions Auction and the formal introduction of Nancy's Fund, the Upland Hills Tuition Assistance program. In March, we hosted the most successful auction ever, grossing over \$80,000 at Twin Lakes Golf and Swim Club. After expenses, we had raised over \$60,000 for the school, more than any other auction in our history. We were able to do this because of the abundant gifts from our auction donors and sponsors.

The introduction of Nancy's Fund that evening was marked by enthusiastic bidding on several Live and Silent Auction items, and by an unprecedented "Buy a Day at Upland Hills" during the Live Auction. More than \$18,000 was raised for Nancy's Fund on auction night. Later in the school year, an additional \$15,000 was given to Nancy's Fund, as part of an endowment pledge from a major donor. Because of all this generosity, 20 children in 12 families are able to attend Upland Hills School this year.

We also experienced the most successful Annual Giving campaign in recent memory. Upland Hills School received over \$12,000 from 142 donors. Fourteen of those donors gave at the Bridge Builders level, with gifts in excess of \$1000. These funds, in addition to the money raised during the auction are the reason that Upland Hills is able to keep tuition at such an affordable level, while still providing a healthy and well-rounded education and paying a living wage to its teaching staff.

Finally, one of the greatest gifts we received this year was the gift of time and involvement. Virtually every current family volunteered in support of the school. Extended community members and some new friends also joined in to enrich our experiences this year. The connections that were made, and the relationships that grew as a result of this involvement, added to the meaning and depth of this amazing community.

Thank you so much for making 2006-7 an amazing year. Just imagine the wonder that awaits us in 2007-8!

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Upland Hills School

Mission Statement

Upland Hills School, founded in 1971, is an independent school community whose purpose is to educate pre-high school children. Our aim is to discover and respect the uniqueness of every child.

Guiding Principles

Upland Hills School holds the following principles as our core values and seeks to create an environment that:

- Protects, nurtures and defends the innocence of childhood
- Encourages a relationship between children and the natural world
- Empowers teachers and staff
- Fosters cooperation and consensus in decision-making
- Promotes mutual respect and trust that encourages our community to form authentic relationships
- Teaches us to think comprehensively
- Builds friendships that connect us with others around the world

Upland Hills School encourages children to know themselves and to connect with their environment as responsible world citizens. We provide a full academic program that emphasizes mastery of skills and creative growth. Our vision is that through the alignment and commitment of parents and teachers, children will come to see themselves as having extraordinary learning potential and access to the greatest miracle or tool in human experience, love.


Connecting with the Future

Calendar of Important Events

September

Wed., Sept. 5		First Day of School
Sun., Sept. 9	1-4pm	Welcome In/Welcome Back
Fri., Sept. 28	1 pm	karenJoy theatre Rob Faust- School Presentation
Sat., Sept. 29	10 am-1pm	karenJoy theatre Rob Faust-Faustwork Mask Theatre Workshop
Sat., Sept. 29	7 pm	karenJoy theatre Rob Faust-"Mask Messenger"

October

Tues., Oct. 16	6 pm	
Mon., Oct. 22		AIMS Trustee Day - NO SCHOOL
Tues., Oct. 23		PTP (Parents Teaching Parents)

November

Fri.-Sat., Nov. 2-3		Quilt Retreat
Fri., Nov. 9	1 pm	karenJoy theatre - TPS "James and the Giant Peach"
Sat., Nov. 10	2 and 7 pm	karenJoy theatre - TPS "James and the Giant Peach"
Mon. & Tues., Nov. 19-20		1st Evaluations - NO SCHOOL
Wed.-Fri., Nov. 21-23		Thanksgiving Recess-NO SCHOOL

December

Wed., Dec. 5		UHS Book Fair @ Halfway Down the Stairs, Rochester
Wed., Dec. 19		Staff & Student Holiday Celebration
Thurs. Dec. 20-Tues. Jan. 1		Holiday Break - NO SCHOOL

January 2008

Wed., Jan. 2		School Resumes
Sat., Jan. 19	7 pm	karenJoy theatre "Community Showcase"
Sun., Jan 20	2 pm	karenJoy theatre Bernard Woma
Tues., Jan 22		PTP (Parents Teaching Parents)

Thank you to all who supported Upland Hills School this year!!

We couldn't have done it with out YOU!

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Thank You !!!

Unknown. Continued from page 1

term. The new school building was completed in 1989 and this group became the core of our school community. They were attracted to an expanded sense of community and the creative core of our curriculum.

This most recent period that spans the new millennium seems to have the word uncertainty written all over it. Our parents embrace many of the characteristics of the first two time periods but they transcend them as well. The parents of this time period sense the fragility and fear of our culture and are attracted to our school because of its safe and joyful atmosphere. Our parents today come from a diverse array of perspectives, but they all share a deep commitment to give their children a complete childhood, despite the pervasive anxiety that surrounds this time. Our parents today have researched the options, investigated our reputation, and searched inside themselves. They want community, safety, creative curriculum, natural beauty and something more. They want a place that has developed over time into a community of souls who are attempting to live authentic lives of wholeness and integrity. They want a place where hopes and dreams can be nourished.

