

# To the Point

THE SMALL POINT SUMMER SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2009



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## President's Letter

**H**ELLO SMALL POINTERS, New England has been having one of the most colorful foliage seasons in recent memory. Small Point was ablaze over Columbus Day and several families were spotted enjoying the warm, beautiful weather as they readied their homes for the long, cold winter ahead.

Summer School, as always, enjoyed a season filled with varied activities, happy campers, busy counselors, and a few new twists, such as the hugely successful regatta sailing program. We sadly bade good-bye to Malcolm during a day-long celebration that involved a grueling Small Point Small Marathon (won by Annie Dear), a very successful Yard Sale (Thank you Elena V. for allowing us the use of your barn for drop-offs), a delectable community-wide pot luck dinner with a celebratory toast to Malcolm, and a dance (thank you, once again, to Leo and friends for their musical talents). The events were well attended and numerous helpers of all ages and sizes contributed to making the day a huge success. It is truly inspiring to be part of an organization that benefits from such a cooperative community spirit. We thank you, one and all!

Each year the SPSS Board sadly bids goodbye to members whose terms have expired while welcoming new representatives of the community. This year we extend our heartfelt thanks to Peg Daly for her thorough attention to buildings and grounds, Leslie Owen (and Annie Dear!) for production of the newsletter, and Kip Weese, who kept our books balanced and our bills paid. SPSS is healthier because of your service. Thank you.

## NEWSLETTER NOTES

This issue of *To the Point* is being distributed exclusively in digital form. This is more efficient, less expensive, and far more environmentally friendly than printing and mailing. However, we realize that some people will not be able to receive the newsletter digitally. If you or someone you know would like a printed version, please let us know. Just send us an email (<tevere@mainstreetdesign.com>) with the recipient's name and address and we'll gladly pop a copy in the mail.

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# 2009 Season Review

## Drama

Well, summer has passed and the leaves are piling up around Brad's Barn. When the wind blows just right you can still hear the sounds of joy wafting out into the crisp fall air. 2009 was another great year for our drama program. Brady and Sydney each did a splendid job with the kids, once again pulling off the annual miracle of the July and August play. As usual, we couldn't possibly have gotten it all done without the help of the Small Point community. Thanks to all who contributed along the way. We're already planning for the next summer of acting and fun.

—Grey Terry

### July Play

Thanks for everyone's help making *Babar* a great success. What a wonderful show you all put on!

The play I've been thinking about for next July is *Many Moons* by James Thurber. There is a mystery to be solved, and as with all good fairy tales, it gets solved by the end of the play. It has a princess, a lot of little princesses who dance in white nightgowns, a King and his courtiers, and a whole slew of different animals — along with a court jester who helps solve the mystery of the moon.

And thanks to whoever dropped off a whole slew of animal costumes in the Green Room. Of course, they'll become part of the play.

—Sydney Harnett

### August Play

As a first-time director of something as special as the Small Point Play, I'll admit I was a little anxious at first. The daunting task of putting up an entertaining and fun show in a condensed timeline loomed large. But this summer proved to be a more wonderful adventure than I ever could have hoped for. In part, I owe a lot to the material. Delia Ephron's *How To Eat Like A Child* was a great choice, perfect for the kids to adopt as their own and find their own voices... which they certainly did! Working with them was a constant reminder of what really matters: I knew if I didn't keep things light and fun, I'd lose their attention and interest.

With that in mind, we created an atmosphere where inspiration of all sorts could flourish and fun lay at the core. And that 'we' was a crucial aspect of this summer's success: I was very fortunate to have Elizabeth Vaughan and Jessalyn Christen behind me, an amazingly creative and capable team. Not to

mention the countless parents and friends who pitched in along the way. At the show's close, I was struck by how quickly it all goes by: the rehearsals, the play, the summer.

But instead of letting it all escape, even as we return to our non-Small Point lives, I think it's worth basking once more in the greatness of what everyone did this summer. Bravo to all the players!

—Brady Kirchberg



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We're also pleased to welcome the following new board members who have agreed to share their time and talents: Leslie Belz will assume responsibility for the Winter Address book; Malcolm Coates will extend his wisdom and experience as the incoming SPSS directors assume their new responsibilities; Tevere McFadyen will

produce the newsletter; and Sarah Sewall will coordinate the drama program. We're delighted to have them aboard.

This year also we'll be making the transition from the "Malcolm era" to the new administration of co-directors Ben Lewis and John Herrigel. For all you campers (and parents) out there, Ben and John are hard at work planning a fun-

filled 2010 summer season. We like their energy and ideas and we think you will too, so stay tuned!

If you have questions, suggestions, or concerns please feel free to contact us. Best wishes, and we look forward to seeing lots of familiar and new faces on the porch at Brad's Barn next summer.

—Lynne Mitchell

## Sailing

SPSS experienced another well-attended sailing season in 2009. Though dogged by nasty weather in July, attendance spiked in August. Most days saw Blue Jay, Opti', Laser and Tadpole out on the water, sails filled with wind and hulls brimming with kids. Sailing Head Byron Malcolm did a fantastic job leading our program! Many thanks to Byron and all the staff.

