

Parkmont School Passing Notes

SUMMER & BACK TO SCHOOL 2024



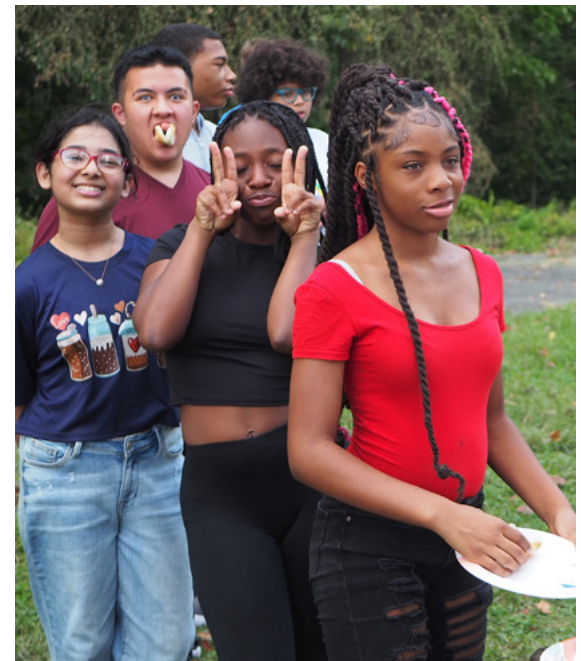
Rhodes, Sam, Klára, Tom, and Nijole pause for a photo while prepping for the first week of school.

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Orientation and All-School Cookout

What a great start to the year! Students arrived on campus for orientation on August 29 and began classes the following week. It has been wonderful to welcome our new students and reunite with veteran Parkmonters! Returning students raved about the classroom renovations that were completed over the summer. We're so grateful to Sam and Christy for managing the building work, and a special

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summer-edition Parkmont Shoutout to students Mikayas and Clara May, who helped put everything back in place before school started!

At Orientation, in addition to sorting out such practical details as lockers and schedules, students and teachers played plenty of silly games (and ate many Oreos) as a fun way to get to know each other.

The fun continued at an all-school cookout on Sept. 11, organized by teacher and grillmaster Ethan Kuhnhenh. Thank you, Ethan! We all headed over to the picnic area at nearby Carter Barron and enjoyed an afternoon of soccer, badminton, ultimate frisbee, and good-old hanging out and talking. ■



Building Updates

Christy Halvorson Ross

The summer of 2024 was an exciting one for Parkmont's schoolhouse!

Almost every classroom received a major upgrade, and the result is a brighter, cheerier student experience. Each teaching space got new paint, new carpet, new Forbo display boards, and an accent wall from Parkmont's color palette. New technology, desks, bookshelves, lighting and fans were also among the updates. Additionally, we created new display areas for photos and mission-driven inspiration around the building.

Many thanks to our angel donors who made it possible for us to complete the renovations so far!

There will be more to come next summer, too, in the form of a kitchen, science lab, and computer lab renovations.

Stay tuned for this year's annual giving campaign, which will be 100% focused on the renovations. We're excited to build momentum on restoring and updating our beautiful schoolhouse for the work we do with students. In the meantime, please enjoy a few shots of our cheerful new spaces! ■



Staff Summer Adventures

Exploring the world through travel expands our thinking, ignites our creativity, deepens our understanding of other people and ourselves, and is a key component of a Parkmont education for students and faculty alike. Parkmont has a tradition

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Nijole and friends at Iceberg Lake in Glacier National Park, Montana.



