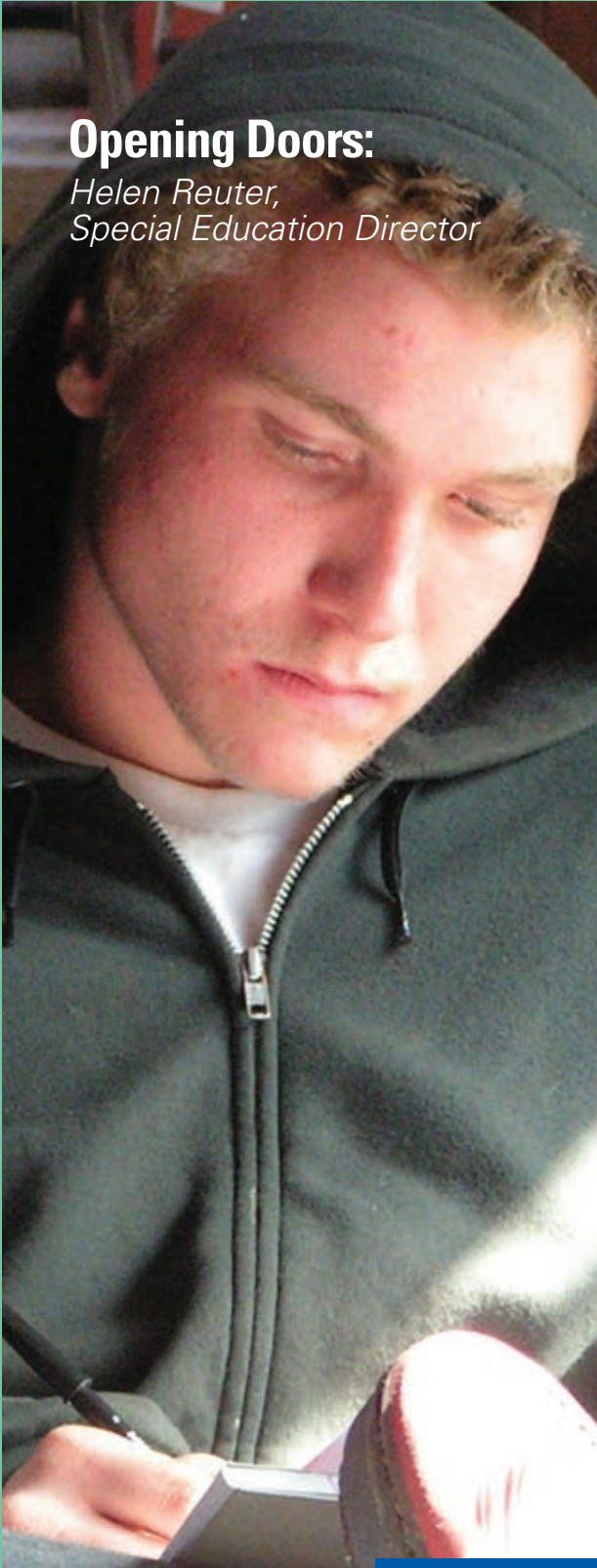




TIDINGS

Newsletter of the Penikese Island School



Opening Doors:

*Helen Reuter,
Special Education Director*


Since I joined the staff of Penikese, I have been struck by the number of opportunities the culture of Penikese offers our students and how the boys avail themselves of the doors opened to them.

Reading has always been a cornerstone of education on Penikese. In the early days, given the limited selection of books for young readers, much of the material was hand-me-downs from the staff, forging an intellectual and conversational connection.

Progressively, due to the explosion of new, high quality young adult books, our teachers have been able to recommend a more diverse and kid-appealing selection.

Almost incidentally, our new English teacher, Amy Gifford, introduced the boys to The New York Times book review section. It has sparked such interest that we departed from our practice of purchasing paperbacks and have sprung for a dozen hot-off-the-press hard covers. Boys who would not have considered themselves readers are now compiling lists of books they hope to read.

Food is always a highlight of island life; preparing it is another authentic learning experience at Penikese. Currently, bread making is popular among some staff and during the winter, our Math and Science teacher, James Burraston, has students make bread as part of their microbial studies. Students also benefit from assisting staff members who take on the role of chef for meals. In addition, there is a daily "after study hour snack" which is the sole purview of the "kitchen-kid." This responsibility becomes a source of pride for most students. As one student, Jeffrey, says in his graduation speech, "I like baking because I like to see the reaction on people's faces when they bite into my delicious snack." After success with his chocolate moon-pies, another student, Christopher, turned snack into an art form and left the program as a prospective Penikese-inspired pastry chef.

