



TIDINGS

Newsletter of the Penikese Island School

Volume 30, Number 1, Spring 2003

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Emotional Nearsightedness

The above phrase is one of our so-called bumper stickers, sayings that help us keep our perspective, wit, and sense of humor when we run into tough sledding on the island. This bumper sticker reminds us to not always expect normal behavior from those who, despite somewhat normal appearances, are quite different from the average person.

In exactly what way Penikese boys differ from each other depends on their circumstances. In general, all share the inability to manage intimate and social relationships. Most are quite uncomfortable in relationships, and some simply don't "do" them at all. This brings us to the very quintessence of Penikese's art: building relationships with people who don't do them well or don't want to be in them in the first place. Fortunately, to lead our way we have a

fundamental understanding of psychological trauma which most of our boys have experienced.

Of course, Penikese boys aren't the only ones who struggle with relationships. We *all* do, some better or worse (or much worse) than others. Charting the full spectrum of human relationship behavior would result in a bell curve with a few Mother Thesas on one extreme, the vast majority of "us" in the middle, and a few

Saddam Husseins of the world on the other. Again, the same core themes join us all, but endlessly variable circumstances lead to endless variation in how we express these universal needs through behavior.

Enter today's bumper sticker. "Emotional Nearsightedness" describes a trait common to trauma survivors: the trauma (often mixed with other factors) has damaged their ability to clearly "see" the social world around them and their inner emotional world. These people are disabled in ways that, although not readily apparent to us, can be quite profound nonetheless.

To illustrate, take Mr. Magoo, comically myopic and unable to see anything unless it is on his nose. Now imagine Mr. Magoo driving his car into busy intersections, peering over his steering wheel in a futile attempt to read street signs and avoid on-coming traffic.

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We all agree that Mr. Magoo shouldn't be driving in the first place. He is a danger to himself and others. But, he needs to get around somehow, so he chooses to drive anyway, and we are not surprised when he runs terrified motorists off the road and then totals his car.

On the highways and byways of relationship life, the challenges are not so different for those affected by trauma. Their ability to pick up social and emotional signposts has been damaged.

Indications and signals so painfully obvious to us can be all but invisible to them. From their perspective, anger rushes over them as suddenly as a speeding truck careens around a blind corner, giving no time to dive out of the way. They are no more able to pick up a social limit or obvious behavior deterrent in time to respond (if they can see at all) than Mr. Magoo can pick up an exit sign as he speeds past it on the highway.

Yes, such people know the difference between right and wrong very well, but respecting right and wrong involves, among other things, possession of one's faculties and self-control. Trauma can have a profound effect on everyday human abilities that we often take for granted. The concept of emotional nearsightedness is invaluable in formulating interventions with Penikese boys.

Here are some of the many things we try to do:

For those with true emotional nearsightedness (can't see feelings unless they are close or big), we first try to orient them to the predictable patterns in their lives, point out the hazards along their way, and help them to anticipate these trouble spots while learning alternate choices and replacement behaviors. Again, think of

Mr. Magoo: most of the roads he drives on are regularly traveled, taking him to and from his job, work, the supermarket, and visits to friends and family. To be able to help Mr. Magoo, we would first need to follow him and see what kind of trouble he gets into.

On Penikese we in effect are traveling our students' roads (and ours too, don't forget!) with them to do the very same. Consider the following scenario, with Penikese text embedded:

"Mr. Magoo! Look, every time you get to this intersection (I turn my attention away from you

for a minute), you always take a left (react by causing a disruption) and end up in a dead-end street (blown out of school for the day).

Let's try this instead: when you get to this intersection again (find yourself feeling frustrated or antsy), ask yourself, haven't you been here (felt this way) before?

They are no more able to pick up a social limit or obvious behavior deterrent in time to respond (if they can see at all) than Mr. Magoo can pick up an exit sign as he speeds past it on the highway.

What's the best choice (go "off" and get a consequence, or ask for what I want with words), what do you want?

Let's find some road marks (let's agree on a cue we can both recognize) that might help remind you. You can do it, and I'll help you (let's work on this together)!"

