

Family Tree

Summer 2020

A magazine for the extended family of Ojai Valley School



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ON THE COVER

OVS soccer players huddle for their final game against Vasquez High on February 12. They lost 2-0 in what for boys soccer was the first CIF playoff game in school history. On that same day, there were just 14 cases of COVID-19 in the United States. In this issue, we look back at the loss, resilience and camaraderie that followed as the virus spread and upended the school year.
Photo by Megan Manion (U20)

THIS PAGE

The OVS horses enjoyed an extended vacation in Ojai area pastures, but are returning to the barn this fall, ready to welcome their riders back.

CONTRIBUTORS

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Building the future

New Upper Campus buildings will meet LEED Gold standards — and offer the best views in the Valley

Construction is underway on a \$16-million building project that will replace the dormitory and science center destroyed by the Thomas Fire while adding a long-awaited Student Commons to the west end of the Upper Campus.

The new Grace Hobson Smith House dormitory will house 51 resident girls and feature expansive views of the Ojai Valley. The new Aramont Science and Technology Center will help redefine how Ojai Valley School delivers a 21st-century education while integrating science, technology, and the arts. The design includes a makerspace for robotics, physics, chemistry, biology and environmental science labs, a digital and media arts lab, a social science seminar room, and a multipurpose room for performing arts.

The much-anticipated Littlefield Student Commons, located in the footprint of the former tech center, includes a spacious dining hall, kitchen, student lounge,



reading porch and library, a new college counseling office and learning center, and meeting rooms for small classes. At 12,590 square feet, the Commons replaces the existing cafeteria with a modern facility that can accommodate 260 people. It will also include a shady outdoor dining terrace and student garden.

Before the pandemic, construction crews had mostly completed installation of the underground utilities, storm drains, and trenching. More recently, they raised steel support beams for the Commons, and completed framing for the girls dorm and tech center. The project is expected to be completed by April 2021. The design by Los Angeles architect Frederick Fisher & Partners embraces the mid-century roots of the Upper Campus and blurs the lines between inside and outside using glass, stucco, warm wood accents, and ample landscaping. The buildings are expected to meet LEED Gold standards for environmental sustainability.

Ojai Valley School has received more \$13 million in gifts, pledges, and other funds toward the project, but the campaign to rebuild is far from over. We need your support to furnish and complete these buildings. Contact our development team at development@ovs.org or call us at (805) 646-1423 for more information.



It was a joy to hear the noise and laughter of excited students when our OVS Summer Camp opened in June after months of quiet, closed campuses due to the coronavirus pandemic.

An early lesson I learned shortly after arriving at OVS was to never underestimate the capabilities and resourcefulness of children, and that lesson has proven true over the years of teaching generations of Spuds. OVS students are resilient and adaptable. I remember on one of my first class hikes, we all had a pack check. One highly organized student reminded me to bring my hat and sunscreen, another to fill my water bottle and get a sack lunch. Soon I was up to speed and ready with the class for our orientation. The students were asked to remind the parents and teachers accompanying the campers on what to expect.

"Walk in single file and leave a space in line."

"Don't go off the trail."

"Don't pick any plants."

"Drink at the scheduled water breaks."

"Leave no trace."

"Help the slowest hiker," and many more.

I was impressed, especially as my group of hikers were third graders.

As the OVS community prepares to resume learning this fall, whether that is online or in-person, I am optimistic that the resilience and preparedness of our students and staff will carry us through these challenging times. This adaptation, perseverance, and will to make the most out of a given situation is a major tenet of our Ojai Valley School philosophy.

For the past several weeks, members of our administrative team and teaching faculty have come together as a Reopening Task Force to chart the course for how we will operate during the 2020-21 school year. Our plan, Roadmap to Reopening, prioritizes

the health and well-being of our students and faculty, while allowing for an optimal learning experience. We have followed the best practices of the National Association of Independent Schools, the California Association of Independent Schools, The Association of Boarding Schools, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and state and local health agencies. We are grateful for the hard work that went into creating this document.

Our goal is to resume in-person classes as soon as possible. To do so, we must all help to reduce the risk of transmission and be adaptive to the evolving health circumstances. We believe being together is in the best interest of our students and can be accomplished if all members of our community agree to do their part. There is much to look forward to in the coming school year, including the completed construction of our Littlefield Student Commons, Aramont Science and Technology Center, and Grace Hobson Smith House girls dormitory at the Upper Campus. We are also moving forward with improvement plans for the West Entrance of the Lower Campus, while immediately investing in new technology for our elementary and middle school classes.

The school year will look different, but we are learning quickly that different can be better, and children are quick to adapt and thrive when presented with new challenges. As when we take even the youngest students out into the wilderness, coming back to campus under the current health directives will be thoughtfully planned and executed.

We all look forward to seeing them back on campus soon, and hearing their laughter once again.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Hall-Mounsey". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michael J. Hall-Mounsey
President/CEO



JOURNEY THROUGH A PANDEMIC

How Ojai Valley School Navigated the Outbreak of COVID-19

By Tracy Wilson

It was sometime in January when Mulan Ma, a junior at the Upper Campus, first became aware of the coronavirus: “I saved an article on my phone, which contained some overview data about the virus, such as the number of confirmed cases, deaths, and recovered cases. To be honest, I saved it because it was a novel unknown disease, and I was studying exponential growth in math class. A perfect article to save for a bio and math nerd, I thought I might be able to use these live data to build up a math model or something.” That was it. Somewhere in southern China there was a potential case study in exponential growth.

She never expected it would turn out like this. No one did.

The coronavirus spread so quickly that nine weeks after Mulan began tracking it a global health crisis was in full swing. Cases of COVID-19, the official name for the disease caused by the coronavirus, were escalating so rapidly that on Friday, March 13, 2020, the United States declared a national emergency. That same day, Ojai Valley School suspended classes after local health officials ordered all but essential workers to quarantine at home.

“I want to emphasize that we do not currently have a known COVID-19 case at Ojai Valley School, or in the Ojai Valley,” school President Michael Hall-

Mounsey wrote to families that day. “However, given the increasing spread regionally, and the heightened concern globally, we are making this decision to prioritize the health and well-being of our students, employees, and families. We have the opportunity now to prevent the spread of this virus, and that is why we are taking this action.”

The following Monday, teachers gathered at their respective campuses for an hours-long crash course on distance learning. Middle and high school teachers were well versed in posting grades and lessons online, and students in grades 6-12 were already equipped with laptop computers. Now the challenge was learning — in a day — how to teach a math, science or humanities class via videoconferencing.

Day 1 of distance learning began on Tuesday, March 17. Students had missed just one day of instruction. Teacher Caitlin Shain met first with a rowdy group of eighth-grade language arts students. It was a verbal dogpile as they loudly talked over one another, no one yet understanding how to mute themselves in a digital classroom.

It didn’t take long to establish new ground rules, manage the distractions, and trouble-shoot the tech issues in the days that followed. Students adapted to a new school schedule that included a shorter academic



Artwork by Angela Qu (U20)

day with “live” classes held via GoogleMeet or Zoom in the morning, followed by study hall hours in the afternoon.

But the nagging issue for OVS students, parents and educators was not navigating the technology as much as adjusting to the lack of personal connections. For a school built on the philosophy of hands-on learning, one that embraces the spontaneity of lively class discussions and a dynamic, engaged environment, this new interface was jarring.

“This is just an awful way to teach. I don’t know how some kids and programs do it full time,” said Fred Alvarez, who teaches Humanities, AP World History, and Journalism at the Upper Campus. “The Humanities classroom thrives off of the chaos of kids going at it, expressing opinions, defending their own. That takes place in a dynamic space. The virtual world, by its very definition, flattens it all out. We’ve just got to understand the limitations and make the best of it.”

Added Mike Mahon, Assistant Head of School at the Lower Campus: “We have always valued the personal, face-to-face, hands-in-the-dirt style teaching, and remote learning is a departure from that. It is important for parents to understand that we are evolving. Everything we are doing today will improve by next week and the pace of new ideas is extremely motivating

to me. The early elementary is facing the most extreme challenge with their limited independence, but I’m very excited about the tools we are working on now. ”

As COVID-19 infection rates continued to rise in Ventura County during the spring, the school and the greater Ojai Valley remained relatively untouched by the virus. Remote classes continued in April and May, and teachers became more creative in finding ways to connect with students and offer a version of the school’s signature programs.

Woodshop teacher Ryan Lang posted YouTube videos of woodworking projects from his home in Matilija Canyon, including shaping a surfboard from a hunk of agave plant. Equestrian Director Stephanie Gustafson posted videos of equine veterinary care while attending to school horses turned out in green pastures.

Upper Campus Outdoor Education Coordinator Zach Byars held a series of virtual campouts. The move to distance learning occurred just days before a group of 20 students were scheduled to leave for a weeklong Honors rafting trip in Utah, and a month before a senior trip to Big Sur. Instead, students and faculty members set up tents in their backyards and joined remotely to share campfire songs and S’mores.

"I got a lot of good feedback from both students and faculty and staff saying, 'What a cool way to kind of keep some of the components of an outdoor program without being able to get outdoors with one another,'" Byars said. "You can, to some degree, go somewhere else if you focus on it hard enough."

Twenty-four seniors were focusing hard on their next steps when the May 1 College Decision Day arrived. As a group, they earned acceptances to more than 160 colleges and universities, and several of them got into their top-choice schools. Many met virtually with the Head of School and the College Counselor on College Decision Day to celebrate their accomplishments. Of course, they also spoke of the uncertainty of what would happen with COVID and their schools of choice in the fall.

At the same time, school administrators were puzzling out how to hold graduation ceremonies while simultaneously developing plans to return for in-person classes for the 2020-21 academic year.

At the end of May, the school presented two talent shows online that featured live performances synced with pre-recorded content. It was a brilliant collaboration of the performing arts and video production teams and served as an important reminder of what could be accomplished with perseverance, creativity, and a green screen. Those twin performances were also a critical dry run for the graduation and promotion ceremonies to follow.

On Friday, May 29, retiring Head of School Gary Gartrell applauded the graduating eighth graders, who were not in attendance, for their ability to adapt in the face of adversity. The virtual ceremony ended at 6 p.m., and the tech crew immediately pivoted to the 7 p.m. ceremony for the seniors, who were also participating in a graduation ceremony online.

Upper Campus Head of School Craig Floyd moved the traditional late-morning commencement to the evening to accommodate international graduates and their families. A few teachers, administrators and members of the Board of Trustees sat at a distance in an otherwise empty Carl S. Cooper Amphitheater. The graduate remarks were extraordinary. They didn't linger on the pandemic that had upended the last three months of their senior year. One after another, they spoke eloquently about a school that had taught, challenged and inspired them for years.

"Being at OVS has allowed me to become whoever I wanted to be," said senior Avery Colborn (L16, U20). "During my time in high school, I could become a runner, a writer, a musician, and an environmentalist.

And the people supporting me taught me to be the best version of all those things that I possibly could be."

"It is through my time here that I discovered my passions, and how to go after them," senior Caspian Ellis (L16, U20) said. "I learned about my fears, and how to overcome them. And I learned that I am capable of so much more than I ever believed."

"In August, we will be traveling all over the country to some of the top institutions in order to further our education," said senior Sebastian Wayman-Dalo (L16, U20). "But I know if you switched any of our places, we would thrive, because that is what OVS has taught us to do."

For a brief moment, as the sun set over the Ojai Valley, no one thought about the virus. It was all about the seniors. They never expected it would turn out like this. But they didn't complain.

They made it better.

After Ventura County's stay-at-home order went into effect, boarding students from the Upper and Lower campuses dispersed. Some went to live with local day students and their families, but most opted to return home.

Mulan struggled with the decision, but ultimately she took a series of connecting flights for a 20-hour journey back to her home in the Zhejiang Province, just south of Shanghai. After health screenings at the airport, she arrived by bus in her home district, where government officials drove her to a hotel to wait out a 14-day quarantine. It wasn't what she expected.

"I didn't even get a chance to see my mom closely. All I did was wave at her through the metal bars on the windows from the fifth floor," she wrote in a blog post for her journalism class. She had planned to take the SAT that weekend, then go ice-skating and shopping with her friends. Instead, she was back in China, in a hotel room, alone.

"Everything just happened too fast," she wrote. "I hate when I have to say goodbye to the people I loved. I told myself that we will see each other again for sure, but I am not sure when. Maybe in a few weeks, maybe a couple of months, maybe several years, or maybe never."

Mulan has since enrolled at a school in China. She won't be back for her senior year. More than a dozen other

international boarding students are in the same position, unable to travel due to immigration restrictions or unwilling to leave their homes due to fears of the virus.

But for those who could be here, administrators worked diligently over the summer to prepare the campuses for the reopening of school in the fall. Classrooms were measured to accommodate social distancing, academic schedules were in place, and book orders, temperature readers, and other new technology were on the way.

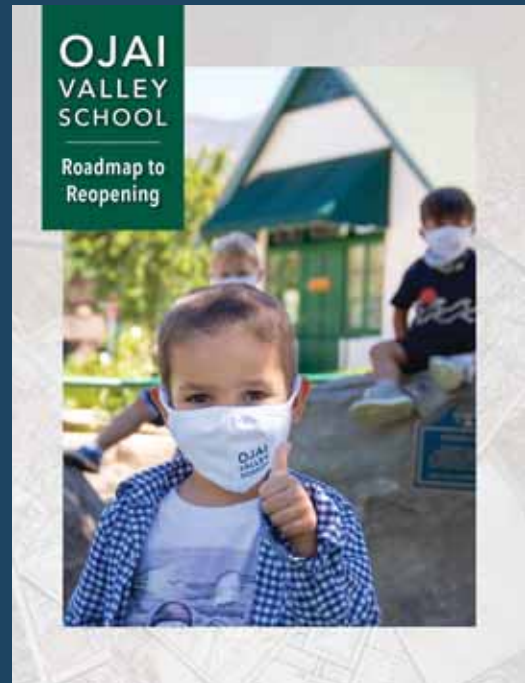
Then, on July 17, with just six weeks before the opening of school, California Governor Gavin Newsom announced that public and private schools could not reopen until infection rates declined. Suddenly it was back to online learning. New Lower Campus Head of School, Laurie Clark, sent a letter to Public Health Director Robert Levin seeking a waiver to open at least the elementary division. That request, at the time of this writing, is still on hold.

"Overall, we know that our ability to resume in-person learning rests on two key factors: lowering the coronavirus infection rate in Ventura County and keeping those numbers low to prevent future closures," Clark and Floyd wrote to families on July 31. "Both of these factors hinge on changes in our routines and habits, and we all need to work together to succeed in this goal. Our Roadmap to Reopening begins with a statement about shared values and responsibility. In a nutshell, it comes down to the idea that for us to ensure everyone's health and safety we must all agree to follow the rules ... It will take all of us working together, supporting each other, and taking the actions necessary to keep ourselves and our whole community safe to reopen and get our students back on campus to learn together."

Our students are smart, perceptive. They often articulate matters more succinctly. Such was the case of junior, now senior, Adam Pepper-Macias (L17), who summed up the COVID-19-20 School Year in the final issue of the student newspaper, *On The Hill*.

"OVS community members should take note of the dedication our administration has shown during this pandemic," he wrote. "We have long known that OVS has the right stuff, and this virus has merely been another opportunity to prove that. However, when we return to the campus, when life will lurch cautiously back to normal there will be no mistaking that OVS has grown stronger as a result of the rush to adapt to distance learning procedures. We know now, more than ever, that we have the ability to adapt and make OVS an incredible school, no matter the circumstances. "

Student journalists Aaron Wolf (L16, U20), Mulan Ma, and Adam Pepper-Macias contributed to this story.



This summer members of our administrative team and teaching faculty came together as a Reopening Task Force to chart a course for how the school will operate during the coming 2020-21 school year. We are grateful for all their hard work in putting together our Roadmap to Reopening.

Our goal is to offer in-person classroom instruction, five days a week, for students in all grades. We believe being together is in the best interest of our students and can be accomplished by reducing class sizes, tightening health protocols, and other measures.

We invite you to read our plan at:
www.ovs.org/roadmap-to-reopening.

We know circumstances can change quickly. As this magazine was headed to the printer, Ventura County was still on the state watch list for rising infection rates. Due to current state requirements, this means public and private schools may not open and must continue with online learning. We hope our county will be removed from the watch list soon. Please do everything you can to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 for the health of our school and our broader community.



VIRTUAL



CAMPOUTS

By Aaron Wolf (L16, U20)

The outdoor shed sits undisturbed in the setting Ojai sun, no gear checked in or out for months now. But still, 20 people sit around 20 campfires around the world and listen as Zach Byars strums a guitar and sings familiar tunes. The move to distance learning occurred just days before a group of 20 students were scheduled to leave for a week-long rafting trip in Utah, and a little over a month before the culminating senior trip was scheduled to depart for Big Sur, leaving a gaping hole in this school's outdoor education program. For many seniors, those trips are staples of their final year at OVS.

To try to make up for lost opportunities, Byars, who teaches history and serves as the Outdoor Education Coordinator at the Upper Campus, started hosting Virtual Campouts.

The first Virtual Campout was held on April 29; more followed. These would become momentary escapes during the pandemic. Along with musical performances, campers shared stories ranging from wild adolescent elephants along the Zambezi to helicopter rescues in the Sespe almost 40 years ago. Guest appearances included Jenner Fox and Kevin Misajon, both old rafting friends of Byars, as well as Danny Bolster, a lifelong climber telling stories of Yosemite in the early 1980s as he witnessed history being made, and made some himself.

