PITT HYDE
AUTOZONE ENTREPRENEUR
EYES NEW HORIZONS
IN PHILANTHROPY
The inaugural Mempho Music Fest rocked Shelby Farms Park in October. Diego Winegardner ’87, now living in New York, conceived the idea for the festival during a trip home after friends Ricky Heros ’86 and Pierce Ledbetter ’85 took him for a bike ride through the newly renovated park. Winegardner hopes he can build the event into one of the country’s top-tier festivals, along the lines of Austin City Limits or Chicago’s Lollapalooza. “I felt that Shelby Farms Park was as nice as any site in America and also felt it was the right time for Memphis to reintroduce itself as a destination for all music lovers.” The band Cold War Kids, pictured here, performed on opening night. Photo courtesy of Keith Griner/Mempho Music Fest.
First Impressions

I write this on a cold but beautiful December day in Memphis. It is a milestone, of sorts, in that it has been exactly six months since my wife, Tracey, and I moved into the Headmaster’s House. The following week, I moved into the Headmaster’s Office and started my tenure here. Six months is too early to issue pronouncements or draw conclusions – especially given the school’s 125-year history – but I can offer some first impressions.

“This is a school for a lifetime.” I encountered this quote while reading about MUS when I was a candidate for the headmaster position. In my brief time here, I have learned that this is, indeed, a school for a lifetime. It is clear in the remarkable devotion alumni have for the school and in the positive influence they have in their communities. As I have come to know Memphis better each week, I have found MUS connections at nearly every organization and civic group in the city. I have also found that the footprint of the school goes well beyond our beautiful East Memphis campus, and beyond western Tennessee.

In October I was part of a delegation that traveled to New York City for an evening reception with more than 60 alumni and friends. In addition, eight Manhattan alumni took time from their working day in that busiest of cities to meet with us. They had stories to tell of their careers and families, but what they wanted most to talk about was MUS. They wanted to know my thoughts on the school and, more important, they wanted the new headmaster to know how much MUS means to them, how their teachers and coaches helped shape them into the men they are today.

The faculty has always been a strong point for the school. The teachers are well-versed in their subjects – three-quarters have advanced degrees in their fields. As impressive as that is, I have also been struck by how well our instructors connect with the boys. I have been able to observe over 20 teachers in the classroom so far, and I have seen them interact with students during their free periods. In my Parents Back-to-School Day address, I talked about an experience I had when I needed to speak with a certain teacher. I tried to reach him after school, but his office was filled with students. I tried between periods, but he was explaining points of a lesson he had just taught. I tried before school and he, again, was with students. Finally, I was able to speak with him during a free period just before a cadre of boys approached him again. I have discovered that this kind of dedication and connection is not an exception at MUS; it’s the rule. Our boys are fortunate to have access to this exceptional group of educators.

Parents I have met seem to appreciate the work of our teachers, coaches, and counselors, and they express respect for the school’s mission. Even when questions or concerns have arisen, I have gotten a keen sense of their support for MUS. Such a supportive parent body is essential for the success of a school. On a personal note, so many parents have given Tracey and me a welcome that we will never forget. Whether sitting with them in the stands at a game or running into them at the grocery store, we have appreciated their friendliness and hospitality. We have felt that same welcoming spirit from so many in the community – alumni, faculty, staff, board members – which has made our transition to MUS and Memphis smooth and enjoyable.

By the time you read this, we will be well into the second semester, and I will be teaching a section of U.S. History to freshmen. I am looking forward to getting back into the classroom. I also eagerly anticipate meeting more of you, perhaps learning what has made MUS your school for a lifetime and how we can continue that legacy.

Thanks to all who have welcomed us, shared your thoughts with us, and given us a great start here.

Happy New Year … and Go, Owls!
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Visionary philanthropist and entrepreneur Joseph R. “Pitt” Hyde III ’61 recently retired from the MUS Board of Trustees, but his persistent efforts to improve our larger community continue. With education reform and riverfront redevelopment still on his plate, his work through the Hyde Family Foundations continues to benefit Memphis and its residents. “We’ve got a fully loaded program,” he says, “but there’s always something new that comes up.”

Photo by Lisa Buser
Epiphany of Gifts

After a knock-your-Christmas-stockings-off Beg To Differ and Studio Band concert, I spied drummer Caleb Riggs ’19 among the crowd of beaming musicians and laudatory fans in Hyde Chapel. Performing Johnny B. Goode, Caleb had not only rocked the drums but belted a solo that would have made Chuck Berry proud.

“Caleb, I didn’t know you were so talented!” I exclaimed.

“I didn’t either!” he responded, his face reflecting genuine amazement – and not a hint of hubris.

I suspect he is not the only young musician astonished by how far he has come. From I Want You Back, the opening number – for the first time – of a second Studio Band, to the traditional closing Beg To Differ song, It’s Alright, performances kept concertgoers jumping to their feet. Two days earlier the two-year-old MUS Orchestra, Jazz Ensemble, and Owl Strings had captivated the audience with their musicianship.

Later that week I watched Lower School robotics engineers working together in Garrett Smithson’s science classroom. Boys who, a year or so ago, did not know a drive train from a motor controller had planned and built a robot that – if all goes well – delivers a series of cones to stationary and mobile targets and operates autonomously for 15 seconds. This day the students were working out design flaws through trial and error and collaboration. Boisterous collaboration.

Seventh graders are still learning the team-project process, Smithson explained. “They find themselves challenged to work with others, communicate ideas, compromise. They may yell out their opinion rather than listening to teammates, expressing their ideas clearly, and making a decision based on time, knowledge, and likelihood of success.”

Around the corner, in a newly formed maker space (one of several here), the freshman team appeared to be listening, expressing ideas clearly, and making decisions based on time, knowledge, and likelihood of success as they studiously programmed and tested their creations. “The new ninth-grade team has shown mastery in the art of teamwork,” Smithson said. “They work as a seamless unit.”

MUS seems to incubate this kind of interaction, growth, and self-discovery. Students benefit from expert instruction, of course, but there is something more I’ve seen here – the encouragement to try and, perhaps more important, the freedom to fail, that is so much a part of the culture. Surrounded by this culture – and by other motivated students – there is a synergistic effect. The proof is in our alumni and their stories, including many in this issue:

Oh, to be a fly on the wall for conversations between AutoZone founder Pitt Hyde ’61 and FedEx founder Fred Smith ’62 when they were in Upper School. Smith remembers his schoolmate as an innate leader. “Even in those early days [he] was interested in business,” Smith said. “He talked in depth about it often.” Researching her story about Hyde (page 12), Managing Editor Marci Woodmansee learned that the two entrepreneurs still get together for lunch.

When Memphis and Shelby County Juvenile Court Judge Dan Michael ’72 transferred from public school as a sophomore, the son of a service-station owner worried he might not fit in. “I learned very quickly [the faculty] weren’t real concerned about your background. They were real concerned about your brain. They were committed to the fact that they could teach you to love to learn.” (See page 6.)

In November, we learned that Massachusetts Institute of Technology senior Nick Schwartz ’14 won a prestigious Marshall Scholarship that will soon land him at Imperial College London for his master’s in physics with extended research. (See Class News, page 52.) “I’m extremely grateful for MUS being such an immense part of shaping me into the type of person that I want to be,” he wrote to Upper School Principal Barry Ray. “I could especially see the values that MUS taught me shine in the interview. My ideals, shortcomings, and successes were all challenged, and because of MUS, I was able to stand up for and have confidence in my beliefs and background.”

With each issue of MUS Today, we learn more stories of boys – now men – incubated within these halls. And we continue to be astonished by their accomplishments. Maybe they are, too.
Every weekday morning at 6:30, Memphis and Shelby County Juvenile Court Judge Dan Michael ’72 reads an email that lists the children held in the detention facility at the courthouse. Most are boys. Truancy and shoplifting are rare. This day, he’s got four capital murder cases, weapons charges, aggravated robbery, and carjacking.
A recognizable presence in cowboy hat and bow tie, Judge Dan Michael is halfway through his eight-year term with Memphis and Shelby County Juvenile Court. Photo by Karen Pulfer Focht.
Some live in violent homes and become violent children. Juveniles who aren’t old enough to drive commit some of the most heinous crimes in the city. Michael decides whether these boys will be judged as men.

In his 22 years working for the juvenile court system, the last four as judge, he has become convinced the system of justice and punishment needs radical changes that recognize what researchers have proven: The human brain isn’t fully developed until around age 25.

Michael says it’s something people in the judicial system have known anecdotally for a while. It’s a truth revealed in neurology and psychology, he told students and faculty at a recent MUS assembly.

“If we’re going to continue to treat juveniles as little adults – and a lot of the community says if they do adult crime they should do adult time – we’re ignoring the science that is in front of us, that juveniles are not little adults,” Michael said. “They do not process information the same way.”

Neuroscientist Dr. Frances Jensen offers support for this argument in her book *The Teenage Brain: A Neuroscientist’s Survival Guide to Raising Adolescents and Young Adults* (Harper Paperbacks, 2016). She explains that the connections to the prefrontal cortex – the area responsible for decision-making and planning – are not fully developed until the mid-20s, and the emotions, ruled by the limbic system, can take over.

“Don’t take me lightly. I’m not soft on crime,” Michael says. “There are people in our community who because of biological issues or other emotional issues do not need to be members of society. They are dangerous. But the fact is, the vast majority of those dangerous people represent a very small population of the people who wind up in juvenile facilities and in adult facilities. The science is critical.”

So halfway into his eight-year term as judge, Michael is talking to Tennessee lawmakers and anyone else who will listen about major changes he wants in how young adults are handled in the justice system. He’s part of a state blue-ribbon task force charged with making policy recommendations to state legislators for changes in the laws affecting juveniles.

In recent years several programs have been implemented to improve the Shelby County juvenile justice system. (See sidebar on page 9.) Over the past five years, Michael says, the number of children and teens transported to juvenile court by police has dropped 78 percent.

Michael applauds recent developments as he seeks further revisions based on neuroscience. “Give me a system where we can train these young adult [offenders], up through the point that brains are better matured,” he says. “Release them into the community with probation and supervision, help them become productive citizens, then expunge records when they become 25 if they’ve kept their noses clean. You’ll begin to lower crime. I could save about 90 percent of the kids.

“Would it not be smarter on our behalf to reeducate people while they are in prison, make sure they get their high school diploma, make sure they come out with a journeyman’s license in electrical or plumbing, or make sure they’re in their second year of college?”

**THE BOY FROM SHERWOOD FOREST**

Michael grew up in Sherwood Forest, a blue-collar neighborhood with storybook street names – Friar Tuck Road and Maid Marian Lane. It was far from the mean streets and violent, neglectful homes of many juveniles who fill Michael’s docket – the ones whose brutality is laid bare in his courtroom.

His father, Julian Michael, owned service stations, not gas stations, Michael says. The difference is the reason he’s a judge today. Service. For his dad that meant being the best, friendliest place where he would do anything to make customers happy. His flagship Esso station opened in 1954, the year Michael
was born. The little station on Park Avenue across from Eastgate Shopping Center became a stop for regulars, people who passed other service stations to get to Michael’s business. Later, he opened two more stations.

Michael grew up with three sisters. He remembers a calm and stable home life – the children did their homework, obeyed their parents. They walked to Sherwood Elementary. Michael was an easygoing boy – the worst trouble he got into was crossing Barron, a busy street, without permission from his mother, Pinky. After several years, the Michael family could afford to build a new house on Yorkshire in a growing part of East Memphis.

In the summer Michael and friends rode bikes miles from home. They explored a gravel pit where the interstate would be built. They poked around the Wolf River or just rode around the neighborhood.

“The rule was you came home at dinnertime. And if you weren’t home, your mother would come out and start hollering for you,” Michael says.

When he was 10 years old, he started working at the service station every Saturday. His job: Fill up the candy and Coke machines, count the change, roll it up. When he got older he worked in the summer, graduating to washing cars, pumping gas, and fixing flats. He also learned how to be a mechanic.

Michael met Debby Nichols, the girl he would marry, during study hall in ninth grade at Colonial Junior High School. They dated through high school and have been married 44 years.

It was near the end of junior high that Michael’s father told him he was sending him to a school for boys his sophomore year. Michael wanted to go to Overton High School with his friends and Debby. His father insisted Michael get a better education to prepare for college, but he softened the news by letting his son pick: Christian Brothers High School or MUS.

The choice came down to a necktie. He visited CBHS first. The boys wore ties every day. That wouldn’t do.

At MUS students wore a tie only on Fridays. Sold. But Michael, whose father came home with grease under his nails, wondered if he would fit in at a school filled with the sons of doctors and lawyers.

“I learned very quickly [the faculty] weren’t real concerned about your background. They were real concerned about your brain. They were committed to the fact that they could teach you to love to learn. They didn’t approach it from a public-school perspective of sit there, be quiet; we’re going to pour information into you. They expected you to do the hard work.”

His favorite teacher was Ellis Haguewood, who taught English.

“I’ll never forget him because he challenged you to read something then talk about it from your perspective,” Michael says. “And he always respected your perspective. Smart as a whip. Dry wit, oh my gosh. He was really, really good at imparting. ‘You’re smart; you can figure this out yourself.”

FINDING ALTERNATIVES TO JUVENILE COURT

During Judge Dan Michael’s tenure, several programs have been developed and implemented to reduce the number of children entering the Shelby County Juvenile Court system, including the following:

- School House Adjustment Program Enterprise (S.H.A.P.E.) is an alternative to Juvenile Court for students who commit minor infractions within Shelby County Schools. Learn more at www.scsk12.org/shape.

- Law Enforcement Assessment Phone-In (LEAP) allows law enforcement officers to call the Juvenile Court’s detention facility intake office to determine if a youth would be detained (based on the court’s detention assessment tool) if transported. If the youth would not be detained, then the officers do not need to transport.

- The Center for Health in Justice Involved Youth at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center, under the direction of psychiatrist Dr. Altha Stewart, accepts youth referred from Juvenile Court. The center aims to reduce the number of young people in the juvenile justice system by addressing the trauma and exposure to violence that often contribute to the behavior that lands them there.

- In collaboration with the Memphis Shelby Crime Commission’s Operation: Safe Community, the Juvenile Court and local officials recently announced an effort to establish a youth assessment center. “This center would serve any juvenile who is alleged to have broken the law, work to divert them from the juvenile justice system, prevent them from getting a record, and intervene immediately to help them overcome their behavior,” Michael says.
Headmaster Emeritus Haguewood says Michael, whose hair was long, stood out in a class of less than 70 boys. “He didn’t grow up at a country club. He rode a bicycle to school. He wore Elvis sideburns. He didn’t make top grades. He was street smart,” Haguewood says. “He loved to talk about political and social issues. He had a great heart for other people and his fellow students.”

“Dan was a standout among a school full of outstanding people,” says his friend Linton Weeks ’72, an editor and reporter for The Washington Post for 19 years and national digital correspondent at National Public Radio for eight years.

“He worked at his father’s service stations, which gave him invaluable real-world experience that he brought into the classroom. When Dan spoke, it was with a lot of heft and a lot of heart,” Weeks says.

“Even as a teenager, he was kind, and deliberate, and thoughtful with a keen sense of social justice. And a delightfully original mind. Those character traits drew me to him as a friend, and I’m sure that those same traits make him a damn fine judge today.”

SERVICE STATIONS TO CIVIC SERVICE

After high school Michael and Debby married while he was earning his degree in philosophy at the University of Memphis. He bought a couple of gas stations, intending to carry on the family business with his father, and he enrolled in the university’s MBA program, working nights at his gas stations.

During this time, he and Debby had two children, Jennifer Swinehart, a paralegal, is now a stay-at-home mom who lives in Enterprise, AL, with her husband, Jack, and daughter, Lauren. Matthew owns a plumbing business in Gilpin, CO, where he lives with his wife, Ali, and daughter, Cora Lee.

When he was just 10 credits shy of his MBA, Michael realized he didn’t want to be a businessman; he wanted to be a lawyer. He took the entrance test and was accepted at the Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law at the University of Memphis.

While in law school Michael volunteered to be a court-appointed special advocate for children in the juvenile court system. His job was to protect children and be willing to make tough recommendations, including terminating parental rights. He began to see another world where children weren’t cherished, education wasn’t encouraged, and poverty suffocated dreams.