My experience of this last year was rich in irony. It dawned on me that my strategy of one year at a time had matured into 36 years. I also realized that ever since I was in sixth grade I hungered to be free from the tyranny of a school calendar yet my life has been defined by school rhythms. I chose this work to live a simple life rich in purpose without concern for dollars earned and I end up taking a leadership role in raising two million dollars for the school. For years, I've attended meetings with other headmasters considering myself the odd one out because of my views on ecological education and yet this year I've been asked present my ideas on sustainability and greening schools by these very colleagues. I started out the year feeling vigorous and young despite my age and ended up the year feeling humbled by back pain and foolish decisions, like skiing Big Sky without snow. I met with several new parents and potential donors in hopes of attracting a lead gift only to be surprised and humbled by the enormous generosity of someone whom I've known since I was twelve. I clearly don't suffer from irony deficiency, as my friend Swami Beyondananda would say.

In May, while recovering from back pain, I wake up on the anniversary of my mother's passing and set up an altar. I find a picture of her striking a glamorous pose, vintage early 40s, a candle, which makes me smile thinking about how she never really learned how to light a match even though she did so every Friday night for most of her life. I sit in silence. When I open my eyes I notice my cell phone charging on my desk. I decide it doesn't fit, so I put it in my backpack and head off to school.

Later on, in my office I hear a ringing sound but for a longish moment don't know what to do. It's not my office phone; then I remember my cell phone is in my backpack and fumble to answer it.

"Phil, it's Glenn, is this a good time?"

"Sure Glenn, what's up?"

"What if we could raise 10% of our goal for the school with one gig?"

My head's spinning with all the synchronicities of the moment. Glenn Frey, a childhood friend, who is a founding member of the Eagles, is asking me what I think about him making an appearance on behalf of our school. This is maybe the second time in 36 years that Glenn has called me, and secondly I'm kind of amazed that I remembered where I put the cell phone.

"I know your school is pure, green, open and visionary but I need some more details before I call this guy back. Could you fax me information about our school here at the studio?"

"Sure when do you need it?"

"In an hour. Finally some good news in this bright and darkened land."

I close the phone and sit. A cell phone, especially my cell phone, doesn't usually work at school. Even with a tower on Lake George Road, our school seems to hide from the constant interruptions and distractions of 'the cell'. Glenn's words resurface as I recall his use of the simple pronoun 'our' when referring to UHS. I think about the 12 year old boy whom I first met at Clara Barton Junior High School in Royal Oak. I remember how inquisitive, charismatic, and quick witted he was. I also remember that he was in an experimental program called The Major Work Room, an exceptional program that selected children who had creative potential and worked with these children in thematic, innovative ways.

Continued on page 7

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Perhaps Glenn understood the essence of our school because he was given the direct experience of a new paradigm.

The 36th year began with an expanded staff. Mentoring has become an integral part of our school's culture. Learning by example, or modeling is clearly the most powerful tool for anyone who wishes to teach. We also began the 36th year with a new dream. We call it the 3D campaign. A plan that has three distinct dimensions to a school that has grown into something more: a learning community. It's a bold dream. It's audacious. It's unreasonable. It's new territory. It requires the protection of an ancient mantra. It requires that we hold both the light and the darkness as integrally linked. It requires that we respond in a nimble fashion to profound changes in our culture. It requires skillful decision-making. It requires that we continue to think in ways that support our vision of children as unique, brilliant, and entitled to a safe and joyful childhood. It requires that we continually practice love, not just in words, but more importantly in actions: by paying attention, by acknowledging and being supportive and by being affectionate. It requires the spirit of an explorer who has planned with impeccable integrity for a journey into a place never before seen or experienced.



FAUSTWORK MASK THEATRE

September 28 @ 1 pm and September 29 @ 7 pm

World renowned masked performer, Rob Faust, takes the art of masked performing to a rare and wonderful level!

FAUSTWORK MASK MOVEMENT THEATRE WORKSHOP

September 29 @ 10 am

Rob Faust leads a dynamic and engaging workshop involving theatre, mime, dance exercises, character development and the creation of short sketches. Includes a 90 minute session, lunch and one ticket to Rob's Saturday evening performance at 7pm. Space is limited.

UHS THEATRE PLAY SHOP "James and the Giant Peach"

November 9 @ 1 pm and November 10 @ 2 pm and 7 pm

UHS COMMUNITY SHOWCASE

January 19 @ 7 pm **

UHS parents, staff and friends shine under the spotlight.

****See both events for just \$12!**

BERNARD WOMA

January 20 @ 2 pm **

Bernard Woma is one of Ghana's foremost musicians, recognized around the world as an outstanding performer and teacher of Dagara xylophone music and other forms of traditional Ghanaian music.

UHS THEATRE PLAY SHOP 2008 Spring Musical

May 2 @ 1 pm and May 3 @ 2 pm and 7 pm

RESERVE YOUR TICKETS NOW!

For more information, please call 248-693-2878 M-F 9am-3pm, or visit our website at www.karenjoytheatre.org.

BECOME A KJT SPONSOR

When you become a sponsor, you support the continued production of quality performances at the Karen Joy Theatre. Your name will appear in the PLAYBILL for the entire season at the appropriate level. Donations are tax deductible. For more information, please call 248-693-2878 M-F 9am-3pm, or visit our website at www.karenjoytheatre.org.



On October 16th we will share our sixteenth Empty Bowls event at School. This UHS tradition has not only generated more than \$25,000 for Gleaners of Oakland County, it has enriched and connected our School community to similar events throughout the country and given us an opportunity to be more aware of the needs of others.

Calling All Writers-

The next issue of Connections is all about "The Power of Play."

Submit your articles by Nov. 1 to Linda Bowers at school or by email at development@uplandhills.org.

Save the date - - - April 12, 2008

UHS Auction - 5:30-10:00 pm

Twin Lakes Golf & Swim Club



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