We also give the boy feedback on how he appears to us while encouraging him to give feedback on how he sees himself. We can scale these questions from 1 (calmest) to 10 (enraged, hurting people), asking him where he sees himself on the scale. We often find that even though we will observe the boy escalating up the scale, he will self-report registering nothing, nothing, and nothing, then *boom!* In other words, we can see that he is angry long before he can, sometimes not until his anger has built to an 8 or 9, which for most people is too late to keep from blowing their stack.

Our goal is to lower their threshold for registering their building tension or anger as much as possible, helping to recognize what they feel in the moment. Again, we use lots of feedback, rely on agreed-upon external cues, and practice and practice until they can internalize their new strategies. Such an intervention might sound something like this (with core theme practices thrown in for good measure!):

"I see that you are pretty angry right now. I can tell because you are talking loudly, pacing, and your fists are clenched (previously agreed upon external cues).

We agreed that when we saw you doing those things that you were probably close to blowing your stack. Our plan was to get outside for a walk, remember (relate back to agreed upon plan)?

Come on now; remember that this is what you want (relate back to goals).

OK, I know you're angry. I know this is hard, but this what you want, and here's your chance to practice (be gently persistent).

Yes, you can do it, and I'm going to help you. You can do it. You matter to me."



This can be arduous work, and for some, their emotional vision may be so badly damaged that it will never be normal. But any improvement in being able to recognize and forestall impending loss of control can be enough to make the difference. Think of it this way: helping someone improve their ability to see and check their anger even to just 7 on the scale (breaking objects) or 8 (only thinking of hurting someone) is better than 9 (actually hurting someone).

Another strategy to improve emotional eyesight is to help our boys recognize the many smaller anxieties and indignities that contribute to ultimate loss of control. This approach is particularly useful for those with what is referred to as Complex Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. The nature of their trauma is such that, unlike an acute or catastrophic trauma such as surviving a natural disaster or plane crash, their trauma experience (living with poverty, within an occupied territory, or a severely dysfunctional family) was the norm for which they had no other comparison.

When someone is fighting everyday for survival, you don't have time to sweat the small stuff, and since no one around you cares about it anyway, you learn to let it go. Unfortunately, small stuff can build and build until, *kaboom!* The best place to work on this dynamic is in a group setting, where the littlest things, like someone yawning or whispering when you have the "stage," prove valuable grist for the mill. Quite often, we get down exchanges as basic as this:

Pam: "You had a reaction to what he just did. Everyone did."

Student: "I didn't feel anything. That shit don't faze me one bit."

Pam: "As long as you are alive and breathing, you will have a reaction to what people do, no matter how small, how silly it seems. The only way to get better at handling bigger feelings is

practicing when they're small, very small. So, you had a feeling."

Student: "Do I have to choose one?"

Pam: "Well, you are alive. You had a feeling. Start with one end or the other. Did you like it or not like it?"



Student: "I guess I didn't like it."

Pam: "Great! Now here's the really hard part. Want to take the next step?"

Student: "Whatever. What is it?"

Pam: "You could tell so-and-so himself that you didn't like what he did. He's sitting right next to you."

Another type of emotional eyesight problem we describe as "spectrum-challenged." People who are spectrum-challenged only register a particular emotion or situation to the exclusion of others. Since they are on the lookout for hostile incoming (put-downs), this is all they see and they quickly fire back defensively. Such boys could be receiving the Nobel Prize and still be relentlessly ferreting out the teensiest indication of negativity buried among all the accolades, then bash themselves over the head with it.

Dealing with the spectrum-challenged, especially those with volatile reactions, involves patience, education, practice, and carefully planned interventions.

For instance, before any significant intervention, we always dress-rehearse the scenario. Who will tell him? What and how will we tell him? Who else should be there? How should we set the stage (where and with whom does he feel safest)? We take exacting care to deliver the message in manageable portions with time to digest between servings, never mixing good and bad news or complicated scenarios all in one batch. To separate and clarify aspects of an intervention even further, we will have different people handle different parts of the message. We always have a witness present so that the student can check in with the third party to process the conversation and weed out spectrum-challenged distortions. "So what did you understand Toby to say? What does that mean to you? Well, here's what I heard him say." And, we always try to anticipate his reaction and have a plan for each.