This experience helped set his course for public-service law over more lucrative sectors. By then he had sold his gas stations, which gave the family enough income to compensate for his decision. Another factor was his father’s influence. When Michael went to work at the service station, his dad paid him with two paychecks. One was his regular pay. “The other was 10 percent of my salary,” he says. “I had to open two bank accounts. I could do whatever I wanted with my salary, but the 10 percent was for charity.”

His father’s motto: “Learn, earn, and return.”

“He told me, ‘You’ll learn for the rest of your life, but once you get through your formal education, then your job is to earn. Once you have reached a point in your earnings, you have to always give back,’” Michael says.

It was through his work as a children’s advocate that Juvenile Court Judge Kenneth Turner took notice. Once Michael passed the bar exam, Turner asked him to become his legal counsel at the court. In 1998 the American Bar Association of Young Lawyers awarded Michael the Child Advocacy National Certificate of Recognition for “Significant Legal Contribution to Advancing the Welfare of our Nation’s Children.” He later became a magistrate, and in 2014, he was elected judge.

Michael stands about 6-foot-2-inches tall, a couple inches taller in cowboy boots. He’s bearded, bow-tied, and bald, nearly. He wears a cowboy hat every day and blue jeans under his robe on the staff’s Blue Jean Fridays.

While he works a high-profile job, he and Debby keep things low-key. They expanded their screened porch to make it more comfortable for reading, their favorite hobby. He’s a skillful cook who makes a mean jambalaya and chili while his speakers blare songs from his phone’s playlist. It’s a mix where Buffalo Springfield meets The Black-Eyed Peas, where Elvis and Jimi Hendrix take turns along with John Denver and Munford and Sons. The couple has a flat-screen television, but no cable, just rabbit ears. The last time it was turned on was the night of the presidential election.

They live far enough, on the edge of Shelby and Fayette County, that it takes him...
an hour in his pickup truck to get Downtown to work. He spends that time listening to NPR or his own music.

VIEW FROM THE BENCH

Once he gets to 616 Adams and puts on his robe, the gravity of the day sets in as he deals with children whose lives seemed predisposed for criminal activity because of abuse and neglect. He tells a story, one of many, of a boy born with cocaine in his bloodstream. When he was a toddler, the boy’s aunt burned the soles of his feet with an iron after the child urinated on the floor. He lived with a distant uncle, who sexually abused him. The child was returned to his mother, and the two fought a lot. Michael saw the boy in and out of his court on domestic violence charges until his most recent charge at age 14: murder.

Research has shown that the effect of early trauma – known clinically as adverse childhood experiences or ACEs – may alter a young person’s emotional responses and set the stage for future antisocial behavior.

“What we know about this young man’s brain is that from birth, he was in fight-or-flight mode. He didn’t know where the next blow was coming from, and that’s an adrenaline dump that [continues] constantly.”

There are commonalities in these juvenile offenders’ lives that can’t be dismissed, Michael says. This is the reason he is working to convince lawmakers and community leaders to consider alternative justice that educates offenders and helps resolve underlying trauma and mental health issues, so when they are released they have a chance at becoming law-abiding, productive members of society.

“When you’re beaten down by poverty, hunger, lack of an education, lack of transportation, living in a dangerous neighborhood, it’s hard to see tomorrow,” he says. “It’s not an excuse, but it’s a reason.”

Cindy Wolff is a freelance writer based in Memphis.

JUVENILE COURT REFORMS: DUE PROCESS, EQUAL PROTECTION, SAFETY FROM HARM

Since he was elected in 2014, Memphis and Shelby County Juvenile Court Judge Dan Michael has led the court in reforms and procedural changes that were required under a Memorandum of Agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice. According to Michael, this is the first time in the DOJ’s history that it has entered into an MOA as opposed to bringing suit. He provided the following details:

“The Department of Justice and the Juvenile Court entered into a Memorandum of Agreement on December 17, 2012, after a five-year investigation revealed the court was lacking policies, procedures, and practices in three major areas: due process, equal protection, and safety from harm. The first area focused on court process in transfer hearings where children may be transferred to the adult system for trial. The second area focused on the disproportionate overrepresentation of minority children in the system. The last area focused on the safety of children in the detention center awaiting trial.

“In a recent letter from the Department of Justice concerning the termination of the MOA, Acting Assistant Attorney General of the Civil Rights Division John M. Gore wrote recognizing our successful completion and termination of 42 subsections of the MOA by stating ‘we acknowledge your leadership and the commitment of your staff to compliance with the Agreement.’

“He also stated that ‘this steady movement toward sustained, substantial compliance with the entire MOA is promising. We are confident that, based on the county’s continuing and, to date, successful efforts to achieve compliance, we will be able to successfully terminate the remaining provisions’.”

DOJ officials were scheduled to issue a new report on the county’s efforts to date in December. This report was not available at press time.

As part of the Juvenile Court’s agreement with the Department of Justice, an online dashboard provides information about the court’s progress with the provisions. See it here: dashboard.shelbycountytn.gov.
Shelby Farms Park

After some eight years of planning, design, and construction, Shelby Farms Park – one of the largest urban parks in America – unveiled $70 million worth of enhancements in the fall of 2016. Thanks were due in large part to the leadership and generosity of Barbara and Pitt Hyde, pictured here at the park, whose $20 million challenge grant in 2008 got the project rolling. The expanded Hyde Lake, named in their honor, is the jewel in the center of the recreational oasis. Shelby Farms Park is just one of many initiatives brought to fruition through the philanthropy of the Hydes. See more areas of influence on “The Power of Pitt” pages in this story.
Visionary entrepreneur J.R. “Pitt” Hyde III ’61 continues transformational work in Memphis through his Hyde Family Foundations, a remarkable follow-up to his extraordinary business career.
On the coffee table in Pitt Hyde’s living room, there’s a beautiful hardback book titled, _The Bucket List: 1000 Adventures Big & Small_. It was a gift last year from his wife, Barbara, in celebration of his adventurous spirit, in anticipation of his 75th birthday (which was December 27), and in the hopes that he might, at long last, set aside some time for himself.

The hitch is, Pitt Hyde is a busy man. Although he recently retired from the MUS Board of Trustees after 43 years (see sidebar, page 20), he shows no signs of slowing down on other projects, which include continuing work on education reform in Memphis and a new effort to revitalize the riverfront that includes moving the Memphis Brooks Museum of Art to Downtown.

Having an inside track on the workings of a business was invaluable in gaining an understanding of the management process, but Hyde clearly had a knack for it. FedEx founder and CEO Fred Smith ’62, recently included on _Forbes_ list of 100 Greatest Living Business Minds, first met Pitt at Presbyterian Day School and recalls that his business sense was emerging even during their high school days.

“While Pitt had a good sense of humor and a wide circle of friends, he had great innate leadership traits, and even in those early years was interested in business,” Smith says. “He talked in depth about it often.”

Voted Most Likely to Succeed as an MUS senior – and with experience as the yearbook business manager and Youth for Nixon county campaign chairman under his belt – Hyde went on to the University of North Carolina, graduating in 1965 with a degree in economics. He returned home to begin working with his family, and his leadership skills soon were tapped when
Malone & Hyde
*Founded by Joseph R. Hyde, Sr., in 1907; sold in 1988 to Fleming Companies*

Pitt Hyde’s introduction to the family business in Memphis started as a child with Saturday morning visits to his grandfather’s grocery stores in the late ’40s. By the time he was a teenager, he was working in stores. The company went public in 1961, introducing its own Hyde Park food products a year later and opening the first Super D Drug Store in 1966. Hyde became president of the company at age 26 in 1968, and upon his father’s retirement in 1972, took over as CEO. Hyde ended up expanding the company into the nation’s third-largest wholesale food distributor.

AutoZone
*First Auto Shack store opened in Forrest City, AR, in 1979*

An interest in diversification – in a market segment with a higher profit margin than groceries – prompted Hyde’s entry into the automotive parts business. In 1986 his Auto Shack line spun out of Malone & Hyde and, the following year, the company became AutoZone. The very first store manager, Doc Crain, coined a phrase, WITTDTJR (what it takes to do the job right) that came to define the company’s commitment to providing customers the parts and products they needed. By the time Hyde retired as CEO and chairman in 1997, AutoZone was a Fortune 500 company with more than $8 billion in annual sales. The leading retailer and distributor of automotive replacement parts and accessories in the U.S., the chain recently celebrated the opening of its 6,000th store, which is located in Memphis.

National Civil Rights Museum
*Established in 1991 at the former Lorraine Motel, the site of civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s assassination*

As the young president of Malone & Hyde in 1968, one of Pitt Hyde’s earliest tasks was meeting with local leaders of the civil rights movement who were organizing protests in front of the company’s grocery stores and other locations in the wake of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s assassination on April 4. Forging positive relationships with these leaders, coupled with his conviction that the city needed to preserve the Lorraine Motel as a historic site, led to his leadership in establishing the National Civil Rights Museum. Since its inception, the museum has presented annual Freedom Awards to individuals who battle for human rights both in the United States and worldwide.
After his prostate cancer diagnosis in 1996 and subsequent recovery, Pitt Hyde’s interest in supporting medical research and treatment for men’s health issues escalated, leading to his investment in GTx, a biopharmaceutical company, and his involvement in the creation of Memphis Bioworks Foundation, which is helping create local companies, jobs, and investments in bioscience. He’s also supporting the new Memphis Medical District Collaborative and its efforts to strengthen and enhance the appeal of the medical center area. “While there are very vibrant businesses with some 16,000 employees, right now they just drive in and drive out,” he says. “We’ve got a vibrant Downtown and vibrant Midtown [on either side], so what we want to do is make a seamless experience not just for work, but work, live, and play.”

**Education Reform**

*Support and advocacy for reform began in the late 1990s and continues today*

The Hydes’ initial foray into educational reform began with support for St. Andrew’s AME Church and its Circles of Success Learning Academy. In 2001 they helped bring KIPP Diamond Academy to Memphis. Hyde personally lobbied the Tennessee General Assembly in 2002 to get the state’s first charter school law passed. The Hydes’ efforts gained attention and momentum with the city’s award of $90 million from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in 2009 and the state’s receipt of $500 million in Race to the Top federal funding in 2010. They remain generous and wide-reaching in their support of education equity for all children, whether the vehicle be MUS and other independent schools, Tennessee’s Achievement School District, Shelby County Schools, charter schools, Catholic Jubilee Schools, or the Memphis Teacher Residency program. Hyde calls their educational reform efforts a “forever” project.

**Memphis Tomorrow**

*Founded in 2001 by Hyde and Storage USA CEO Dean Jernigan*

The 26 CEOs in this association, representing Memphis’ largest businesses, are engaged in fostering prosperity and quality of life for all who live in the Memphis community. The group is committed to impacting economic growth and opportunity and investing where there is a promise of maximum socioeconomic return.
his father became ill, necessitating that he take over as president of the company in 1968. He has often called it "the ultimate baptism by fire."

But lessons learned early had stuck. Within a decade he had increased the company’s sales volume and gotten the company listed on the New York Stock Exchange. And like many wise businessmen, he began looking to diversify, which led to the founding of AutoZone, a success story equally well-known in business circles.

Staking its claim on customer service and on doing whatever it took to do the job right, the automotive parts retailer took off, growing from one store – then called Auto Shack – in 1979 into a Fortune 500 company with $8 billion in annual sales and some 6,000 stores today. Hyde had learned from an early mentor, Wal-Mart founder Sam Walton, the importance of strong employee morale and a customer-first culture; that has remained a defining characteristic of the company since its inception.

Hyde frames his entrepreneurial success in simple terms: "It’s all about hard work, perseverance, and belief in oneself and the concept you’re pursuing. The idea or concept is about 5 percent of it; 95 percent is the implementation, which is the really tough stuff."

Hyde’s gift for implementation has been matched by a keen sense of timing. In 1988, having grown Malone & Hyde into the nation’s third-largest wholesale food distributor with annual sales of over $3 billion, he sold the company. In 1997, after building AutoZone into the largest auto parts and accessories retailer in the country, he stepped down as CEO and chairman. There were other goals to tackle.

PHILANTHROPIC FOCUS

Pitt Hyde’s grandfather was 77 years old in 1961 when he formalized his lifelong commitment to philanthropy by founding the J.R. Hyde Sr. Family Foundation.

"Besides teaching me the business and entrepreneurship and all, both [he and my father] were huge believers in giving back to the community in which you’ve been able to grow and prosper,” Hyde said.

PHILANTHROPIC FOCUS

In this undated photo, from left, Col. Ross M. Lynn, Gene Thorn, former Board Chairman Buddy Morrison, and Joseph R. Hyde, Jr. gather on the steps of Humphreys Hall.

Hyde says, “My grandfather was highly focused on his church, which was Mullins United Methodist. My father was also a great believer [in philanthropy] and very generous in giving to the community. But his primary interest was MUS.”

As a member of Second Presbyterian Church and friend of then-PDS Headmaster Col. Ross M. Lynn, Joseph R. Hyde, Jr. was on hand for the restart of MUS, becoming an 11-year charter member of the new board charged with resurrecting the college-prep school with the sterling reputation that had closed in 1936. Joe Hyde’s son, Pitt, would enroll in the first seventh-grade class of the newly reopened school in the fall of 1955.

"Hot and dusty!" Pitt says with a laugh, recalling the early days of the new school. "They were still finishing the campus."

Joe Hyde, Jr. was extremely generous to Pitt’s new school. He donated funds to build the chapel, dedicated in 1962 in memory of his mother, Ruth. A plaque outside the Headmaster’s Office also signifies a gift in memory of his mother. In 1967 he made a gift of $250,000 as a challenge donation in the school’s building-fund drive. A Commercial Appeal article about the gift quoted him: “I think we have one of the finest prep schools in the country, and I think everybody should be proud of it.”

His gifts helped build the Joseph R. Hyde, Jr. Library Learning Center, dedicated in 1971. An endowed chair for the English Department was established by the family in 1963 and renamed in 1977 in memory of his late wife, Sue. Shortly thereafter Joe Hyde gave $500,000 to launch an endowment fundraising campaign and establish an honor scholarship program that would initially provide three full-tuition scholarships to help “bright young men... obtain a good education,” Hyde said. Tuition at the time was $3,000 per year.

In 1990 Joe Hyde and his son, Pitt, partnered to fund the building of the Sue H. Hyde Sports and Physical Education Center. Shortly thereafter, Joe Hyde passed away, but his giving to the school continued with a $2 million-plus bequest in his will for additional scholarships. In a Commercial Appeal article reporting the gift December 23, 1990, Headmaster Gene Thorn said, "[Joe Hyde] was interested in education and believed strongly in what our school stood for. He wanted to help young men who were able and deserving but couldn’t pay their way through school."

Joe Hyde, Jr.’s $2 million gift funded an endowment that has grown to $21 million today and provides scores of need-based scholarships annually.

In addition to partnering with his father to build the new gymnasium, Pitt Hyde’s largesse toward MUS has included the funding of an annual supplemental
stipend for leading teachers for some 35 years now. The wider philanthropic net he has cast in Memphis has also benefited countless other deserving organizations and initiatives.

TRANSFORMING A COMMUNITY

One of Pitt Hyde’s first major philanthropic endeavors – helping establish the National Civil Rights Museum – had its seeds in his business experience during the years following Martin Luther King Jr’s assassination in Memphis in 1968. "How I got to know the leadership in the whole civil rights movement and the African-American community so well, was that after [King’s assassination in] 1968, there were protests, and to garner attention of the press, [often] the first thing they’d do is put up a picket line in front of a neighborhood supermarket,” Hyde recalls. “Well, at the time we had 70 percent market share, so inevitably it was one of our stores, and of course these leaders insisted on meeting with the president of the company, who was me.

“I must have negotiated with everybody under the sun during that period,” he says. “The positive side of it was that we developed a mutual respect for one another.”

As years passed, there were people in city leadership who wanted to tear down the Lorraine Motel, which had closed, to try to erase the memory of that awful episode from the city’s past. Pitt Hyde didn’t see that as an appropriate option. "Along with some of the African-American leadership, I felt that we needed to take that tragic site and transform it into something positive, for our city and for the country. That’s how I got involved from day one on the museum. I think it’s served a very good purpose of helping to heal wounds as well as being a place where we can recognize heroes and heroines of the civil rights movement, and honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr."