SPSS sailing turned an important corner this summer in offering a concentrated racing program. Attended by four kids over a two week period, the program culminated in a regatta at which our kids acquitted themselves most respectably. We plan to continue and perhaps expand the advanced sailing program again next season. As always, we will continue to refine and improve our offerings so as to provide a great sailing experience for as wide as possible a range of ages, skills and interests.

—Malcolm Coates

## Tennis

This was a delightfully active season on the SPSS tennis courts! Nearly 40 kids participated at the height of the summer, practicing new skills and competing in hard-fought rounds of Jailbreak and Around the World. Our final week saw a spirited junior tournament in which Chase Warner was victorious in the finals after a lengthy match with Estelle Pfitzer (the female Sportmanship winner). Danny Graves defeated Josh Hoffman in a balanced singles battle; and Danny and his partner Max outlasted Josh and Thorne (the male winner of the Sportmanship Award) in an impressive third set tiebreaker.

Next summer we're hoping to spread the tennis into the afternoon so there's more space for both group work and individual play. We're very excited about the bumper crop of up and coming players!

—Sarah Hoffman



# Development and Fundraising

## A Full Day of Fun!

The power of positive thinking was put to the test for the 2009 summer fundraiser. After record-breaking rain and cold throughout June and July, you might think bad weather contingency plans would be absolutely essential. Sure, we had some vague notion of how we might proceed if the heavens opened up, but for some reason we were convinced that warmth and sunshine would prevail. And how right we were!

The day began at dawn – or almost – with the revival of the Small Point Small Marathon. (Feedback from participants indicates that this may need to become an annual feature!) Meanwhile, the “Other People’s Treasures” yard sale got underway, with amazing donations available to an eager and supportive Small Point community. The event was

not only a fun and effective fundraiser for the Summer School, it proved useful for both donators and purchasers.

Malcolm Coates then corralled his team of can-do counselors and transformed Brad’s Barn for the evening festivities. A farewell potluck supper, with tributes to Malcolm for his fourteen years as SPSS director, was attended by a large portion of the community. The Flying Blind band provided a fantastic repeat performance, equaling their efforts the previous year.

Our fundraising goals for this day’s events were achieved thanks to the continued support of a wonderful, caring community. Without your active commitment and involvement we simply could not continue to carry forward the traditions we all cherish, traditions that are increasingly rare in this day and age.

Special thanks are extended to:

*Sandy Mitchell* for so many things, from arranging for and framing Malcolm’s photo of Brad’s Barn, to supplying pictures for the slideshow and containers for flowers, and so much more.

*Elena Vandervoort* for the generous use of her barn for drop off and storage of yard sale contributions.

*John Williams* for the fabulous slideshow of Malcolm’s SPSS years.

*Henry Ijams* for his help planning and implementing the Small Marathon

*Sally Ijams* for her time and expertise preparing for the yard sale, and her supervision of all of her “sales associates”.

*Diane Eberle, Sherry Sutton* and *Marcia Lynch* for their time and effort setting up and working the yard sale.

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Thanks also to *Molly Eberle* for her time spent making our “Ask Me” and “Pay Me” badges; *Ann Bartoo* and her flower fairies (*Sally Graves, Hodie Hazard, Jillian Herrigal, Sarah Hoffman, Sydney McDowell, Paula McLaughlin, Suzanne Rothschild, Abby Rowley, and Laura Sewall*) for gathering an amazing display of arrangements for Malcolm’s Farewell Dinner.

Our apologies if we’ve inadvertently missed any of our helpers!

### Annual Fund

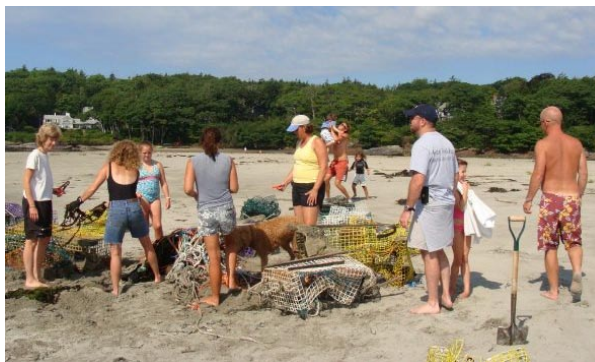
Many thanks to all of you who have made your gifts to the 2009 Annual Fund! Your generosity allows the Summer School to continue to thrive. As of November 6, 2009, we have received \$26,046 from 141 Small Pointers. Of this amount, \$3,396 was received through the Winter Address book, and one gift reflected the proceeds from a poker party! We are also very appreciative of the \$2,850 that we have received from 16 of you in honor of Sydney Smith.

If you have not yet made a donation and would like to do so, please send your gift to the SPSS Annual Fund, c/o Amy Coes, 7600 Pine Road, Wyndmoor, PA 19038. Thank you!

### A Note from Malcolm

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you, kids, counselors, parents, the board and the community in general for all your kind words and heartfelt goodbyes. As always, the best partnerships in life are those that are win/win. The 12 years I spent at SPSS were certainly that! As a community, please now join me in embracing John and Ben, and supporting their effort to continue leading SPSS in the great direction its headed! See you all next summer!