It goes without saying that there is utterly no excuse for criminal behavior. Many criminals need to be locked up because, similar to Mr. Magoo, they need to be kept off the road for the sake of public safety. But for most others, there are things we can do to help, rather like getting Mr. Magoo to wear his glasses (although we might have to threaten to pull his license in order to get him to wear them when he drives!). After all, 20-100 vision might be poor, but it is better than 20-200 – better enough to save a life, improve a relationship, and experience the world differently.



— Toby Lineaweaver, Executive Director (with a tip of the hat to Pam Brighton and Tom Stewart)

If you are interested in obtaining a schedule of in-service or training, or would like to schedule one, please e-mail toby@penikese.org or pam@penikese.org.

POP'S PAGE



Now that the winter of 2002-2003 is safely behind us, we thought you might be able to stand reading Pops' reminiscence of the Blizzard of '78 on Penikese Island. If you just can't bring yourself to read it yet, save this story for the next summer heat wave and break it out with a tall glass of iced tea.



The Blizzard of '78

A Stormy Remembrance



Dave "Pops" Masch

remember taking bucket showers while standing on ice—saves water. We would put metal bucket of hot embers from our wood stoves in the junction pit and around the pipe's emergence point in the cellar on especially cold nights. We formed a collar of aluminum foil—actually a tube—over the pipe that ran below the joists to our sink. This tube was warmed by hot air from kerosene lamps on pedestals or ladders to prevent freezing. We did sometimes have ice in the kitchen sink in the morning before this technique was devised, despite leaving the tap open enough for a hopefully continuous overnight drip to discourage freeze-up.



The snowfall this year on the anniversary of New England's Blizzard of '78 brought back memories of being on Penikese Island during that remarkable storm. Our school was still in its early childhood, if not infancy, at that time, not yet the unique, still evolving institution it has become.

We were prepared for the rigors of winter. Our waterlines were buried and only vulnerable to freezing in the junction box, a roofed pit between the well, cistern, and house where the pipes emerged from the earth in our cellar, which was often below freezing. I

We had several days worth of wood-cut, split, and stacked for our woodburning cookstove and enough overnighter wood to feed our big heating stove.

We still heat and cook with wood on Penikese. Here a lad can see a direct connection between his work at sawing and splitting wood and his own comfort and wellbeing, and the comfort and wellbeing of those around him. This work is necessary for survival on Penikese in the winter.

"Overnighter wood" is made up of large, unsplitable pieces that will not fit in the cookstove, but will burn slowly in the larger heating stove. Even with these slow burning chunks of wood, the heating stove has to be fed and tended once or even twice on the coldest nights when the wind is howling out of the Northwest.

As a child, I read that native Americans woke themselves for their dawn raids upon their enemies by drinking enough water before going to sleep to guarantee their arousal. By experiment, I learned by drinking 2 cups of water before retiring at 11 PM, I would wake up at 2 AM; one cup and



The cookstove that keeps on cooking...



A Collection of Pops' Art

I would wake up at 4 AM. If I drank nothing at all after 7:30 PM, I would sleep through the night. Using this technique, I could awaken to feed the stoves without disturbing others with an alarm. This technique works—try it. You'll have to calibrate your own systems and recalibrate with age....

By midday, the snow began to fall and soon the wind began to increase. It became quite dark, though daytime, so lamps were lit throughout the house. The kerosene lamps provide enough light and a little heat. I have always been pleased by the look of warmth, light, and coziness these lamps provide.

The snow fell and the wind blew throughout the afternoon. The snow fell and the wind continued to blow until well past midnight, the wind speed increasing. By morning the sky had cleared and the wind was howling out of the Northwest, and it was bitter cold under the bright sun —0° and blowing 50 mph.

The original house, before the addition, had an interesting quirk. It gave a shuddering shake, like a damp dog, when the wind hit 55 mph; it remained steady at higher speeds. It shuddered early in the morning after the snowfall ended, and the wind continued to increase.