While many in Memphis are aware that Hyde also played a key role in leading the pursuit team that brought the Grizzlies to Memphis in 2001, few would categorize it among his charitable endeavors. But his motivation was altruistic.

“When I got involved leading the pursuit to get the team, I hadn’t even been to an NBA game,” he says. “But my main interest – I was convinced – was that it was something that would bring the community together, give something to the city that everybody could cheer about and embrace.”

That motivation remains a common thread in Hyde’s endeavors and helps explain how his giving has evolved and how it differs from the earlier philanthropy of his family.

“My father and grandfather supported institutions like MUS or various successful charities; they were more traditional in their giving,” he says. "With Barbara and me, the big shift was [in trying] to initiate change, to change public policy. That’s how we got involved in the longest effort we have going, K-12 education reform.”

Barbara Hyde’s previous experience as a fundraiser at their alma mater, UNC, has lent valuable perspective to the change they hope to achieve and to the role she now fills as chair and CEO of the Hyde Family Foundations. Pitt and Barbara’s brand of philanthropy has rewarded innovation, accountability, and high-impact outcomes. They put both time and treasure into entities that pique their interest and have proven their merit in the community. Delivering educational equity to all children in Memphis is a huge priority, and they are committed to the idea that every family should have high-quality options, public or private.

“We’ve been in this for over 20 years now,” Pitt says. “And fortunately, we’ve finally made tremendous progress. The State of Tennessee is the fastest-improving state in the country in education reform.”

“There’s still a long way to go,” Barbara says. “That’s going to be the work of our lifetime.”

Fortunately, trying to initiate change through projects that benefit the entire community sometimes moves a little more quickly and easily, as it did with the revitalization of Shelby Farms Park. A $20 million challenge grant by the Hydes catalyzed the campaign, and Barbara helped lead the effort as board chair for the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy. The former Patriot Lake in the Heart of the Park was renamed Hyde Lake in recognition of their support. Pitt says he loved that project because it was one that everyone instantly embraced.

“There wasn’t any controversy associated with it, everyone loves it, so, hooray,” he says with a laugh. “I think because we tried to set the bar very high, and more than exceed people’s expectations, the enthusiasm for the park has been huge. The connecting bike trails and hiking paths have just been embraced by the community, so that one has been tremendous fun.”

Urban revitalization – and its potential impact on a community – is much on Hyde’s mind of late. He saw that impact firsthand when he moved AutoZone’s headquarters from the center of the city on Poplar to Downtown’s Front Street in 1995, at a time when Downtown was still very underdeveloped.

“It wasn’t built up at all,” he said. “I had two motivations there. One, for years I thought it was a shame we didn’t take advantage of this terrific bluff and vista we have, and I thought it would make a great location for the headquarters. And two, I was hopeful it would stimulate development down there, which it certainly did.”

Today, Hyde is excited about the latest riverfront revitalization plan: the move of the Brooks Museum to the bluff. He sees the land along the river as having the same potential as Shelby Farms Park did before its recent upgrades.

“It really hasn’t been developed to make it the kind of attraction it has the potential to become,” he says. “So we think if we take the same approach we did at Shelby Farms, to really raise the bar and do something great for the city, it could have a huge payoff.”

Continued on page 20
NBA Pursuit Team

*Grizzlies brought to Memphis in 2001*

Various groups had attempted to woo professional sports teams to Memphis before with little success, but that all changed when Pitt Hyde put his formidable powers of negotiation and persuasion to work acquiring an ownership stake in the NBA’s Vancouver Grizzlies and relocating the team to Memphis. Even though he had never been to an NBA game, he saw potential for the team to serve as a unifying force for the city. It worked. Seven years of playoff appearances and players who support the community continue to fuel the city’s grit and grind.

Arts Community

*Ongoing support continues to enhance the city’s cultural landscape*

The belief that a world-class city requires world-class assets has helped fuel the Hydes’ support of creative and artistic pursuits in the community. Their support has included matching gifts to the city’s ArtsMemphis grant-making organization, as well as direct contributions to organizations, including the Memphis Brooks Museum of Art, Ballet Memphis, Memphis College of Art, the Memphis Symphony, The Memphis Rock ‘n’ Soul Museum, Stax Museum and Soulsville Music Academy, and the Blues Foundation.

Riverfront and Downtown Development

*Early support of Downtown continues today*

Moving AutoZone’s corporate office from its original location on Poplar to Front Street in 1995 was a strong testament to Pitt Hyde’s belief in the importance of a vibrant Downtown. As he hoped, the relocation catalyzed subsequent Downtown development, and he followed it by moving Pittco Management and the Hyde Family Foundations office – and significant art collection – Downtown in 2003. The newest project he is excited about? Riverfront revitalization and “moving the Brooks to the bluff.”
Longest-Serving Trustee Retires After 43 Years

AutoZone founder and philanthropist Pitt Hyde ’61 announced his retirement from the Board of Trustees last August after serving from 1968-1984 and 1990-2017 for a total of 43 years.

“I was looking back to when I first came on this board, and the fact that I couldn’t remember suggests that it’s a good time to retire,” Hyde said. “I also felt very comfortable retiring because we’ve never had a more outstanding board than we have today, and we have chosen – and chosen very well – [Pete] [Sanders] as our headmaster.

“My son [Alex] ’17 graduated this past year and is now at Chapel Hill, and he couldn’t say more great things about this school. My older son [Bo] ’92, founder of Cherry Road Films] used to say, ‘I’ve never seen a school where every kid I ever met who went here talks about what a fantastic experience it has been for them.’ This school could not be in better shape.

“A close-knit couple, Barbara and Pitt recently celebrated their 25th anniversary, which Barbara says included Pitt re-proposing and the couple renewing their vows. They are well-matched and well-suited for their work in Memphis. Pitt’s two older children, Margaret and Bo ’92, are board members for the Hyde Family Foundations and supportive of the work being done in Memphis. Pitt and Barbara are looking forward to engaging their three younger children, Susannah, Claire, and Alex ’17, more directly in the work as they complete their educations.

PHILANTHROPY FOR THE FUTURE

A close-knit couple, Barbara and Pitt recently celebrated their 25th anniversary, which Barbara says included Pitt re-proposing and the couple renewing their vows. They are well-matched and well-suited for their work in Memphis. Pitt’s two older children, Margaret and Bo ’92, are board members for the Hyde Family Foundations and supportive of the work being done in Memphis. Pitt and Barbara are looking forward to engaging their three younger children, Susannah, Claire, and Alex ’17, more directly in the work as they complete their educations.

LEAVING A LEGACY

The payoff would be creating a more livable, engaging city for future generations and all segments of the community to enjoy. The Hydes feel strongly that if they move the needle in Memphis, it could help create a national model for moving the needle in other cities. The drive to make that happen is why Jack Sammons, former chief administrative officer for the City of Memphis, has called Pitt Hyde a guardian angel for Memphis. And why Fred Smith has described him and his wife, Barbara, as nothing less than civic treasures.

Barbara and Pitt were honored this fall with the 2017 William E. Simon Prize for Philanthropic Leadership – a prestigious award that included a $250,000 grant to the charity of their choice. The couple was honored to be named recipients not for themselves, but because of the recognition and attention it brought to Memphis.

“The thing that energizes us the most is not awards like that,” Barbara says, “but when we get to ride our bikes to Shelby Farms and wander around and see all the smiling faces there, and notice that it looks like the United Nations in terms of all the people it serves. That really floats our boat, so to speak.

“The riverfront is like Shelby Farms, the kind of project where you can see the kind of immediate transformational change that benefits a lot of people in Memphis,” she adds. “Those kinds of projects really feed us to do the hard, long-term work of educational reform.”

PHILANTHROPY FOR THE FUTURE

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Barbara credits Pitt’s vision and dedication as essential to the success of their philanthropic endeavors.

“I learn so much from him every day,” she says. “He’s such an inspiration to me. He could have [done] plenty of other things. He’s very steadfast in his commitment, and I find that inspiring – [it’s] just a whole load of fun to get to work on these things together.”

Pitt is grateful for what they have accomplished to date. “One of the great pleasures of having the good fortune of being successful in business is to be in a position to really help transform one’s community in a positive way,

particularly for the less fortunate in the community,” he says. “It’s very rewarding, whether you see people enjoying the park or the riverfront, or seeing kids from impoverished backgrounds [who], because of a quality education, are on a totally different trajectory for their lives. The reward you feel for that is just immeasurable.”

The Hydes’ influence on this community could also be called immeasurable. Fred Smith puts it this way: “Memphis would be a far less livable city without Pitt’s vision and leadership and the great philanthropic endeavors that he and Barbara have led in our city. Their importance to the city is without equal.”

Three generations of visionary entrepreneurs: Joseph R. Hyde, Sr.; Joseph R. Hyde, Jr.; and Pitt Hyde
Halcyon Lynn, 1924-2017

Halcyon Roach Lynn, wife of the late Col. Ross M. Lynn, former headmaster of MUS, passed away September 13, 2017. She was 92. Lynn attended Hutchison School, Stephens College, and Southwestern (now Rhodes College), and taught at Presbyterian Day School.

“She was a remarkable and gracious lady who served our community in numerous ways in addition to being at Col. Lynn’s side during the formative days of MUS,” Board Chairman Sam Graham ’80 said.

Her obituary in The Commercial Appeal noted that she was an avid gardener with a special interest in daylilies, and that for a number of years, her garden on the MUS campus was open to the public during June. She served as chair of the Women’s Division of Shelby United Neighbors (the forerunner of the United Way) and president of the Crippled Children’s Foundation. Over the years she was a member of the Memphis Garden Club, Junior League of Memphis, Tuesday Study Club, Les Passees, the Symphony League, Noel Club, and the Little Club. She was a life member of Dixon Gallery and Gardens and a member of Memphis Country Club.

Headmaster Emeritus Ellis Haguewood, who remembers Lynn well, described her as “the quintessential ‘first lady’ at an all-boys school.”

“She worked as one with Col. Lynn for over two decades during the challenging, seminal work necessary to build the premier academic institution for boys in the Memphis area that we enjoy today,” Haguewood said. “Active in the Memphis community, she contributed substantially to the early development of the school. After the Colonel’s retirement, her educational leadership lived on through the significant longtime board memberships of her sons – Thurston ’64 at St. Christopher’s in Richmond, VA; and Rick ’63 at MUS – and now lives through her trustee grandson, Richard ’98. We are ever in her debt.”

In addition to her sons and grandson (one of 10) listed above, Lynn leaves 14 great-grandchildren, including Owls.

Betty Robinson, 1929-2017

Betty Margolin Robinson, well-loved French teacher from 1968 until 1978 and chair of the Foreign Language Department from 1970 until 1978, died October 2, 2017. The mother of Richard Robinson ’72 and grandmother of Joseph Robinson ’04, Robinson died peacefully at home in Ponte Vedra Beach, FL, next to the ocean she loved. She was 87.

Her obituary noted that Betty, affectionately called Kacky by her family, was born in Memphis on October 15, 1929, to Fannie and Joseph Margolin. She attended the University of Tennessee at Knoxville where she met her husband, Frank. While raising their three children, she received her undergraduate and master’s degrees in French from Memphis State University, both with honors. She taught at Memphis State University as well as MUS. An avid reader, she loved to travel and loved being with her family. She leaves an enduring legacy of dignity, intelligence, and integrity.
WHISKEY REVIVAL

BY CHRISTOPHER BLANK

Photos by Alan Howell
Chris Canale’s great-great-grandfather was once Memphis’ best-known distributor of bourbon whiskey. Now, the 150-year-old Old Dominick label is poised to make a comeback.

A sk Chris Canale, Jr. ’97 what’s been on his mind lately, and he’ll tell you straight up: raising four kids and 1,000 barrels of whiskey.

The children are all under 10 years of age, so they’ve still got a few years to go before they’re ready for market. The oak barrels have been mellowing their boozy contents for less than a year, but in no time they’ll be mature enough to take over the family business.

Or maybe it’s the other way around. Who knows? These are busy, ambitious times for the 39-year-old father of four and a thousand.

“Sometimes I ask myself, ‘What the hell happened?’” Canale laughs, before explaining how, in just four years, he’s become the largest and most promising maker of craft whiskey on Tennessee’s Western frontier.

Oh, and he hasn’t bottled a single drop of it ... yet.

ROUND ONE: THE OLD-FASHIONED

A visitor to 305 S. Front Street in Downtown Memphis might be surprised to find an industrial warehouse still being used for actual commercial purposes, not turned into swanky condos for Millennials. The 100-year-old facade certainly lends the perception of a venerable Memphis operation. On the roof, an enormous neon sign advertises the “Old Dominick Distillery” and resembles something out of a local history book. Just two years ago, there was no sign, nor this building. It was formerly owned by Memphis Machinery & Supply Co., was 54,000-square-feet of emptiness.

Today, a light-filled tasting room in the central atrium smells of high spirits – a heady mixture of charred oak, grain alcohol, and time. The guts of the operation are visible through a window behind the bar, a steampunk jungle of pipes, valves, and tanks made of shiny copper and steel. Daily tours remind tipplers that the ancient art of whiskey-making requires the perfect balance of chemistry, long-term planning, and reputation.

That latter ingredient is nowhere more evident than in the gift shop, where the company’s seemingly ubiquitous 19th century logo adorns everything from cufflinks to kitchen towels.

There are times when Canale looks around at all of it – the nearly $15 million facility that opened to the public last May, the impressive merchandise, the 20 employees, and the sheer scale of this start-up operation – and feels amazed by the fact that it’s even here.

“1f you had told me four years ago I would be in the whiskey business, I would have said you were crazy,” says Canale.

The prelude to this high-stakes gamble on a craft liquor enterprise begins with another Canale – the one whose name is on the bottle and whose painted portrait hanging in the tasting room depicts a stocky figure in a three-piece suit proudly cradling a glass of the brown stuff in one hand and a Dominicker chicken in the other.

Domenico Canale emigrated from Italy just before the Civil War and started work in his uncle’s wholesale liquor and wine business. He soon was operating his own successful fruit and produce pushcart. In 1866 his most popular non-perishable item, also sold off the wagon, was a self-labeled bourbon whiskey, which the then-23-year-old wisely enhanced with the venerable appellation Old Dominick.

The liquor itself was imported from Kentucky’s Richwood Distillery. In time the young entrepreneur was marketing a whole line of bourbons, a rye whiskey, and a fruit-and-spice concoction called the Dominick Toddy. Domenico invested heavily in advertising, and as the population of Memphis doubled in the decade following the war, Old Dominick became one of the most prominent beverages in the region.

In high spirits. Chris Canale is happy to restore a family tradition with the Old Dominick label his great-great-grandfather founded some 150 years ago.

In the 1870s Domenico’s growing D. Canale & Co. first entered the beer market as an importer, using its refrigerated warehouses to store and preserve the beverage prior to the invention of pasteurization.

This meant that tourists – from Milwaukee to Terre Haute – could now step off a steamboat in the Bluff City, head straight to a local watering hole and order up the taste of home: a Pabst Blue Ribbon, a Champagne Velvet, or any number of beers and wines impossible to find in smaller, less connected towns. In addition to providing the city’s restaurants with healthy fruits and vegetables. D. Canale was also stocking the bars of Beale Street.

Domenico died in 1919, the year before his company was forced out of the liquor business by the constitutional ban on the sale and manufacture of alcohol. Old Dominick, like so many other vintage labels, wouldn’t survive the 13-year period of Prohibition, though D. Canale did, thanks to its produce. After Prohibition’s repeal, the company again took up beer and wine distribution, though the Old Dominick label never resurfaced.

D. Canale & Co. was handed down through generations from father to son, until 1981, when John Dominick Canale Jr., according to family lore, flipped a coin to determine how the business would be divided between his two sons.

John Dominick Canale III ’63 took ownership of the food services side, which he sold to the Sara Lee Corporation in 1999. Chris’s father, Chris Canale, Sr. ’68, got the Anheuser-Busch products distributorship and sold it to the Hand family in Clarksville in 2010.