This idea of camaraderie that inspired these activities also rang true among the student body, especially with senior Corbin Muller (U20). "It was really awesome of Mr. Byars to come up with this idea, and even though we're all stuck at home, it's important that we get together one way or another," Corbin said.

Senior Caspian Ellis (U20) said the trips helped make up for the loss of personal connections that came with distance learning: "I felt like it had separated me from what I loved about the school, which was the connections we all have with each other. But with Mr. Byars providing this experience it made me feel connected with the spirit of OVS again, as well as with the memories I had created in the outdoors throughout my years here."

Though there were some hiccups in the virtual campouts, never once did Byars let those issues irk him. "The kind of loose organic feel is a lot of what you have to be adaptable to in the camping environment," he said.

Alumni Lucy Orgolini (U19), Caroline Morrow (L15, U19), and Maya Mullins (L15, U19), all joined the last virtual campout. They performed John Denver's "Take Me Home, Country Roads," a song they adopted as their own after the honors trip of 2017. The presence of these familiar faces was a strategy Byars employed on purpose. He said the virtual campouts help with "triggering past memories. It's not really transformative, but you can kind of let yourself escape."

As the school year came to a close, Byars provided an opportunity to plan for the future. If distance learning prevents normal Outdoor Education activities, these virtual campouts will continue and evolve.

"My focus for class, and similar for this outdoor campout, was just ... (to) disrupt the students' regular routine, like throw something at them that can be not just a binge watch on a Netflix show," Byars concluded.

*Before our Outdoor Education schedule was cut short, we went to some incredible places!
Check out page 42 for highlights from grades PK to 12.*

A Home Away from Home

By Bella Slosberg (L17) and Olivia Brown (L16, U20)

As both the Upper and Lower campuses closed due to the widespread outbreak of COVID-19, government orders told people to return to their homes, shut their doors, and to not let anyone in. But for several OVS families, this news instead meant that now more than ever was not a time to close themselves off from the community, but rather a time to open their homes to those in the community who needed it most.

Dr. Maria Halvorson and Dr. Kooros Samadzadeh welcomed sixth-grader Peter Wang — who lives in Chengdu, China, and is a friend of their son, Arya — during the February winter break. But after the virus became more widespread, and schools across the United States closed, the family welcomed him back while OVS transitioned to remote learning. Peter ended up staying with them until early August, and shared part of his culture during his stay.

"We have been talking to Peter about things that he misses from home and one of the things he said was food," Halvorson said. "We cooked dumplings from his grandmother's recipe while Arya made Pixie ice cream. It was super fun and made everybody happy to have a good dinner."



Jake Larkin and Kyria Ngankoy (L20) make juice in the Larkin kitchen.

Bob Larkin and Kimberly Cluff (L83), parents to seventh-grader Jake Larkin and sophomore CatieJo Larkin (L18), took in Kyria Ngankoy (L20), an eighth grader at Lower Campus. The Larkins were excited to welcome Kyria, and they cleared out their home office to convert it to a temporary bedroom. Because she was separated from her mom, who works overseas for the U.S. foreign service, and her little brother, sixth grader Adam Ngankoy, during this time, Kyria was glad that she was welcomed into the Larkin household while transitioning to online classes.

"It has been good to know that there are two other students who are doing the same thing as me," said Kyria at the time. "I feel more comfortable and we all know what each other is going through. At first, it was hard to adjust on top of being in a new house, but I feel pretty good here."

The homestay experience went beyond just living in another house for a few weeks and doing school work. The Larkins made sure that the kids were being creatively active during the remote learning period.

"One of the benefits of being in a community like Ojai is that even when the world outside seems to be in free fall, we have our little town that feels very safe," Cluff said. Making recipes, dyeing hair, taking walks, and gardening were just a few activities that CatieJo, Jake, and Kyria did to pass time. The Larkins made the best out of their situation and tried to remain positive during a stressful time.

For some residents, the home stays lasted a few weeks while families navigated travel restrictions and other logistics to bring their children home. For just graduated eighth-grader Alex Jia (L20),



Peter Wang shows his buddy Arya Samazadeh how to make dumplings.

whose home is in Shanghai, China, staying with his classmate and good friend Eli Roston (L20) was an easy transition.

Last summer, Eli traveled to Shanghai and stayed with Alex and his family. Then Alex stayed with Eli and his grandparents, Michael and Ko Roston, at their San Diego home during Thanksgiving break. So as soon as the Rostons heard that Alex wouldn't be able to return home due to the coronavirus, they immediately welcomed him into theirs with open arms.

"When we found out that Alex couldn't go home, it was a natural thing for us to say 'hey, bring Alex here,'" Michael Roston said.

They established a schedule to make things go smoothly. The boys had their breakfast before online classes, then Alex practiced the piano for an hour and Eli read a book of his choice. After that, they came down to "Papa Mike's" office and gym, where Roston became their personal fitness trainer. In the evening, they had family dinners

and watched movies or played board games. They even had a weekly poker tournament.

To the Rostons, Alex — who started at the Lower Campus as a seventh grader — is another member of the family and they were happy to be able to keep him safe during the pandemic. He returned to Shanghai in July.

"Alex is like my second grandson," Michael Roston said. "We treat him the same as Eli and really have just become so fond of him."

To these families, the idea of community is strong, and even though this is a challenging time for not only the nation, but the entire world, the OVS community continues to spread love and joy. "It is super important that people stay home as much as they can as well as not being around people in order to keep our community healthy," Halvorson said. "It is also important to keep our minds healthy like going outside, going for a walk, or even meditating. This is how we beat the virus."

Making Masks to Make a Difference

By Aaron Wolf (L16, U20)

As infection rates soared last spring, members of our OVS community were combating the global pandemic from home.

Wendy Tremiti, who oversees Alumni Relations, spent weeks relentlessly sewing protective face masks amid a national shortage. Through social media, she received requests for more than 2,000 masks from hospitals and other essential businesses, while also distributing masks to teachers, maintenance workers, and other staff members in the OVS community.

Crystal Davis, who teaches English and serves as



Wendy Tremiti was among the many OVS community members who leapt into action by making masks.



Assistant Head of School for Student Life at the Upper Campus, worked to distribute masks to the Montecito Fire Department, where her son serves as a captain. She also sewed masks for friends and family members. Ceramics teacher Jody Cooper (L71, U74) sewed masks for essential workers and used material donated by parent Tanya Staples, whose son, Erik, is a rising junior at Upper Campus.

"Many countries are far ahead of us in this regard and regularly wear masks in public during cold and flu season," said Davis, who was months ahead of mask mandates now in place when she started sewing. "Even though the CDC was not yet urging people to wear masks in public, I decided to work on a pattern and fabric combination that provided good protection and that was well-fitted enough so people could keep it on comfortably without constant fiddling."

Davis believes that though masks provide a physical layer of protection from the virus, they serve another purpose as well.

"I knew that a properly designed and fitted mask — even homemade — would provide some protection from airborne contagion, but as importantly I understood the social importance of wearing masks to combat a pandemic. They become a visible reminder of the gravity of the situation and responsibility we have as a community to protect our 'herd,'" she said.

Tremiti had a somewhat different motivation. Her cousin, who works as a nurse, is immunocompromised and received just one N95 mask for her shift. Worrying for her wellbeing, and others like her, Tremiti began producing masks as fast as she could. "It's like the war effort," she said, "when people came together to produce clothing for soldiers on the home front during World War I and World War II."

The message both women have to give is simple: Help. If you can sew, sew a mask. If you can cook, make a meal for a family shelter. If you can't do any of that, give your grandparents a call and make them smile.

"I have always been of the mind that the best I can do in life is try to use whatever skills, advantages, and time I have to help others," Davis said. "Knowing people are safer as a consequence of my small actions gives me purpose and helps me sleep better at night."

Facing the Pandemic, One Shield at a Time

By Adam Pepper-Macias (L17)

As communities the world over stitched together masks in response to the pandemic, two Ojai Valley School STEM teachers, Christopher Westcott and Micah Sittig, decided to do what they do best: take it to tech.

Westcott and Sittig, who between them teach seven different math, science and computer science courses at the Upper Campus, used the school's 3-D printers to print parts for face shields that are now being used on the frontlines in the battle to protect against the coronavirus. Using templates downloaded from the internet, the teachers turned a spool of sanitizable PETG filament into headbands for 40 medical grade face shields.



Mr. Westcott, with the face shield components he and Mr. Sittig printed.

"Unfortunately, I will never get to see what the final product looks like," Westcott said. "But it was very satisfying to know they will be used to support our health care workers on the front line."

Due to the need for medical grade parts, and the lack of manufacturing infrastructure, organizations such as Maker Nexus are harnessing the power of at-home makers to take part in the supply chain. Maker Nexus

has templates and instructions to make 3-D printed face shields as well as fabric face masks and medical scrubs. The organization has makers send assembled parts to their headquarters for final assembly. The group usually supplies templates and plans, but due to the virus they have used their large network to contribute to combating the pandemic.

Maker Nexus is fueled by the constant effort of their 575 volunteers, who in late spring were helping to make 2,000 face shields a day. Westcott and Sittig made OVS part of that supply chain. While other members of the OVS community were stitching protective cloth masks, it made sense that instead of

reaching for a needle and thread the STEM teachers, who also coach the high school robotics teams, would print small plastic parts as their contribution to a world-sized problem.

"It's a no-brainer to use the technology we have to make something," said Head of School Craig Floyd. "That's in the school DNA to do something to help the community."



OVS Food Services lend a HELPing hand

Apples, oranges, carrots, onions, bagels, eggs, milk, yogurt, tofu, and potatoes (go Spuds!) from the OVS kitchen were delivered to HELP of Ojai, which provides healthy meals to homebound seniors. The food donation helped support HELP of Ojai in providing 180 meals a day for seniors in our community during the current health crisis.

Senior Reflections

Two OVS graduates look back on what they lost — and what still remains



Sebastian Wayman-Dalo, in his family's avocado grove.

By Sebastian Wayman-Dalo (L16, U20)

High school is supposed to be hard. Emotions are involved in everything, APs are abundant, and extracurriculars take up quite a bit of time. But no one ever expected it to be global pandemic hard. No one predicted half of the campus turning to ash hard. No one anticipated political division so strong that the future of our nation is in jeopardy. Yet those three things are defining moments of my and many other seniors' high school experience at OVS.

In no way has it been a normal four years.

I was hoping, before the outbreak of COVID-19 in early 2020, that

college would be a new start. I wanted to do something steady, that I knew had been done the same way many times before. But as I write this, emails from various colleges have come in saying that things may change in the coming months. My hopes that normality will become normal are at a low, to be truthful.

At the same time, I know that there is a silver lining in all of this. The best of humanity emerges in times of struggle, and sometimes the catalyst for reform blossoms with the growth of issues such as those that we currently face. I'm 18 years old, about to go to college, and although there are times that

the world's problems weigh heavily upon me, I know that in the end this is just motivational fuel.

Yes, I'm in isolation. I may not get to move into my dorm room on the first day of college. But in the grand scheme of things, for life, for humanity, and for our planet, these are trivial. Events such as this empower us to find change, to root out the issues that strangle progress and re-envision a better life for all.

But until those problems can be addressed, it is those small things that matter to me. It isn't what we know about the current state of the planet that scares us. It's the uncertainty.

By Aaron Wolf (L16, U20)

The Class of 2020 has been through a lot. It started with the Thomas Fire, when the top half of our campus went up in flames. But after the ashes settled, we knew that the next steps were up to us. What progress would be made was resting in our hands. And we came back from it. We were unstoppable.

This time, however, we don't even know when the ashes will finally settle because we can't see them. We are no longer up against a brutal force of nature, but unlike last time, all we can do to overcome this new challenge is sit and wait.

Waiting in itself may not seem like such a great task, but for seniors, our time ran out. We were sitting and waiting, and missed out on everything we'd been looking forward to. This was the time when we were supposed to relish our achievements, to enjoy the camaraderie that we had built with our fellow seniors, and do the things we'd been looking forward to since the beginning, the things that define our final year at OVS.

I understand why it had to be this way. There are countless people in the global community going through extreme hardship and loss, and failure to acknowledge this would be grossly selfish and ignorant. There is nothing we want more than for this pandemic to end. And that's why we so willingly abide by these lockdown rules, even though they jeopardize the future we had worked so hard to achieve.

As I got into my car that Friday afternoon, March 13, to drive home from school after we had switched to distanced learning, I never thought that would be the last time I would set foot on the campus as a student. From the time we were incoming freshmen we had been told about the amazing times that

senior year held for us. And not to discredit any others before us, but our class is remarkable. We watched year after year of seniors before us revel in their efforts and enjoy the last stretch of senior year together as a family, and we labored arduously so that our last bit of time together would be the best we'd ever have. And just as it came time for us to reminisce and capitalize on our remaining days, it all came to an end.

Now this may not actually be the end for us, though for the numerous separated seniors around the world, it sure feels like it is. Regardless of all the fear and confusion in the world today, I believe in us. The Class of 2020 will prevail. We've been through a lot together. We

watched from a distance as our school burned. But even if we never got to dance at our senior prom, or to walk the stage at graduation, we will overcome the challenges set before us by this pandemic.

I love every single one of my fellow seniors. I'd like to believe I know them quite well by now, and I know just what we are capable of. We will continue to be as connected, as driven, and as eager as we have always been. When the pandemic finally subsides, and all returns to normal, and people begin to reemerge from their homes, they will come out to see the Class of 2020 proudly leading the way.

There may be a lot of uncertainty right now, but this I can guarantee.



Upper Student Council President Aaron Wolf, at his desk at home.

Head of School Message

By Craig Floyd - *Head of School, Upper Campus*

This group of seniors run the spectrum — artists and engineers, athletes and equestrians — who have become an integral part of the Upper Campus community. Collectively, they are the Class of 2020.

This is a special group.

To begin with, some members of this class were in my wife's first fifth grade class at Lower Campus; three members are legacy graduates following in the footsteps of their parent or parents; and two of them are third generation grads, having a grandparent as well who attended or graduated from OVS. Another is following her two brothers who previously graduated. One has been an OVS member since birth, well actually before birth since her mom was pregnant with her while teaching US History. I have known one, my nephew, since the day he was born. I have camped with most, played against some in Alumni games, and even coached a couple. And finally, they are a special group because they have been tested together through the Thomas Fire and the current COVID pandemic.

But with all of that, they are definitely individuals. Each graduate has his or her unique interests, passions, strengths, and weaknesses. Those qualities distinguished these students throughout their high school careers, but especially in this last year of high school, as they grew more independent, confident, and capable. This was evident in the classroom, but also on the sports field and in the outdoors. They won league titles, competed in CIF playoffs, pushed their limits hiking trails, climbed rock faces, and even rafted down wild rivers. They accepted the myriad challenges that OVS put in front of them and successfully navigated them all.

To say this class accomplished much would be an understatement. But what impressed me most was that with so many different activities going on, they never veered in opposite directions or became self-absorbed. Rather, they became more cohesive as a class and demonstrated a true sense of community.

In December 2017, early in their sophomore year, the school and this group of current seniors faced an unprecedented catastrophe when the Upper Campus was severely damaged by the Thomas Fire. En masse, the students rose up and tackled the resulting challenges. They helped re-open the campus with their hard work, and continued that commitment over the next two years through beautification projects and community activities to make the campus a better place for all of us. As school life smoothed out and they entered the senior year, they were eager to take on what lay ahead: college applications, AP classes, outdoor



education trips, athletic contests, and continued growth a cohesive unit before embarking on their college experiences.

Twenty of them applied for Early Decision/Early Action. As a group, they earned acceptances to more than 160 colleges and universities, and several of them got into their top-choice schools. The colleges clearly saw what we know about this group: they wanted to be challenged and they fully immersed themselves in all aspects of school

life. As a class, they took Advanced Placement courses. They played on sports teams, and most joined the cast and crew of the spring musical, *Grease*. Early in the second semester, several members of the class competed in the Los Angeles Regional Championship for the second consecutive year as part of the Robotics teams. They wrote countless articles for the school newspaper and website, and created masterful pieces of artwork in the AP Art, Photography and Ceramics classes.

Unfortunately, as they entered spring, the world was thrown a nasty curveball. The current pandemic forced everything to come to a halt. School closed, and classes transitioned from in-person learning to distance learning. The class was broken apart as they all went to their homes to shelter in place. But, they didn't flinch. College acceptances continued to come in, classes and AP courses continued and they took their exams, and this class continued to be in touch. While not preferred, I enjoyed the opportunities I had to meet virtually with the class.

The resilience, grit and determination that members of the Class of 2020 have shown during their high school careers is remarkable. They tackled and overcame the challenges presented. While it may not have always been easy, the members of this class did what they needed to do to accomplish their goals.

As a school, we want to see our students push beyond limits. We want them to discover their potential and develop the work ethic and confidence to take on any challenges that life may throw their way. It's reassuring to know that many leave here today having learned those skills. These graduating seniors will be successful in life as they are equipped to tackle all that lies in front of them.

I'm confident this group of 24 is ready for the next chapter. Their paths will lead them all over the globe, but they will remain connected. Their actions have bound them together. But above all else, all of us will long remember their sense of community. I look forward to the opportunity when we can gather them together in-person to hear their stories and properly celebrate their accomplishments.