We left the house only to use the outhouse and to care for the animals that morning. There was a 5' drift at the poles between the house and the outhouse, and the pens were hard to reach, but all was well. We felt like we had "made it."

Late in the afternoon, the wind was blowing at 65 mph and the temperature was 8°. One of the boys and I decided to venture to the north shore of the isthmus to see what the storm had brought us. We bundled up so that only our eyes and cheekbones were exposed. We made it to the wild beach where the gusting wind nearly toppled us—we could not stay. We later learned that the wind had gusted to 80 mph! We wisely turned our backs and were pushed, stumbling, back to the delicious warmth and serenity of the house. We each had spots of painful frostbite over our cheekbones, but felt we had done something important. I have never forgotten that day, and I bet he, his name was Randy, has not forgotten either.



TV stove



goosefish



fishcake

I learned by drinking 2 cups of water before retiring at 11 PM, I would wake up at 2 AM; one cup and I would wake up at 4 AM. If I drank nothing at all after 7:30 PM, I would sleep through the night.



cooking pots



striper



eels

fish
→
too alive

→
dead

→
alive

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DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Volunteer Spotlight



Active volunteerism is such an important component for any lean-staffed, non-profit organization. We at Penikese recognize and appreciate our many volunteers who reinforce their belief in us by devoting their time and talents. We begin our Volunteer Spotlight segment with this newsletter, and what better volunteer to kick it off than **Lewis Nassikas**, a 3-year volunteer for Penikese.

"Volunteer: one who offers him/herself for any undertaking or service. A perfect description of Lewis, who has always given of his time with a smile, a wonderful sense of humor and a good story. We are most fortunate to have him 'onboard'! Thank you, Lewis!"

— Pennie Hare, Board Chair

"We are deeply indebted to our many volunteers, and of them all, Lewis is perhaps the most available, agreeable, and good-natured," comments Toby Lineaweaver, Executive Director.

"It's very simple and plain. I like to contribute in my own small and humble way," Lewis states embarrassingly, yet proud.

When asked what he takes away from a visit to Penikese Island School, he remarks of "how cooperative and grateful the

students seem to be with staff. There's a dedication shown by the staff. It's so impressive."

Lewis absolutely loves the woodworking wonders that students create on Penikese, while learning job applicable skills for the future. "I purchased two cutting boards and gave one as a special gift to my oldest daughter who lives in California."

If you would like to become an active member of our very special family of volunteers, please contact Tammy Barboza, Director of Development at 508.548.7276, x207 or tbarboza@penikese.org.

Planned Giving

Philanthropy translates to many forms of giving, and our school currently benefits from many of them: outright cash, pledges, goods, services, etc. As we plan for Penikese's continued financial success, we invite you to be among our planned giving family of donors.

What would you like to be remembered for? If supporting an organization that reflects your values and intent is high on your giving list, or if helping to create for our school a giving venue for others to follow, we encourage you to include Penikese in your estate planning. Stay tuned in the coming months to hear more about our planned giving program.

For information about Penikese's development program, contact Tammy Barboza at 508.548.7276, x207, or tbarboza@penikese.org.

2002 CALENDAR YEAR GIVING: January 1, 2002 through December 31, 2002

Our donors know a good investment when they see one. Your gifts have worked as hard as our staff and students, and together, we have taken Penikese to new heights. By believing in our mission, our family of donors has grown 23% in one year's time. Thank you!

Our development office prepares this list with upmost care, but we are human. If your 2002 year gift has been mistakenly omitted, we apologize and hope you will contact Tammy Barboza, 508.548.7276, x207, or tbarboza@penikese.org.

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FROM THE AFTERCARE DIRECTOR

The Mission of Aftercare

What is Aftercare...it is a lot of things...a work in progress, a learning curve in constant flux, an experience that is a continuous reflection process and challenge to learn the most from the students we have the most difficult time with. Penikese as a whole is a place where the main goal is to actively teach and live relationships in the realest possible way, the real life way. Of course there are rules and guidelines that facilitate our mission and give us compass and lines in the road to steer by, but we are forever correcting our course as we drift on and off these slippery shoulders. Such is the way of real life relationships.