These distinctively Penikese events are interwoven with and given continuity by the interpersonal relationships between students and staff who take on the role of teacher, advisor, trusted friend, parent, and counselor. Each day every boy spends one-on-one time with adults: a casual walk to the schoolhouse or woodshop, a lingering conversation at the dinner table, a private talk with an advisor or teacher during study hour, or a session with our clinical director, Pam Brighton. Equally valuable are group experiences such as group therapy, morning sports, island walks during free time, night fishing and chatter before lights out. (Can you imagine having seven brothers?) Overtime the entirety of each student's experiences on Penikese comprises a unique set of real life skills and understandings that will enable him to open new doors as he makes his way beyond Penikese. 

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What is Aftercare:

Linda S. Navarro, Aftercare Director



Andrew Avault, Student Outreach Coordinator and Linda Navarro, Aftercare Director

Sometimes the value of these calls and visits are lost on us, but recently the mother of one of our students said at his graduation ceremony,

"...his first home pass, I was a little nervous to have him home. I was pleasantly surprised when Penikese staff called to check on us. I felt supported and reassured and it was wonderful to know that the people of Penikese cared enough to call when he was off the island."


Aftercare is a process that begins while a student is on the island. Connections made during their stay at Penikese Island School are drawn upon once they graduate, or leave, to help in making the transition into the community as smooth as possible and to increase the potential for success. Aftercare services for our students are relationship based and will remain in place for as long as the former student wants, needs and will allow.

One of my roles as Aftercare Director is to facilitate calls and visits from island staff when the students earn their Home Pass weekend. These interactions function to normalize seeing people from "the program" on "the outs" and pave the way for post-Penikese connection. Our students' needs run the gamut. Some of the boys are from intact two parent homes, others, single parent homes, to which they will return. Many have been brought up in the "system."

Most have been in more than one program or placement before landing on our little island. Therefore, each student's needs must be assessed individually. Island staff have the unique opportunity to spend 4 and 5 days (and nights) in a row with the kids and thus, are able to observe how they function in different situations. It is here that their Life Skills abilities are evaluated. Money management, job seeking and keeping skills, use of public transportation are a few of the areas that are addressed while the young man is a student on the island and also within the context of Aftercare visits, once they leave Penikese.

As the time for a student to graduate draws near, I work with the family and student to craft a Discharge Agreement. This agreement is a negotiation around such issues as curfew, household responsibilities, counseling, school

and consequences for not following through with any part of the agreement. This document, although not legally binding, helps to begin the process of anticipating what kinds of things will come up once the boy goes home.

Utilizing former staff in the Aftercare program has proven to be a valuable tool. Island staff typically remains employed at Penikese an average of 5 years. Many students who have graduated during the earlier years may not have a connection with our current staff. If a former staff person is able and willing to reach out to a student, I assist to make that happen. This process speaks volumes to the strength of relationships that are cultivated on Penikese Island and at the end of the day... relationships is what Aftercare at Penikese is all about. 

WISH LIST

To fulfill our staff requests please call Suzanne at 508.548.7276 x208

Tool shed	Portable printer	(All items must be new or nearly new to ensure that we remain with state safety codes.)
Boat rope	Porthole window	
Boat fenders	Bookstore gift cards	
Pool sticks	Complete socket set	
Weight bench	Protective eye wear	
50 lb. Kettle bell	Professional corded drill	
Foosball table	Magazine subscriptions	



New school desks made from donated lumber, milled by Penikese students and staff, and built by the Weld/Bright clan at a family reunion this summer.

Respected Elders:

Peter Kirwin and Irwin Freedman

When Executive Director Toby Lineaweaver was seeking clinicians wishing to devise, implement and co-facilitate a group therapy experience for a non-traditional group of adolescent males, Irwin Freedman, and Peter Kirwin, said, "Why not?"

Both are experienced therapists who share a mutual belief in the basic value and worth of all young people. Among other career accomplishments, their resumes are replete with an extensive background in helping young people find their way as functional members of society. Irwin as therapist and director at Judge Baker Guidance Center, Newton- Baker Project and Peter as therapist and long time Director of Falmouth Human Services.

And both have clearly flunked retirement! Not to worry however, as they firmly believe that their advanced age and experience affords them a unique advantage in working with the boys at Penikese. They speculate that their "grandpa-power" status, if you will, can present an opportunity to fulfill a missed aspect in contributing to the development of more secure young persons.

There is support for this view both in the literature and in the experience of the co-leaders. Leading American psychologist David Wechsler made a reference to the adolescent who needs, "a grandparent who consistently reminds them of their fundamental worth." Both Peter and Irwin acknowledge having had young clients who have turned to older members of the family, such as grandparents, for their support and nurturing when required by circumstance.