Senior Class of 2020



Claire Alexander

University of Hawaii
at Manoa

Claire possesses an infectious positivity and a warm, welcoming spirit, and she infused all of those energies to her academics, art and athletics. With a sense of joy and curiosity, she took full advantage of our small class sizes and nurturing learning environment to carve a path to academic success, taking a range of Advanced Placement and honors courses. But there were some areas of study that were clearly her favorites. Claire is a gifted photographer and artist, and she excelled in these areas through her high school curriculum. Her AP Art 2-D concentration this year focused on the characters of Venice Beach, which she photographed and then modified digitally and with acrylic paint. However, for all her grace and good humor, there's something you absolutely must know about her: Claire is a beast on the athletic field. Our small sports program does not have all of the same offerings for boys and girls, so for the past two years, when it came time to choose fall and spring sports, Claire simply chose to play with the boys. She has played flag football and baseball, matching the boys hit-for-hit (literal baseball hits and bruising football blows). While she may not look the part — she is super friendly and quick to smile — she is tough as nails, sometimes drawing the ire of opposing players who don't like getting beat by a girl. Too bad. She plays fair, but she likes to win. She is a hard-nosed competitor who has learned to harness her skill and talent and apply her all to whatever task is at hand.



Olivia Brown

University of
San Francisco

Olivia was a force to be reckoned with on the basketball court, gobbling up rebounds against much taller players and imposing her will as a down-on-the-block scorer and defender. The same qualities that made her an outstanding player — focus, determination and perseverance — also made her an outstanding student and citizen at Ojai Valley School. Independently motivated, she possesses a keen intellect and an inquisitive curiosity for knowledge. She not only made the most of our rigorous college prep curriculum, she embedded herself deeply into the fabric of our high school community. She performed in the school chorus, took part in a host of service and Outdoor Education opportunities, and took on starring roles in every school musical produced during her time at OVS. She racked up numerous academic awards and three times earned the OVS Sportsmanship Award, one of our highest honors as it recognizes those students who not only give their all to the sports program, but who uphold the highest levels of integrity and fair play. In her senior year, she made her mark as a writer in the award-winning journalism program, emerging as a solid reporter and gifted storyteller. That gift was on full display for her Senior Capstone project, where she described how her love of food and her love of family were essentially one in the same. Elected to serve in her senior year as the Athletics Representative to the Student Council, she was a natural leader and an inspiring human being to be around.



**Thomas
Christopher**

Gettysburg College

Creative, committed, cerebral and curious. Throughout his time at OVS, Thomas sought distinctive and diverse opportunities to explore new interests, develop different skills, and engage with those around him. He was a brilliant, highly accomplished student. As a matter of fact, many of his teachers used exactly that word — brilliant — to describe his contributions, verbal and written, to classes, especially in subject areas that are his strengths, which include English and history. On top of that, he was an artist of immense talent. He demonstrated his gifts for drawing and painting in the classroom, but it was his musical artistry that was most on display at our high school. He composed and performed his own piano pieces throughout his years at Ojai Valley School, including a piece he performed shortly before graduation at the virtual Festival of Talent. He was extremely humble about the depth of his ability, and generously lent his talents to the school's musical productions and Garage Band. Finally, none of us will soon forget the high quality of his Senior Capstone project, where he married his love of history and his artistic abilities by putting together an outstanding documentary on the Vought F4U Corsair, an airplane that was instrumental in securing Allied victory in World War II. He did the research, assembled the footage and served as narrator for the documentary, and the end product truly could have been on the History Channel. We are thrilled to see him pursuing his passion as a History major at Gettysburg College.



Avery Colborn

Colorado
College

In a class full of natural leaders, Avery rose to the top. Integrity, determination and intellectual curiosity are all qualities that earned her the respect of her peers and teachers. But for all she accomplished, there was not an ounce of hubris to be found in Avery; she is humble, kind and understated in all she does. Her ultimate gift was that she made everyone around her better, and she made Ojai Valley School a better place. For the past three years, Avery was our top cross-country runner, leading our girls' team to back-to-back league titles and three straight appearances in the postseason CIF preliminaries. Off the field, she took on leading roles in every musical performance during her four years, including the lead role of Sandy in this year's production of Grease. She is an extraordinary musician and a superb singer, and generously lent her gifts to the school's Garage Band and the annual Festival of Talent. She won awards for her journalism prowess, and served as editor-in-chief of the school newspaper in her senior year. She was also named an AP Scholar with Honor by the College Board, and at graduation, Avery was recognized with the Andrew Kille Award. But awards and accolades are secondary to her; she truly has designs to change the world. Driven by a passion to protect the environment, she served this year as the Student Council's Sustainability Representative, bringing to our school community a renewed commitment to be kind to our planet. In that way, she reminds us that the OVS experience is as much about character and purpose as it is about achievement.



Tyler Davis

Oregon State
University

Hard working and motivated, a tenacious student and athlete, Tyler's teachers and coaches have witnessed the fervor with which he pursues his goals and commend the ways that he matured into the student and individual he is today. Tyler's drive and tenacity have been apparent in the classroom and in the sports arena. His teachers describe him as a curious and conscientious student, one who pursued academic questions for the sake of learning and self improvement. He earned year-end academic awards and took on challenging Advanced Placement classes. And he performed on stage in the school musical and was elected by his peers to serve as a class representative. Then there was the athletic arena, where he truly shined. He was relentless on the ball field, playing flag football, basketball and even cross country. But it was on the baseball diamond where Tyler really set himself apart. Simply put, he was outstanding in that sport, voted by coaches one year as the league's Most Valuable Player. But the best thing about Tyler was that he was kind to his teammates and to opposing players. He took the game seriously, but not so much so that he forgot why we played the game in the first place. It was fun to watch him play against his brother and father in the past Alumni basketball and baseball games, and he followed in the footsteps of his grandfather, father and brother attending the Ojai Valley School. To be sure, he made his family proud.



Morgan Dreier

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical
University

Morgan spent her four years at OVS in a quiet pursuit of greatness. In the classroom, she took an assortment of Advanced Placement and Honors courses, and earned academic awards in subjects including Algebra, Marine Science and, just this spring, English 12. But her contributions spilled beyond the Upper Campus as she walked laps to raise money for cancer survivors, volunteered to restore habitat at the nearby Channel Islands and befriended abandoned animals at the local animal shelter. However, her mightiest mark was made in the equestrian arena, where she dedicated hours of her time and all of the passion she could muster. She trained her two horses every day after school, making sure they stayed healthy for training and upcoming competitions. And, while she didn't often give voice to it, she put in this lifetime of work in pursuit of achieving her dream of one day competing in the Olympics, riding dressage for the United States team. As if those aspirations weren't lofty enough, over the past couple of years she put a different set of plans in motion that involves pursuits a bit more above ground. At the start of her senior year, she began taking flying lessons, flying two or three times a week, so that after college she can start an animal transportation business and be the pilot flying the animals. Morgan is a high flyer in so many ways, and what is evident is that her talents and hard work will allow her to soar.



Caspian Ellis

University of California
at Davis

Caspian is self-motivated and driven at all times, and in all instances, to perform at her highest level, no matter the task in front of her. She demonstrated her academic grit by taking the most challenging curriculum available at OVS, including multiple Advanced Placement classes her senior year. Going into her senior year, the College Board recognized Caspian as an AP Scholar for her exceptional performance on those exams. She racked up numerous academic awards in her years at the Upper Campus, including two more in the year-end Awards Ceremony in the last week at school as the outstanding student in Astronomy and AP English Literature. During her high school career, she wrote for the school newspaper, winning awards for her work. She ran cross country and track at the highest level, played soccer on the varsity squad and spurred OVS participation in the Interscholastic Equestrian League, where she served as team captain. It was no wonder then that Caspian was appointed by the school administration to serve as a member of our Leadership Council, and that she was voted by her peers to serve in various student council positions and, in her final year, as Senior Class Representative. Determination and intellectual curiosity are qualities that have earned her the respect of her peers and teachers. They are also qualities that have made her an extraordinary equestrian at the national level, and that have propelled her to compete at the NCAA level for her university.



Margarita

"Margo" Eramova

Cal Poly Pomona

Margo started studying at Ojai Valley School in middle school, and it was a good place for her to mature both socially and academically. She flourished in many of her high school classes. In Computer Science, Physics, and pre-Calculus, her teachers noted her disciplined work habits, commenting that she was not afraid to ask for help when it was needed or to put her head down and apply herself when there was work to do. However, it was in her art classes, particularly Ceramics and AP Studio Art, where she truly made her mark. Her AP Ceramics work was incredibly well done, both times, since the College Board changed its guidelines between her junior and senior year. She brought the same level of focus as a leader on our varsity volleyball and soccer teams. She was a fierce competitor, but she also understood the importance of fairness. She was as quick to make a hard charge toward the soccer goal as she was to extend a hand to a competitor who had hit the ground. But perhaps it was her Senior Capstone project that told you all you need to know about this young woman: she jumped out of a plane – with a parachute of course – as an homage to the spirit and adventure that was her OVS experience. Margo's life at OVS was made up of just this kind of spirit, and we know with certainty that her best days are ahead.



Jolene Fan

University of California
at San Diego

Jolene put her heart into all she did: she was fastidious in the classroom, a leader in her community, and a strong athlete on the cross country course and basketball court. Throughout her years as an OVS student, she was a passionate participant in all facets of boarding school life, taking advantage of the opportunity to study and live at OVS to explore and contribute. In the classroom, she proved to be a hard worker and deep thinker, and teachers applauded her attentiveness and contributions to class. She won numerous academic awards over the years, and she augmented her studies through summer courses in neuroscience and psychology. She also emerged as a committed and effective student leader during her high school years, elected to serve as Student Council Treasurer her senior year. Jolene was quite simply a doer, pitching in to raise money for cancer survivors through our annual Relay for Life campaign, helping socialize abused and abandoned animals during weekly trips to the Humane Society, and helping rebuild a school during a service trip to Peru. However, her commitment to excellence was never clearer than when she was on the athletic field. She was a fierce and formidable opponent, and emerged as a valuable, scoring member of our cross country team, which won the league title the past two years. If you're looking for grit, Jolene possesses that quality in abundance, and it will serve her well in her college exploration.



Carter Hsu

University of Washington

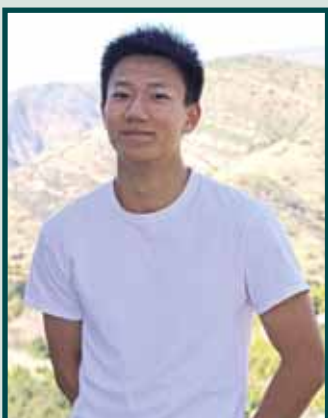
Carter lived his OVS years to the absolute fullest, leaving no corner of his American high school experience untouched. On the basketball court, in the Student Council room, in the dorms, on outdoor excursions, and in the classroom, his resume was a testament to his love for our school community, and evidence of the curiosity and commitment he brought to everything he did. Carter challenged himself in the classroom, taking a number of Advanced Placement classes and winning the respect of his teachers, who praised his dedication to developing deep understanding in a broad range of courses. He served on our school's Leadership Council and as a dorm prefect. And he was an artist and an innovator, showing off his skills as a phenomenal dancer, wowing his peers at our all school meetings with his impressive spins and moves. But there was more to it for Carter. He has taught dance and used it to break down age and cultural barriers in his native Taiwan and in his time at OVS. In recent years, his musical interests expanded to include an interest in music engineering, where he created electronic beats for online release. That talent was the focus of his Senior Capstone project. And one day, Carter hopes those "streams" will generate money, which he plans to donate to charitable causes. Additionally, he exhibited his talents by performing in our spring musicals Mamma Mia and Grease, and just recently performed a dance routine for the Festival of Talent. It's hard to imagine what audiences and adventures await, but you can be certain that he will bring his creative, can-do spirit to whatever comes his way.



Joshua Hsu

Michigan State University

In his four years at the Upper Campus, Joshua merged as a superstar. He was an originator, an idea producer and a contributor. As the school's elected Vice President, he helped lead a variety of service efforts, and did so with boundless enthusiasm, prodding his peers to put down their phones, put away their video games and get out of their rooms to do good work for others. Sure, he was solid in the classroom, a tenacious athlete, and funny and kind to everyone he encountered. But Joshua's best quality was the size of his heart. He honestly wants to help those who are struggling or who are less fortunate, and he worked hard to persuade everyone in his community to respond to that need. He was the originator of Spudbucks, a program he launched to positively reward students for exceptional behavior. In his junior year he launched a Storytelling initiative. The premise was simple: he worked with our librarian to find books and volunteer readers to work with kids at our Lower Campus and continue a long storytelling tradition at Ojai Valley School. On the basketball court, on the baseball team, on the student government campaign trail, and on outdoor excursions, he did it all, and we at OVS were the better for it.



Siyu Lai

New York University

Easy going and self-assured. Laid back yet driven to excel. Brash but sensitive. To characterize Siyu is to arrive at a contradiction in terms, but that's what made him such a special member of the Class of 2020. He has a sharp mind and a focused drive, but underneath his tranquil exterior was a young man who wanted to achieve and excel, and that he did at Ojai Valley School. He absorbed information into his very being, not to memorize and recite, but to contemplate and consider. He took a half dozen Advanced Placement classes during his time at the Upper Campus, displaying a high level of proficiency in math and the sciences and earning year-end academic awards in those subjects. In the classroom, his teachers lauded the curiosity he brought to his coursework, noting that he set himself apart as a problem solver, bringing concentration, perseverance and good humor to ensure his academic success. However, Siyu demonstrated his greatest growth outside of the classroom, where he helped establish a flag football team and served as a key member of a reborn track team, practicing for countless hours on his own to improve his technique and times for a senior track season that never materialized. But he reminded us that achievement is about much more than outcome — it's about character and commitment to a goal, whether or not that is ever achieved. Siyu achieved much at OVS and we know the best is yet to come.



Yui Kikuchi

University of California
at Irvine

Whether it was lending her talent to the school chorus, charging down the basketball court on a fast break, or contributing her technical expertise to the robotics program, Yui brought a laser-like focus to every task at hand. In her years at OVS, she grew from a quiet, reserved newcomer to an involved, committed and caring member of our student body, making the most of the many academic and extracurricular opportunities at our school, and forming lifelong bonds at her home-away-from-home. In the classroom, teachers lauded her attentiveness and contributions, and she racked up a number of academic awards over the years in fields including Biology and Calculus. She emerged as a committed and effective student leader during her high school years, selected to serve as a prefect, student leader and, in her senior year, Weekend Representative to the Student Council. Yui demonstrated her daring by parachuting out of an airplane for her Senior Capstone. And she demonstrated her love for OVS when, after the Thomas Fire destroyed key buildings and a large swath of our high school campus, she and an OVS friend organized and staged a fundraising lunch in Japan to contribute to the school's rebuilding campaign. Yui's heart is big, and it is among her best features. In all ways, Yui demonstrated she not only cared about doing her best, but that she was dedicated to the idea of helping others do the same.



Megan Manion

Salve Regina University

She is an innovator and a go-getter. To that end, Megan spent much of her time at Ojai Valley School striving to improve her community, generating project ideas, largely aimed at promoting sustainable practices, and then having the wherewithal to see those projects through to fruition. A motivated and much-improved student, she is a compassionate, caring person – one who won't tell you what she does well, but rather will let her talents and contributions speak for themselves. She implemented "Meatless Mondays," and launched the Zanmi Club, which seeks to provide a more solid economic foundation for poor women in Haiti. She took a range of honors and Advanced Placement courses, and in her senior year added journalism to her academic repertoire, where her talents as a photographer and videographer earned much recognition. She served as the Outdoor Education Representative to the Student Council and demonstrated her passion for soccer, playing the position of striker and goalie. Last year she created a whimsical yearbook cover and this year she served as editor-in-chief of the school yearbook, a job that requires grit, resilience, and the willingness to artfully manage a small yearbook staff, a task she took on with her hallmark grace and humor.



Corbin Muller

Oregon State University

Possessing the soul of an artist, the grit of a high-caliber athlete and the spirit of an adventurer, Corbin was our quintessential Renaissance man. He worked hard at his academics, but his real talents shone outside the classroom. He is a gifted photographer, and has demonstrated his talent as part of the curriculum at OVS, and beyond. One of his goals is to become a professional photographer, with an emphasis on wildlife conservation, and this year he took a huge step toward that objective when he launched his own website to showcase his work. His images are breathtaking, and have been featured on our school website and promotional materials. Corbin lent his programming expertise to the robotics program, and he emerged as a standout athlete, becoming one of the school's top cross country runners the past two years and earning the 100-meter league championship last year in track. This past winter, he helped lead the boys soccer team with his defensive ability to a berth in the CIF playoffs for the first time in school history. Finally, Corbin immersed himself in our Outdoor Education program, hiking the Sierra, helping repair damaged ecosystems on the Channel Islands, and rock climbing and star gazing in our local mountains. To close the year, he was presented the J.B. Close Award as the outstanding outdoorsman for the academic year, an honor fitting and well deserved. Following both parents and his grandfather, Corbin made his family proud by being a third-generation OVS graduate.