—*Malcolm Coates*



### Cleaning Up After Bill

Hearty Small Pointers led by Nellie Coes dug out and removed hundreds of lobster traps and stranded gear that were swept onto Big Beach by Hurricane Bill.

## Buildings and Grounds

Stewardship of the Summer School’s unique and venerable physical plant demands attention, affection, flexibility, and a healthy sense of humor. The Buildings and Grounds Committee got several initiatives underway during 2009 and more are planned for next year. Here are a few highlights:

### Memorial Garden

Under Amy Coes’ and Grey Terry’s leadership we’ve completed design of a beautiful memorial garden to be located near the old apple trees between the driveways. This will be a special place where Small Pointers can recognize deceased friends and family members, and it will also provide a wonderful new informal gathering spot for SPSS programs. We hope to begin construction in late spring and be complete by the time camp begins. Look for more details in the spring issue of *To the Point*.

### Sprague Hall

As we’ve begun investigating a possible renovation and expansion to Sprague Hall, to gain more space for indoor SPSS activities, we conducted a long-overdue thorough building inspection on the house. We’re pleased to report that it’s in remarkably good shape, notwithstanding many years of hard wear. No major problems were reported. Enormous thanks to Hans Warner for his ongoing help with architectural design of proposed improvements.

### Brad’s Barn

More problematical is the condition of the electrical wiring in the Barn. We will undertake significant rewiring in the spring to bring the building up to code and improve safety. Other Barn projects on the docket include a major clean-out and reclamation of the lower level space, cosmetic improvements to the bathroom, and the creation of a small retail space which will offer SPSS gear, tennis balls, etc.

### Science and Nature Building

Again with Hans Warner’s expert guidance, we’re exploring way to improve and expand this valuable but under-utilized building. We hope to have this project completed and ready to go for next summer.

### Around the Grounds

We’ve received a contractor’s proposal to improve drainage on the slope between Sprague Hall and the tennis courts and eliminate the infamous “oak tree mudhole.” Work will begin this spring. Also this spring we’re planning to push back the encroaching brush along the driveway and the parking/boat storage area. We’re hopeful that aggressive pruning will reveal several additional parking spots – and maybe a lost child or two!



### Fond Farewell

Beloved departing SPSS director Malcolm Coates was rousinglly toasted and roasted by members of the Small Point community at last summer's pot luck dinner.



# 2010 Season Preview

Incoming directors John Herrigel and Ben Lewis are hard at work on plans for next summer. Among their proposals:

- Biweekly community bingo and movie nights in the Barn
- Continuation and possible expansion of the advanced sailing and regatta program
- A new program designed exclusively for older kids, 12-15 years old, with a different and more challenging mix of activities
- A new focus on integrating community service projects into the core SPSS program, to make sure that we're out and about in the community helping to sustain our environment and support our friends and neighbors
- An effort to institute organized car pooling to get kids to and from camp, to reduce the crush of traffic and help us all be a little bit greener

Also in 2010, John and Ben, with the Board's support, have decided to set the minimum age for CIT's at 15 years old, and to require a minimum commitment of one month from applicants for either CIT or counselor positions. We feel strongly that this will yield a better overall experience for everyone involved, campers and staff alike.

## Important Dates

May 22, 2010	.....	Informal SPA/SPOC meeting ( <i>Saturday</i> )
May 23, 2010	.....	Memorial Day Clean-up ( <i>Sunday</i> )
June 28, 2010	.....	SPSS Opens ( <i>Monday</i> )
July 17, 2010	.....	July Play ( <i>Saturday</i> )
July 31 & August 1, 2010	.....	Tryouts for August Play ( <i>Saturday &amp; Sunday</i> )
August 8-15, 2010	.....	Tennis Tournament
August 14, 2010	.....	SPSS "Casino Night" Fundraiser ( <i>Saturday</i> )
August 20 & 21, 2010	.....	August Play ( <i>Friday &amp; Saturday</i> )
August 20, 2010	.....	Last day of SPSS ( <i>Friday</i> )
August 21, 2010	.....	SPA/SPOC Annual Meeting ( <i>Saturday</i> )

### Small Point Small Marathon

After nearly a 30 year hiatus, the SPSS Small Marathon was reborn as forty SPSS fans scaled the summit of Morse Mountain on a perfect August morning. Delightful weather accompanied both runners and walkers while volunteers and adoring fans cheered them on. Jack Harnett, 15, made sure the mountain troll was properly rewarded for passage of the marsh bridge. Our winners spanned a wide range of age groups—from 11 to 79—some walking, some

sprinting, some costumed. Annie Dear, took the top prize, completing the 4.2 mile course in 29.05. Over a minute behind was novice runner Wes Lewis, 17, and Eliza Lagerquist Vaughan. Ann Seymour St. John took the top costume prize for her handsome rendition of Sydney Smith sauntering down the beach. Thanks to the generosity of all who participated and volunteered the run generated lots of fun for all ages and abilities.

—Henry Ijams