D. Canale exists today as a holding company – one that employed the young Chris Canale, Jr., to help look after its assets. He attended Auburn and received a master’s degree in executive leadership from Christian Brothers University.

After the sale of the beer business, Canale was reminiscing with his father about the company’s 125th anniversary two decades past.

“There was a huge party,” Canale remembers.
“Between the food and beer company we had 400 employees at the time.”

The conversation turned to thoughts of the 150th anniversary in 2015.

“We were like, ‘Well? Who are we going to invite?’” Chris says. “There were no longer any employees, no customers, no clients. There’s an intangible value to being in a business. I grew up sweeping floors, driving forklifts, and bagging ice in the warehouse. Sitting at a desk doing investments and talking on the phone to people who had no connection to this city wasn’t making me happy. I was looking for an excuse to get back involved in something here in Memphis.”

That excuse, as he soon discovered, had been sitting on his office shelf the whole time.

ROUND TWO: THE BOILERMAKER

D. Canale’s holding company office is directly over the Downtown Huey’s, where, on any given night, some local businessman might get a jumpstart on happy hour with a beer and whiskey chaser.

Chris Canale never suspected that his own life would soon be served up in a similar combination. One day, an investment banker visited his office to discuss venture capital ideas. The man noticed an antique Old Dominick whiskey bottle sitting on a shelf.

“What’s that?” he asked, and the conversation veered into family history. The investor had a connection to Fortune Brands, a company that formerly owned Jim Beam and a host of other spirits.

“He comes back to us with this proposal to take the Old Dominick brand and sell it to Fortune Brands,” Canale says.

The time was ripe to enter the craft whiskey business. Prior to 2009 there were just three legal distilleries in Tennessee. Then a new state law opened the market, allowing the legal production of distilled spirits in most Tennessee counties. Investors were pumping millions of dollars into new liquor ventures.

Canale considered going the route his great-great grandfather did by slapping the family label on a Kentucky-made bourbon.

“We realized that’s not what the market wants,” Canale says. “They want authenticity. They want to come to a place and watch you make it. It became clear early on that if we were going to be in this business, we’d have to make it ourselves for the market to accept it.”

Canale declined the offer to sell the brand. Old Dominick would become the new family business.

To get the ball rolling (and to have a product to sell) they used outsourced bourbon to recreate the Old Dominick Toddy, which is available now. Also available are two brands of vodka, which takes much less time to make.

Chris teamed up with his cousin, Alex Canale, a CBHS graduate and son of John Dominick III, who had been in the restaurant industry in Chattanooga. Together, they conceptualized the operation. “We would go big or go home,” Chris says, a proposition of equal parts risk and reward. As co-owner, Alex runs daily operations at the distillery. Chris is often on the road, using his experience and connections in the beer business to get the toddy and the vodka on store shelves in an increasingly competitive liquor market.

In the beginning, Chris Canale didn’t know much about the actual whiskey-making process. He did know that going from zero to 1,000 barrels a year required one hard-to-get ingredient – the key to whiskey’s charred-oak flavor.

“There was a major barrel shortage in the industry,” Canale said. “Newcomers like us couldn’t pick up the phone and say, ‘Hey, I need a thousand white oak barrels.’ They were like, ‘Get in line behind Buffalo Trace.’

The shortage dated to the housing crisis of 2008, when many logging companies went out of business. After the industry recovered, many of those loggers harvesting white oak were focused on pricy vencers.

“There were no loggers out getting staves,” Canale says.

Compared to other upstart distilleries, Canale was in an enviable position. For years, D. Canale has owned stands of hardwood and pine across Tennessee.

“To get the barrels, we had to essentially create our own supply chain from the forest to the cooperage,” Canale said. “We had the trees, we knew the loggers, we knew the stave mill, so when people see these barrels and it says ‘West Tennessee White Oak,’ I could actually show you the stumps on these tracts where we marked the timber, hand-picked the logs, and turned them into the barrels that you see upstairs.”

The goal of 1,000 barrels of whiskey a year – about 20 a week – far and away surpasses the volume of the average new craft whiskey distiller, who might get things rolling with two to five barrels a week. If Old Dominick takes off, Canale says he’s prepared to jump to 100 barrels a week.

“It’s such an opportunity,” he says. “We have a brand, a story, the resources and we’ve invested enough money in this place that it really puts us at a kind of once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.”

Along the way, Canale has reassured whiskey connoisseurs that Old Dominick will remain a tried-and-true Memphis brand.

“I have no doubt there are some people who think I’m some kid whose got too much money to play with, and now I’m starting a distillery,” Canale says. “We’re serious about this. We’re not building it to flip it. We are thinking about this as a family business, something to pass down to our children.”

It’s a business that relies on delayed gratification and mathematics – like the stock market. The first barrels were filled just last February. The financial ripeness of a bottle of whiskey, i.e., the point at which a company gets the most money from each bottle, is a four-year-old product.

“Four years is the magic number,” Canale says. “In the whiskey business, what you don’t sell as a four-year whiskey sits for another two years. Then you try to sell that. What’s left of that lot becomes an eight-year whiskey. Every barrel that eventually becomes a 25-year-old whiskey started as a four-year-old whiskey.

The most important thing Canale’s learned from growing up in the family business is how to hire good people. “It’s the secret of success, plain and simple,” he says.

Much of the company’s hopes hang upon a key hire: the head distiller.

Alex Castle grew up in northern Kentucky
and became a distillery supervisor at Campari’s Wild Turkey facility a year after she graduated from college. She leapt at the offer to head up the new enterprise.

“I saw immediately that this company was very people-oriented,” Castle says. “I loved the vibe I got from the whole team.”

Old Dominick gave her the chance to research and develop the product line – a rare opportunity in the industry – and help shape the flavor profile.

And there will be a flavor profile – she just isn’t sure what it is yet. The mystical part of whiskey making is what happens to alcohol after it goes in the barrel and sits in an open-air room for four years.

“I’m from Kentucky, so I know very well what the seasons do there,” Castle says. “You want those seasons when you’re making whiskey. The changing temperatures force the liquid in and out of the wood, letting it take on the characteristics of the barrel. Here in Memphis, it doesn’t get nearly as cold. It could take longer to age. It can be nerve-wracking. There’s a lot of pressure to get it right. It’s my career, but there’s also a layer of helping Chris and Alex succeed. This is their family legacy.”

THE NEW DOMINICK

When Chris Canale stands on the rooftop terrace of Old Dominick Distillery, he can look out across the street at a nondescript building where Domenico Canale, 150 years ago, landed his first job in America. A few blocks south on Front Street stands the building (now apartments) where D. Canale once operated its food distribution.

Reestablishing his ancestor’s legacy in the Downtown core comes at a time when he is also establishing the family that he hopes will carry that legacy into the next century. He and his wife, Colleen, are in the throes of raising their children: Webb (Christopher Webster III), 9, and Mac (Charles McMahan), 8, both of whom attend PDS; Duke (John Douglas), 4, in preschool at Emmanuel United Methodist Kindergarten; and Lela Anne, who will soon be turning 2.

Colleen remembers that when her husband floated the idea of this new business, the kind of business was important to him. He wanted a real workplace. A proving ground, where both his whiskey and his kids could reach maturity.

“There’s this generational work ethic,” Colleen says. “He wants to start that early with them. A sense of doing meaningful work is something that was handed down to him, and to his father, going all the way back.”

Chris sees the logic in that.

“It’s in my DNA, I guess.”

Canale sourced the white oak barrels needed for production from the family’s own hardwood stands across Tennessee.
"I want future generations of boys to enjoy MUS, and I want them to have an MUS even better than the one we have today."

— Ellis Haguewood
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RICHARD C. MOORE, JR. ’63

Rick Moore has had a front-row seat at Memphis University School from his youth. After his mother, Halcyon Moore, married Col. Ross M. Lynn, he and his brother, Thurston ’64, were at home in the Headmaster’s House.

“We had the unique advantage of seeing the moral, ethical, and educational fiber that our dad, Ross Lynn, imparted,” Moore said.

At the May Board of Trustees meeting, Chairman Sam Graham ’80 said Moore was second to none in institutional knowledge, and he epitomized the school’s philosophy, living by “the principles of personal responsibility, morality, and gentlemanly conduct. His example makes all of us want to be better people.”

Chairman of the Lehman-Roberts Company, Moore was elected to the board in 2002, and he served on the Athletics Committee and Building and Grounds Committee. For the 2004-2005 Strategic Plan, he lent his expertise to the Physical Facilities Committee. A founding member of the Ross M. Lynn Society, he was president from 1999-2001, and he is a member of the Crest & Cornerstone Society.


“The quality education that these grandsons have received launches them with a great foundation to do whatever they want to do,” Moore said.

Saying it was an honor to serve on the board, he added that beneficiaries of an MUS education have a responsibility to continue that tradition so future generations can have the same or better benefits.

“It was time for me to retire from the board, but it was an encouraging moment when [son] Richard ’98 was selected to fill the opening,” Moore said. “He also has a great love for the school and what it has done for him and will do for his sons in the future.”

R. LOUIS ADAMS ’70

MUS has been part of Lou Adams’ life since 1965, first as a student, then alumnus, parent, and board member.

“I am happy to give back to such a great institution that has been so formative in my life and my sons’ lives,” he said.

Looking back on nearly two decades as a trustee, Adams said, “It was fun. We were unified in our purpose to support the school in its mission. … Ellis and his administration made the board’s job relatively easy.”

Extolling the school’s tradition of fiscal stability, Adams said he appreciates how the board has become more strategic in its deliberations and decisions.

“The school is on an exciting trajectory,” he said. “With the leadership and the enormous talent brought to the table by the current members, I know MUS is in great hands and that [Headmaster] Pete Sanders will have excellent partners in his stewardship.”

Chairman Graham said Adams pushed the board to get better. “He has always focused on what was best for the school, with his eyes pointed to the future and with a great conviction that the best days of MUS are ahead of us.”

Elected in 1998, Adams served as a member of the Academics Committee and the Strategic Planning Committee for the 2012 Strategic Plan. He was co-chair of the Programs Sub-Committee for the 2004-05 Strategic Plan. A founding member of the D. Eugene Thorn Society, he is also a member of the Crest & Cornerstone Society. He served on the Case Development Committee, Task Force 2001, for the Doors to New Opportunities Campaign, as co-chair of the Special Gifts Committee for that campaign, and as president of the Alumni Executive Board.

A plastic surgeon with Plastic Surgery Group of Memphis, he is married to Connie Dunavant Adams and has three sons, Galloway Allbright ’98, William Adams ’03, and Hunter Adams ’06.
Elected to the MUS Board of Trustees in 1999, Bob Loeb compiled a distinguished record, including serving as chairman from 2008-2013. During his chairmanship members of the board developed a strategic plan and fine-tuned the school’s mission statement and philosophy. A strong proponent for increasing the school’s endowment, he established the Loeb Endowment for Academic Support, used by the academic dean to develop and fund programs that foster academic excellence. For his contributions to the school, Loeb was named Alumnus of the Year in 2014.

“Your mentorship and loyalty are hard to match,” Graham said at the May board meeting. “You have left very big shoes to fill – both literally and figuratively. We have all benefited from your exciting strategic vision, tireless support, and uncanny ability to provide a balanced wisdom. You are the quintessential friend and leader.”

In addition to providing leadership on the Strategic Planning Committee for the 2012 Strategic Plan, Loeb served on the Physical Facilities Committee for the 2004-05 Strategic Plan, and on the steering committees for the Doors to New Opportunities Campaign and the Multi-Sports Stadium Campaign. A member of the Ross M. Lynn Society, he was a founding member of the D. Eugene Thorn Society, serving as president from 1998-2000. He is also a member of the Crest & Cornerstone Society.

President of Loeb Properties, Loeb is married to Mary Seay Loeb, and they have five children – Win Loeb ‘10, Hensley Loeb, Jackson Loeb ‘13, Tallulah Taylor, and Clementine Taylor.

“I have been blessed to be a student, an alumnus, a parent, and a trustee at MUS,” Loeb said upon stepping down as board chairman. “I am very grateful for each of these roles, and I am mindful that to whom much is given, much is expected. MUS has given much to me, and to give back seems natural.”

E. CARL KRAUSNICK, JR. ‘79

Senior managing director of Raymond James & Associates, Collie Krausnick contributed to the board not only his business acumen but also – likely rooted in the team spirit of his MUS days – his fervor.

Chairman Graham expressed deep appreciation for Krausnick’s contributions. “We’re grateful to Collie for his unselfishness, encouragement, quick wit, and steadfast friendship,” Graham said. “Whenever asked to serve in an area of need, he always said ‘yes’ with an enthusiastic and contagious smile followed by his trademark dependability and helpfulness.”

Joining the board in 2004, Krausnick served on the Athletics Committee and the Development Committee, the Mission and Philosophy Sub-Committee for the 2012 Strategic Plan, and the Development/Advancement Sub-Committee for the 2004-2005 Strategic Plan. He was president of the Ross M. Lynn Society from 2010-2012, and he is a member of the Crest & Cornerstone Society. He also served on the Campaign Design Committee, Task Force 2001, Doors to New Opportunities Campaign and on the Special Gifts Committee for that campaign. In addition he served as a class representative and as a member of the Alumni Executive Board.

He and his wife, Veazey Gully Krausnick, have two children, Elizabeth Malmo (Donnie ‘06) and Carl Krausnick ‘09.

“Being on the MUS Board was truly one of the most rewarding things I have ever been involved with,” Krausnick said. “The dedication and passion that the trustees have for the school is contagious. It was humbling to be part of a group of experienced, successful leaders who have a true love for MUS and all it stands for.”

AutoZone founder and philanthropist Pitt Hyde ’61 announced his retirement from the MUS Board of Trustees at the August 2017 meeting after 43 years of service. See page 20.
New Board Trustees Bring Fresh Perspective

JAMES H. BARTON, JR. ‘85

Basketball standout Jim Barton is the only Owl whose jersey – No. 42 – has been retired. He also served on the yearbook and newspaper staffs, and he made up for all those hours in the gym through his participation in the Savage Tan Club. Barton went on to Dartmouth, where he earned a B.A. in history and continued to distinguish himself on the basketball court. He holds numerous records at the college, including most points in a game (48), season (636), and career (2,158). He was recently named to the 2018 class of Ivy League Basketball Legends and will be honored at the tournament in Philadelphia this spring.

Head of risk management at Southeastern Asset Management, Inc., Barton has 26 years of investment experience. He has continued to invest in MUS over the years, most recently chairing the Ruth and Jerry Peters Court Endowment Campaign. He has also served on the Thorn Society Executive Committee and the Major Gifts Committee of the Doors to New Opportunities Campaign.

In the community, he sits on the board for the Peer Power Foundation, which recruits high-performing high school and college students to tutor younger public-school students. He has served on the boards of Youth Villages and the executive committee of Arts Memphis.

He is married to Allison Melton Barton, and they have three children, Annsley (Hutchison ’19), James ’22, and Ali (St. Mary’s ’25). He enjoys passing along his love of sports by coaching his kids in basketball, and he also enjoys playing tennis and golf.

RICHARD C. MOORE III ’98

Richard Moore has been a team player since his days on the Owl varsity football, basketball, and track teams and his service on the Student Council. He received the Ross McCain Lynn Award and the James R. Haygood III Best All-Around Athlete Award in recognition of his accomplishments.

Moore went on to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he earned a B.A. in management and played Tar Heels football, and then to Vanderbilt for an MBA.

He has been active as a volunteer at MUS, including serving as the founding president of Emerging Leaders (2008-2010).

“I remember Richard accepting the challenge,” board Chair Sam Graham ’80 said. “With his enthusiasm, he was able...
to rally younger alumni to connect with one another. That set the table for all who followed."

He also has coached seventh-grade football since 2010 and served on the Thorn Society Executive Committee and the Student Focus Group Task Force for the 2001 Doors to New Opportunities Campaign. In addition, he lends his expertise to the Mercy for Memphis Board of Directors.

Director of business development for Lehman-Roberts Co., Moore works with asphalt production customers to find solutions for material and construction needs.