**Stephany
Nostrant**

Babson College

Strong, ethical and self-aware, Stephany's teachers praise her ability to think deeply and express herself confidently in class and through her work. In her years at Ojai Valley School, there is virtually no area of campus untouched by her talent, hard work and enthusiasm. She contributed without being asked, from community service projects to school leadership positions. Her talent and tenacity were also apparent in the classroom, where she took a range of challenging Advanced Placement classes and was designated an AP Scholar last summer by the College Board. A fierce and formidable opponent, she was committed to the cross-country squad, and for the past two years was a key member of the small but mighty varsity team that won back-to-back league titles and qualified for post-season CIF running. In fact, along with a partner, she dedicated her senior Capstone Project to the lessons she learned competing in that torturous sport, revealing to her peers and teachers that adversity truly is the path to self discovery. However, it was basketball that was her true love and the game she sought to master. She dedicated countless hours to improving herself in that sport, and served as team captain the past few years. Her contributions have been many, and they will be missed as she heads east next fall to study business.



**Danni "Angela"
Qu**

Boston College

Here is what our college counselor had to say about Angela in his recommendation for her: "The way she does one thing is the way she does everything." Put another way, she is outstanding at any task set in front of her, whether that be in the classroom, the art studio or the sports arena. An independently motivated young woman, she was an exceptional student and citizen at Ojai Valley School. Angela not only made the most out of our rigorous college prep curriculum, taking 11 honors and Advanced Placement courses, she supplemented her studies with college courses in math and business leadership. While her strength was math and science, a number of her advanced courses were in English and history, demonstrating her propensity for self-challenge. The College Board last summer designated her an AP Scholar with Distinction, one of only two OVS students to earn that honor. In other areas, Angela was an innovator and originator of movements big and small. She launched the Math and Investment Club and founded the Dance Club, which brought together students of different cultures and backgrounds for dance practice and performances. Additionally, she was an exceptional artist. For her AP Art portfolio, she painted microscopic images of diseases and viruses, which includes a haunting image of COVID-19. Ingenuity, determination and care for community are all qualities that have earned her the respect of her peers and teachers, and they are qualities that will serve her well as she launches into the next phase of her life.



Aiden Robertson

University of Oregon

Smart and funny, Aiden worked hard in his classes and took good advantage of co- and extracurricular activities outside the classroom, plugging into the many offerings at our school and demonstrating substantial growth in many areas. He joined our newly formed weightlifting activity and became a captain of our competitive robotics team, drawing on his programming and mechanical expertise to propel that program to new heights. He especially thrived as a contributor in our Outdoor Education program. Whether it was backpacking, mountain biking or rock climbing, he was in his element when exploring the world around him, and in that way he emerged as a quiet leader, helping his younger, less experienced peers find the same wonder and joy he did. To be sure, the outdoors shaped his character and was integral to his development as a student and a human being. But Aiden accomplished the task we are always asking our students to complete: anywhere and everywhere he could, he gave back. However, little did the school community know what special talent he possessed until this year's school musical. Gathering up all his courage, he joined the cast of the production of Grease, taking a leading role by singing "Beauty School Dropout" in his deep, beautiful baritone. He flexed his ability as an old-school crooner, impressing all in attendance. What other tricks, what other hidden talents, does this young man have up his sleeve? We can't wait to see.



Mark Sun

University of California
at Irvine

Mark is a bit on the quiet side, but don't let his calm, cool demeanor fool you. He is a naturally gifted student and strong thinker, and his teachers said he regularly demonstrated his intellectual precision and impressive motivation to further his knowledge and understanding of material, especially in those courses in which he is most interested. Last spring, when school administrators were interviewing candidates for a math position, he was part of a group of students brought in to sit through simulated lessons by the candidates. He was the best of the bunch, asking excellent questions that put the candidates to the test. As a boarding student all four years of high school, he made the campus his second home, plugging into a diverse range of experiences. He used his programming expertise to help turn our robotics team into a regional power and worked with younger players to help develop strategies as part of Chess Club. He also contributed to our sports program, demonstrating his passion for basketball, golf and tennis. In fact, he is a fantastic tennis player, one who willingly helped less experienced players learn the game, and who essentially took on the role of tennis coach for our spring season.



Sasha Valenzuela

California State University
at Fullerton

Like many of her classmates, Sasha started her OVS experience at the Lower Campus and throughout her high school years demonstrated that she was a contributor – in the classroom, on the athletic field and in our Outdoor Education program. In her experiences and in facing adversity, she was tough and tenacious, a student who was curious, trustworthy and who took on challenges. Here's an example: our Outdoor Education Coordinator remembers accompanying Sasha on the first camping trip of her high school career, a trek to Santa Rosa Island that was memorable because of high winds that flattened most tents and made it a trying night for all campers. As dawn broke, our director said Sasha rose to the occasion, displaying determination, a sense of adventure and leadership that was pivotal in boosting morale and making the trip a great success. She brought the same determination to her studies, excelling in a range of challenging courses that demonstrated her commitment to mastering the various facets of our curriculum. At this year's virtual Awards Ceremony, she was recognized for her outstanding work in ceramics and environmental science. And on the athletic field, she emerged as a leader on the volleyball and basketball courts, serving this year as the heart and soul of those varsity squads. She was all-in at Ojai Valley School, and we will miss those contributions.



Adair Wallace

Gap Year (Enrolling at
Connecticut College)

A friendly and energetic presence in all aspects of school life, Adair left an enduring mark on the Upper Campus. Her teachers describe her as conscientious, bright, funny, enthusiastic, and engaged — and a quiet, powerful leader who let her actions speak for themselves. Whether it was presiding over a new club to bring much-needed funds into the hands of third-world women, volunteering to fill in at the last minute to take on a key role in the school musical, or earning year-end academic honors for her curiosity and perceptive thinking, Adair was always authentic and true to herself. In short, she was a go getter. Curiosity to explore the world around her led her to take a semester abroad in Italy, but she returned to OVS and didn't miss a beat in getting back involved with the community she loves. She was instrumental this fall in getting a yoga class off the ground as an alternative to fall sports offerings, demonstrating once again the range and depth of her interests. And in organizing volunteers for various service efforts, she emerged as a force to be reckoned with, taking on those responsibilities with humor and grace. We have all come to learn that it's hard to say "no" to Adair. That's a great leadership quality to possess, and she possesses it in abundance.



**Sebastian
Wayman-Dalo**
Bowdoin College

Sebastian was an outstanding contributor to our school community, a rare learner who could surprise you with the depth of his thought and power of his perception. He took a range of challenging Advanced Placement courses and earned high marks on many of those exams. He was especially drawn to history, political affairs, environmental issues and languages, and his teachers praised his keen intellect and inquisitive curiosity. But the proof of his knowledge and academic curiosity couldn't truly be found on a transcript or a test score: sit around a lunch table and listen to him discuss these subjects with peers and teachers. He could talk about these subjects for hours, possessing a thirst for learning and intellectual curiosity rare for one so young. Animated, gregarious, and self-assured, he was full of spirit, opinions, and conversation. He played a leading role in our school musicals – including the lead role of Danny Zuko in this year's production of *Grease* — and he wowed school crowds as the bassist and true heartbeat of our Garage Band. Sebastian's work as a day student prefect afforded him the ability to help organize his peers to better the school. He also proved to be a leader on the athletic field, becoming a key member of the cross country and soccer teams, and, last year, picking up a new skill as a thrower of the shot put and discus for the track program. It seemed Sebastian was always busy learning new things and was ready to take on new challenges, and in that way he distinguished himself and assured a future that is bright and full of promise as he pursues a major in environmental diplomacy.



Aaron Wolf
UCLA

What a wide swath this young man carved. Aaron set a high academic bar in the classroom, proving himself to be a curious and conscientious student, one dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge not for a grade, but for its own sake. He took on 10 honors and Advanced Placement courses, and excelled throughout the curriculum, so much so that the College Board last summer designated him an AP Scholar with Honor. He was a leader on the athletic field, anchoring our varsity basketball team and playing supporting roles over the years in cross country and baseball. He was a man of action during his years at OVS, embedding himself into the fabric of the life of our middle and high school campuses. At Lower, his computer savvy led administrators to rename the tech booth in the Greenberg Center "The Wolf Den." At Upper, he continued to provide technical support for school musicals, and, in his senior year took a star turn on stage in the school's production of *Grease*. In the aftermath of the December 2017 Thomas Fire, Aaron was among a handful of students who returned from break early to help prepare the campus to reopen on time for the second semester. He led efforts to provide food and water stations for birds displaced by the fire, and followed that up with an ambitious Eagle Scout project, convincing more than 40 people to help rebuild 200 feet of destroyed ridge-top fencing. Aaron is a natural leader, and his peers recognized that, electing him to serve as Student Body President his senior year. For all you accomplished, congratulations Mr. President.



Gary Zhou
University of California
at Santa Cruz

A naturally gifted student and strong thinker, Gary regularly demonstrated his intellectual precision and impressive motivation to further his knowledge and understanding of material, especially in those courses in which he is most interested. He made the most of his time at OVS, engaging in the wide range of opportunities offered in outdoor education, resident life, athletics, and college preparatory academics. Always pushing himself to explore new things, he was a programmer on the robotics team the past several years, and took part in athletics as an important member of the golf and cross country teams. But it was in the arts where Gary truly stood out. He served as the heart and soul of the school's Garage Band, keeping the beat on bass and on drums. He is an exceptional musician, and remarkably he is largely self-taught. And he was the most reliable member of the band, having never missed a performance. But the best part of his expression in this area was that he was incredibly humble – in talking to him, you would never guess he possessed such immense talent. At the year-end awards ceremony, Gary was presented with the school's music award to honor his many contributions in that area. For those of us you rocked, Gary, we salute you!

During my time at Upper Campus, I discovered a passion for the environment. I plan on majoring in environmental studies, and I hope to spend my life working in environmental education and sustainability. Without being exposed to the outdoors and the importance of conservation throughout my time at OVS, I might never have realized the cause that I want to dedicate my life to. ... Being at OVS has allowed me to become whoever I wanted to be. During my time in high school, I could become a runner, a writer, a musician, and an environmentalist. And the people supporting me taught me to be the best version of all those things that I possibly could be.

- Avery Colborn



In August we will be traveling all over the country to some of the top institutions in order to further our education. But I know if you switched any of our places, we would thrive, because that is what OVS has taught us to do. ... A big factor of our ability to adapt like that is due to the resilience we have gained from our experiences these past four years.

- Sebastian Wayman-Dalo



Senior Memories

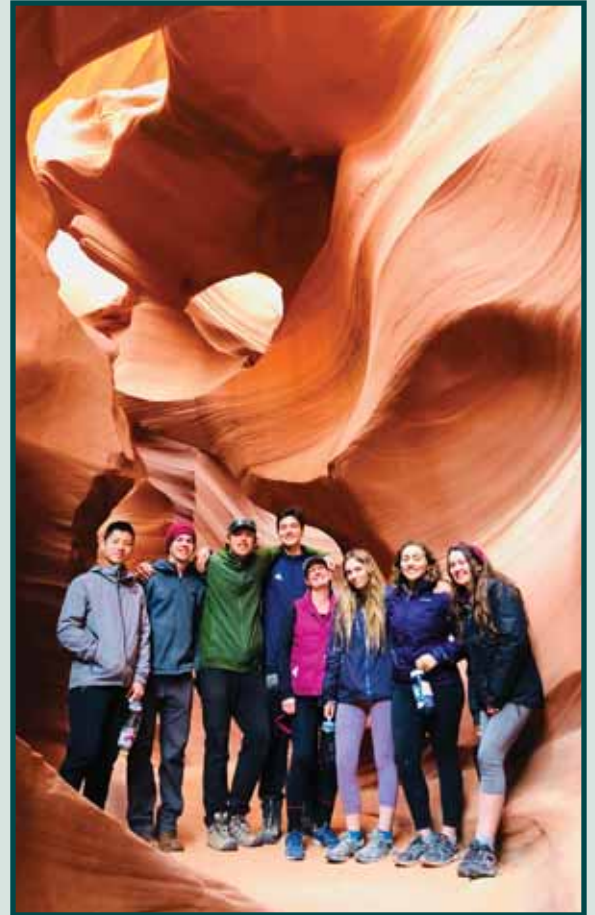
With camping trips, group study sessions, playing sports and performing, **I understood what it meant to be part of a community**, something bigger than myself. I saw my life through a clearer lens. I translated that new perspective that I gained to my personal life, and found who I was as a multi-ethnic female. OVS facilitated a learning environment where I have been able to **explore my ethnic identity in various ways**, from history lessons to simple discussions we would have in the car on our way to our next camping adventure. My peers, advisors, teachers, and other various mentors around campus have helped and **supported my journey to become a strong outspoken woman**.

- Olivia Brown



It is through my time here that I discovered my passions, and how to go after them. I learned about my fears, and how to overcome them. And I learned that **I am capable of so much more** than I ever believed that I was.

- Caspian Ellis



Lower Campus

SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD

The highest honor we can give an eighth-grade student. Its purpose is to commend the student who, with his or her actions and attitude, contributed to the school community in a sensitive and constructive manner in all phases of school life.

Ben Manning

HEAD OF SCHOOL AWARD

Given for the significant contributions of an eighth grader, or eighth graders, have made during their years at Lower Campus.

Class of 2020

J.B. CLOSE AWARD

Given each year to the student who best exemplifies the goals of the OVS Outdoor Education program. His or her consistent contributions to camping, backpacking, and rock climbing trips, love and respect for nature, and commitment to helping others in the face of adversity set this student apart.

Eric Schmidt

PAUL PITTMAN AWARD

Recognizes the student, or students, who have exhibited the most enthusiasm and active participation in the equestrian program.

Sarah Thele

MICHAEL D. HERMES AWARD

Given to the most outstanding eighth-grade student athletes.

Donahi Soriano, Sullivan Rothwell

MICHAEL J. HALL-MOUNSEY AWARD

Honoring the boarding students who have consistently served as outstanding role models for their peers and who have demonstrated initiative, leadership, and responsibility.

Eli Roston, Kyria Ngankoy

Upper Campus

WALLACE BURR AWARD

Established to recognize the student who has made a significant impact on the OVS community by giving unsolicited service.

Adam Pepper-Macias

ROBERT G. COOPER AWARD

Honors the senior, or seniors, who have demonstrated the most growth during his or her senior year

Olivia Brown, Yui Kikuchi

A. CARL KOTCHIAN AWARD

Awarded to the most outstanding scholar, not only for academic achievement but also for this student's level of effort and intellectual curiosity.

Mark Pindur

ANDREW KILLE AWARD

Given to the senior who has demonstrated himself or herself to be a leader with a strong sense of community; one who has been consistently hard working, helpful, friendly, and who has exhibited a good sense of humor.

Avery Colborn

SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD

Given to the athletes who have most demonstrated integrity, leadership, and, above all, good sportsmanship.

Avery Colborn, Olivia Brown, Hyunung Choi

J.B. CLOSE AWARD

Recognizes the student, or students, who have exhibited the most enthusiasm and active participation in the outdoor program.

Corbin Muller

SANDY BALLOU MEMORIAL TROPHY

Recognizes the student who demonstrates good horsemanship, sportsmanship, and the belief that competition is not as important as the simple joy of being with a horse.

Kyla Pinchassi

CARL S. COOPER AWARD

Recognizes the underclass student, or students, for their leadership and character. It is an award that neither dwells in the past nor predicts the future. It honors the individuals for who they are, here and now.

Chloe Warren, Mark Pindur

Small school.



Big outcomes.



Congratulations, Class of 2020!

"Our goal is for students to have the flexibility to select from a broad range of colleges and universities, to see them push beyond limits, discover their potential, and develop the work ethic and confidence to take on any challenge that life may throw their way."

- Craig Floyd (U83), Upper Campus Head of School

Head of School Message

By Gary Gartrell - Head of School, Lower Campus

The following is an excerpt from Gartrell's speech to the graduating 8th graders:

You are not able to sit on the OVS stage this year as we celebrate your graduation, this makes me very sad, I wish you could be here. I have been a part of the 8th Grade graduations for the last forty years. They are all unique to me, in their own way. Although a couple of graduations do stick out to me. Mrs. Floyd's oldest son, Connor, was about to receive the JB Close Award, when he started to get a serious nosebleed. We had to stop the ceremony, take a ten minute time out to take care of it. Blood everywhere. Another unique situation was a student who was not feeling well during graduation, suddenly stood up, walked to the back of the stage, and threw up! Then, in typical OVS form, returned to finish the ceremony.

But, I am sure Your graduation will stay with me as the "Most Memorable" for a few reasons: It's the last graduation I get to be a part of, the circumstances are so unique, and the entire class is part of the story. So, what defines your class? Not the COVID-19 pandemic, or the required shift to online learning. It wasn't that, it was your ability to adapt, adjust, and persevere in the face of adversity. I will never forget the spirit of your class, and how you came together and participated in absolutely everything. You are a diverse group of kids that have accomplished so much.

Along with your academic achievements, you had a wonderful experience on your fall camping trip to Sequoia National Park. Your trip to Washington DC was a fun class bonding experience. Your Campus Lighting performance was spectacular. You hiked 13 miles round trip to the Lookout Laura tower. You showed great leadership and spirit playing on our sports teams. The Student Council officers led All School with maturity and grace.