Christy and extended family in Keene Valley, New York



Lexis in Barcelona, Spain



Ethan and a campsite companion in West Virginia



Kaltra in Sintra, Portugal

of providing stipends when possible to full-time faculty for summer travel, and we've been delighted to have the help of a current family in support of recent teacher adventures. This past summer, teachers and their families explored the world outside their classrooms, from Vancouver, Canada to Tirana, Albania, and returned to our 16th Street home base with the inspiration and renewed energy that travel delivers — as well as some great pictures! ■



Anthony and family at Niagara Falls



Klára at Hungarian dance camp on Raft Island, Washington



Matt in Berlin with sister Maggie and friends



Mike with his daughter Lyra on the Douro River in Portugal



Siobhan and son Soren on a puffin tour in Maine

Graduation and 8th Grade Moving Up

In early June we celebrated the Moving Up of our 8th graders from Middle School to Upper School and the graduation of the Parkmont Class of 2024. We are thrilled to welcome our 8th graders to high school, but we already miss our graduates! We're so proud of all of you.

One of the ways we do graduation differently from other schools is that we have as many speeches about our graduating seniors and 8th graders as there are graduating seniors and 8th graders! For every student, a teacher who worked closely with them tells the story of that student's Parkmont journey – their interests, their personal and academic growth, the sweet and hilarious moments along the way.

Because all of the teachers work with students across every grade level, they've witnessed every stage of their students' journeys. Their graduation tributes are heartfelt parting gifts to students who will always be part of the Parkmont community! ■



What We're Learning, Session One

Each session, students may choose one Main Lesson (based on needed credits) and one Afternoon Class. Middle Schoolers are assigned to an English class and Upper Schoolers to a Reading Group, and all students are placed in an appropriate-level math class. Check out the options for Session 1!

MAIN LESSONS

MS: Inventions

Students will use the engineering-design process to create new inventions and innovate previous ones. They will learn about new ways to design and build using computer animated design (CAD), cardboard fabrication, and coding. We will start to think like inventors, explore real-world problems, and engage in several different projects over the course of the session.

MS: Elections

The class will introduce students to the concepts and historical background necessary for understanding elections around the world, beginning with an exploration of the Greek roots and inspirations that lead to modern democracy. Election processes, voting rights, transparency, and legitimacy will be major themes. Students will also study the 2024 presidential elections, drawing upon knowledge gained in the introductory portion of the class to evaluate the presidential race and compare it to other international elections. We'll have

active discussions surrounding the history and evolution of elections. Field trips, film, lecture, and debate will be used to present and dissect the information.

US: Current Events and Journalism

In Current Events and Journalism, students will learn about the power of media. We will examine the role of journalists and their responsibilities through the prism of current events. We will look at why events are newsworthy and how journalists approach reporting on them. We will talk about the value of press freedoms, take field trips, and even make our own newspaper.

US: U.S. Government

What makes the U.S. unique from other states, and societies around the globe? This class will discuss the origins, ideas, and core principles of the U.S. government by examining the Founding Documents. We will consider the responsibilities of the Three Branches of Government, participate in a Mock Congress using real bills from Congress, and explore state and local governments. Weekly current events

discussions will connect the course to today's political landscape. Field trips will provide real-world insight into the day-to-day functions of the U.S. Government.

US: Geography

We will learn about major aspects of geography and the many ways in which the world is interconnected. The class will be organized into one-week units, each focusing on a different continent. As we work our way around the world, we will focus on addressing several aspects of Geography: location, physical, human, and political geography, economics and natural resources.

US: Anatomy and Physiology

This section of Biology will enable students to identify and understand key structures, organs, systems, and spatial relationships in living systems. We will compare the different physiologies of the five kingdoms to see the unique strategies each has evolved to succeed in their environments. Upon completion of the course, students should broadly understand the roles of the different

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organ systems in the body, and the mechanisms by which those systems act (at both the macroscopic and a microscopic levels) as well as a greater appreciation for, and understanding of, their own bodies.

US: Capitalism

Capitalism is the economic system in which private owners compete for profit. In this course we will learn about about basic economic theory and hold regular class discussions on technology and society.

READING GROUPS

MS English

In Middle School English, students work on skills related to reading and writing. They read novels, short stories, poetry, and plays, and they write short essays, research papers, and novels! Students work on vocabulary and basic grammar skills, long-term projects, and in addition to the class texts, they read five books of their own choosing for independent reading.