Moore – whose father, Rick Moore ’63, just retired from the board – is married to Taylor Norrid Moore, and they have three children – Richard IV, age 4; Caroline, 2; and George, 6 months.

JEFFREY B. M skinny

As partner and head of Private Banking at Brown Brothers Harriman, Jeff Meskin spends much of his time in New York City, but he says he is excited to become an active participant of the MUS Board of Trustees meetings.

"Jeff has been one of those quiet voices in this town and at this school. He believes in this place," Graham said. "Having someone of his stature and talent to help us think through issues is wonderful."

Also serving as a co-manager and principal of BBH Capital Partners and as a member of BBH’s Executive Committee and Finance Committee, Meskin has over 21 years of experience in private equity and mergers and acquisitions.

At MUS he and his wife, Laurie Perl Meskin, brought their talents to the Parents’ Association, leading the group as chairs last year, and they support the school as members of the Ross M. Lyn Society. They have three children – twins Hannah (Lausanne ’17), a freshman at University of Michigan, and Jake ’17, a freshman at University of Texas; and Daniel ’20.

Meskin serves on the boards for Tower Ventures, Microban International, Vyve Broadband/BCI Broadband Holdings, and EdgeConneX.

He earned a bachelor’s degree in economics from the University of Wisconsin and a juris doctor from Fordham University School of Law.

WILLIAM V. THOMPSON III ’95

Will Thompson and his wife, Paige Parthenais Thompson, are doing their best to support MUS, including raising four prospective Owls, all currently at Presbyterian Day School – Van, age 11; Hall, 10; Max, 7; and Abe, 4.

"Will is someone I have great respect for," Graham said. "He was a well-rounded, bright student on campus, played varsity football and baseball, was a National Merit Finalist, Cum Laude Society – the whole gamut."

He also worked as a newspaper editor and was inducted into the National Honor Society and Mu Alpha Theta.

Thompson continued playing football at University of Virginia where he earned a bachelor’s degree from the McIntire School of Commerce.

A principal at NFC Investments, Thompson shares his expertise on a number of corporate boards, including Stillwater Insurance, Tri-State Insurance, National Fire and Casualty, WT Holdings, and Corrisoft. In the nonprofit arena, he is on the boards for Slingshot Memphis and the Memphis and Shelby County Sports Authority.

At MUS he is on the steering committee for the Ellis L. Haguewood Legacy Endowment Campaign, and he was the 1990s co-chair for the Rudolph Plaza Campaign. He has served as a class representative, phonathon volunteer, and volunteer varsity and eighth-grade football coach (2000-2008).

When asked about his hobbies, Thompson says, simply, "Kids!" adding, "I used to have a lot of hobbies.

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Where Tradition Surrounds U

For more than 100 years, Memphis University School has educated young men to become the future leaders of our community, our nation, and the world. Our legacy of scholarship and leadership is perpetuated by caring individuals who name the school as a beneficiary in their estate plans.

There are generations of students yet to enroll, all deserving the best education possible in order to become future leaders.

Leave your legacy of scholarship and leadership.

For more information and estate planning tools, visit plannedgiving.musowls.org.
Alumni Honor Sayle and Montague

Every year the Alumni Executive Board honors two alumni for outstanding service to the community and to the school. At the board’s annual luncheon September 21, alumni recognized outgoing president Harry Sayle ’92 as Volunteer of the Year and David Montague ’82 as Alumnus of the Year.

Volunteer of the Year
The Volunteer of the Year Award is presented to an MUS alumnus who serves Memphis University School in a significant and needed way throughout the year, seeking opportunities to promote the interests of the school.

Sayle family members gathered at The Racquet Club to celebrate Harry Sayle being named Volunteer of the Year. From left, Carter (fourth grade, PDS), Erin, Harry IV (sixth grade, PDS), and Harry III; (daughter, Sara [kindergarten, CMDS], not pictured)

In honoring Harry Sayle IV ’92 as the Volunteer of the Year, Alumni Executive Board president Jason Fair ’89 listed activities that distinguished the 1992 alumnus in his student days, including participation in The Owl’s Hoot, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, the Civic Service Club, and Amnesty International. Sayle was also an outstanding baseball player.

“His dedication to and love for the game of baseball would serve MUS well,” Fair said. “When asked about Sayle’s baseball career, teammate Ben Clanton ’94 called it ‘ridiculous,’” Fair said. “As Clanton put it, ‘Harry was a ridiculous athlete – a great first baseman, great hitter, and pitcher. I’ll never forget the first time we made it to sub-state in baseball, and Harry was [both] our outstanding starting pitcher and clean-up hitter.”

A highlight of Sayle’s senior baseball season was a 17-strikeout showing against the defending state champion. Under his leadership the Owls clinched the 1992 regional championship, and Sayle went on to enjoy a successful baseball career at UT Knoxville.

He kept his baseball skills sharp volunteering as a Lower School baseball coach in 2013, but his service to the school didn’t stop there. During his recently completed term as president of the Alumni Executive Board, he not only solicited alumni volunteers for activities but also participated himself, doing mock interviews with juniors, attending Open House to help the school’s admission efforts, and speaking to groups of alumni and students alike to remind them of the importance and benefits of staying involved with MUS.

In his remarks, Sayle confessed that the most difficult aspect of his job was speaking on the same bill with Headmaster Emeritus Ellis Haguewood at the Faculty Portrait Series unveiling and the Legacy Luncheon. “That was a daunting task!” he said. “I always wanted to get through relatively mistake-free and just turn the reins over to him, let him take over the room … he always did an outstanding job.”

Sayle expressed his gratitude for Haguewood’s 22 years as headmaster, his pleasure in welcoming new Headmaster Pete Sanders to the community, and his appreciation for the opportunity to be of service to the school.

“I’ve enjoyed every minute serving on this board … and coaching baseball,” he said. “It’s not a chore, it’s a pleasure, because it allows me to reconnect with [MUS] and with a lot of my friends, and to serve and give back to the school that gave me so much.”

Sayle, a director of fixed income capital markets at Stifel, said the best endorsement he and his wife, Erin, can give MUS is enrolling their own sons. “We want our kids to continue their education [here], to get the same great experience I had, which is being around great people, great students, great administrators and faculty that will vault them to the next level of their careers and their lives. For us it’s a no-brainer that they will continue here.”

Alumnus of the Year
The Alumnus of the Year Award is presented to an MUS alumnus who exemplifies community leadership and personal integrity, personifying the school’s guiding principle of developing well-rounded men of strong moral character.

Upon accepting the award for Alumnus of the Year, David Montague ’82 garnered some appreciative laughs when he thanked the school for honoring him and, apparently, forgiving his ninth-grade Honor Council violation. “There were several of us that would sneak away during free period and take M&M’s out of the Hull-Dobbs concession stand,” he said. “I’m grateful for second chances!”

Montague, former varsity basketball team captain and member of the Student Council, FCA, and Civic Service Club, has more than made up for that early misde-meanor. Fair described his contributions to the community as inspirational. After an early career in the brokerage business at Morgan Keegan, Montague switched gears, focusing his attention on the needs of the city’s low-income homeowners through his work as the director of Service Over Self (SOS). After five years there, he spent two years in east Asia working with Campus Crusade for Christ. In 2009 he
founded Memphis Teacher Residency, and today, as the executive director, Montague is working to solve what MTR describes as the greatest social justice and civil rights issue in America – substandard public education.

MTR’s mission is Christian love expressed in equal education – providing the city’s most marginalized communities with access to the same quality of education within their neighborhood-zoned schools as any other child in Memphis.

“David’s awareness of the injustice of the public education system, coupled with his devotion to his own Christian beliefs, [allows him] to address the disadvantages of youth in our community,” Fair said. “MTR works in six partner neighborhoods with teacher placements in over 30 schools. Walker Hays ’84 said this about him: ‘David has done so much to give back to the city and to the world. His track record defines the exact qualities this award is meant to recognize.’”

Montague expressed gratitude for the excellent education MUS provided and shared some statistics about the educational landscape for other students in Memphis. “MUS plays an incredibly valuable role in our city as it’s educating our leaders tremendously well; for that I’m grateful from a community standpoint and also personally. I think we all recognize and understand that off of Park Avenue, the educational world looks very, very different. There are about 120,000 students in Memphis public schools; of those, about 25 percent will never graduate. There are about 68 percent who will graduate but not with an academic background that will allow them to get into or succeed in college. That’s a problem for our city.”

In looking at the mission of MUS, Montague encouraged his fellow alumni to consider applying that model to all the schools in the city.

“I think the measure of a good society, a good civic community, is not how well the privileged are doing, but how well the most vulnerable are doing,” he added.

“I’m grateful to McKee Humphreys ’01, Clint Cowan ’05, Warren Grimm ’05, Frank Jemison ’06, and Matt Shelton ’09, MUS graduates who took advantage of this tremendous education our faculty provided … and are reinvesting those resources into the academic lives of children in our lowest income and lowest performing schools. They are five of 350 people who’ve chosen to be a part of MTR.”

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Alumni Board Transitions

Alumni Executive Board members serve three-year terms, and this year six members rotated off the board: outgoing president Harry Sayle ’92, Andy Garrett ’03, Paul Gillespie ’01, Ned Laughlin ’94, Allen McCool ’77, and John Stewart ’78.

Alumni Executive Board president Jason Fair ’89 commended the retiring alumni for their service to the school. “It has been a pleasure to serve with you,” he said. “We appreciate the time and leadership and support you’ve given to MUS when you’ve been called upon.”

Fair also welcomed eight new members to the board: Chris Beard ’84, Jeffrey Block ’94, Horace Carter ’89, Emmel Golden ’97, Brig Klyce ’66, Garrett McClintock ’06, Shannon Rhodes ’90, and Gideon Scoggin ’95.

“We appreciate your willingness to broaden your support,” Fair said. “Serving is a great way to stay even more involved and connected with the school I know we all love and treasure.”

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Family members who attended the Alumni Awards Luncheon to celebrate the recognition of David Montague, second from left, as Alumnus of the Year included his wife, Kelli; his mother, Ruth; his father, Charlie; and May, one of his five daughters (Annie, Ruthie, Mary Van, and Joy, not pictured).

“I encourage the MUS community to keep raising up men who are academically sound, service-minded, strong leaders, [with] high moral character, who may come alongside us at MTR and continue our mission of Christian love expressed in equal education.”

Watch the video of the 2017 Alumni Awards Luncheon here: bit.ly/MUSAwards17
The golf team earned back-to-back championship honors with a state tournament win this fall at the TSSAA Division II tournament. State team members were senior Wyatt Berry and juniors Walker Crosby, Call Ford, Hall Upshaw, Henry Wells, and Philip Wunderlich.

In a hard-fought TSSAA Division II Region Tournament, they placed second after tying with Briarcrest in regular stroke play – going five extra holes in the playoff and ultimately falling to the Saints, but advancing to the state tournament in Manchester at Willowbrook Golf Club.

At the state tournament, the boys ended day one in third place, three strokes behind rival Brentwood Academy. But the team rallied and took charge on day two, surging to the top of the leaderboard to defend last year’s title and capture the trophy, ending with a final score of 594, two shots ahead of runners-up Briarcrest and Brentwood Academy.

This is the seventh state title for the Owls and their fourth in the last five years. Leading the team is Coach Cliff Frisby. In his ninth year as head coach at MUS, Frisby is a 37-year member of the Professional Golf Association and director of the United States Junior Golf Tour since 2001. In October TSSAA announced Frisby’s selection as the 2016-2017 State Boys’ Golf Coach of the Year. (See opposite page.)
Tech Department Changes

In early October John Simi, director of instructional technology at MUS since 2015, was named director of technology. In his new position, Simi oversees all technology at the school.

Prior to MUS John posted 30 years of experience in Shelby County Schools and Bartlett City Schools. For the last 19 years, his career has been heavily focused on school technology, and he has gained extensive experience as a supervisor and director.

Simi will continue to support technology needs in the classroom and will remain available to teachers and students. He succeeds Billy Smith, previous director of technology, who left in October to pursue a career opportunity at Smith & Nephew.

Arthur Rosario joined the department as assistant director of technology. With more than 17 years of IT experience, Rosario was previously at Rhodes College where he had been systems administrator since 2015. For the eight previous years, he served as director of technology and infrastructure at Lausanne Collegiate School, where he oversaw the technology aspects of two major construction projects. His responsibilities included designing the surveillance security and data infrastructure and planning and sequencing vendor operations. He also managed video/multimedia live streaming for sporting events and class sessions.

Before moving to the Mid-South, Rosario lived in South Florida, where he worked as a microsystems technician for Miami-Dade County Public Schools and as a team-leader network engineer on a project building 200 IBM xSeries servers for Broward County Public Schools. He earned an associate’s degree in computer network engineering at Florida Career College in Miami, and he studied French law at Universidad Nordestana, San Francisco de Macorís, Dominican Republic.

His qualifications include Office365, VMware virtualization (cloud computing software), and VoIP phone systems. He is also fluent in Spanish. His wife, Miriam Rosario, teaches Spanish and French at Lausanne, and they have a 7-year-old daughter, Julianna.

Hollinger Honored

Facilities Manager Willie Hollinger was recognized by the city’s Office of Emergency Management (OEM) for his service as an exceptional volunteer. Richard Keith, OEM manager of operations, presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Hollinger in October. Deputy Chief Pamela Kiestler, below right, was on hand to congratulate Hollinger on his volunteer award.

TSSAA Names Frisby State Golf Coach of the Year

Head Golf Coach Cliff Frisby was named 2016-17 Boys’ Golf Coach of the Year in October by the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association. TSSAA nominates each state award winner to the National Federation of High School Associations for consideration as a Section 3 Coach of the Year. Frisby’s team captured state championship honors this fall for the second year in a row. (See story on opposite page.)
Portrait of the Artist
Peter Bowman Memorialized in Faculty Portrait Series

Friends and family gathered in November to remember inimitable longtime art teacher Peter Bowman and celebrate the unveiling of a portrait in his honor commissioned by the school’s Alumni Executive Board.

Bowman, who died in 2015, taught art at MUS from 1979 to 2008. Attendees heard stories of his creative genius and unique persona from Jason Fair ’89, president of the Alumni Executive Board; Headmaster Pete Sanders; former student, artist, and gallery owner Matt Ducklo ’92; and Headmaster Emeritus Ellis Haguewood.

As the only art teacher for much of his tenure, Fair said, Bowman “had the distinction of teaching practically every student who came through these hallowed halls.” He described Bowman’s characteristic gesture – arms extended, Peter Bowman’s wife, Beth, center, and their son, Matthew, and his wife, Amanda, were on hand for the portrait unveiling. Also in attendance were Bowman’s brothers Tom and wife, Sally, and Rush and wife, Kathy; and his sister, Patti, and her husband, Dan, with their daughter, McCarthy, and grandson, Stewart.

Student Recalls Bowman’s Artistic Genius
BY MATT DUCKLO ’92

The feeling of being in Mr. Bowman’s class as a seventh grader was an awakening. It was clear that Mr. Bowman – even though I couldn’t articulate it at the time – was an artist who happened to be a teacher. There were clues: the coat, his many sketchbooks, his passive disregard for some of the formalities the other teachers observed. But mainly it was obvious because he was always drawing. Between classes, during class, he couldn’t stop. Peter drew in his sketchbooks, on random pieces of paper, or whatever was at hand. He was an example, and a lesson, and a model. The process is what is important. Art for Bowman was a continuum. After I graduated from MUS, I never witnessed that kind of obsession in any classroom ever again. And never found a classroom I was happier to be in.

Bowman’s class implicitly asked students to question what a successful work of art was. The objective wasn’t clear. It was mysterious. There was no discussion of beauty. As a 13-year-old I thought “good art” was mimesis, but the ability to accurately reproduce the subject wasn’t primarily what Bowman considered a success. I think that led me and others to think there might be many different ways to measure success, not just in art, but in life.

Bowman loved to talk, but when it came to discussing art or individual pictures, I don’t remember him talking too much. He would nod his head affirmatively, even enthusiastically, when he thought you were on the right path. But there wasn’t any definitive explanation why some drawings or sculptures were better than others. This was art class, not an academic subject.