Another example of your positive participation in leadership was the 8th Grade Committee. I have had the pleasure of leading this group since Mr. Hall-Mounsey and I created it 20 years ago. This year's group was especially memorable. Our meetings were always lively and productive. I appreciated your enthusiasm, and leadership when running the snow cone sales and student contests. You persuaded me to add skateboarding and woodshop as possible graphics choices on your individualized diplomas. That was impressive. The logo for our committee's T-shirt was a skateboarding chicken to acknowledge the class gifts. Maybe down the road, we can prove that chickens can skate. (Inside joke!)

At this moment we are not so different. You are moving on



to high school and I am moving on to a different role at OVS. We are all heading into a world that is changing fast and where there are many unknowns. An OVS education has prepared you for exactly this situation. Are you prepared to adapt? Do you have the resilience to take on an unknown challenge? Will you come up with a creative solution? I am positive you will answer "Yes" to all three of those questions.

In my numerous years at OVS, I have seen many groups of 8th graders, but none more inspiring than this most special class of 2020. With everything that this class had thrown at it, from moving to distance learning, to reinventing rites of passage, your answer was always "Yes." Above all, you were a class that was unafraid to try new things. The challenges didn't break you; you were unwilling to quit, you grew stronger as a class, and as individuals.

It turns out that technology and 21st Century skills were not what was most needed in the last few months, though this class can now Google, Moodle, and Zoom with the best of them. What was needed the most was resilience, creativity, and flexibility. It turns out that you can have all of the tools, and resources, and platforms at your fingertips, but they don't count for much if you don't know how to apply them in a moving, changing format. We have been essentially building a ship while sailing it across the sea. You are now ready to be the captain of that ship.

But these were skills that OVS has been building in you for a long time: from turning pieces of broken glass into art, or a mighty stump into a hobbit house, or cardboard into battle gear, native plants into medicine, a piece of plywood into a skateboard, or popsicle sticks into structural bridges. OVS has helped you lay a foundation for how to be adaptable, and how to completely function in a changing world. Some questions you might ask yourself, as I am now asking myself are; Will this school remember me? Have I left something behind with my name on it? And I don't mean in the "Lost and Found!" or my PE bag. Have I done something worthy of a story to be told around a campfire? Have I taken advantage of every opportunity and given my best effort regardless of the outcome? To these questions, I think that all of you can say YES!

As you move on from Lower Campus, and grace the hallways of whatever high school is lucky enough to have you, I hope you will surround yourself with the right people. I hope you will practice kindness in your daily lives. I hope you will harness the power your OVS education has given you and use it to better our world.





Gartrell's Goodbye

Facing retirement, Lower Campus Head of School Gary Gartrell looks back on 40 years at OVS — and the coronavirus curveball

By Bella Slosberg (L17)

Of all of the ways Gary Gartrell thought his OVS career would conclude, he never imagined it would be like this.

Instead of leading assemblies and graduation ceremonies, the Lower Campus Head of School spent much of the second semester leading Zoom videos and Virtual All School gatherings. Instead of eating cookies and chocolate-covered strawberries at the annual High Tea, he remained at home or, when he was on campus, making sure he

stayed six feet away from any teachers who also showed up.

After 40 years in various roles, Gartrell had hoped to spend his final year as Head of School to the fullest degree before retirement. But COVID-19 completely changed those plans.

"I never expected my last year at Ojai Valley School to end like this," said Gartrell, who started as a dorm parent at the Lower

Campus in 1980 and who worked as a math teacher, summer camp administrator and assistant head before being named Head of School in 2015.

"The virus has completely eliminated the face-to-face interaction with the students," said Gartrell, noting that important events such as Spring Family Weekend, Achievement Day, Pons Dinner, and the annual Science Fair had to be postponed or canceled. "I'm really sad that some of the events we were hoping to do did not take place."

But true to his dedication to the school, and his knack for problem solving, Gartrell tried his best throughout the spring term to stay in close contact with students, parents and teachers, and to keep alive the OVS spirit that for decades has been central to his life.

"Gary stepped in and accepted the headship when we needed it

most, showing calm leadership and a great listening ability," said OVS President Michael Hall-Mounsey, who has worked with Gartrell for the past 30 years. "We began together at Lower Campus in 1981. I've appreciated his loyalty and commitment, and all he's done for the school."

From leading camping trips and 8th Grade Committee meetings, to supervising disciplinary actions and school activities, Gartrell's positivity and spirit were always evident.

Senior Avery Colborn (L16, U20) said Gartrell consistently made students feel like they were heard and demonstrated to them that he was someone they could trust and rely on.

"I think middle schoolers are supposed to be a little bit scared of their headmasters, but to be quite honest, I always thought of Mr. Gartrell as a friend," she said. "I always used to pop into Mr.

Gartrell's office and joke around with him, or eat lunch on the 8th grade lawn. I remember once I was walking to lunch and he had just come out of the cafeteria, and I screamed, 'What's up, Gardy G!' from all the way across the quad. He just looked at me and laughed."

During the pandemic, Gartrell could often be found on campus greeting students in their online classes or filming feel-good videos to post at the end of each week on YouTube. He joined other faculty members in riding bikes to students' houses to greet them from a distance and say hello over a megaphone.

That is classic Gary Gartrell, said colleagues.

"I think Gary's greatest legacy will be in the culture that students and teachers maintain at OVS," said Mike Mahon, the assistant Head of School at Lower Campus. "Gary

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Gary stepped in and accepted the headship when we needed it most, showing calm leadership and a great listening ability ... I've appreciated his loyalty and commitment, and all he's done for the school.

- Michael Hall-Mounsey
OVS President



Gary Gartrell promotes Tovah Starin to first grade at the end of the 2018 school year.

will listen to anyone and try to engage in their vision. He does it with faculty and the 8th Grade Committee in the same way ... He approaches a national disaster with the same patience and wisdom as an average Wednesday."

Added Dean of Studies and Learning Center teacher Myr Slosberg: "Gary has been calm, patient, even keeled, positive throughout his entire career. He continues to stay level headed even in these hard times. Throughout my years at OVS, especially this one, I don't know what I would have done without his support."

As he enters retirement, Gartrell plans to travel with his wife, Linda, read a lot of good books, and be available to support incoming Head of School Laurie Clark. He will also work another year in the Alumni and Development Office, reconnecting with students who he mentored over the years. And OVS will remain close to his family.

Two of his four children, daughters Nicole and Kelsey, also work at the school and three grandchildren will be enrolled students in the fall.

Although his last year as Head of School did not go exactly as planned, Gartrell was proud to finish the year with optimism,

helping the students and teachers keep the OVS spirit thriving.

"I'm going to miss the day-to-day OVS life. I really enjoy All School and the camping trips and watching the students play sports," Gartrell said. "I'll miss all of that, but I know I'll still be a part of this community."



Gary Gartrell, OVS President Michael Hall-Mounsey, and Upper Campus Head of School Craig Floyd chat at a recent Family Weekend gathering.



When Covid-19 forced school closures, Mr. Gartrell and Mr. Mahon kept the All School tradition going with online videos.



New Lower Campus Head of School, Laurie Clark.

Welcome, Laurie Clark!

By Tracy Wilson

Head of School Laurie Clark arrived this summer like a fresh breeze blowing through a heavy fog. Tasked with running the Lower School in the midst of a pandemic, she immediately went to work tackling a daunting list of challenges, taking the lead with confidence and enthusiasm.

Originally from California, Clark was drawn to Ojai Valley School not just for its sunny location but because she connected with the philosophy, especially the notion of giving students the opportunity to be innovative and learn from mistakes.

"It's not all going to be in a textbook and we don't want it to be," she said. "We want kids to think differently. That's definitely my philosophy — provide the tools and let the kids explore."

Clark brings an impressive list of qualifications to the position. She earned her B.A. in Humanities

from Fort Lewis College, her M.A. in Education from Adams State College, and a Master Teacher Certification in Outdoor Education from Four Corners School of Outdoor Education. She taught grades 1-4 in Durango, Colorado, and later worked as a fifth-grade teacher and Head of Lower School at Cedar International School in the British Virgin Islands. Clark most recently served as the Lower School Principal at Rancho Solano Prep School, a PK-12 school, in Scottsdale, Arizona.

"We conducted a lengthy and comprehensive search for a new school leader and, without question, we have found it in Laurie," OVS President Michael Hall-Mounsey said. "We are truly fortunate that she will apply her talents, enthusiasm, and her passion for learning here at Ojai Valley School."

During her 25 years as an educator, Clark has developed curriculum, taught workshops, trained

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Less than 48 hours after her arrival from Arizona, Laurie was whisked away to an unknown location in the Sespe to crawl through a tiny hole in the side of a waterfall. She didn't even flinch when we showed her the opening to Boney Bean and she dove right in. Since then, she has met every opportunity and challenge with enthusiasm, joy, and a healthy dose of elbow grease.”

- Assistant Head of School, Lower Campus, Mike Mahon

teachers, and evaluated schools. But what most impressed the parents, alumni and trustees who met her during the Head of School search was her profound commitment to educating the whole child. It is what attracted her to OVS.

“It's the fact that the school focuses on academics, but there is so much more to it,” she said. “There's the outdoor ed program, there's the playing, there's the creative thinking and critical thinking...It's not just a school where you go to learn your reading, writing and math.”

Clark took over for retiring Head of School Gary Gartrell in June. Her can-do attitude was evident from the start when she joined Gartrell and Assistant Head of School Mike Mahon on a hike to Rose Valley Falls as part of a virtual All-School video.

“Less than 48 hours after her arrival from Arizona, Laurie was whisked away to an unknown location in the Sespe to crawl through a tiny hole in the side of a waterfall,” Mahon said. “She didn't even flinch when we showed her the opening to Boney Bean and she dove right in. Since then, she has met every opportunity and challenge with enthusiasm, joy, and a healthy dose of elbow grease.”

On most mornings, Clark pedals her bright blue bicycle to Lower Campus and conducts exhaustive planning sessions for the upcoming school year. She has rolled up her sleeves to measure classrooms for social distancing, and filmed playful videos to demonstrate the new health protocols. In between, she has developed a love for Pixie tangerines and enjoyed exploring Ojai with her husband, Peter, who helped paint her office in Frost Hall. It's one of the few changes Clark has made.

“I'm not coming in with an agenda, that's not my style,” she said. “I'm coming in to listen and learn, see what works well and what I can make better. It's a great community and I'm excited to be part of it.”



Mike Mahon and Gary Gartrell welcome Laurie Clark to OVS with a trip through Boney Bean.

OVS earns AP Diversity Award

Ojai Valley School has earned the College Board AP Computer Science Female Diversity Award for achieving high female representation in AP Computer Science Principles. Schools honored with the Diversity Award have expanded young women's access to AP Computer Science courses. Out of the 20,000 institutions that offer AP courses, 818 achieved this result during the 2018-2019 school year. In 2019, OVS was one of just 639 recognized in the category of AP Computer Science Principles.

"We're proud to see the commitment and enthusiasm our female students have demonstrated in their study of AP Computer Science," said Craig Floyd, Upper Campus Head of School. "We have a strong STEM curriculum and are setting our students on a path to success."

Indeed, Ojai Valley School has a long history of producing top female STEM students, many of whom have gone on to top colleges and universities to major in engineering, computer science, biology, and environmental science. OVS added AP Computer Science Principles starting in the 2017-2018 school year. It is one of 24 AP and Honors courses now offered at the high school.



Upper Campus Musical

The Upper Campus staged a rocking version of the musical Grease earlier this year, featuring upbeat ensemble dance numbers as well as strong vocal performances by a cast dominated by seniors who have contributed to the performing arts program since middle school. Seniors Avery Colborn (L16), Olivia Brown (L16), and Sebastian Wayman-Dalo (L16) with junior Adam Pepper-Macias (L17) took on the lead roles. Seniors Aaron Wolf (L16), Thomas Christopher (L16) and Aiden Robertson all joined the cast in their final year at OVS. Since the sixth grade, Aaron has worked lighting, microphones, and the technical side of productions. But this year, as Student Body President, Aaron decided it was his duty to take the stage. "Every single past president has done it," he explained. "I need to carry on that legacy." The musical was just one example of how the Class of 2020 grabbed the spotlight this year. Many seniors participated in a special online version of the Festival of Talent in May.

Competitive Robotics

The competitive robotics season ended with strong performances from all three OVS teams. For the second year in a row, Team Spudnik advanced to the regional FIRST Tech Challenge championship and performed well against 47 other teams from across Southern California. The team did not advance to the world finals in Houston. Team Spudnik includes senior Gary Zhou, juniors Ethan Gao (L17) and Mark Pindur, sophomore Jack Lai (L18) and Grace Huber, a Thatcher School student who joined the OVS team.

Spudnik earned its qualifying position following the Interleague Tournament in Palmdale, where it placed seventh out of 31 teams. Two other OVS teams, Spudbot (high school) and Savagebot (middle school), also competed but did not advance to the regional championship. FIRST Tech Challenge is a competitive robotics program for middle and high school students in which students design, build, program, and operate their own robots under the guidance of adult coaches and mentors. OVS has become a recognized leader among independent schools in competitive robotics.

College Counseling

OVS seniors hit new heights this year with more than 150 acceptances from colleges and universities around the nation. The list includes small liberal arts colleges, large universities, and elite tech schools, including UC Berkeley, UCLA, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Skidmore College, Colorado College, Pepperdine University, University of Washington, Boston College, Bard College, Reed College, Hamilton College, Cal Poly Pomona, Rensselaer Polytechnic University, and many more. Most seniors committed to their schools of choice before May 1, the national college decision day, although some colleges offered extensions due to the coronavirus. At OVS, the seniors moved their annual College Swag Day celebration online, wearing sweatshirts and t-shirts from the schools they chose to attend.

"These are challenging times for many people, and that includes our seniors who face plenty of uncertainty about how they will end their high school years and begin their college experience," said College Counselor Fred Alvarez. "But we keep reminding them to remind themselves just how hard they worked to get to this point. Their accomplishments are noteworthy and deserve to be celebrated."



Shave for a Cure

At five years old, student Jake Larkin was diagnosed with very severe aplastic anemia, a bone marrow failure disease. He received a life-saving bone marrow transplant and now, as a proud survivor, is determined to give back. For the past four years, Jake, now a seventh-grader, has sponsored a campaign called Shave for a Cure, shaving his head in front of the student body to raise money for and awareness of pediatric cancer research. This year, Jake asked junior Adam Pepper-Macias (L17) if he would shave his head to support the fundraiser. Adam reached out to his peers and a dozen Upper Campus students and one faculty member, ceramics teacher Jody Cooper (L71, U74), shaved their heads on a rainy March morning. The inspiration continued the next day at Lower Campus, where Jake, Head of School Gary Gartrell, Assistant Head of School Mike Mahon, and math teacher Duncan Wallace all shaved their heads. Jake's fundraiser raised more than \$7,000 for Midwest Athletes Against Childhood Cancer Inc., which distributes money to organizations battling childhood cancer.



Boys Soccer Advances to CIF

The OVS boys soccer team advanced to the CIF playoffs this year, but lost 2-0 in a hard-fought contest on the road. The playoff game was 1-0 late into the match, with the opposing team, Vasquez High of Acton, scoring a second security goal in the final minutes. Led by new soccer coach Dave Andrews, the boys' team had a phenomenal season, finishing second in Condor League play with a 6-2 record. "We have been a very good team in the past, but this year things just clicked and we made it through," said senior Sebastian Wayman-Dalo (L16). "It feels fantastic. I always wanted a CIF patch." This year's team consisted of veteran players and a host of talented new young players, including freshmen Hyunung Choi and Dongkeon Kim. Several boys soccer teams have qualified for CIF berths in the past, but those teams did not go on to CIF because of scheduling issues and other conflicts.

Battle of Hastings

Earlier this spring, OVS middle schoolers staged an epic re-enactment of the Battle of Hastings, continuing an annual tradition that brings history alive for our students. Social studies teacher John Rowan has orchestrated the battle for the past 10 years. Using the Bayeux Tapestry as a guide, Rowan's students re-enact the events on the Hermes Quad. First, the archers' volley starts the battle. The Saxons resist, their lines break and the Norman cavalry encircle the disconnected foot soldiers, galloping pretend warhorses in formation. The Norman knights finish the fight victorious. William, the Duke of Normandy, defeats King Harold II, the last Anglo-Saxon King of England. However, unlike the 1066 combatants who crafted their armor and weapons from chain mail and beaten metal, these soldiers wrought their armaments from cardboard and duct tape.



Imagine Concerts

Earlier this year, Ojai Valley School welcomed more than 800 students for the annual Imagine Concerts. The performances, attended by fourth, fifth, and sixth-grade students from Ojai and Ventura, were organized by the Ojai Music Festival's Bravo program and funded by the generous support of alumna Barbara B. Smith (L35). This year's concert welcomed the Sandhi Indian Ensemble — Dave Cipriani, John Stephens, and Leonice Shinneman — who played music from northern India during two morning concerts in the Greenberg Activities Center. The trio played a series of morning Ragas and explained the rich history of the music and its complex and unusual instruments. They also played a third concert, free and open to the public, later in the afternoon. The Imagine Concerts are made possible by the Ojai Valley School-Barbara Barnard Smith Fund of the Ventura County Community Foundation. We thank Barbara, professor emeritus of ethnomusicology at the University of Hawaii, for supporting the arts and creating an opportunity to educate students and expand their cultural awareness by attending live performances of world music.