Revolutions

In this class, we'll explore and compare historical revolutions. Through writing essays and reading both fiction and nonfiction, we'll engage with a variety of literary genres and perspectives.



American Dream

Ever wondered what it means to be an American? This course takes you on an exploration of the “American Dream.” From the founding fathers’ ideals to the modern-day pursuit of happiness, we’ll explore the stories, struggles, and triumphs that have shaped this idea. Through literature, history, and current events, you’ll examine how the American Dream has been defined, challenged, and redefined throughout the nation’s history. Do you think that the American Dream is still attainable today?

Genres

In this course, we will compare and contrast written literature from major literary genres as a way of reflecting on the current state of our society. On our journey, students will read various types of creative literature (poems, short stories, plays, essays, etc.) and produce their own creative pieces. In addition to frequent writing assignments, we will actively study grammar, sentence mechanics, and vocabulary to improve our writing and reading abilities.

Modern World History

In this course, we will consider how the world’s major events such as war and generational trauma, revolutionary movements and decolonization, conquest and colonization, and technological developments have influenced our present living conditions. Along the way, we will read books, and watch films about those who lived through these moments. We will also develop the important skill of source analysis, learning how to evaluate historical evidence, primary documents, and modern media with a critical eye.

Philosophy

Philosophy explores the fundamental nature of what we know and how we live our lives. This course will give students

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a general overview of major ideas and themes within philosophy and introduce some of the historically important authors in their respective fields. Students are asked to engage in daily debate and discussion, complete a set of assignments based on independent reading, and focus on improving their writing in the areas of sentence structure, vocabulary, and more sophisticated forms of argument.

AFTERNOON CLASSES

Study Skills

This course will offer time management skill-enhancement and the time and space to work on schoolwork/homework during the school day.

Mixed Media Collage: Exploring Identity

Students will explore the concept of identity through mixed media collages. They'll learn to combine various materials to express personal and cultural narratives.

Sports

Co-Educational, all-ages soccer. Skills, drills, play!

Modern Games

Modern Games will be a chance to explore playing a variety of newer card/



tabletop games. The games are generally quick-learning group games that have interesting strategies but are mostly just fun to play. Some examples of games we might play are: Exploding Kittens, Unstable Unicorns, and Mysterium.

Walking and Hiking

In this class, students will go on walks and hikes in the neighborhood and Rock Creek Park to promote cardiovascular fitness and mental well-being.

Chess

This class explores and introduces the rules, strategies, and some beginner ideas in the classic game of chess. We look at

how each piece moves, study opening strategies, learn chess notation and how to communicate moves to one another, and explore variants and minigames. We practice against computers, play against each other, and explore puzzles/tactics.

Anime

This class explores the history of anime, tracing its evolution from early 20th-century Japanese animation to its current global influence. Students will examine key genres, influential creators, and cultural impacts. Through screenings and discussions, the course will provide a comprehensive understanding of anime's development and its role in global culture. ■

The Parkmont Dish

Parkmont 8th grader Clara May's go-to recipe for cheesecake involves a springform pan and a water bath. A beginner's recipe this is not, but Clara May assures us that it's actually fairly simple and worth the effort. "It's really good," she says. Clara May found it on the cooking blog "Once Upon a Chef." She recommends using the metric version of the recipe, weighing the ingredients, and, if you like, serving it with a berry sauce or compote "to cut the richness of the cheesecake." Give it a try!



Painting by Shellie, 8th grade

Once Upon a Recipe's New York Cheesecake

SERVINGS: 8 to 10

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

COOK TIME: 1 Hour 55 Minutes

TOTAL TIME: 2 Hours 25 Minutes, plus at least 8 hours to cool

Ingredients For the Crust

200 g graham cracker crumbs, from 12 whole crackers

70 g unsalted butter, melted

2 tablespoons sugar

$\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon salt

Ingredients For the Filling

900 g cream cheese, at room temperature

400 g sugar

3 tablespoons all-purpose flour

4 teaspoons vanilla extract

1 teaspoon packed lemon zest, from 1 lemon

2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice, from 1 lemon

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt

6 large eggs

120 g sour cream

Equipment

9- or 10-inch springform pan; 18-inch heavy-duty aluminum foil; large roasting pan (big enough to hold the springform pan)