The Penikese staff is a rare group of people, equally as rare as the individuals that come to us for help, young men who have by one chosen path or another wound up on an island 14 miles off the coast off Cape Cod called Penikese. Stories of adventure, success, and even war, that you'll find on best-seller lists, or overhear at the local tavern: lost in the woods or adrift at sea, a profitable business endeavor...they do share common themes, and when the dust from all the excitement has settled, the period at the end of all those stories is a toast to all those who made the experience possible, the connections they made along the way and the memories they will always share regardless of their chosen future paths, that no one can take away, that no history book can unwrite. It is the human element that people walk away feeling good about, and equally sad for having to move on from, and this is the stuff of Penikese.

Continued...



For information about Penikese's Aftercare program, contact Shawn Barber, Aftercare Director, sbarber@penikese.org.

Aftercare News

Ben: Since graduation Ben has been taking it easy at home in Mashpee...After a brief stint working with stand in boat captain Paul Breslin building barns he decided heights weren't for him. Ben has stayed in weekly contact with many of the Penikese staff over the winter and stayed out of trouble while he put together his long awaited Florida plan. He's been down there since mid February, and according to island staff and weekend tracker Chris Yerkes, Ben is alive and well in FL, staying with his friend's father, and not missing this New England weather in the least I'm sure.



Brian Stevens (left) and Ben Lee (right)

Jimmy Lee: It's only been a few weeks since Jimmy Lee left Penikese headed for our trusted friends at Champ House and the newly finished Jamie Ready Youth Home in Hyannis, and it seems a week at home has been enough to change his mind about relocating to Cape Cod. He has decided instead to take a shot at making it work in Taunton. Brian Washington hooked up with him last week for the first of many visits with Jimmy Lee to touch base with him and take Jimmy Lee job hunting. Hopefully the post Penikese honeymoon is not a permanent condition.

Evan: Evan graduated Penikese last July in conjunction with his eighteenth birthday and has finally settled down in Hopkinton with his mother and sister. He's held down the same job as a yard man at Hopkinton Lumber for about eight months now and sounded real upbeat and confident when I spoke to him on the phone last week. He spends most of his time working, and when his cell phone is working, he returns calls. We plan to stop by and see him soon, but with him putting in 50 and 60 hours a week making time for us isn't the easiest thing to do...In Penikese terms, not a bad problem to have.

Steve: Even though Steve left us without graduating he did not leave on bad terms. However, he did not show up at his placement at Sargent House in Boston and spent several months on the run, only to show up at Sargent House about a month ago, only to be released from DSS custody last week. Steve hasn't been in contact with us much since then, but did finally start returning our calls and set up a time to meet up with Brian in Woburn only to sleep through B's wake up call and miss the long awaited visit. The up side is that Steve is living safely at home and hasn't picked up any new charges.

Matt: After many waves of couch surfing, Matt is now in Worcester living with his aunt, and has recently applied to the National Guard, and shows continued interest in getting his life on track. According to Matt, he's been clean for a few months after a slip through the holidays. I recently met up with Matt in Worcester for breakfast and we talked about him relocating to the Cape and make a break from central Mass. Matt seems happy and positive about his future, and keeps the Penikese Aftercare staff high on his list of people to stay connected to and use as a resource to keep himself on track.

Penikese is a place where influence wins over control, choice over coercion, and relationship and connection take the front seat while deadline and mandate sit in the back. We will as policy put student before chore, and give credit to the boy willing to struggle with himself over the boy cruising along with his problems stowed away tightly in his suitcase. This goes for the staff, as well. We all know that we bring our own issues, backgrounds, and histories to the collective table of the Penikese family, and our own willingness to look at that menu with honest eyes and open ears corresponds directly to the intensity and reward of the experience.

We “Penikesers” tend to cringe at the thought of measuring what we do, and feel equally overwhelmed at the idea of trying to design a rubric, an empirical method of assessment, or an evaluation that justifies or quantifies the money we spend and the measures we take to try to make our idea work. Does an expensive gift to your spouse on a special occasion mean you love them more than a child with a homemade card? How do you measure love? The question is equally difficult to answer. People in difficult relationships don’t love each other any less than people who seem to get it right.