Making Valentines for a Veteran

When Alumni Relations Associate Wendy Tremiti saw a plea on the news from 104-year-old Marine Corps veteran Maj. Bill White, she knew exactly what needed to be done. Maj. White, who served in World War II and earned a Purple Heart for surviving the Battle of Iwo Jima, had gone on television in early January with a simple request: he asked people to send him Valentine's Day cards, promising to save each one.

Tremiti, who has been active in supporting military veterans and whose husband served in the U.S. Navy for 13 years, set out to answer the call. She organized teachers at OVS and at two local public schools to craft Valentine's Day cards for Maj. White, and they quickly crafted more than 200 cards to send to the assisted living facility in Stockton where he lives. "Many of our veterans live alone in long-term care facilities," Tremiti said. "When somebody is alone in an institution and gets a card from a kid saying, 'thank you,' it puts a smile on their face."

OUTDOOR EDUCATION

Remember our lives before social distancing? Not that long ago we splashed, hiked, camped, climbed, kayaked, and explored the outdoors. Together.

Outdoor Education is a beloved tradition at Ojai Valley School, and a core part of our philosophy of educating the whole child through hands-on experiences that challenge, enrich, and inform students about the natural world around them. We can't wait to be outdoors again. For now, here's a look at some of the places and experiences our students shared this year.



Leo the Legend Returns

By Aaron Wolf (L16, U20)

After years of helping build the robotics program, Leo Liang (L15, U19) returned to OVS last fall. But this time he wasn't building the robots, he was judging them.

Liang, now a computer science major at the University of Michigan, joined a robotics network for alumni of the competitions he did during high school and received his refereeing credentials. He then accepted an invitation from OVS computer science teacher Christopher Westcott to take part in the first robotics meet of the season. But he didn't stop there.

Liang flew in from Michigan and donned the striped referee jersey to judge the January 2020 inter-league robotics tournament in Palmdale, CA, where 25 teams competed for the opportunity to advance to the state regional meet. "I wanted to give back to OVS as well as the FIRST robotics program, which has shaped me so much," Liang said.

Five years ago, when Liang matriculated to the high school, his genius was already the subject of

much excitement among the Upper Campus faculty. His mastery of multiple programming languages, an undying respect for the jetliner, and the artful aeronautical engineering that allowed him to spend countless hours simulating and piloting numerous flight plans on his beloved flight simulator gave Liang the basic skills he needed to thrive in the robotics lab. What few people knew about Liang, however, was his lack of experience in robotics going into his freshman year, where he immediately took on an important role as programmer and robot builder.

The robotics program at Upper Campus follows the guidelines of the First Tech Challenge, which is the third of four First robotics levels of competition. First Tech Challenge, or FTC, oversaw 6,509 official teams in the 2019-2020 season. It was the first year OVS teams were working without their founding members, who include Liang and fellow alum Ivy Sun (U19), now a student at UCLA.

"When I first joined robotics, I knew nothing about it, except some

"I wanted to give back to OVS as well as the FIRST robotics program, which has shaped me so much."

- Leo Liang

programming skills," Liang said. "I could understand the software aspect of robotics, but I knew nothing about the hardware and the electrical aspect. I gradually learned from Westcott, who has mentored FTC teams before."

Liang's interest now spans far beyond being a referee for robotics competitions. He now wants to expand further into the area of STEM, which is one of the reasons he received his training certificate and is now a registered referee. As a leader within the robotics program, he made incredible contributions to the robotics team and Westcott was excited to see those contributions continue.

"It just warms my heart to see him come back and volunteer to be a part of the [inter-league tournament]," Westcott said. "He's been a great part of our program."



Left: OVS robotics coaches Chris Westcott and Micah Sittig visit with Leo and Ivy Sun (U19) at 2019's meet zero, held at OVS. Right: Leo works on a robot during his last year as a member of the OVS team.

Paloma Sandoval Fields

New Role as Coach, Mentor

By Mulan Ma

It's Friday afternoon on Dok Smith Field, and there is a light rain with a chill in the air. Soccer coach Paloma Sandoval (L02, U06) and a group of energetic girls are practicing ball control over and over again.

As a player-turned-coach, Sandoval knows what it takes to be successful. She brings an intensity to the field each day and expects hard work from her players.

"I just ask them to do lots of things they haven't done before, they haven't pushed their limits," she said. "I am impressed by their willingness to be put in an uncomfortable position, and I haven't had any girl quit, or any girl not be able to finish the drill."

Sandoval, who works as a nursing assistant in the OVS Health Center, spent three years helping coach women's soccer at Oxnard College, where she played. She also coached the boys soccer team at Nordhoff High School. She came into the coaching ranks at OVS when former coach Kris Watanabe, who was deeply liked and respected by the players, wasn't able to return after taking a new full-time job.

Megan Manion (U20) said before the season started, none of the girls wanted to play because they never thought they could have a coach as good as Coach Kris. That was before they learned Sandoval was coaching. "Many people rejoined soccer," Manion said. "For me, I wasn't going to play soccer unless we had a good coach."

Spanish teacher and former soccer coach Gretchen Wachter was delighted to see her former player take on the role. "I think it is awesome, she was a super good player who gave a hundred and ten percent all the time," Wachter said. "So I am glad she came back and is giving the same passion to the girls team."

When Sandoval was a student, she played soccer and rode horses competitively. But despite her athletic accolades, she struggled with confidence throughout her younger years. So when she is coaching now, she is determined to make sure her players won't go through the same struggles she did.

"For the girls on the field, I see how amazing they can be," she said, "and I can see their potential. But I feel like they don't see that, so my main goal is to instill confidence in them, let them believe in themselves."

Hope Henderson (L19) said she feels like she has already seen improvements in herself.

"I love Paloma," she said. "I feel like I can actually play soccer now. She does a lot [of] endurance training, so I got a lot of benefits out of practice with her as my coach."

For Sandoval, coaching the girls extended well beyond soccer season. When the school suspended in-person classes during the pandemic, she offered



Above: Coach Paloma playing for Oxnard College. Below: Paloma filming one of her workout videos.



hour-long workouts over Google Meet to encourage fitness and to help feel some sort of normality.

She was thrilled that students liked the workout videos, and she hopes she can provide the same positive mentoring that she benefited from as a student.

"I'm an alumni and I still remember the staff, dorm parents, and teachers that really reached out and showed that they cared and wanted me to succeed," she said. "They put an imprint in my life and I'm so thankful for my experience at OVS. I want the girls to have the same thing and know that even though we're not connecting face to face that I'm always here for them."

Junior Bella Slosberg (L17) contributed to this story.



Mari Holden

The Ride of Her Life

By Bella Slosberg (L17)

Women's Road Coach for USA Cycling, alumna Mari Holden (L84, U88) wants everyone to know that it all started on The Hill.

"I would have never gotten on a bike had I not gone to OVS," explained the cycling phenom. "And that I know 100%."

Holden's love for cycling started when she joined the high school cycling club, where she saw other kids riding and thought it looked like fun.

"When I went for my first ride, I fell in love with riding my bike," Holden explained. "It was just pure love, I found something I loved to do. I loved the feeling of freedom that it gave me, I loved the sense of speed and the people I got to ride with." Her devotion to cycling was evident to everyone around her, especially those in the OVS community.

"When she discovered cycling her life changed," said Upper Campus Assistant Head of School Crystal Davis. "Cycling became her focus, her passion, and you could almost see the life that it brought to her face. When she spoke about it her eyes sparkled and she was driven to excel."

Holden's love and dedication continued far after her time at OVS. Her passion for cycling and immense hard work led her to fulfill her cycling dreams: competing in the 2000 Sydney Olympics, where she won a silver medal.

"When you're an athlete you recognize how difficult it is to have everything come together at the right time, on the right day," she explained. "So for me to get a medal was huge."

In addition to an Olympic medal, Holden won a World Championship title in 2000 and earned six national championships during her career. She continued cycling professionally until her retirement in 2006. She still cycles regularly and is a coach for aspiring athletes.

"After my retirement I got back involved and was director for a women's team here in the U.S. that led me down the path of working with development," Holden said. Currently, she is the coach for the USA Women's National Cycling Team, overseeing USA Cycling's women's road cycling programs from the development athletes through the USA Cycling National Team.

"I work for U.S. cycling which is one of the national governing bodies that is under the US Olympic and Paralympic committee. This position came to me and it's mostly focused on development, which is something I'm very interested in," Holden explained. "I work with juniors and collegiate-age kids getting them ready to take the step to the next level."

With her position, Holden provides



athletes with what they need to be successful along with useful resources and advice.

My focus is primarily making sure that the girls have the resources they need to optimize their performances," she said. "I help connect athletes to coaches in their area and I communicate with them in areas where we (USA Cycling) can enhance or help them. I reach out to their personal coaches to find out what they need. If they need help with their nutrition or sports science or counseling, or if there is anything we can do to help them succeed."

Another part of Holden's job as the USA Women's Cycling National Coach is connecting more girls to the sport of cycling and finding dedicated athletes who will hopefully represent team USA in the future.

"I want to collaborate with other junior coaches on how we can get more girls on bikes," she said. "Hopefully we can get them into our program so that more young girls can learn about racing and the opportunities that USA cycling has to offer."

It takes a certain type of person to be an extraordinary athlete and Holden knows exactly what to look for.

"There are people out there who have a lot of talent or things come easily to them but if you don't have that kind of drive and perseverance, it's hard to achieve big goals," she said. "Then there are people out there who may not have the same amount of talent but they have that work ethic where they are determined to do it, and that is something that I as a national team coach am looking for, and of course, a love for cycling."

Senior to Alumni Dinner

The Senior-to-Alumni Dinner tradition continued in May with a GoogleMeet with alum Ousmane Fofana (U09), who joined the Class of 2020 remotely from his home in Washington D.C. Ousmane recently completed his master's degree at Georgetown University and shared remembrances from his four years at Ojai Valley School. He also reassured the seniors that they are well prepared for the next step to college.

"It's going to be fun. You are absolutely more ready than you realize," he said.

The Senior-to-Alumni Dinner started several years ago to gather the graduating class during final exams for a casual dinner, often pizza at Boccali's restaurant just down the hill from Upper Campus. Traditionally, a young alum serves as the guest speaker to share insights and advice about the transition from high school to college.

This year, there may not have been pizza but the get-together included an inspiring message from Ousmane to the graduates.

"You are ready for this next chapter," he said. "You are the future leaders of this world. Your voices matter. Your opinions matter. And it's important to truly never settle for being comfortable. Always push the envelope, and always seek out different opinions. Never stop being curious."

Ousmane came to Upper Campus a decade ago from Mali in West Africa. English was his third language. His parents worked for the World Health Organization and



Ousmane Fofana (U09) memories and inspiration at this year's very untraditional Senior to Alumni Dinner.

his life experiences, then and now, were shaped by a commitment to service and reaching across borders. After graduating from OVS, Ousmane attended Redlands University for two years and transferred to Howard University, where he majored in political science and economics. His Master's in Foreign Service at Georgetown included a concentration in global business and finance. He currently works in D.C. and said the experiences he had in high school, and the friends he made from around the world, taught him valuable lessons that are relevant today.

"In every workplace one of the compliments I always get is how easily I relate to people. It is imperative and necessary to relate to people," he said.

Like many alumni guest speakers, Ousmane also stressed the importance of staying connected to OVS teachers and classmates. "Don't ever let those relationships go to the wayside," he said. "It is a family."

Alumni Games

It was a gorgeous day for soccer at the Upper Campus in February as the alumni took on the CIF-qualifying student team. With many alumni coming out for this game, it was a tight match. But the alumni won 4-2. Later the same day, we had a packed house for the alumni basketball game. The OVS students played hard, but the fast and fierce alumni squad took the win, 63-35.

Thanks everyone for coming out for both the soccer and basketball games. We look forward to meeting in the coming year for alumni baseball, soccer and basketball games. Stay connected with Wendy Tremitti in the Alumni Office for updates.



Alumni Weekend Memories



Richard LaGraff (U81) and Jody (Berger) Cooper (L71, U74)



Tex Colborn (L76), Doug Henshel (L77, U81), Chris Elberfeld (L76, U80), Lorena (Coward) Korbel (L78), Julie Coit (L76) and Joe Culp (L76, U80)



Kenan Block (U72) and Andrea Hennessy (U72)



Chris Watson (L79, U83), Mike Adamoli (U83), Scott Lake (U83), Craig Floyd (U83), and Chris Fitz (U83)



Opening the time capsule with Headmaster Mike Hall-Mounsey, Melanie Hall-Mounsey (L94, U98), and Assistant Headmaster Gary Gartrell



Seung Ki Sul (U97) and Shintaro Mori (U96) with math teacher Doug Colborn



Jana Broecking (U91), Megan Cooper (L92, U96), just kids at heart!



Weber Wang (L83, U87), and Tony Trutanich (L83, U87)



Will Geyer (L84, U88), Bill Doyle (U68), and OVS President Mike Hermes (L53)



Toward the end of the evening, Ed Littlefield (U67), decked out in kilt, treated everyone to his accomplished bag-pipe playing.

2000-2019



Back row: Ted Kunewa (U90), Todd Gold (L86, U90), Zachary Smith (L86, U90), and Loc Briggs (L86, U90); Front row: Nicole (Vaupen) Sheard (U90), Alison Tannen (U90), Deva (Tamburri) D'UI (U90)



Pat Dyer (U91), Sally (McClenahan) Dyer (L87, U91), Nick Koskoff (U90), Jess Brolin (L87, U91), Emma (Tillinger) Koskoff (U90), Jana Broecking (U91), Roger Wang (L87, U91), Todd Gold (L86, U90), Peter Orgolini (L87, U91), Loc Briggs (L86, U90), Matt Weiss (U89)



Back row: Carl Cooper (L64, U68), Spencer Garrett (L62, U65), Roxie Brophy (L64, U67), Bob Ferguson (L64, U67), Craig Christensen (L64, U67); Front row: Chuck Whipple (L64, U67) and Rene Pon Tell Briggs (U68)



Alaedin Tabatabai (U80), Karen (Rascoe) Farmer (L77, U81), Tara Salton (U82), Richard LaGraff (U81)



Jason Goldman (L01, U05), Liz (White) Goldman (U05), Lauren Touchner (U05), guest, Andrew Menz (L01, U05), Kevin Hartman (L01, U05) and Ben Davis (U05)



Kelly Brown (U93), Marina Black (U93), Carl Cooper (L64, U68), and Tracy Fryer (U93)



Scarlett and Cooper Hefner (U09), John Boyd, Jody Cooper (L71, U74), Jeremy Crisafulli (L05, U09), and Lisa Boyd



John Wickenhaeuser, Rob Davis (L84, U88), Jess Brolin (L87, U91) and Ben Cassidy (L11, U15)



Bernadette DiPietro, Lisa Boyd, Natalie Mckerjee (U07), Marin McCarthy (U06), John Boyd and Judy Oberlander



Breaking ground at Upper Campus: David Trudeau, Spencer Garrett (L62, U65), Mike Hall-Mounsey, Jack DeNault, Gigi Ordway (U78), Andy Helman and Patricia Farber



Barbara B. Smith



Marina Mahler



Ian McDougall



Emily Ayala

Lower 1935

Barbara B. Smith (L35)

celebrated her 100th birthday in June! The University of Hawaii Mānoa ethnomusicologist and professor emerita has earned numerous awards for her work and contributions to her field. Prior to COVID-19, her colleagues and mentees planned a series of events to celebrate her milestone birthday. As part of this celebration, a conference with papers by those she has taught or mentored was to be held in June, but has now moved to a series of webinars via Zoom. Titled "The 2020 Barbara B. Smith Webinar Series: A Legacy for Ethnomusicology," the webinars will be scheduled on the 10th of every month from June through December. Interested alumni, colleagues, and friends can attend. The webinars will be recorded and shared as well. Contact the OVS Alumni Office for details.

Lower 1956

Shelley Scott (L56) makes her home in Ojai, where she enjoys long, invigorating solo walks and ponders when she will again be able to enjoy a margarita at her favorite restaurant because that will be a sign that we are recovering from the present COVID-19 crisis! (We will eagerly

join her in a toast when it is over.)

Lower 1958

Marina Mahler (L58) reached out from her French home after making the difficult decision to cancel the centennial Mahler Festival. She writes: "Thank you for thinking of me and the Concertgebouw Mahler Festival 2020 in Amsterdam which would have been wonderful! So many events planned and now cancelled – festivals and concerts and plays and exhibitions. Much of life put on hold...We pray it is only a few months more that this will last! Here at the Mahler Foundation, we are thinking of which way to 'go virtual' and how to plan for the future. We have commissioned ten short films on ten Mahler Symphonies from a brilliant young Dutch film company. We are still searching for the remaining funding of 55,000 euros! If you know any persons wanting their names to go down in history and into the future with our films on Mahler let me know. I will send a copy once I have finished the narration. They are nearly finished and will be beautiful! ... Remote learning is going on here at my home in France as at Ojai Valley School. My 8-year old grandson is learning by way of his iPad linked to his school in London. We are all here together with my

daughter and son-in-law working from home. All peaceful loving times together! Sending warmest wishes. Do keep in touch! Do keep well!!"

Lower 1959

John L. Warren III (L59) reached out after the passing of classmate **Mark Stuart (Terry) Collins (L59)** (*See In Memoriam article*). John had this to say about Terry, whom he regarded as a true friend: "According to Terry, it was important to do what you say you're going to do. And he practiced what he preached. He was someone you could always count on. It was just one of his many excellent qualities; a quality I have tried to emulate over the years. I will miss him!"

