

**HEADlines**  
**for March, 2010**  
**Christopher B. Williamson**  
**Head of School**

As we finish February and look ahead to March break and some hints of spring later in the month, I hope that you and your family are enjoying winter in New England. So far it has not brought anywhere near the disruptions of last year! This season does bring every year several culminating experiences at Applewild, including the Living Wax Museum for second grade and regional History Day for eighth and ninth, the end of basketball season in Upper School, and the 100<sup>th</sup> Day celebration (and Dr. Seuss's Pajama Day Birthday celebration!) in Lower School. We also will have enjoyed the sixth and seventh grade play, and our K – 3 thespians will have received their parts for their spring production.

**Fourth Grade Team Finalized**

I am delighted to confirm that first grade teacher Pam Meehan will next year join Jenn Buck in moving to fourth grade. Pam has taught second and fourth grades in her career in addition to first grade and is enthusiastic about returning to fourth. She looks forward to learning the fourth grade curriculum from Nanci and Steph this spring and to teaming with Jenn to make the fourth grade's transition to Marshall go smoothly. Tally Lent has been talking with the third graders about their interests and concerns about staying in Marshall, which she, Jenn and Pam all see as an exciting opportunity to strengthen the Lower School. Tally will invite third grade parents to a conversation about those plans when spring arrives.

**“Adapt, Survive, and Thrive”**

Peggy and I will be away at the end of February attending the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) 2010 conference and meeting with alumni in the Los Angeles and San Francisco area. We are making good progress toward our *Building Community* campaign goal, and I look forward to spreading the word about Applewild's aspirations and plans on the “left coast.”

The NAIS conference theme is “Adapt, Survive, Thrive.” I will have a (very minor) role in the conference, attending (in the deep background!) a book signing for contributing a chapter to a book, *Change Management*, that NAIS has just published about how schools can confidently address and manage change. As a result of what has been the most challenging economic circumstances since World War II, combining with a demographic drop in school age children, all schools are wrestling with challenging choices, and NAIS wanted to compile a collection of readings on the topic.

I am proud of the careful attention to detail and prudent planning by the Board, Administration and Faculty at Applewild. We do not take lightly our “Belief in the Future.” We live it every day with our students, and we plan carefully to assure that future generations will benefit from our program as students do now and have in the past. As our country and our area stabilize and begin to regain economic health, you can be confident that Applewild will continue to offer an outstanding program, that outstanding teachers will know each student well, will challenge and affirm each child, and that we will provide both breadth and depth in our program.

A recent testament to the impact of Applewild is from Nat Jellinek '88, the featured alumnus in February's Alumni Spotlight [Nat Jellinek '88](#). Nat talks about how his experiences at Applewild prepared him well, shaped his career path and now cause him to have high expectations for his own children's education.

It is always hard to miss much of a week's activity at Applewild. Jen Caldwell allowed me to sit in on a rehearsal of *Sherlock Holmes' First Adventure* last Thursday. I enjoyed seeing the students working on developing their character and on some complicated, and very funny, lines and stage business. I expect that everyone enjoyed the show – and that adults particularly enjoyed some of the clever references. Most of all, I will miss the interactions between each teacher and student that make every day so enjoyable and that are at the core of what makes Applewild so vital in the lives of children.

Remember “rabbit, rabbit, rabbit” on Monday morning. Maybe that will usher in an early spring!