People who tend to see the world in black and white struggle the most with the Penikese philosophy. We humans are extremely individualized beings and at Penikese we don’t pretend to be any other way. Relationships are messy things and so is the model of true relationship based treatment, especially when it comes to adolescent boys highly skilled at the art of manipulation and division. Where there is a pinhole they will create a subdivision. As masters of this art our job becomes exponentially more difficult, and the inner and outer struggle begin. The two are inseparable. First there’s the offense. Someone has broken a rule. Therefore there has to be a consequence, or else the student won’t take responsibility for his actions and everyone else will think it’s alright to break XYZ rule when he gets mad and so on. Of course two days before someone else broke the same rule when another staff was there and didn’t get a consequence...The battle ensues, disrespectful language and insults thrown, fines and community service levied, and connections blown...Joe-student thinks Joe-staff should be fired and better yet shot, while Joe-staff wants Joe-student thrown out of the program, etc...

Where do we go from here? Just this morning these two were bosom buddies and now irrevocable arch enemies....What’s really going on here? Joe-student thought they were “Boys,” which to him meant bend the rules for me if you care about me...while Joe-staff also thought they had a good relationship and likes Joe-student a lot but felt that his breaking the rules was an attempt to “get over” on him, and he didn’t like it when Joe-student treated him that way...Turns out Joe-student used to get into fights with his

Dad like that all the time but they always ended with him getting hit or Dad running off to the local bar...Did Joe-staff mean to come off like his Dad? No...Would Joe-student let him know the next time he starts to feel like that before they get into another big fight? Sure, he’ll try...Can we go out and try to finish that wood and get it inside before it rains for the next three days? Sure...You think maybe I can work off some of those fines you gave me for calling you an asshole, among other things? I think we can work that out...

Polaroids like this happen all the time at Penikese. They are not always so simple, in fact they are often quite complicated and can be a very foggy and rocky channel to navigate through. This process is the spring training equivalent to slow pitch baseball, t-ball even. No one expects to grab any bat off the rack, wave it around a few times in the on deck circle, and whack one off the Green Monster with Pedro throwing his good stuff. The same holds true for putting your best foot forward when emotions are running high and tempers are flaring. This is the most difficult time to focus on what you are feeling in the moment for anyone, let alone a young person who hasn’t had the practice that it takes to be able to do this sort of work. His experience has more likely been variable speed pitches, a bat that’s the wrong weight and length, and worse yet the pitcher isn’t even throwing from the mound every time...Take all that into consideration and that’s the anything but typical experience our boys are coming from, so the job of trying to interpret and simplify that experience takes tremendous time and better than average patience. For some boys it starts by getting their feet straight in the batter’s box, some need help getting off the bench in the dugout, while others further along their stay want to know how to hit the off-speed-pitch to the opposite field. As a result, the staff at Penikese bring equally unique and diverse skills to teach our kids, whether those skills are vocational, culinary, clinical, musical, relational or educational.

Part of the job of the Aftercare staff at Penikese is essentially to bring them to the game, to help them see how to extend what they have learned on Penikese to real life. By showing up in our students homes and representing a piece of their island success in a very concrete way, our staff offer them a real life glimpse of something no one else so far in their lives has been able to help them see. Whether it’s back to their home or to another residential program, Penikese’s involvement has meant a green light to do well, a bona-fide endorsement from someone who has seen them at their best and has passed on that glow and that magic to the next phase of their lives. Penikese gives the next caretakers or employers incentive to look a little deeper, to know what to look out for, but most importantly, gives the boys a confident running start at the increasingly difficult challenges they are to face in the post-Penikese phase of their lives. It means a lot to these kids for someone to show up in an unfamiliar place and say, hey, let me show you what this kid can do with a fastball...

PENIKESE NEWS

Penikese Offices Have Moved!

Penikese's business offices have moved to a new site on Woods Hole Road



Have you seen that new sign on the right just as you enter the Woods Hole village, right before the Bradley House and Woods Hole Library? Goodness, it's a beauty, and yes, it means that Penikese has relocated its administrative offices to 565 Woods Hole Road, the former location of the Grey Whale Inn and, most recently, the Woods Hole Research Center.

