

# From across the years and across the miles, messages for a mentor and friend ...

My memories of Bromfield are of a wonderful, magical, happy place because of you. I'm so grateful you were in my life. Cheers!

**Rachel (Mohn) Piermarini, Class of 1983**  
North Brookfield, MA

Thanks, Mike, for being a great friend, drama coach and mentor to so many kids, including myself. I still use what you taught me every day.

**Chris Van Dusen, Class of 1978**  
Camden, ME

McG ... my teacher, my Academic Bowl coach, my director, sometimes my nag, but more often my mentor, thank you for everything. Come down for tea/cawffee!

**Kyle Henderson, Class of 2003**  
New York, NY

McGarty, you gave me a vision for my voice, a place for my excitement, a home for my enthusiasm, and a love for theatre. Thank you.

**Dawn-Marie (Starr) Ayles, Class of 1996**  
Lunenburg, MA

Thank you, McGarty, for letting words open up worlds, and acts open up actualities.

**Jenny Levison, Class of 1981**  
Brooklyn, NY

You not only fostered development of skills crucial to lifelong success and happiness, but also got me in touch with my inner swampie. Thanks!

**Lisa Winner, Class of 1995**  
Jamaica Plain, MA

Congrats on an amazing career at Bromfield. I was truly blessed to move to Harvard and spend two years discovering that theatre is a fulfilling career path via your continued teaching and encouragement. Thank you, and enjoy the rest of the show ... I can't wait to hear what you do with it!

**Grant Boyd, Class of 2002**  
New York, NY

My love of theater was born in the early years of your dedicated commitment to the Bromfield Drama Society. You helped instill in me the passion of the arts that I carry with me to this day.

**John Drummy, Class of 1980**  
Harvard, MA

It was with McGarty's guidance that I first learned to enjoy being on stage, to cut loose and throw myself into a role. Thanks, McGarty!

**Leigh Marble, Class of 1993**  
Portland, OR

Looking back, I honestly can't think of one thing Mr. McGarty ever really did to help me. Except maybe cast, coach, and support me. Huh...

**Aidan Kinney, Class of 2007**  
New York, NY

Wiley should have won!

**Brandon Jackson, Class of 1995**  
Missoula, MT

Congratulations! Thanks! Two football fields! You will not soon be forgotten by more than a generation of your students.

**Dan Powers, Class of 1999**  
Champaign, IL

Mr. McGarty taught me how to project my voice and block a scene. But above all, he taught me about myself and what I'm capable of. I couldn't have asked for a better person to teach me such a valuable lesson.

**Catherine Jones, Class of 2007**  
Boston, MA

McGarty, your guidance and tireless dedication both on the stage and in the classroom continue to enrich my life 20 years later. Heartfelt thanks.

**Jon Quinn, Class of 1990**  
New York, NY

My brother John put it best when he said, "How can you write about McGarty in 25 words or less?" It's impossible. So simply, "Extraordinary."

**Lisa (Drummy) Karanikolas, Class of 1981**  
Porto Heli, Greece

Flying teacarts, shifty blinds, rambunctious windows, mysterious blue lights, and the rest; the experience was amazing. I learned more than I could imagine. Thank you.

**Dan Cheveralls, Class of 2007**  
Boston, MA

McGarty, in high school you taught me to focus, then you mentored me as I 'gelled' my career path. Now we have a bright 'source four' a lifelong friendship.

**Peter Frye, Class of 2000**  
Ayer, MA

With few words, McGarty instills such confidence in his actors, and with equally few words, he can scare the living bejesus out of them, but he always, always ends any criticism with "but you'll be fine." Thank you, Michael, for having the faith in us that we cannot see by ourselves right away.

**James Turner, Class of 2005**  
Storrs, CT

McG, you're finally *Getting Out!* I hope you know the impact you've had on all of us. Without you I don't think I'd be pursuing acting so seriously; without you I'd probably be awkward and shy; without you I'd probably be a stress mess of nerves. So thanks for being the best mentor, teacher and second father I've ever had. Never lose the sweater vest.

**Katie Croyle, Class of 2007**  
Bryn Mawr, PA

To the teacher who made me what I am today—for better or worse. Best of luck with your brilliant second act! Love, Jenny.

**Jenny Giering, Class of 1988**  
Brooklyn, NY

McGarty retiring??? Inconceivable! You and I started at Bromfield the same year ... I never would have imagined we'd still be in touch 30 years later! You're the reason I even *graduated* high school ... if I didn't need to be in school to participate in drama, fuggaboutit! I'm still active in theater today, and I have you to thank for it. Congratulations!

**Karen Caplan, 1981**  
North Andover, MA

Congratulations on a successful career. I'll always appreciate the freedom and responsibility you gave to Pete and me. The next wine spritzer is on me!

**Doug Hayes, Class of 2000**  
London, UK

Thanks for being one of the most important influences in my life. I've been out of your class for 20 years and you're still giving me homework that inspires me, challenges me, and pushes me forward. For getting me started down the road to a creative life I have you to thank ... and blame.

**Peter Fernandez, Class of 1989**  
Somerville, MA

Will there be a ceremony to retire your red "Life Is a Cabaret" sweatshirt to the catwalk or sound booth? Congrats!