Lower 1961

Liza (Cass) White (L61) sends warm greetings to her "many OVS COVID-19-generation buddies" and offers this perspective: "Just to say, we worried about Sputnik; we came thru polio; we ducked and covered; we almost went to war with Russia over Cuban missiles; we've seen American leadership assassinated; we've lived through too many wars; we've been alerted to climate change; and now we are the target of a pandemic. This is what I am grateful for: the values and



Hailey Bailey



Madeleine Wisner



Chelsea Brockhoff



Annie and Amy Ahn

teachers of OVS. They taught me early to discern the truth from fiction; to care for each other; to know what is right and do it; and...to wish this were just a Boney Bean story. I am grateful for a life that got to be well-lived because of how it was begun: 'in a valley surrounded by mountains.' So hey, my '59, '60, '61, & '62 peeps: Hope we can still dig it!"

Lower 1964

Craig Christensen See Upper 1969

Lower 1966

Claudia (Christensen) Wunderlich See Upper 1969

Lower 1969

Ian McDougall (L69) is living near Whitehorse in the Yukon Territory in Canada. He writes: "I have a business running dog sleds and travelling with horses. I don't have to do so much anymore as employees and partners can do everything, which is good because I have some health issues. But I feel OK. My business is called Sky High Wilderness Ranch."

Lower 1977

Nina Sugamori (L77) is keeping busy! She is knitting, preparing dinners using Every Plate meal kits, and has "rescued" about

10,000 photos. She explains: "I convert paper photos to digital. Then I generate a photo book. I can get 200-900 photos in a thin book, like our yearbooks. People my age have their parents' photos. I did 1860-1950s era pics. Great treasures. My family and four other families."

Lower 1986

Emily (Thacher) Ayala (L86) and the Friends Ranches crew have been helping to keep our community healthy during the COVID-19 crisis! Immunity-boosting Ojai-grown oranges and tangerines have been hot sellers at farmers' markets and by mail order. When not working in the packinghouse or in the orchards, Emily can be spotted at the Lower Campus, where her children Oliver and Celeste are now enrolled. This spring they were busy schooling from computers and taking time to do ranch tasks, such as trapping gophers, pruning trees, and making forts under the avocado trees and ramps for mountain biking fun.

Lower 1987

Lucy Fleetwood (L87) was in London when the pandemic hit but was able to fly back home to Malibu the day before the airlines closed their flights. Says she, "I am well, staying fit and healthy,

and trying to find things that inspire me to feel fulfilled."

Lower 1991

Nate Cooper See Upper 1995

Lower 1997

Caitlin (Black) Cooper See Upper 1995

Lower 2001

Hailey Bailey (L01) lives in Colorado and is working as a real estate agent with Homesmart Realty Group. She is also Vice President of Lakewood Riding Club and a board member for Hard Knocks Equine Rescue Coalition. Hailey was proposed to by fiancé Nikita Kraemer last October. She has two children who both do tumbling and riding. Abby is age 6 and Charlie is age 4. Hailey and Nikita attended our OVS Alumni Reception in Boulder last fall.

Lower 2003

Tessa Ente See Upper 2007

Madeleine "Maddy" (Shernock)

Wisner (L03) is working as a licensed midwife on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic in Sacramento, where women have rushed to out-of-hospital births. Maddy writes: "I run a thriving nonprofit attending births for



Claudia Wunderlich



Nate and Caitlin Cooper



Tessa Ente



Parker Colborn

low-income families as a primary care provider. I married in December."

Lower 2005

Chelsea Brockhoff (L05) is working in Dallas as a registered nurse on a cardiovascular ICU step-down unit. She writes: "I have a very energetic and handsome son, Charles, who started kindergarten this year. My boyfriend and I have two dogs, Knox and Franklin, as well as our cat, Nola. We love to travel. Recently we went to Puerto Rico for his kickball tournament. I'm currently working on my bachelors in nursing with the goal of continuing my education and becoming a nurse practitioner with a focus in acute care."

Parker Colborn See Upper 2009

Lower 2007

Amy Ahn (L07) graduated from Cornell University and is now completing her master's in psychology at the University of Miami. She has been involved with autism research as an Autism Science Foundation fellow and was recently pictured in the university magazine. She intends to pursue her doctorate.

Lower 2010

Emily Addison See Upper 2014

Lower 2011

Annie Ahn (L11) graduated last spring from Columbia University and plans to attend law school. She is living in New York City. Annie is engaged and her wedding, which was planned for April 4 in Santa Barbara, has been postponed due to the coronavirus outbreak.

Connor Floyd See Upper 15

Matthew Gustafson See Upper 2015

Kiyomi (Jennifer) Ran (L11) graduated from Cate School in 2015 and moved "across the pond" to earn her BA in International Relations from King's College London in 2018. She recently earned her master's degree in Comparative Social Policy from the University of Oxford. Jenny writes: "I've been living in London and working at a company specializing in Corporate Sustainability! Currently we are in the middle of two huge storms, as with classic UK weather, and I definitely miss the California weather at times!"

Claire Wickenhaeuser See Upper 2015

Lower 2012

Qizhou (Victor) Gong See

Upper 2016

Lower 2014

Joy Campbell and Emma Gustafson See Upper 2018

Lower 2016

Mateo Thacher (L16) graced the cover of the fall magazine at Thacher School, where he just graduated following weeks of distance learning at home alongside his siblings **Andrew (L17)** and **Mariana (L20)**. Mateo served as school chair and co-head of Latinos Unidos, striving to make Thacher a more inclusive community. Mateo, the great-great-grandson of school founder Sherman Day Thacher, plans to attend Claremont McKenna College in the fall.

Upper 1969

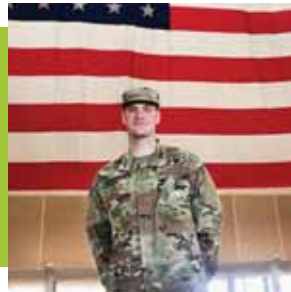
Claudia (Christensen) Wunderlich (L66, U69) hosted a party, with her brother **Craig Christensen (L64, U67)** included, in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. She had planned to travel to Switzerland to help celebrate her granddaughter's first birthday, but will have to put that trip off until it's safe again to travel. Claudia shared a picture of her with her granddaughter, Liv, who visited last fall.

Upper 1988

Sarah Scott (U88) has been



Various alumni (see Parker Colborn)



Cooper Hefner



James Wickenhaeuser and Cameron Davis



Emily Addison

taking intensive courses in jewelry-making, most recently in London, UK. She is preparing to design her own line. Sarah's son, Alessandro, is graduating from Otis School of Design in May. Her daughter, Ava, is pursuing a singing and acting career in Los Angeles.

Upper 1994

Tomoko (Seino) Hotema (U94) has a new job with the Department of Psychiatry at the John A. Burns School of Medicine in Hawaii, and she is also a full-time student at Chaminade University, pursuing her Master's Degree in Psychology. "Life is full, but I am loving and embracing everything," she writes. "My boys are growing up fast and I really hope to bring them back to Ojai soon. With school, it is a bit tough, but I do have a three-week break between semesters, so I will see if we could plan a visit in the summer, maybe."

Upper 1995

Nate Cooper (L91, U95) and Caitlin (Black) Cooper (L97) are sheltering in place with two little ones, ages 3 and 1 year! Their son, Finley, will start in pre-kindergarten at OVS in the fall. Caitlin sent a picture of Finley wearing his dad's T-shirt with the Upper Campus soccer battle cry. It was Nate's shirt when he was

Finley's age. Legacy runs deep with those Coopers. Finley will be a third-generation Spud in September!

Upper 2007

Tessa Ente (L03, U07) got married on September 7, 2019, in Berkeley Castle, an 11th century castle in the Cotswolds, UK. Her husband, Sam, is from England. Tessa and Sam are living in San Diego, and she is now working in the biopharmaceutical manufacturing industry.

Sarah Jane Mariea (U07)

is currently training to be a phlebotomist and clinical laboratory assistant in Oregon. She is set to graduate in June! "No family yet," she writes, "career first!"

Upper 2009

Parker Colborn (L05, U09) married his longtime girlfriend, Kayla, on October 12, 2019, in Carpinteria. The ceremony took place outdoors under the beautiful trees of Lions Park, and the reception followed inside the clubhouse with many OVS classmates, faculty and staff in attendance. Pictured left to right are Doug Colborn, **Max Wheeler (L06, U10)**, **Gunnar Helman (L08, U12)**, **Craig Floyd (U83)**, **Parker, Cooper Hefner (U09)**, **Hunter**

Helman (L06, U10), **Nolan Colborn (L15, U19)**, **Arya Torab (L04, U08)**, and **Ousmane Fofana (U09)**.

Cooper Hefner (U09) and his wife, Scarlett, are expecting their first child this summer! Cooper recently returned to California after four months basic training at Lackland Air Force Base in central Texas. Cooper also serves on the Board of Governors at Chapman University.

Upper 2010

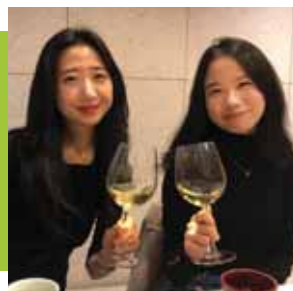
James Wickenhaeuser (U10) married **Cameron Davis (U10)** on June 5. James is a civil engineer and Cameron is the Outreach Manager for the Laguna Canyon Foundation. Amid COVID closures, they were working side-by-side in their tiny Laguna Beach apartment, loving their time together, and decided to forgo a big ceremony for a courthouse wedding. "We cherish this uninterrupted time together, and what we both know is that we are not promised tomorrow. So, we made a choice to celebrate anyway, to say our vows without fear."

Upper 2014

Emily Addison (L10, U14) graduated with honours from King's College London in



Carolita Landers



Eujena Sohn and Gilim Bae



Shelly Xu



Claire Wickenhaeuser

December, earning her Master of Arts in The Classical World and its Reception. Emmy shared her post-graduate accomplishments on social media, thanking “the gods for inspiring the madness that made me choose Classics, my family for thinking it was perfectly sensible, and my professors for intensifying my enduring love for this brilliant, confounding, and truly marvelous subject.” Emmy will begin her PhD at the University of Warwick in Classics and Ancient History in October (pandemic permitting).

Carolita Landers (U14) has been working as a research assistant at Colorado State University, where she graduated with dual science degrees. Then the coronavirus hit. “I was doing lab work for Dr. Steve Fonte’s Agroecosystem lab within the Soil and Crop department. Most of the work I was doing had to do with comparing soil heath between grazed/ungrazed systems and cover crop vs. non cover cropped systems. About two weeks before corona, I had applied to be a full time research associate within the same lab and at another private lab in town ... However, both applications/ hiring processes have been put on hold. So now, I’m technically only part time employed by the soil lab, but not doing any work because all non-essential research

is suspended until further notice.” Carolita is currently quarantined at home with her boyfriend, Luke, and their two dogs, Henry and Frida. They set up a ceramics throwing wheel in the garage, and have been taking lots of dog walks. Carolita says, “I send all my love to OVS.”

Eujena Sohn (U14) and **Gilim Bae (U17)** reconnected with the school last fall during a small get together in Seoul, Korea. Eujena graduated from the University of St. Andrews in Scotland and is tutoring students in English. Gilim is currently taking a break from her studies at NYU.

Shiyu (Shelly) Xu (U14) has been working on the front lines of the coronavirus outbreak as a graduate student at New York University’s Arthur L. Carter Journalism Institute, where she serves as a multimedia reporter for the institute’s award-winning online publication, *Pavement Pieces*. Shelley graduated from Boston University in 2018 with a bachelor’s degree in broadcast journalism. This summer, she will be working as part of The New York Times Student Journalism Institute as a video reporter.

worked last summer as a National Park Service ranger in Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado. At 14,000 feet, Claire worked at the Alpine Visitor Center, and has returned this summer to again work as an EMT. Between seasons she is pursuing a degree in Earth Sciences.

Connor Floyd (L11, U15) asked Caroline Herrig of Bellevue, Iowa to be his bride over Father’s Day weekend and they are looking at a summer/fall 2021 wedding date. The two met while attending Clarke University and have been living in Ojai since graduating in May 2019.

Matthew Gustafson (L11, U15) graduated from the University of Redlands in April 2019. He has spent the time since then preparing to apply for vet school. He recently decided to accept an offer of admission from the University of Glasgow, School of Veterinary Medicine. Scotland provided both a top-ranked vet school and plenty of open country for Matthew to continue spending as much time as possible camping and hiking, passions formed during his time at OVS. Matt was camping in Moab, Utah, when the coronavirus sequestered the Gustafsons in Ojai. He was the only family member to not have cabin fever!

Upper 2015

Claire Wickenhaeuser (L11, U15)



Connor Floyd



Matt Gustafson



Emma Gustafson



Ellen Hou

Upper 2016

Ally Feiss (U16) is trying to focus on the positives during this time of fear and tension. Despite her disappointment about the cancellation of what would have been her college graduation from the University of Massachusetts, Lowell in May, she says being in quarantine has given her a chance to appreciate the smaller things in life. "Being forced to slow down has really given me an appreciation for meaningful relationships with your loved ones." Ally says all her courses have been moved online, giving her a little bit more time to finally get back to some hobbies she had to place on the back burner with the hustle and bustle of work and school. "I've actually been able to do some painting, a hobby I picked up when I took art with Mrs. Beverly at OVS, and I've been able to do some writing too, for fun, not just essays, reminding me of my journalism days with Mr. Alvarez ... Everything is crazy right now, just crazy, but it's the small things, positives, that I'm holding on to."

Qizhou (Victor) Gong (L12, U16) attended Cal State Los Angeles, where he studied animation and has now transferred to Gnomon, a visual effects college, where he plans to study digital production.

Upper 2017

Gilim Bae See Upper 2014

Upper 2018

Joy Campbell (L14, U18) is a sophomore at UCLA, majoring in Asian Linguistics. Like most other college students, she is home now doing online classes amid the COVID pandemic.

Emma Gustafson (L14, U18) is a sophomore in communications at New York University, Emma opted to spend the spring semester at the NYU London campus. She also interned for a non-profit group, Thrive, that helps teenagers transition into college life. She left London amid the coronavirus outbreak and is at home now in Ojai, but is still taking her London classes through Zoom. She is looking forward to returning to city life in the fall.

Ellen Hou (U18) sent us this picture from her last horse show at the Savannah College of Art and Design. It was Valentine's Day. Ellen wrote: "SCAD equestrian set up a photo booth to appreciate all of the amazing ponies we have! This is my care horse of the season, Ducati. He is an intermediate level horse, and he was waiting for a schooling rider at the moment to warm up for the show!" Ellen showed with SCAD

equestrian twice this year, and earned two first places and one second place. Unfortunately the season was canceled, but Ellen is excited for the next season. She is majoring in equestrian studies with a minor in scientific illustration.

Upper 2019

Lilli Trompke (U19) was among the first college students to confront the coronavirus outbreak as a freshman at the University of Washington. On March 6, UW was the first large university in the country to suspend classes due to the virus. "It has been kind of tense," Lilli said. "But people definitely talk about it a lot and people are walking around with masks, to protect themselves or others ... I don't think closing the campus is an overreaction because Seattle is so close."

*Stay connected with
the OVS community!*

*Send photos and
updates to
alumni@ovs.org
to be included in
the next issue of
Family Tree.*



William Hair

William Hair, who served loyally on the Ojai Valley School Board of Trustees for nearly five decades, died on April 17, 2020, after an extended illness. He was 87.

Bill did not attend the Ojai Valley School, nor did he ever serve on the faculty or staff. But his connection to OVS is one of the most profound in the school's entire history. Former OVS president Mike Hermes (L53) called Bill his "personal hero." With good reason.

Time and time again over the long course of his Board service, Bill went courageously to battle for this little school, helping navigate the labyrinth of regulations and obstructions various agencies presented OVS with over the years. Bill was more than generous with his time, with his legal acumen, and, most importantly, with his wisdom. While a steadfast guardian of our traditions, he always advocated that OVS move forward with the times. Mike Hermes left his successor, Michael Hall-Mounsey, a folder entitled, "Manual of Crisis Management." The folder contained a single piece of paper, on which Hermes had written just one invaluable instruction: "In the event of a crisis, call Bill Hair." As the school's president, Hall-Mounsey had numerous occasions to follow that instruction over the last eleven years, and Bill always came through for him with valuable perspective and sage advice.

Bill's connection to the school goes back to the 1970s, when he and his wife, Judy, entrusted their sons' education to OVS. Later, their grandson, Matthew (L08), attended preschool through the eighth grade. Bill agreed to serve on the OVS Board of Trustees starting in 1972 and was elected Board chair in 1989, a position he held for the next twenty years. He remained on the Board until his passing.

In 2006, the newly built lecture hall at the Upper Campus was dedicated in Bill's honor. Fittingly, given Bill's profession, it became the primary classroom for, among other subjects, the Law and Society class. More recently, Bill was honored with the Ojai Valley School's Trustees Award, which recognizes those whose significant accomplishments and exemplary lives have advanced, in a meaningful way, the OVS philosophy of education. Bill's award reads, "...in grateful appreciation for your unflappable leadership and expert guidance as chairman of the Board."

Bill was born and raised in Santa Paula. After graduating from Santa Paula High School, he attended Ventura College before transferring to Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, later finishing his law degree at Hastings College of Law. He also served in the U.S. Navy.