Since Penikese sold its house on Little Harbor Road in 1996, its offices have been located on 49 School Street on the top floor of one of the Cahoon houses, now owned by the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution. Always small, this office was at the time perfectly adequate until Penikese began growing like one of its teenage boys. By the time Penikese agreed with WHRC to rent the Davis House, its old offices were as crowded as a rabbit warren with as many as three to an office.

All that delayed Penikese from making the move was the same thing that kept the Woods Hole office space puzzle

locked: the final touches on the stunning new Gilman Ordway Campus that allowed WHRC to vacate its various rentals in Woods Hole and alleviate its own growing pains.



Business Manager Wendy Nies Denton tries to make sense of one of the many boxes of files and folders.

Penikese's move was planned and coordinated by Dori Mebane and Wendy Nies Denton, with generous assistance from the Board and other friends. The actual move was supervised by Penikese Ace Chip Bennett and assisted by the

Barnstable County Sheriff's Office inmate work crew, who threw their backs right into the work.

We are enormously grateful to the Woods Hole Research Center, Deputy Joe Brait and his inmate work crew, and those individuals mentioned above. We also extend thanks to all the other contributors, especially including the Marine Biological Laboratory and Joe Hayes, who donated some furniture to help fill our spacious new offices. At some appropriate time, Penikese will hold a community open house. We hope to see you there!

Pops Wins an Award!

David W. "Pops" Masch was recently named recipient of the *2003 Albert E. Trieschman Memorial Award for Exceptional Direct Service to Children* by MAAPS, the Massachusetts Association of 766 Approved Private Schools. Pops was presented with the award at MAAPS' 25th Annual Conference on Friday, May 2, 2003.

MAAPS is the same organization that awarded Shawn Barber with the 2001 Special Needs Teacher of the Year, making this the second time in three years that Penikese has run away with one of MAAPS' most prestigious recognitions.

Penikese was inspired to nominate Pops by the recent end of his extraordinary unbroken 29-year string of active island duty. To help ease Pop's grudging adjustment to semi-retirement, Toby wrote up the nomination letter (excerpted below) and sent it off on a prayer with the enthusiastic endorsement of the Board and Pops' school buddies.

While waiting for word on the award, Penikese whipped up a celebration of food, music, and irreverent toasts for Pops on May 10 at the Nimrod Restaurant in Falmouth (more word on this event in later issues of *Tidings*). Just as we put on the finishing touches, word came in of Pops' award, a fitting capper to what will be a whirlwind month to celebrate a legendary man and career.

"Our field is full of exceptional people, but not many are as deserving of this award as is David on the occasion of his retirement and eve of Penikese's 30th anniversary, a school he helped build from scratch with his own hands. In a line of work where burnout can be measured in months, David's career is a monument to direct service longevity, an iron man feat worthy of Cal Ripken.

Continued...

Pops Wins Award, cont.

It began in 1973. George Cadwalader, Penikese's founder, invited David to help start a school for troubled boys. It would be an alternative to juvenile corrections, family-sized, teach real-world skills, and use choice and natural consequences rather than conformity and control to effect change. Drawn by this concept and George's vision, David enthusiastically signed on. He was one of the very first staff to step foot on Penikese, where he continued for a remarkable unbroken string of 29 years. David wanted to make it to an even 30, and would still be on the island right now if not for health concerns forcing him to reluctantly retire.



During this span, Pops survived a near-fatal heart attack and his teenage son's accidental death. He endured hair-raising boat rides, the elements, and spells of low and no pay while agencies, treatment fashions, and political regimes came and went. Pops has played counselor, cook, and carpenter, disciplinarian, referee and father figure to boys, veterinarian to generations of pigs, chickens, and guinea fowl, and supervisor, teacher, and mentor to island staff, many of whom were inspired by him to continue in the field.

Then there are the boys themselves—are there any that have forgotten him or didn't learn something from him no matter the course their lives took? By the visits, calls, letters, and emails Penikese still receives, the answer is clearly not. People always ask for David first, remembering him for the respect he commanded and gave, his gruff warmth, funny stories, excellent food, and the constructive and companionable pursuits he shared with one and all.