Instructions For the Crust

Preheat the oven to 375°F and set an oven rack in the lower middle position. Wrap a 9- or 10-inch springform pan with one large piece

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of heavy-duty aluminum foil, covering the underside and extending all the way to the top so there are no seams on the bottom or sides of the pan. Repeat with another sheet of foil for insurance. Spray the inside of the pan with nonstick cooking spray.

Make the crust: In a medium bowl, combine the graham cracker crumbs, melted butter, sugar, and salt. Stir until well combined. Press the crumbs into an even layer on the bottom of the prepared pan. Bake the crust for 10 minutes, until set. Remove the pan from the oven and set aside.

Reduce the oven temperature to 325°F.

Set a kettle of water to boil.

Instructions for the Batter

In the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment or beaters, beat the cream cheese, sugar, and flour together on medium speed until just smooth, about 1 minute. Scrape the bottom and sides of the bowl to be sure the mixture is evenly combined. Add the vanilla, lemon zest, lemon juice, and salt; beat on low speed until just combined. Add the eggs, one at a time, mixing on low speed until incorporated, scraping the bowl as necessary. Mix in the sour cream. Make sure the batter is uniform but do not over-mix.

Check to make sure your oven has cooled to 325°F, then set the cheesecake pan in a large roasting pan. Pour the batter on top of the crust. Pour the boiling water into the large roasting pan to come about 1 inch up the side of the cake pan. Bake until the cake is just set, 1 hour and 30 minutes to 1 hour and 45 minutes. (If the cheesecake starts to look too golden on top towards the end, cover it loosely with foil.) The cake should not look liquidy at all but will wobble just a bit when the pan is nudged;

it will continue to cook as it cools. Carefully remove the roasting pan from the oven and set it on a wire rack. Cool the cheesecake in the water bath until the water is just warm, about 45 minutes. Remove the springform pan from the water bath and discard the foil. If necessary, run a thin-bladed knife around the edge of the cake to make sure it's not sticking to the sides (which can cause cracks as it cools), then cover with plastic wrap and transfer to the refrigerator to cool for at least 8 hours or overnight.

For Serving

Remove the sides of the springform pan. Serve the cheesecake right from the base of the pan; or, to transfer it to a serving platter, run a long, thin spatula between the crust and the pan bottom, and then use two large spatulas to carefully transfer the cheesecake to a serving dish. Slice with a sharp knife, wiping the knife clean between slices.

Pro Tip

Springform pans are notorious for leaking. Since a cheesecake bakes in a water bath, the foil prevents the water from seeping in during baking. Please do not attempt to use standard 12-inch (30cm) aluminum foil – you can't have any foil seams on the bottom or sides of the pan. No matter how well (or how many times) you wrap the pan, if there are seams exposed to the water, the water will find a way in. Even when wrapped properly, you can occasionally get some condensation inside the foil. If this happens, don't worry – the crust is likely just a bit moist around the edges. Simply remove the sides of the springform pan before refrigerating and let it dry out in the refrigerator. ■

Welcome New Teachers!

Four fabulous new teachers have joined the Parkmont faculty. They're already off to a terrific start! ■



Tom Coulon



Shwe Einthe



Milo Lynch



Klára Schmidt

Asbestos Notification

In accordance with Environmental Protection Agency Regulation, C.F.R. ss763.93(g)(4) and ss7763.84, this is to give notice that the Parkmont Asbestos Management Plan documents are maintained in the office of the Head of School and are available for inspection at any time upon request.

For your further information, the management plan was established in 1988. Our most recent EPA re-inspection was conducted in September 2024 by Jenkins Environmental, Inc. Re-inspections are conducted every 3 years.

Should you have any questions or wish to review the Management Plan, please contact Ron McClain at 202.726.0740.



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