A senior partner at the law firm of Nordman, Cormany, Hair, and Compton, Bill was the city attorney for Port Hueneme. For the last several years, Bill worked with the Musick, Peeler, and Garrett firm in Westlake. He was active with the Association of Water Agencies, the Ventura Yacht Club, and the Channel Islands Maritime Museum.

Bill was also a member of Campo Adolfo and Rancheros Visitadores, that membership a passion he shared with his brother, nephew, and many friends.

Bill was known as a gifted storyteller and devoted friend. He enjoyed many years of sailing at the Ventura Yacht Club, motoring on his boat with his beloved dogs at South Lake Tahoe, skiing with his children and grandchildren, as well as bicycling and traveling the world. He had many wonderful adventures and lived life to the fullest.

Fellow Trustee Robert Cooper Jr. (L61), son of the first director of OVS's Upper Campus and brother of recently retired Upper School Headmaster Carl Cooper (L64, U68), had this to say upon learning of Bill's passing: "Bill Hair exemplified the characteristics we hope to develop in OVS students. He led with integrity, confidence, and flexibility to take on new challenges. He helped bring out the strengths of each Board member. Bill led a well-balanced life that coordinated his OVS involvement with a full set of professional and family responsibilities. However, what impressed me most was Bill's dedication to OVS and his willingness to do the hard work necessary to make OVS a better school year after year. After he stepped down as Board chair, he continued to exhibit this dedication and work ethic, even when health challenges made these efforts more difficult. Bill Hair was one of the cornerstones that makes OVS what it is today, and he will be sorely missed."

Hall-Mounsey has noted the considerable debt of gratitude the school owes Bill and described him as "a towering, awesome gentleman and fearless advocate for OVS."

Bill's legacy looms as tall as the man himself.

He was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Judith; by his brother, Charles; by his brother-in-law, Gregory Reed; and by his sister-in-law, Geraldine. He is survived by his three children: W. Reed Hair of Maine; Joel Hair of Salinas; and Trish Williamson of Ventura; by his grandchildren: Ian Hair, Diane Hair, Matthew Williamson, Dylan McClure, and Madison McClure; by nephews John, Steve, and Patrick; by nieces Suzanne Chandler and Cheryl Cohn; by his sister-in-law, Mary Reed; and by his faithful dog, Jacques.

Bill's family ask that any donations be made in his honor to one of his many favorite charitable organizations:

- Livingston Memorial Visiting Nurse Association and Hospice, 1996 Eastman Ave., Suite 101, Ventura, CA 93003.
- National Disaster Search Dog Foundation, 6800 Wheeler Canyon Rd., Santa Paula, CA 93060
- Doberman Rescue, 2946 Young Rd., Fillmore, CA 93015
- Ojai Valley School, 723 El Paseo Rd., Ojai, CA 93023
- KCLU, 60 Olsen Rd. #4400, Thousand Oaks, CA 91360
- Channel Islands Maritime Museum, 3900 Bluefin Circle, Oxnard, CA 93035



Michael Burdick Burr

Michael Burdick Burr, a member of the Lower School Class of 1946 and son of Dorothy and former OVS Headmaster Wallace Burr, died on September 1, 2019.

Mike was born in Seattle in 1932. His family, which included his older brother, Skip, moved to Southern California two years later when Mr. Burr took a job at California Preparatory School in Covina. In 1943, The Burrs moved to Ojai, where Wallace began his long tenure as headmaster of OVS. Mike attended the Lower School from the seventh through ninth grades. His father's dream was to build an upper campus for OVS students, but that dream would not come to fruition for nearly two more decades. Consequently, Mike attended Thatcher for high school.

He married Lone Archer Smith, who was from Santa Barbara, and they became the first married couple to graduate with honors from UCSB. Initially living in Ojai and then in Santa Barbara, Mike and Lone raised three children and eventually settled down in the backwoods of Cayucos, CA. Mike, having earned his undergraduate degree in education from UCSB and a master's in counseling psychology from UC Berkeley, taught math and algebra, first at Matilija Junior High in Ojai, and later at Morro Bay High School, where he coached tennis and chess, as well. For a brief stint, concurrent with his other duties at MBHS, he also took on the job of vice principal of Morro Bay Junior High.

A creative thinker and educator, Mike taught his children basic construction skills, the fine art of fishing, the gentle approach to horsemanship, and how to "think outside the box." He instructed his children and his students in the value of hard work and perseverance and was guided by a strict moral compass.

lone and Mike built a small family farm, where they raised much of their own food and where they enjoyed the company of fellow teachers and tennis players from the various communities of San Luis Obispo County. To raise money for the American Heart Association, they often sponsored tennis tournaments at the home court they had built. For several years during the 1950s and 1960s they taught summer classes at OVS. They also organized summer horse-pack trips into the Sierra Nevada for OVS students with Mike's dad and other members of the Burr clan. For a time during the 1980s, Mike and lone owned and managed a sandals and footwear store in downtown San Luis Obispo called Foot Loose.

"Mike was an incredibly powerful and important force in my life," says alum and current board member Robert Cooper Jr. (L61). "He was a mentor who wasn't intimidating. Mike helped me grow up in a variety of ways that I will always appreciate."

Mike's wife, lone, was his pride and joy for much of his life. She taught school at Cayucos Elementary, and at other schools. When she passed away, Mike moved to Walnut Creek, CA, to care for his ailing father. There, he was fortunate to meet and fall in love with another sweet and compassionate woman, Holly Markel, with whom he would spend the remainder of his life, occasionally traveling and playing golf and tennis.

Mike is survived by his partner, Holly Markel; by his three children, Patrick Burr, Alan Burr, and Erica Huntzinger; and by his grandchildren, Christopher Burr, Ryan Burr, Cody Burr, Fiona Burr, and Lauren Whitten. His survivors also include five great-grandchildren: Ava, Nolan, Lynnlee, and Cecilia Burr, and Mia Dunbar.



John McCutcheon

John McCutcheon, a member of the Lower School Class of 1965 and the Upper School Class of 1968, died on October 10, 2019.

Classmate Scott Eicher (L65, U68) fondly remembered how John appeared on the first day back from summer vacations at the Lower Campus: "John always came back with the darkest tan, most sun-bleached hair, huge surf knots on his feet and knees and a nose that had likely been peeling all summer. We spent many summers together surfing the Riviera in San Clemente, and later surfing Faria Point, Rincon and Mussel Shoals."

John was the drummer for The Fyve of a Kind, a band composed of classmates Conrad von Dehn (L65, U68), Jeff Hanselman (L65, U68) and David Sessions (L65, U68) while they were attending the Upper Campus. After graduation, Scott recalls, he and John didn't see each other more than once or twice a year, but when they did it was generally for a surf trip to the Hollister Ranch.

John was living in Santa Barbara with his mother in the late 1990s when he met Barbara King. "He told me she was different from any other woman he had ever met, and soon they were all but inseparable" Scott recalls. "He would learn later that Barbara was his devoted soul mate. At the same time, he began a

small business making chutney. He worked at this for two or three years until the change came."

At 51, John had a massive stroke. From that day forward he was not able to surf, play his beloved Ludwig drum set, drive a car or speak normally. "While I had a very difficult time understanding John's conversations, Barbara was there to translate," Scott said. "Sometimes John would answer a simple question with a totally unrelated comment, pause and laugh because he knew it was off the wall. He never lost his sense of humor. John lost the use of his right arm and leg from the stroke, but he taught himself to paint and draw left handed using felt pens. At one point he had a one-man show at a gallery on the Central Coast."

After John passed, Barbara called Scott to tell him. "I was reading the Fall 2019 Family Tree and started thinking of John and all the times we met at Faria Point for dawn patrol surf sessions. We would stand by our cars waiting to warm up in the sunlight, and the Southern Pacific Surfliner train would rumble by. We'd turn and strike muscle-man poses for the passengers and then laugh at ourselves. That's the memory I'll hold of him," Scott said. "Okay, John, time to paddle toward the peak and turn hard off the bottom."



Mark Stuart
(Terry) Collins III

Mark Stuart (Terry) Collins III, a member of the Lower School Class of 1959, died on February 19, 2020, his beloved family by his side. He was 77.

Early on, Terry showed promise as an outdoorsman, sportsman, and entrepreneur. His first successful business involved collecting a bounty from his clients in his La Crescenta neighborhood for trapping and exterminating their gophers. With the money he earned, he bought three-story comic books for ten cents; then, after reading them, broke them apart and resold the stories singly to his classmates for five cents each. A five-cent profit was worth the effort in those days: candy bars sold for a nickel each.

Terry came to OVS as a boarding student from seventh through ninth grade. English teacher J.B. Close instilled in him a passion for reading and, in exchange, he taught J.B. backpacking and mountaineering skills. J.B. became Terry's greatest mentor and remained a lifelong friend. It was Terry's father who arranged to record J.B. reading some of the stories his students most loved hearing. OVS is grateful to Terry for having passed along those recordings to the Alumni Office.

The picture that emerges of Terry is one of a leader. Or maybe more of a Pied Piper. Terry and his OVS classmate John Warren decided that if the ninth-graders were enjoying a "ditch day," it was only fair that eighth-graders should as well. Their plan was to hightail it to the foothills for the day. Recalls John, "As I started to run across the street, I looked back and there was Terry, followed by four other eighth-graders. At the end of the day, Mike Hermes spotted us off campus, piled us into his old car, and hauled us back to Mr. Burr's office. Mr. Burr said, 'So you and Terry ran first? I was thinking of casting you two forth into outer darkness, but instead I think I'll give you a prized spot on Mr. Wolcott's Saturday labor crew. You two will be hoeing weeds all day in 95-degree heat at the PB cabin up in the Sespe.'"

Terry's antics were tolerated by the bemused staff at OVS probably because he was so well-liked by students and teachers alike. He charmed those at his next school, as well. Because there was not an OVS high school program at the time, Terry continued his education at Fountain Valley Preparatory School in Colorado Springs, Colorado. His former roommate tells of ingenious ways Terry foiled the proctors who were trying to enforce "lights out" in the dorm. One such prank involved tape recording a card-playing session between the boys and later playing the tape so that the proctor, just outside their door, would think Terry and his roommate were up past "lights out" playing poker. Just as the proctor burst through the door to bust them, Terry flipped a switch, stopping the tape. The boys feigned great confusion, as though they had been awakened from deep sleep. The proctor must have been utterly mystified.

Another prank involved a homemade explosive device, one that made a satisfyingly enormous

"Boom!" the whole school heard because Terry had placed it where the sound would be maximized. He got away with that one, too.

Regarded by his schoolmates at Fountain Valley as the best athlete there, and very possibly in the whole state at the time, Terry played soccer and baseball, and he was a top wrestler. Recipient of the award for most outstanding athlete the year he graduated, he was also given the coach's award for sportsmanship. Terry was liked and admired by his teammates and was noted for his iron strength, stoicism, outstanding agility, and a focused mastery of what he aimed to accomplish.

Katherine Cowell was the lifeguard at the Montecito Country Club's pool one day in late 1963 when she got her first glimpse of the man she would ultimately marry. Terry stepped out onto the diving board and completed a flawless one-and-a-half gainer with a half twist. It made quite an impression on Katherine. The two soon fell in love and went off to college together in Flagstaff, Arizona.

After graduating from Northern Arizona University with degrees in geology and business management, Terry formed the Collins Communication Corporation, which provided relay communication services for the Los Angeles basin. He and Katherine married in 1968. They had two sons, Mark and Whitney. Over the next 40 years, Terry and Katherine built, owned, and operated four mountain-top sites in Southern California. Their various business enterprises proved to be quite successful and so allowed Terry both the leisure and financial means to, as he put it, "pursue one of the truly great loves of my life: photography."

Over the decades, Terry traveled extensively, photographing gorgeous and diverse terrain. Of the many spectacular shots he captured were three of the four biggest waterfalls in the world: Niagara Falls, Iguaza Falls in Argentina, and Victoria Falls in Zambia. There were exhibitions of Terry's work in Carmel, Santa Barbara, and Santa Paula, and he received numerous awards for his photos. Terry was generous about sharing his gift and teaching budding landscape photographers.

Remembered by his loved ones as a loving son, husband, father and grandfather, Terry is survived by his wife, Katherine Cowell Collins; by their eldest son, Mark Stuart Collins IV, his wife, Maile Orian Collins, and their son, Lokahi Ka Nalu Mark James Orian Collins; by his younger son, Whitney James Collins, his wife, Brooke Marshall Collins, and their daughters, Ava Adeline Collins, Elsie Elizabeth Collins, Vianne Valentine Collins, and their son, Shepherd Thomas Collins; by his brother-in-law, Thomas Putnam Cowell and his wife Achara Cowell; by brother-in-law James William Cowell; by his sister, Susan Collins Dougherty, and by his sister-in-law Elaine Gale Collins. He was preceded in death by his father, Mark Stuart Collins II; by his mother, Emily Gillan Collins; and by his brother, John Lee Collins.



Michael Taggart, Sr.

Michael Taggart Sr., who taught at the Lower School from 1959 to 1964, died on July 27, 2019, at his summer home in Michigan. He was 88.

Mike's family reports that he was an amateur archeologist as a child; that he developed a life-long love for the American Southwest after attending a summer camp digging up pottery shards and dinosaur bones. Born and raised in Indianapolis, he attended the local Park School for Boys and the Belmont Hill School in Boston before enrolling at Princeton University. After serving in the Army, Mike finished his undergraduate degree in English literature at Colorado College. He then attended the University of Arizona and Colorado College during summer sessions to work on his master's degree, which he completed in 1962. His thesis was on William Butler Yeats.

Teaching briefly at his alma mater, the Park School, in Indianapolis and at Edison High School in Colorado, Mike eventually headed farther west and discovered Ojai. Lore has it he met Mr. and Mrs. Burr when he got to town, had a beer with them, and was offered a job at OVS on the spot. (However, his faculty file indicates a slower, more conventional process was followed, involving the appropriate paperwork.)

In addition to teaching English and history to seventh, eighth, and ninth-graders, Mike also coached soccer, baseball, and basketball. He and his wife, Francisca, were hired to be the first dorm parents at the newly built Upper School, but ultimately decided the campus was too isolated. Mike and Sunny Hermes replaced them.

Spencer Garrett (L62, U65), who, as an eighth-grader, was in Taggart's English class, remembers being entertained by some of the more unconventional practices Taggart employed in the classroom: "He demonstrated uncanny aim when he suddenly hurled an eraser at a student who wasn't paying attention," said Spencer, chuckling. "And we got to listen in class to the Indianapolis 500 on the radio. That was great!" Mike was sharing one of his early joys: he'd seen his first Indy 500 as a boy when the family bakery business sponsored several drivers. (His grandfather's choice to put colorful balloons on the packaging of Wonder Bread was inspired by the sight of thousands of balloons rising into the air as the race began, an image that caused him to

remark, "What a wonder!")

After leaving OVS in the mid-sixties, Mike taught at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana. He subsequently taught both English and ESL at Ventura College, where he remained for decades; he also briefly joined the faculty at Cal Lutheran College, where he coached tennis as well.

Mike dearly loved tennis and won his first tournament in 1953. When he was in his 60s, Mike and his partner won every match they played in the over-50s category at the Phoenix Challenge, helping the Ojai team win the national title. Mike was a regular player at Libbey Park and later at the Ojai Racquet Club. For many years, he generously sponsored the open division of the Ojai Valley Tennis Tournament. He was known as an able but irreverent tennis player, sometimes smashing his racket or throwing it and various articles of his clothing up into the oak trees that surround the courts, to the amusement of onlookers.

He also had a deep and abiding passion for everything that moves fast: cars, motorcycles, and hydroplanes. At one time, his extensive collection was housed in ten garages located in two states. His Ojai garage was a popular destination over decades for vintage car and motorcycle enthusiasts.

Liza Cass White (L61) sent in this reflection about her former teacher: "Mike Taggart took seriously what he loved, and, as his English students, we benefited from that. He loved words. Joseph Conrad's *Victory* was the summer reading book assignment along with Mr. Taggart's requirement that we look up definitions for 200 words. 'Diaphanous' was one; 'prodigal' and 'consummate' were others." Liza last saw Mike at an OVS/Sedona retreat. Her adult assessment of him? "He knew how to encounter, enjoy, and convey the roar and excitement of life."

Mike's family remembers his child-like joy, which was apparent in his myriad enthusiasms. He is survived by his beloved and loving children, Rebecca Taggart and Michael Taggart Jr; by their spouses, Mikkell Aaland and Lori Taggart; by his granddaughters, Miranda and Ana Aaland; and by his long-time partner, Hiroko Yoshimoto.

The family has asked that memorial contributions in his name be sent to the Ojai Valley Tennis Club (OVTC).



Parents of Alumni:

If your son/daughter no longer maintains a permanent address at your home, please notify the Alumni Office (805-640-2578) of his/her new mailing address.

723 El Paseo Road, Ojai, CA 93023 | 805-646-1423 | development@ovs.org | www.ovs.org



Thank you.

Thank you for your support during these challenging times.

It is impossible to predict what the coming months will look like. We are preparing for a number of scenarios, and you can be assured that our focus will always be on providing high-quality education for all students. Thank you to the alumni, current parents and past families who are generously contributing to our OVS Annual Fund/COVID Relief effort.

With your support, we will rise together.