There are countless stories about Pops, but one tells it all: years ago before Pam Brighton, Penikese's Clinical Director, had even heard of Penikese, she worked in prisons with adult offenders. On one occasion, Pam was helping an inmate prepare for release, only to discover that, even for the average prisoner, he was unusually bereft of resources, people, and places to turn to on the outside. Even his family (or what remained of one) had pulled stakes and moved without so much as telling him or leaving a forwarding address. Still, he held to a ray of hope, and told Pam about a school he once went to when he was a teenager, and a man who worked there called Pops. He asked Pam to get him Pops' number, saying, "I've got no one in the world, but I know I can always stay with Pops."

For all his generosity and devotion, David is rather unsentimental, and would not be comfortable with these sentimental words. He thinks we attach too much importance on ourselves and take too much credit for our students' successes and too much blame for their failures. I do know that David is proud of the school he helped build and his work with these extremely difficult and damaged boys. I'd also like to think he would take inner pleasure from this tribute, even if it were too flowery for him. I hope so, because little else we have to offer even begins to fit his legendary accomplishments or equal our inexpressible gratitude."

People always ask for David first, remembering him for the respect he commanded and gave, his gruff warmth, funny stories, excellent food, and the constructive and companionable pursuits he shared with one and all.

Penikese Island School

Fiscal Year 2002 Annual Report

July 1, 2001 - June 30, 2002

Gaining Stride



Announcing: FY 2002 Annual Report

Penikese's 2002 Annual Report titled "Gaining Stride" was recently published and mailed to over 1500 friends, supporters, and partners in business. This annual report mailing was our biggest ever, and the publication itself was an ambitious undertaking meant to signal to the world that, on the eve of its 30th anniversary, Penikese is coming powerfully into its own.

"Gaining Stride" was a team effort from start to finish: written by Executive Director Toby Lineaweaver and Development Director Tammy Barboza, enriched with input from Penikese's Board, professionally rendered by Beth Ready Liles, printed by Rogers Printing, Plymouth, and sorted and mailed with the generous assistance of our wonderful volunteers.

If you have not received a copy of the 2002 Annual Report, please contact Tammy at 508.548.7276, x207 or tbarboza@penikese.org. We are confident you will agree it is one of our best ever!

TIDINGS

Designer, Beth Ready Liles

Printed by Rogers Print and Design, Plymouth, MA

Help turn a life around!

Yes, I/we would like to support the mission of Penikese Island School.

Mr. Mr. & Mrs. Mrs. Ms. Dr.

Name/s: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

Seasonal Address:

Dates at seasonal address:

from _____ to _____



Your gift is tax-deductible, under section 501 (c) (3) of the IRS code.

Enclosed is my/our gift of:

\$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 \$1000 \$ _____

Please make checks payable to Penikese Island School.

Please charge my gift to my:

MasterCard Visa

Card #: _____ Exp. _____

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This gift will be matched by:

(Please include matching gift form from your employer.)

I want this gift to support the following area/s:

Aftercare Endowment Facilities Programming Best use

Please list my gift as Anonymous.

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Sp03N

Penikese Island School
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www.penikese.org

Non-profit Org.
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Woods Hole, MA
02543



The Penikese Island School is a non-profit organization created to educate and rehabilitate troubled teenage boys in a remote family setting, preparing them for law-abiding and productive lives with the help of graduate aftercare, and to share our experience and resources with the community at large.

Address correction requested.

Saturday Trips to Penikese Island



Which Saturday works for you?

June 21 - from South Dartmouth
July 19 - from Woods Hole
August 16 - from Woods Hole
September 20 - from Woods Hole
October 25 - from Woods Hole

It's so true. To tour the Island and truly absorb all that our students and staff experience on a day-to-day basis is to further appreciate why we exist in the first place. Annually, the staff and board of Penikese look forward to hosting day trips to the Island and would love to add you to our growing list of guests. The entire trip is complimentary and includes lunch overlooking Buzzards Bay.

Please call Board Chair Pennie Hare 508.548.0926 soon to reserve your spot. We welcome both individuals and groups.