Mr. Bowman’s class was not going to make you a better person or give you an appreciation for rarefied masterpieces. The point of the class was to be around this man for 50 minutes so he can show you a few things. He might instruct by drawing on your drawing, thereby demonstrating what a confident line looks like and teaching you that art should not be precious. After that he might go over to his desk and
Bowman’s artistic style, described in a review in the *Memphis Business Journal* as “surreal realism,” included landscapes and everyday objects infused with deep color and thick texture. Haguewood recalled high praise from Lon Anthony, a longtime art instructor and sculptor at Rhodes College: “He once said that he would rather have a Bowman hanging on his wall than a Picasso.”

The Faculty Portrait Series was started in 2005 to honor MUS faculty members who have dedicated themselves and their lives in service to the school. Installed in the Dining Hall, the portraits serve as a reminder of the exceptional faculty who have provided the essential foundation for academic excellence and who are vital in delivering the MUS experience. Bowman’s portrait is the 13th in the series.

draw, and he might become so engrossed in his own drawing that he momentarily stops paying attention to class. At some point he might say something hilarious to you or refer to another student as a “slug.” His class was a place where students could be quiet and interior and work on their projects and get an A or a B, unless you were just really obnoxious, in which case he would tell you to get out – [though] probably not report you to any authority – so you could just wander around and pretend like you had a free period. But he would at some point tell another student or a faculty member that you were a worthless slug who was surely bound for prison.

Beneath the apparent casualness of it all, Bowman had the gift of making the work in class feel less like an assignment and more like something that was self-driven.

I emailed another alumnus who studied with Mr. Bowman, curator Robert Snowden ’03, to see if had any thoughts he wanted me to share.

He wrote, “I had a number of classes with Mr. Bowman. Once a bird got loose in the ground-floor studio, and he chased its flight with a broom. The bird, maybe it was a blue jay, eventually left. Class resumed, and Mr. Bowman had us draw the bird in flight – the bird and what I remember him describing as ‘the space between the broom and the bird.’ It was a pretty good lesson in metaphysics. Only now, as I enjoy this memory, do I begin to encroach on a real lesson.”

Someone once said that Bowman is the Memphis Morandi. That’s high praise. Like the Italian master, his subject matter was an excuse to explore form and color, but Bowman’s work had more of a diaristic quality. The trees and buildings he took as his subject were often his own home and world. He never entered into pure abstraction, and I believe his delight in the world would not allow it. I still love Peter’s paintings, and I still find them mysterious and powerful. They never had the audience they deserved.

Peter’s power and authority as a teacher are a direct result of his practice as painter, and the fact that he was consistently engaged with his art until the end and didn’t have his soul crushed by his teaching demands is astonishing.

He was a generous artist who gave some lucky students the chance to witness self-directed passion and skill, changing the way we see the world, our work, and our lives.
in his short book The Romance of Boys’ Schools, Dr. Richard Hawley, longtime headmaster at University School in Cleveland, suggests that “When teachers … are singled out for story treatment, two qualities tend to be celebrated: genuine eccentricity and long-standing service.” Peter Bowman qualifies in both categories.

All of us who knew Peter loved him. We loved him for his art: after all, he was one of the most significant artists in Memphis. We loved him for his often unassuming but accurate observations about students or events of the day. He was a rare but winsome combination of bewildered naiveté at times and at other times, a trenchant perceptiveness. We loved him because he loved us: he cared profoundly about MUS and his friends on the faculty and staff.

Peter was an intellectual repository of art history, but there was always a relaxed tone within his art classroom, a welcome respite from the stressful school day. He was a kind instructor, and he cared about the work of his students.

Sometimes that “care” exhibited itself in unusual ways.

One of his former students fondly recalled a comment Peter made to him once in class, “Some people have artistic ability, and some don’t, and you just need to try a little bit harder.”

One alumnus said that Peter would often take the paintbrush out of a student’s hand and seemingly ruin the project by streaking purple, or black, or red paint indiscriminately across the surface. Somehow, the student admitted, the paintings always looked better in the end.

When Loyal Murphy ’86 was a student in seventh grade art, Peter covered his pastel sketch of a vase of flowers with a heavy dark crayon. “It just needs more black,” he said.

Bill Taylor recalls the summer that Peter was the master teacher for MUS in Europe. “You couldn’t leave him alone; he had no sense of direction and would just get lost in the city. I wanted to tie a rope between his waist and mine. But he taught a great art course, and the kids loved it.”

He was as uninterested in his appearance as he was enthusiastic about food and snacks – any kind, anywhere, any time. One day early in her tenure as college counselor, Dr. Emily Baer, a little shaken, told a colleague that a strange man, unknown to her, had strolled nonchalantly into her office. Saying nothing to her, in fact ignoring her entirely, he scooped a handful of candy from a dish on her desk, deposited it into his pants pocket, turned, and mutely walked out. She was relieved to learn that the candy marauder was harmless and, in fact, one of her new colleagues.

After one Friday morning chapel, the faculty streamed into the workroom, as always, for food. Seeing just two doughnuts, they hesitated. Peter walked in and without hesitation grabbed both, one in each hand, and took a bite from each.

For years Peter worked the chains at school football games, and one Friday evening, after halftime activities had terminated, the officials were ready for the second-half kickoff. Both the kicking and receiving teams were on the field ready to go, but the chain gang lacked one important member. Peter had gone to the home side for a snack. Norman Thompson and Bill Taylor, working in the old press box, saw Peter strolling leisurely through the north end zone, carrying a huge box of popcorn in the crook of one arm and a super-sized cold drink in the other hand. Somebody said, “Tell him to hurry up.” Taking that as his cue, Norman loudly and sternly announced to the stadium, “Will the members of the chain gang report to the sideline immediately.” Startled, Peter began to jog, spewing popcorn and Coca-Cola in all directions, frantically trying to grab one, maybe two last fistfuls of popcorn before rejoining the crew.

Lower School Principal Clay Smythe ’85 said well what all of us are thinking tonight about Peter: “He is much more special to me than I ever had the courage to tell him. While we are richer for having known him and labored alongside him, both we who remain and the boys we now teach are poorer for not having him in our lives today.”

Art was both need and love for Peter – both a vocation and an avocation for him. He was a unique character, a memorable figure in the life of the school for 29 years. I believe that Providence brought him here, rather than somewhere else where we might not have known him or to a place in which he might not have been appreciated.

“Dear MUS, how kind the fate that brought him to these halls.”
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Your gifts in memory of loved ones or in honor of special friends directly enable young men at MUS to receive the best education available. Memorials to Memphis University School support the Annual Fund program. Families of those whose memories are honored will be notified by an appropriate card with an acknowledgment to the donor. We gratefully acknowledge the following gifts to the school:

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After graduating from Rhodes College, Bill Butler worked at Whitney Bank in New Orleans for seven years, then 28 years with National Bank of Commerce in Memphis. He and his wife, Chipsy, are enjoying retirement, playing golf and visiting Charleston, SC, to see their daughters, Ellen and Anne, and four grandchildren.

True Redd graduated from Ole Miss and worked in advertising photography for 32 years. Clients included Kodak, Shell Oil, Neiman-Marcus, and National Geographic. Semi-retired, True was an international consultant in imaging photography; he retired with his wife, Lady Margaret, to Oxford, MS. Daughter, Louise, lives in Austin, TX, with her two sons, and son, Allan, is in Atlanta with his wife and new daughter.

In recent conversations, Archie McLaren and Alex Wellford recalled a 40-minute point while playing each other in a 15-and-under tournament at the Belle Meade Country Club in Nashville. McLaren won 6-1, 6-1, in a match lasting over three hours. During that point, Wellford thought he could be more patient than McLaren, but he tried a drop shot that hit the top of the net and fell back. About a decade later Wellford taught an English course, Modern American Drama, at MUS that was put together the prior year by McLaren, when he taught English there and coached the tennis team. William Stratton, Carl Olsen, Ferrell Varner, John Bondurant, and Les Nicholson ’58 were teammates with Wellford and McLaren in defeating Baylor, McCallie, Westminster, and MBA. As high school freshmen, Wellford and McLaren defeated MBA senior Tommy Frist and his partner the same year Frist was quarterback for the MBA football team that won the state championship.


Jerry Bradfield reports: For those of you who came to the 55th reunion, you no doubt enjoyed being treated royally by the MUS staff. After a delicious meal catered by one of my favorite places to grab a veggie lunch, Abbay’s (“How the South does fast food”), we were led by Director of Alumni and Parent Programs Ann Laughlin to the football field. We stood on the field for the ceremonial coin toss and were recognized by the large Homecoming crowd in attendance. We proceeded to one of the enclosed skyboxes (see photo next page) for treats provided by our hosts, including the tireless Assistant Director of Alumni Programs, Karen Skahan. Bob Manker and his friend Bobby Swords entertained us with jokes and interesting stories. An ardent Owls supporter, Bob attends
almost every game and knows the players by their first names! Everyone seemed to have a good time (including Dan Copp, who climbed to the roof for a better view). Headmaster Pete Sanders dropped in to introduce himself and wish us well. The Jake Rudolph Plaza in front of the impressive, multi-storied stadium is a fine addition, especially when lit at night. You would do well to take in one of the football games to share in the excitement they bring along with the fantastic Pep Band and Drum Corps. They have it together!

The cookout the next night in Eads provided a good time to relive some of the old times and hear of new adventures by our young-at-heart fellow classmates. I’m sorry that more of you were not able to attend as the food and camaraderie made for a great evening of memories. Although we were somewhat hesitant about trying to pull off a 55th reunion, the results were much better than expected.

If you are not familiar with the school’s website, musowls.org, you should check it out to see all the accomplishments of current students and some of the activities on campus during the year. There are many events planned each year and listed on the website that brought to mind connections 55 years after being there! There is a great video of Mr. Haguewood’s retirement directed by a former student. There is also one introducing Mr. Sanders, who will be a fine successor. (Watch it and see if he reminds you of one of our classmates!) I had the opportunity to visit with him and his lovely wife before dinner at a reception in their home, which is behind the indoor tennis compound and a short hike through the woods.

Alex Wellford ’60 and his wife kept us in rapt attention as he recounted the early days of his father’s tenure as the first chairman of the board. I had never heard the fascinating details of how MUS came to be, and hearing it from him was a real treat.

Pete Shearon and I did not get through to as many of you as we would have liked on Phonathon night, but we did enjoy talking to those we reached. Let us hear from some of you we missed, and share some of your latest news. I know that Canon and Jamie Hall recently hosted Canon’s Rhodes 50th reunion party at their home with some 50 people attending. And at the time I submit this, Pat and Nat Ellis are planning to join Kathy and me at the annual Beg To Differ Concert at MUS in December. We usually meet first for dinner across the street at P.F. Chang’s. The talented students never disappoint.

Robin and Gordon Greeson celebrated anniversary No. 46 in August, thankful for meeting at Rhodes and finding each other. He reports: “We have three daughters, Cory, Laura, and Kate. Cory lives with her family in a condo on Anna Maria Island off the coast of Bradenton, FL. She is a plein air artist and sells her works off the easel and in galleries. She also teaches classes for beginning to intermediate artists. Her son, Sam, 13, is an avid Vol fan like his father; her daughter Anna, 11, started middle school this year and has a remarkable capacity to make friends easily. Middle daughter Laura, having spent 23 months in Singapore, moved back to Chicago in September and is a director of the Bank of Tokyo. She has a daughter, Tessa, who turned 2 in July, and Laura is expecting twins in mid-December (one surely a boy and the other almost surely a girl). They will need help, and Robin and I look forward to making trips from Knoxville to Chicago to grandparent. Kate and her husband live in suburban Charlotte and have daughters Emery, 3½, and Juliette, 1½. Kate is a full-time mother. I retired December 31, 2016, after serving Knoxville as a child psychiatrist since 1980. I feel my age when I tell you I was the first full-time child psychiatrist in the history of Knoxville. I enjoy reading, playing bridge, writing, gardening and following UT sports (a guy can’t live in this town without being a Vol fan). We enjoy traveling and went to Australia, Bali, and Singapore early in 2017 to visit Laura and to check off one of my bucket list items – seeing some of the Australian Open in Melbourne. My reunion experience was enhanced by seeing three classmates for the first time since May 1967. I connected via FaceTime with Walter Sprunt, who was in Maine for the wedding of a niece and unable to make the weekend. In August I discovered that Charles Livermore lived in Knoxville. He retired three years ago as
The Class of 1967 had a great 50th reunion on September 22-23 with 17 class members and their spouses attending. Friday night we had dinner at MUS, watched the first half of the football game in a Stokes Stadium skybox, and then went to John Pettey’s house for an after-party with drinks and some special Memphis barbecue. We were hosted at lunch on Saturday by the new headmaster, Pete Sanders. Pete gave us a history lesson on what was going on in politics, music, and society in 1967. Saturday night the party was at Jack Erb’s home in Rossville with a wonderful dinner of Argentinian beef, chicken, and other dishes prepared by his Argentinian polo crew. The weather was great, and we sat at tables in his front yard to eat. Notable dance moves were made by Bill Jordan, who has obviously been coached by his wife. At the end of Saturday night, all there said we do not need to wait five years to do this again. Those in attendance for all or part of the reunion were, from left, Pettey, Walter Wills, Mark Halperin, Walt Tomford, Bob Parrish, Jim Seale, John Callison, Lance Minor, Minor Vernon, Gordon Greeson, Jim Cowan, Erb, Jordan, and Joel Fulmer (not pictured, John Callison, Ray Higgins, and Vance Vogel).

A few days after spending a delightful weekend at the Class of 1967’s 50th reunion, Bill Jordan and his wife, Josie, hit the road again to spend four weeks sightseeing and hiking in Italy. They visited Venice, Florence, Tuscany, Rome, and the Amalfi Coast, trying a different flavor of gelato almost every day. They returned tired and happy to their home in Washington, DC, where Bill works as a consultant to environmental groups and the chemical industry on pesticide and food safety issues. Bob Parrish and his wife, Pat, are now living in Vonore, TN; combined, they have six children and six grandchildren.

After a total of 24 years in the armed forces, one tour of duty in Iraq, and holding a place on the Board of Mayor and Aldermen in Germantown for 16 years, Bob is now working part-time in Memphis and Knoxville.

Players from the undefeated 1967 Owls football team recently established a new endowment, the Challace J. McMillin Defensive Coaching Fund, to honor the distinguished career of their defensive coach. Alumni unveiled a plaque in his honor at Stokes Stadium and recognized him on the field during a game in September.

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**Fishing News.** In 2006 I started a nonprofit organization, Great Outdoors University, that takes inner city at-risk kids from Memphis into the outdoors on trips.

Leslie and I run a 1,600-acre sustainable livestock farm near Brownsville, TN, and an 80-acre organic produce farm near Whiteville, TN. We also operate The Curb Market, which sources local food from Memphis area growers and sells retail in the Crosstown Concourse.

Reuniting with MUS’s original garage band, The Strangers, has been a great reminder of the fun we had in high school. Playing old music with Jimbo Robinson, Cleo, Terry, and Steve, along with newcomers Allen “Cool” McCool ’77 and John Murrah ’77, has been a blast. Losing Steve to brain cancer almost did us in. But we’re going to hang in there for the big Five-O reunion!”

**’70**

Warren Ayres is currently serving as president of the University Club.

Mac Caradine is totally retired now and doing lots of camping and fishing. He plans to head West soon for more of it.

**’71**

Irina and Harrell Schaeffer are building two new homes and planning to spend more time in Florida.

**’73**

Montgomery Martin was featured in a New Memphis Institute Series on innovative Memphians: bit.ly/MartinArticle.

**’74**

Chuck Day still owns Manning Brothers Food Service Equipment in Athens, GA, and was awarded the Manufacturers’ Reps “Icon of the Year” Award for the southern region of MAFSI (Manufacturers’ Agents Association for the Food Service Industry).

Gerald Wade has joined Pinnacle Financial Partners as senior vice president.

**’76**

Jeffrey Klinke has returned to Memphis after his career in journalism had him living abroad in England and Ireland.

From left, Steve Young and his brother Paul Young ’85 stopped by campus to visit during a recent family trip to Memphis.

