

At least half of what it takes to be a great teacher of girls is being a good role model. We can check both boxes for Sarah McFarland—she taught well and set a good example for her students and colleagues. If I had the names of all the girls who shared with me their love and appreciation for Ms. McFarland over the years, the list would stretch from Holmes Road to the Klein Arts Center. Her secret was connection. But, there really isn't anything mysterious about her style. Who among us does not connect with someone who really listens to us, who communicates unconditional support even when a tune-up chat is in order, and who is always in our corner to help us rebound when life knocks us down? The tributes that poured in for Sarah when she passed confirm her students' gratitude.

Sarah was authentic. She was not afraid to be herself, or disagree, or tell the truth. Nor was she afraid to hear the truth, reflect, reconsider, rethink, adjust. Sarah was gracious. What is now the Head's office used to be Sarah's office when she was college counselor. Sometime during my first year as Head, I decided having an office in the front hall was not ideal. I had scouted out the various possibilities and decided that Sarah's space would be perfect. I remember walking into her office and describing the changes I would like to make. She looked at me, rather clearly annoyed, and then said, "This *would* make a good office for you. When shall I move out?"

Long before one could ask Google to explain the giant African fruit beetle, one could ask Sarah. She was well read. She was curious. She had seen much of the world with her own eyes, and I often suggested we "ask Sarah" if some obscure data was needed for a project or to resolve an issue. In addition to her teaching and advising, at one point Sarah assumed the role of archivist for the School and superbly set about to create order out of considerable chaos. Many times during those years, she would rush into my office, thrilled with an archival discovery—a letter, a photo, a connection we had not made before. I loved those moments.

She and I also enjoyed reminiscing about our childhoods, as we each had family roots in the Midwest. Later in my tenure, Sarah and I chatted about getting older, and she shared a few tips on how best to accommodate the challenges of aging, e.g., tucking one's chin a bit facilitates swallowing. Who knew?

Sarah was funny, forthright, athletic, brave, accomplished, and honest. I am grateful for all the ways she enriched Miss Hall's School and touched the lives of her students, colleagues, and me. — **Jeannie Norris H'62, H'12, former Head of School**