Peter Kirwin and Irwin Freedman

Given a nod to proceed, the Penikese group began the first of its twelve session cycles. The current summer session, as was the case for the winter session, includes both staff and students. Although there are consistently two staff members in each group, the number of students in the group has varied. Participation in group is voluntary; all students have opted to attend the second group.

The group sessions are structured to accommodate the needs and interests of group members. Such factors are determined through individual interviews with potential group members. Direct grist for the mill questions as, "what brought you here?" or "what would you like to get from this group?" and "where do you want to go after Penikese?" serve to keep the group on track and maintain a here and now focus to the sessions.

All sessions are 90 minutes and are pre-planned and tightly structured. There is an opportunity for personal sharing and the review of theme-based topics such as those which deal with family relationships and the myriad other vital issues which impact the lives of young people. The experience thus far has proven the hypothesis: There is basic good in all young people.

The group leaders have been touched by the concern shown to one another when difficult personal issues are sharedsome times with the comment, "we have each other's back." Our elder leaders have also been impressed with the caring shown to them by the boys when their own personal concerns are shared. Irwin and Peter would like to express their gratitude for this opportunity and for the generous support of the Penikese family. They are optimistic as to the ongoing success of this group work. 



The Man I Am: Joel, a recent Penikese Graduate

Before Penikese I thought I was living "normal," but now I realize how messed up I really was living. I needed Penikese to show me that. Penikese has been a big stepping stone in my life. I really needed them and they helped me a lot. Today if I could go back in time I would repeat everything I did to get to Penikese, because the person I am today is the person I have always wanted to be.

Thank you Penikese—I really needed you,

Joel

Home Sweet Home



The Penikese Island School recently completed the purchase of its new permanent onshore office at 565 Woods Hole Road in Woods Hole. Penikese's new building, known to local historians as Davis House, was built in 1805. In the mid-1980's it was the Gray Whale Inn before being acquired

by Woods Hole Research Center. Upon completion of its new campus further up Woods Hole Road in 2003, the Research Center vacated Davis House and rented it to Penikese.

In late 2008, the Research Center informed Penikese of its intention to sell and gave the school first option. Penikese's Board acted swiftly but prudently to examine the opportunity and explore purchasing and financing options. Thanks to a generous gift towards the down payment from a local foundation and financing through Eastern Bank and MassDevelopment, Penikese closed its purchase in late July 2009. Although the cost of owning over renting will prove marginally higher, we intend to help offset the mortgage by renting our third floor office space.

Everyone at Penikese is elated and thankful beyond words for the efforts and contributions of those helping make this dream come true possible. Again the school has a home to call its very own, and a door for its students, families and graduates from any era to be welcomed through. Penikese's acquisition is strategically important, too: nothing sends a stronger signal than this of Penikese's strength and intention to be around for years to come, and having a permanent anchor in the community provides a foundation from which to further expand its mission into the community.

For those who have yet to visit Penikese at its new digs, the school plans to hold an open house sometime during the upcoming holidays. Stay tuned, and we hope you can drop by!

Raising Spirits and Funds

A great big thank you to our friends at C.H. Newton Builders for allowing us to host our first annual **Wine and Cheese Tasting** in their historic "Stone Room." This beautifully renovated space was the perfect venue for our sold-out event that raised over \$6,000 in just two hours! It was a fun and informative evening made possible by the vision of Event Chair, Kathy Regis, along with the dedication and hard work of the Development Committee, Penikese

Development Officer Suzanne Currier and the enthusiastic participation of Penikese staff. Special thanks to Phil Stanton, a Penikese Board member and auctioneer extraordinaire.

This year, Penikese is proud to have been chosen as one of three new charities approved by the Board of the **Falmouth Road Race**. On race day we had eight "Team Penikese" runners who shared the road with some of the best runners in the world, forming a tapestry

of colors from the start at Water Street to the finish line in Falmouth Heights. With our runners hard work, and fundraising efforts on behalf of the school, Penikese raised over \$20,000!

A very special thanks to Polly Kisiel, Event Chair, and the Roberston family for graciously allowing us to use their lovely lawn for our post-race celebration and for offering to make it an annual event.

Welcome Aboard



Sarah Tribuzio joined Penikese Island School as our new Director of Development in early July. She received her undergraduate degree from Wheaton College in Norton, MA and completed her graduate work in education from DePaul University in Chicago. She spent the last nine years working in development and fundraising

in small grassroots nonprofits as well as large human service organizations such as the Greater Chicago Food Depository.

"I am honored to have been selected as Penikese Island School's Director of Development. Having spent the last twelve years in Chicago, it is an absolute pleasure to be living and working on Cape Cod where I was raised. There is enormous gratification in being able to give back to my home community. I am looking forward to meeting you and expressing my sincerest thanks for your steadfast support of Penikese Island School."

Sarah resides in Sandwich with her husband David and two children.

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Penikese Island School

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