**’79**

Robert Gordon recently received an Emmy Award for Outstanding Historical Documentary for his film, *Best of Enemies*. Other Owls who participated in the project are Clif Phillips ’77, executive producer; Jonathan Kirkscey ’93, composer; and David Leonard ’80, cinematographer. Read more in an upcoming MUS Today feature.

Chip Parrott and Owls Basketball Head Coach Matt Bakke were inducted into the Rhodes College Hall of Fame this fall as members of the 1980-81 Southwestern (as Rhodes was known then) Men’s Basketball team. Their team won the College Athletic Conference Championship in 1981 with a 9-1 record and finished the year 23-3 overall, advancing to the Elite 8 of the NCAA Division III Tournament.

**’80**

John Sebes says his son, James, has started his master’s degree at Carleton University in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. The degree is in biology with a focus on salmon conservation.

**’81**

Lynn Ballinger has embarked on a second profession and started a new business, Ballinger Executive Coaching.
David Rudolph, son of the late Coach Jake Rudolph, was recently appointed by Governor Bill Haslam as Shelby County Circuit Court Judge for the 30th Judicial District. He was sworn in by retiring Circuit Court Judge Robert L. Childers, above right.

Kevin Russell was recently inducted into the Millsaps College Athletics Hall of Fame for his basketball prowess. In three years on the Millsaps men's basketball team, Russell scored 806 points and grabbed 403 rebounds, leading the Majors in rebounding and blocked shots all three years he was on the team. He averaged double figures in scoring all three years and helped lead Millsaps to a 20-6 record and its first-ever NCAA Tournament appearance in 1984 when the Majors reached the Sweet 16.

The Alumni Executive Board honored David Montague as Alumnus of the Year this fall (see story on page 34).

Richard Greenwald has returned to Memphis and is the new president and CEO of the Soulsville Foundation.

Brian Sullivan joined the board of the Orpheum Theatre Group.

Edward Felsenthal was named editor-in-chief of Time magazine. He joined Time in April 2013 and led a major expansion of the company’s digital footprint, including the establishment of a 24/7 newsroom and video operation. Read more in an upcoming MUS Today feature.

Chad Parker recently moved to Little Rock Waste Management where he is now district operations manager for Little Rock/Pine Bluff, AR.

Will McGown designs and builds custom furniture in his shop, McGown Studio, located in the Edge District in Memphis. He recently donated storefront space at his studio on Monroe to Memphis Heritage to showcase and sell architectural treasures from historic Memphis buildings. Will serves as president of the board for Memphis Heritage.

Frank Colvett was elected vice-chairman of the Memphis City Council for 2018.

The Class of 1991 is sad to report the passing of Trent Allen. Big No. 33 will be remembered by all, and prayers are appreciated for his wife, Courtney; his son, Elliot ‘21; and his daughters, Simmons and Ayden. Trent would be excited to know that Simmons, a senior at Hutchison, has signed to play volleyball at Mississippi State University. Trent’s funeral was attended by a huge portion of the class – too many to list. We all thank Reagan Burford for his exceptional eulogy during the service.

Darrell Cobbins was recently appointed to the state Board of Education by Gov. Bill Haslam. After teaching at Vanderbilt University Law School for four years, Lee Dickinson joined the firm of Hathaway & Kunz in Cheyenne, WY, in 2015. His practice areas include commercial contracts, retail regulatory matters, mergers and acquisitions, trademarks, and franchising. (And, yes, he asked us to mention that he is licensed in Tennessee.) He also taught at the University of Wyoming College of Law. Last month, the Wyoming State Bar awarded Lee the 2017 Pro Bono Award for Legal Services for Indigent Clients. He is loving life on the windy high plains and fitting right in.

Rey Flemings checked in with Darrell Cobbins; he is no longer in the Witness Protection Program, but can be found in San Francisco ... give him a shout if you are in Cali.

David Waddell was recently elected to the executive committee of the Greater Memphis Chamber’s Chairman's Circle,
which comprises 130 member companies working on game-changing initiatives for Memphis.

’92

Duncan Chesney has finally gotten married, to Beth Tsai of Taipei, Taiwan. He spends his time between Taipei, where he is a professor of comparative literature at National Taiwan University, and Dubai, where Beth is currently based.

The Alumni Executive Board honored Harry Sayle as Volunteer of the Year this fall (see story on page 34).

’93

David Wall is now president of Laminar Corporation in Washington, DC. As a licensed professional engineer, David has over 20 years of experience in the operations, maintenance, design, and construction of utilities. This includes operational oversight of a water distribution system serving 640,000 residents and 17.8 million annual visitors, managing a team of professionals on a $300 million development project, and implementation of various innovative initiatives throughout his career.

’94

This past summer William Mays fulfilled his lifelong dream of singing in The Music Man for nine shows at the Desoto Family Theater. (See Mays second from left.) He also got married on August 5, 2017, to the very lovely and patient Megan Shering.

’96

Thad Ferrell, pictured below, has developed a reputation around Durango, CO, as a superb and beloved rock climber in the past 11 years he’s lived there. On Sept. 9 he miraculously survived a 100-foot fall from the top of a climbing route so popular and challenging that climbers call it Holy Grail. Friends in Colorado set up a fundraising page through gofundme.com/we-thad-ferrell-recovery-fund to assist with his recovery efforts and have raised $85,000 towards their $100,000 goal.

Rob Ratton was selected as a member of the Memphis Business Journal’s 2017 “40 Under Forty” class. This program salutes 40 of the best and brightest individuals under the age of 40 who have made

IN MEMORY

John Addison Nickey ’65 October 7, 2017

Philip Warren Cruzen ’71 September 9, 2017

Regenold Sedberry Aycock ’68 February 24, 2016

David Gilroy McDonald ’74 November 1, 2017

Richard Arnold Sneed ’68 October 22, 2017

Trent Elliot Allen ’91 November 4, 2017

John Herbert Curtis, Jr. ’70 October 18, 2017
significant contributions in the business, professional, civic, and personal arenas in the Mid-South. Ratton received the Distinguished Service Award from the Shelby County District Attorney General in 2011 and was listed in Mid-South Super Lawyers – Rising Stars in 2016.

**’97**

**John Scruggs** and his wife, Elizabeth, welcomed a second daughter, Jane, in March 2017. In November the Scruggs family moved to Washington, D.C., where Scruggs is manager of public affairs communications for FedEx.

**’98**

**Jason Bradford** is the director of baseball sports performance at Pennsylvania State University. He and his wife, Diana, and children, Aidan and Evalyn, moved from Beavercreek, OH, to State College, PA, a year ago.

**’00**

**Scott Fletcher** is a freelance screenwriter in Los Angeles. He is a member of the Writers Guild of America and the Screen Actors Guild of America.

**Michael Liverance** is currently the national director of Extremity Orthopedic Sales & Marketing for 4WEB Medical in Texas. He and his wife, Brittney, welcomed a second son in November.

**Jay McDonald** recently moved back to Memphis and joined Semmes Murphey where he is a pain management physician. He specializes in nerve blocks and minimally invasive surgical techniques such as spinal cord stimulator implants that greatly reduce or eliminate chronic pain. Jay was previously in private practice in Jackson, MS, but is happy to have moved back home. He and his wife, Chavanne, have two boys, who both attend PDS.

**’01**

**Harvey Kay** is assistant director of development at the Memphis Leadership Foundation, a non-denominational outreach ministry that empowers urban under-resourced men, women, and children through effective and innovative ministry and leadership.

**’02**

**Frank Langston** reports: “Eleven dedicated members of the Class of 2002 made it out to our 15th reunion weekend, with good times all around.” Front row, from left, **John Adrian, Herbo Humphreys, Stephen Rodda, Scott Adams, Brooks Hamner**, back row, **Adam Lazarov, Langston, Robert Rowan**, and **Andy Rock**, not pictured. **Gene Douglass, Field Norris**. (See other reunion classes and Homecoming photos in We Saw You on page 56.)

**’03**

**Barlow Mann, Jr.** has moved from London back to the States with his wife and daughter to accept a position with McGuire Woods in Charlotte, NC.

**’04**

**Kyle Slatery** has a new position as assistant dean of students at St. George’s Independent School.

**’05**

**Charles Askew** is the controller at Echo Health Ventures.

**Daniel Williams** is the director of operations for M33M Basketball.

**’06**

**John Hensley** is an associate attorney in the corporate finance practice of Morrison & Foerster in Washington, DC. He represents publicly and privately held companies in a variety of corporate and securities law matters.

**Walter Klyce** is a Poggi Research Fellow in pediatric orthopaedics at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine.

**Gerald Wade** is completing his medical residency program at St. Louis University hospital.

**Logan Welch** has joined Pinnacle Financial Partners as a financial advisor.

**’07**

**Stewart Gray** is working toward his MBA at the University of Virginia Darden School of Business.

**’08**

**DeAndre Jones** is living in Greenville, SC, and is a senior consultant with Cognizant, which provides consulting
services designed to help clients solve their most complex business and technology issues.

**09**

**Joel Moss** is assistant operations manager at Interstate Blood Bank in Memphis.

**Will Paxton** is a senior real-time trader for FirstLight Power Resources in Boston.

**Taylor Reed**, a third-generation dentist, joined Reed Family Dentistry in Millington.

**10**

**Wade Laycook** is an associate with Lime Rock Partners, a private equity investment firm in Houston focused on the oil and gas sector.

**Matthew Murphy** is the newly appointed COO of the Commonwealth Group mortgage consulting firm.

**Patrick Nenon** graduated from the University of Alabama with a management information systems degree and is employed by Fast Enterprises, a Colorado software development company. His job has taken him to Denver, CO; Phoenix, AZ; Warsaw, Poland; Helsinki, Finland; and recently to Wellington, New Zealand. Travel has afforded him the opportunity to see different countries and do many things, including bungee jumping and heli-skiing in New Zealand.

**Peter Rainer** has joined Raymond James & Associates in Memphis.

**11**

**William Hepner** is an audit associate with KPMG in Houston, TX.

In memory of **Blake Caummisar**, **Ben Roberts** reports that friends held the first annual Blake Caummisar Memorial Golf Tournament at Germantown Country Club. Pictured from left, Roberts, **Austin Magruder** '10, and **Kevin (Szymkowicz) Simms**

**12**

**Edward Francis** is a client analyst at Green Square Capital in Memphis.

**Healy Fuess** is working as a digital design engineer and designing computer chips at IntelliProp.

**Garrott Graham** is a business analyst with Deloitte in Atlanta.

**Ben Still** is managing associate in the Memphis office of Capital Financial Group.

**Chris Walker** recently graduated as second lieutenant from the U.S. Military Academy. In June he married 2nd Lt. Stephanie Geyer; **Anthony Hodges**, **Daniel Cunningham**, and **Christian Patterson** '13 served as groomsmen.

**13**

**Derrick Baber** is an associate in the Atlanta office of Prophet, a management consulting firm.

**Tripp Crews** graduated from Ole Miss with a BBA in 2017 and is now a financial analyst with Mercer Capital in Memphis.

**Nourse Fox** was a guest speaker in chapel this fall, speaking to students about the importance of character, humility, and being your authentic self. He currently attends the U.S. Naval Academy.

**Ford Howell** is a business sales account executive with FedEx Services in Memphis.
Peyton Klawinski is an associate in the Private Client Group of Stephens, Inc. in Little Rock.

Bryan Luttrell is a financial representative with Chartwell Financial Group in Memphis.

Sam Moore worked at Renasant Bank over the summer as a client relations specialist. While in school he has maintained an undergraduate job as an assistant to the admissions advisors. After graduation he plans to get into commercial banking and work toward a career as a relationship banker.

Hayes Westlake is a business analyst with Smith & Nephew in Memphis.

After his 2017 national championship in the high jump for Rhodes College, Renn Eason received the Coaches Association Scholar Athlete of the Year award. A biochemistry and molecular biology major with a 3.45 GPA who plans to go to medical school, Eason is the first Lynx athlete in school history to receive that distinction.

Tucker Fox was named University of Mississippi’s 2017-2018 Mr. Ole Miss this fall.

MIT senior Nick Schwartz recently learned that he won a prestigious

MARRIAGES

William Mays ’94 to Megan Shering on August 5, 2017
Stephen Weinberg ’95 to Kristin McLaughlin on June 10, 2017
Jason Colgate ’98 to Rachel Vardon on October 21, 2017
Tucker Carr ’08 to Audsley Dunavant on October 7, 2017
DeAndre Jones ’08 to Eryn Rogers on September 23, 2017
Robert Counce ’09 to Lydia Sooter on October 6, 2017
Lowell Hays ’09 to Kelly York on September 9, 2017
Chris Walker ’12 to Stephanie Geyer on June 24, 2017

BIRTHS

Ashley and Donny Kwon ’96, a daughter, Ellyette Rose, born September 23, 2017
Natalie and John Pettig ’97, a son, Webb Sherard, born September 13, 2017
Ashley and Jason Lewin ’98, a daughter, Lucy Robert, born September 28, 2017
Brooke and Chris Hamilton ’00, a son, James Richard, born January 7, 2017
Brittney and Michael Liverance ’00, a son, Trace Soren, born November 3, 2017
Paige and Paul Gillespie ’01, twins, a daughter, Bailey Elizabeth, and a son, Paul Trowbridge IV, born November 16, 2017
Ivy and John Phillips ’03, twin sons, Edward Warrington and Davis Edgar, born August 29, 2017
Jaime and Charles Askew ’05, a daughter, Ellery Anne, born June 23, 2017
Bridget and Bo Ladyman ’05, a daughter, Eve Rosalyn, born September 18, 2017
Brittany and Daniel Williams ’05, a daughter, Finley Grace, born July 11, 2017
Elizabeth and Peter Zanca ’06, a son, Henry McCormick, born June 22, 2017
Maddie and Kimbrough Taylor ’09, a son, Palmer Graham, born December 12, 2017

Kicking standout Gary Wunderlich of Ole Miss was one of 181 semifinalists for the William V. Campbell Trophy, presented to the top college football scholar-athlete in the nation. At the conclusion of the season, Wunderlich needed only two points to take his place as the Rebels’ all-time leading scorer in program history. He easily accomplished the feat in the Egg Bowl win over Mississippi State, and became Ole Miss’s career record-holder in multiple additional categories: career points kicking, career field goals made, and career point-after attempts made. Family members joined him on the field during the last home game of the year for his Senior Night recognition: Madison Wunderlich, Paul Edwards ’79, Jennifer Edwards, Elizabeth Edwards, Wunderlich, Scott Edwards ’08, Gary Wunderlich ’88, and Libby Wunderlich.
Marshall Scholarship to pursue a graduate degree in the United Kingdom. He is one of only 43 Americans to receive this award. He reports: “This was absolutely my top choice in all the fellowships that I applied to, and I’m extremely grateful to MUS for being such an immense part of shaping me into the type of person I want to be. I could especially see the values that MUS taught me shine in the interview. My ideals, shortcomings, and successes were all challenged, and because of MUS, I was able to stand up for and have confidence in my beliefs and background. I’m going to be getting a master’s in physics with extended research at Imperial College London over the next two years. I am indebted to MUS for all the school has done for me.” Read more here: bit.ly/Schwartz-Marshall

**Zain Virk**, a chemistry major at Rhodes College, is the school’s Honor Council president.

**August Klinke** and **Zachary Klinke ’17** started an Eagle Scout project four years ago that involved gathering photos and information on some of the city’s historic National Register properties; that information provided the catalyst for Memphis Heritage to create a guide book released this year of all currently listed historic properties in Shelby County.

**Nicholas Manley ’15**, fresh off a semester at the University of Oxford in England, dropped by **Michelle Crews**’ eighth-grade English class to teach a grammar lesson this fall. Manley, a student at University of Tennessee, Knoxville, expressed an interest in teaching when he spoke with Crews and Academic Dean **Flip Eikner ’77** at a previous Beg To Differ/Studio Band concert. They invited the English literature major to try teaching in a Lower School class. “It’s great ... seeing how well MUS prepared me in grammar and essay-writing,” Manley said. “Even while doing a term at Oxford, I felt I was more prepared than other students.”

**Carlton Orange** was named an SEC Academic All-American at Texas A&M University.

**University of North Carolina sophomore soccer player Jack Skahan** has been named to the 2016-2017 Atlantic Coast Conference Honor Roll, comprising student-athletes who participated in a varsity-level sport and registered a grade-point average of 3.0 or better for the full academic year. He was recently accepted into the UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School.
Max Scott pledged Phi Delta Theta at the University of Arkansas.

Ryan Pahlow ’17, second from left, celebrated MUS Commencement with several other Owl family members, including, from left, uncle Tom Marshall ’77, cousin Oscar Marshall ’22, and brothers Eston ’19 and Mason ’21.

National Interscholastic Swim Coaches Association (NISCA) named Class of 2017 swimmers Alex Robinson, Parker Kaye, Jack McCaghren, and Christian Berry to its high school All-America list as the top 200-yard medley relay team in the nation. Their time was 1:28.58 in the finals in Chattanooga.

Belhaven University running back Bradley Foley was named the National Christian Collegiate Athletic Association (NCCAA) Football Offensive Student-Athlete of the Week in October. He received the honor after recording a season-high 95 rushing yards on 18 attempts while grabbing four catches for 45 yards on the road at McMurry University.

Owls gathered this fall in Chapel Hill to watch UNC’s Tar Heels battle Virginia: from left, Buchanan Dunavant ’18, Mac McArtor, Hudson Anthony, Alex Hyde ’17, Billy Dunavant, Jack Skahan, Patton Orr, and Tucker Colerick.

Belhaven Athletics
Class Reps  Send news to your class representative listed below
or to Ann Laughlin at ann.laughlin@musowls.org.

'58 Claude Crawford ...........................................grill17@yahoo.com
'59 John Lawo ..................................................johnlawo@bellsouth.net
'60 Metcalf Crump .............................................metcrump@crumpfirm.com
'60 Doug Ferris ....................................................dferris@fccfuelcells.com
'61 Bill Quinlen ...........................................wlg1975@aol.com
'62 Jerry Bradfield ............................................jbradfg123@aol.com
'63 Doug Ferris ....................................................dferris@fccfuelcells.com
'65 Bob Heller .....................................................hrheller3@comcast.net
'66 Chuck Smith ..................................................duckhead50@aol.com
'67 John Pettry .............................................john.pettry@raymondjames.com
'68 Bill Ferguson ..................................................theactor@cypressusa.com
'69 Scott Wellford ............................................spwellford@gmail.com
'70 Kelly McGuire .............................................t.king70@gmail.com
'70 Jimmy Ogle ..................................................jogle@memphisriverfront.com
'70 Barlow Mann ..............................................barlow.mann@sharpenet.com
'71 Greg Meyer ....................................................gregmeyer112@gmail.com
'71 Mel Payne .....................................................mel_paynejmc123@gmail.com
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'73 Cecil Humphreys ...........................................cecil@cecilhumphreys.com
'73 Wise Jones ....................................................Wise.Jones@regions.com
'74 Mark Ruleman .............................................mark.ruleman@litedpc.com
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'78 George Sousouls ...........................................gsouss@comcast.net
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'81 Boyd Wade ...................................................bwade@fctgm.com
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'90 Brian Eason ....................................................be@aol.com
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'97 Justin Lohan ..............................................lohanjvl@yahoo.com
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'97 Chip Campbell ............................................chip.campbell13@gmail.com
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'00 Daniel McDonell ........................................dmcdonell@gmail.com
'00 Battle Willford .............................................battlevilford@gmail.com
'00 Scott Adams .............................................scott.adams@ftnf.com
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'05 Sam Sawyer ..............................................samhuttonsawyer@gmail.com
'06 Hunter Adams .............................................hadams87@gmail.com
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'09 Jim Moore ....................................................jimmoore910@gmail.com
'10 Stephon Allmond ..........................................allmond.stephond@gmail.com
'10 Hank Hill .....................................................hank4hill@gmail.com
'10 Jake Rudolph .............................................jcrudolph4@gmail.com
'10 Blake Hennessy .............................................blakehennessy11@gmail.com
'10 Case Schoolkop ...........................................cschoolkop@gmail.com
'11 Scooter Taylor .............................................scooter.taylor11@gmail.com
'12 Edward Francis ............................................jefrancis56@gmail.com
'12 Anthony Hodges .........................................ahodges21@student.gsu.edu
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'14 Mac McArtor ..............................................mmacma@live.uncc.edu
'14 Trammel Robinson ..........................................trammelrobinson18@gmail.com
'14 Josh Gray .....................................................98josh.gray17@gmail.com
'14 Marcus Gronauer ...........................................dukeboy8@gmail.com
'14 Alex Hyde .....................................................alex.hyde11@gmail.com
'14 Evan Smith ..............................................evansm110@gmail.com
Alumni gathered from far and wide to reconnect at Homecoming 2017. Festivities opened with an alumni dinner Friday night and were followed by a 33-14 win over opponent Haywood High School.

Many alumni from the Class of 1967 were on hand to celebrate their 50th reunion, including, front row, from left, Gretchen Hallerberg and Walt Tomford, Bill Jordan, and Walter Willis, and back row, Robin and Gordon Greeson and Bob and Pat Parrish.

Class of 2007 alumni, from left, William Ware, Buck Towner, Jay Edwards, Neely Mallory, and Simon Wigfield, who attended MUS as an exchange student from England their senior year.

Alumni Executive Board President Jason Fair ’89 and Class Rep Brandon Westbrook ’92.

Class of 1977 alumni, including, from left, Ron Banks, Andy Humphries, Clayton Peeples, Tim Sharpe, Ken McCown, Kent Ihrig, Chuck Wilkinson, Stu Rosen, and in front, Bob Neal, came out to celebrate their 40th reunion.

Class of 1997 alumni, from left, Ben Wunderlich, Will McDonald, Jay Thakkar, and Emmel Golden.

Class of 2007 alumni celebrating their 10th reunion were, from left, McCauley Williams, Jim “Special K” Kyle, Kristof Tigyi, Steven Thompson, and Sisco Larson.
Reunion Terrace Party Winners

Class of 2002 alumni Frank Langston, Gene Douglass, and John Adrian (with son, Jack) enjoyed the use of the Alumni Terrace overlooking the field as part of the class with the greatest percentage increase in Annual Fund participation.

With the greatest percentage increase in total class gift, members of the Class of 2012 were also Terrace Party winners. Classmates William Hammond, Mitchell Marino and wife, Olivia, and John Oates headed straight from the terrace to the stadium to watch the Owls defeat Haywood High School.

Allen McCool ‘77 and his wife, Caroline, visited with Tim Sharpe ’77.

Aaron Noble ’12 attended with his wife, Celia.

From left, Class of 1997 alumni Justin Grinder, Eddie Aftandilian, Dave Hwang, Andrew Hartsfield, Russell Erskine, Rob Sayle, Wilson Chwang, and Josh Acker came to celebrate their 20th reunion.

Aaron Noble '12 attended with his wife, Celia.
50th Reunion: The Class of 1967 celebrated Homecoming all weekend long - at the dinner, football game, and after-party at Jana and John Pettey’s home Friday night, at a special luncheon in their honor Saturday, and at another class party held at the home of Karen and Jack Erb Saturday night. See Class News on page 46 for more info. Luncheon attendees, pictured above, from left, included Vance Vogel, Minor Vernon, Walt Tomford, Ray Higgins, Jim Seale, Pettey, Mark Halperin, and Walter Willis.

Alumni celebrating their 55th reunion serve as honorary team captains for the Homecoming football game. These Class of 1962 graduates, from left, Nat Ellis, Jerry Bradfield, Pete Shearon, Cole Wilder, Sam Gary, Bob Marker, and Dan Copp, witnessed the coin toss before kickoff.

Members of the Class of 1972 celebrated at Lafayette’s Music Room in Overton Square.

Debbie and Cliff Phillips hosted the party for the Class of 1977.
The Class of 1982 enjoyed catching up Downtown at Loflin Yard.

Nikki and Dow McVean hosted the reunion party for his classmates.

The Class of 1987 met at the home of Beth and Richard Hussey.

The Class of 1997 reconnected at Loflin Yard.

The Class of 2012 held their party in November at Loflin Yard.

See the Class of 2002 reunion photo in Class News, page 50.

The Class of 2007 caught up at Railgarten in Midtown.
The foursome from 1992 captured the Best Class trophy; from left, Jason Shelby, Todd Watson, Nathan Howard, and Scott Anderson.


Ron Banks ’77, Justin Grinder ’97, Bruce Moore ’77, and Drew Alston ’07.

Kirk Malmo ’08, Walter Barnett ’09, Grant Heflin ’08, and Blair Wright ’08.
New York Alumni Gathering
Area alumni met new Headmaster Pete Sanders and reconnected with old friends at New York’s Gramercy Park Hotel in October.

Board member Jeff Meskin and Jake Greenstein ’12
Brian Ringel ’13 and Edward Felsenthal ’84
John Palmer ’93, Instructor in English Lin Askew, and Michael Kerlan ’93
Gene Dattel ’62 and Todd Keathley ’88

Brian Ringel ’13 and Edward Felsenthal ’84

Turner Morehead ’09, Will Benton ’09, and Will Stokes ’09 and his wife, Grier

John Palmer ’93, Instructor in English Lin Askew, and Michael Kerlan ’93

Headmaster Pete Sanders, Reid Sanders ’10, Wilson Orr ’10, and Michael Stein ’08
I have been ruminating for some time on the reading habits and skills of my students – students as bright and destined to lead successful lives and to accomplish great things as ever. Trying to allow for my advancing age and grumpiness, I nonetheless am aware of a subtle despair stalking me from the darkness of the back alleys of my mind. Oh, students, to be sure, still make 4’s and 5’s on AP exams. Freshman grades are still bell-shaped curves skewed to the higher end. But something essential to the rich ragout of the liberal arts education has soddened, a dilution resulting in a thin gruel of mere grade-based competence. Many of my students today do not enjoy reading, nor are they able to summon their imaginations to the noble cause of liberating themselves from the constrictions and mundanity of this time and this place. Few at their age see reading fiction as the avenue to the fuller man, the man whose views are tempered by familiarity with the wisdom of the ages accessible from the printed page.

As I write this sentence, I realize that I am only echoing Sir Francis Bacon, who famously wrote, “Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man.” Sir Francis spoke the word in season, for the surest route to good writing is extensive reading. The “full man” is “liberal” in the true meaning of the word.
He possesses a studied understanding of the wider world in all its complexity, a man who can deal with diversity and change. He seeks to know his place in the universe. Writer and critic Northrop Frye observed that “literature encourages tolerance – bigots and fanatics seldom have any use for the arts, because they’re so preoccupied with their beliefs and actions that they can’t see them [the arts] as possibilities.”

Lacking a periscope through which to view the future, many students do not see the utility of reading as a bulwark against bad choices and missed opportunities. Nor do they see reading as a pure form of entertainment, an always available and inexpensive thrill ride. Emily Dickinson made this argument in her often-anthologized little poem “There Is No Frigate like a Book,” wherein a book is compared to “frugal” conveyances, designed to “take us Lands away.”

My lamentations about something lost, about the inability of students to imagine, to see vividly in the mind’s eye the fictional landscape being described in assigned reading, to imaginatively subsume themselves in the action, will not lead me here to conjure the usual deleterious suspects – violent video games, text messaging, graphic novels, Shmoop. I will merely remark that in my experience many students see no real distinction between the text of Macbeth and a Spark Notes summary of the play. Either version is simply something that must be slogged through on the quest for a good grade.

Futile it is to assert to some students that reading is good for them. A recent study revealed that just six minutes of reading is enough to reduce stress by 68 percent. But many students either feel no stress or adopt more immediate methods of dealing with it. Try pointing out to students that numerous studies have shown that reading keeps the brain functioning more effectively as one ages and that elderly individuals who read regularly are 2.5 times less likely to develop Alzheimer’s than their peers. For many students gazing into the future takes them imaginatively only to the weekend.

Well, I have mused long enough, my bemoaning so marinated in pessimism that a spot of levity seems called for. Let us hear from some of my students. Not so very long ago I assigned to all my students (freshmen and seniors) the following thesis statement for an early-semester essay: What Reading Means to Me. Here are some responses gleaned from their essays that, on my honor, I quote verbatim. Nothing could blunt the keen edge of opprobrium of the student who wrote, “reading provides a never-failing way to waste time.” Another veracious young man felt strongly that reading is “something I am made to do rather than something I want to do.” Yet another lad wrote, “Until the usual attempt to read three books in two days before school starts, summers serve as an escape from the burden of reading.” Imagine, a burden! Not one of life’s great pleasures, but a burden.

One young philosopher noted that “It is often said that reading broadens horizons, enhances experiences, and teaches valuable lessons.” Ah, I thought, here is fine metal, among the dross. But, alas, he continued, “Yet these lofty ideals are foreign to me.” And, as I suspected, electronic media is often the IED that destroys a student’s desire to read, for one younger wrote what many others implied: “Spending hours reading a book is less enticing than simply skimming a video or article online.” Notice that he “skims” even the video.

A few students were ambivalent about reading. One, for example, allowed that “reading is better than algebra.” Another admitted the utility of reading, which, he said, “makes me fall asleep when nothing else can.” Another asserted that reading afforded him a “haven,” a refuge from the drudgery of homework and challenging classroom lectures. A wave of relief washed over me as I noted that at least he had mercifully refrained from referring to reading as his “safe space,” where “trigger words” would not assail his delicate sensibilities or cause him to examine his preconceived opinions.

A few, however, seemed to grasp the importance of reading. One said that reading “allowed me to be a more joyful kid with a stronger imagination.” One young reader indicated that he had learned something about humanity, for he wrote, “Whenever I read something written centuries ago, it teaches me that people then are mostly like people now.” Even more perceptive, another student wrote that reading “is a low-cost, low-movement way to explore not only our world but also past worlds,” a view expressed in Emily Dickinson’s poem cited earlier (though I am certain that he had never heard of Miss Dickinson). Another young essayist also saw reading as a frigate “to take us Lands away,” for he viewed literature as “a way to escape reality, a way to explore a new world … to get away from the harsh reality of my personal life, such as my parents.”

One more and I am done. Obviously having done some reading, one young writer assumed a historical vantage, as he confessed, “I’m a medieval peasant at heart. I think reading is some sacred thing.” Perhaps unaware that most medieval peasants were illiterate and therefore thought reading “sacred” because it was a mystery to them, he nevertheless expressed a sincere sentiment. Continued reading will inevitably focus the lens through which he views the past.

I ask myself, “What is to be done to allay my ‘subtle despair’? For a teacher only one answer is possible: continue to plow the field and sow the seed in the hope of a rich harvest for the receptive student. An essay titled The Odd Pursuit of Teaching Books by Roger Rosenblatt that Col. Lynn cut out of Time magazine in 1983 and gave to Bill Hatchett, who passed it on to me, has since then afforded me encouragement and the will to persevere. A voice from the past, from the printed page, possessed by a man whom I will never meet spoke to me personally and said, “If words are merely words after all, then the teacher of books may be the world’s most optimistic creature. No matter how he may grumble about life’s decay, it is he who, year after year, trudges up the stone steps of old, dank buildings, hauls himself before the future, and announces, against all reason of experience, that [quoting Milton] ‘the World was all before them.’”

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A 13-foot-tall rooster presides over Old Dominick Distillery in Downtown
Memphis. Chris Canale ’97 has resurrected the Old Dominick label in honor
of the bourbon whiskey his great-great-grandfather, Italian immigrant
Domenico Canale, sold in Memphis 150 years ago. Prohibition would force
D. Canale & Co. out of the liquor business, although the company survived
and eventually took up beer and wine distribution again. Producing vodka
today, Old Dominick Distillery will have its own whiskey ready in a few
years to offer new generations of Memphians. See story on page 22.
Photo by Alan Howell
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his permanent address at your home, please notify the MUS Development 
Office (901-260-1350) of the new mailing address. Because college addresses 
change so frequently, we are unable to use them for general mailing.

Kathie and Albert Alexander ’84 donated chess tables and stools and chess pieces 
to the school in honor of their son, Mackey ’17. The two tables, which are cast concrete 
with granite and brass inlays, were installed in the Morrison Courtyard of Humphreys 
Hall and have proven extremely popular. Director of Counseling Joe Abrahams ’96, 
center, observed a spirited match this fall.