**Jen (Brulé) Raymond, Class of 1993**  
Thetford Center, VT

I'll never forget those plays, nor can I forget Mr. McGarty, whose love and dedication made them possible. Thanks, Mr. McGarty!

**Peeter Pirn, Class of 1981**  
Cleveland, OH

McGarty! Thanks for your years of dedication and for everything you've done for Bromfield's drama program. Enjoy retirement! From Hairy Man '94.

**Colin Durrant, Class of 1994**  
Arlington, MA

McG gave us a place to vent our excess energy, creativity, and emotion. Thanks for trusting and challenging us, for never taking it easy on us. I'd never be where I am today if you hadn't hurled those bottles at me back when I was 4'10". Have a happy, well-earned retirement.

**Jack Fellows, Class of 2007**  
Storrs, CT

It's difficult to cover Mike's influence on my education and maturation in a few words. As a beginning, he ... guided, laughed, loved, challenged, accompanied, aided, understood, permitted, reasoned, patiently waited, taught, demonstrated, allowed, championed. That's merely scratching the surface of his teaching, barely acknowledging his overall influence on me as an individual.

**David Thompson, Class of 1981**  
Groveland, MA

McGarty ran the best drama department in the state and was the inspiration for me to pursue the arts. It's great to have the chance to thank him. "Onward and upward!" (Eugene in *Brighton Beach Memoirs*)

**Nate Longcope, Class of 1993**  
Brooklyn, NY

Congrats and best wishes to Mr. McGarty! Any success I have or can hope to have can be traced back to those years in the Bromfield Drama Society. "What I owe you is beyond evaluation" (Alec Guinness in *Lawrence of Arabia*).

**Sam Cherington, Class of 2004**  
Los Angeles, CA

Hi, McGarty!!!

**Eggie Gamage, Class of 1996**  
Rochester, NY

Congratulations, McGarty! You truly deserve it after 30+ years of shaping clowns like me. I owe you a lot, and I can't thank you enough. Take care of yourself and your beautiful family.

**Todd Murphy, Class of 1988**  
Norwood, MA

Congratulations, McGarty!

**Sydney (Brown) Shipps, Class of 1983**  
Atlanta, GA

McGarty, you really were that teacher who made it all come together—from showing me the wonders of Ste. Chapelle and Mont St. Michel to teaching me the importance of staying within a 40-minute time limit! Thanks for your guidance, for your dedication, and for believing in me. I'm heartbroken that you won't be around to take Emma to Festival!

**Erin Ash Sullivan, Class of 1987**  
Harvard, MA

For over thirty years you've been a friend and mentor. We may not see each other often, but please know that both you and Maryellen had a huge influence in helping me become the person I am today. Here's to great success in your new venture.

**Clark Swain, Class of 1981**  
Roxbury, CT

McGarty, you showed us how to find our voices, and gave us space to build a proud and accepting community. TWO FOOTBALL FIELDS! Much love and appreciation.

**Ellen Tuzzolo, Class of 1997**  
New Orleans, LA

I became the best version of myself with McGarty's guidance. In my proudest Bromfield memories he stands offstage, ready with cue, if I need it.

**Toni Earls, Class of 2002**  
Lancaster, MA

Take note of a job well done:

Adults you nurtured when they were young  
Dreams you helped paint sky and sea for  
A heaven strung with stary songs now claps: Encore!

**Helen Batchelder, Class of 1979**  
Harvard, MA

McGarty! You did it! Congrats! Retirement in just a shade under a century! Your passion for theater inspired me greatly and will continue to forever.

**Keir O'Donnell, Class of 1996**  
Los Angeles, CA

Thanks for the memories and good luck in a much deserved retirement. Now, like us, you will know the joy of life after high school.

**Doug Cregar, Class of 1983**  
Harvard, MA

McGarty, you've been such an asset to Bromfield. Glad you've been there for 30 years of great influence on Harvard kids.

**Jonathan Westerling, Class of 1994**  
Sausalito, CA

McGarty, more than twenty years later, Festival was still the experience of a lifetime. Thank you for giving us such a powerful experience of artistic risk and camaraderie. Even the editing was fun—it helped train my ear to hear the music of language and find the heart of any text.

**Anne Fifield, Class of 1988**  
Brooklyn, NY

"The folks atop the ladder are the ones the world adores!" Hope you are even more successful in retirement. Cheers from Matron Mama Morton.

**Hannah (Vesenska) Roeder, Class of 1984**  
Pompano Beach, FL

Congratulations, Mr. McGarty. Thank you for your kindness, passion, inspiration, and patience. Wishing you all the best.

**Karen O'Brien, Class of 1981**  
New York, NY

"Stampin', stompin', comin' through the trees. Shufflin' through the swamp grass, blowin' in the breeze..." Congrats, McGarty!

**Mark Robbins, Class of 1995**  
Crested Butte, CO

All a kid really wants is to find that one teacher who "gets" them, who takes that extra time to find a way to reach them. McGarty was "that teacher" for me. And I wasn't alone. There's a long legacy of kids like me he has been "that teacher" for. On our behalf, let me say, thanks, Mike. And here it is 30 years later, and you're finally packing it in ... quitter.

**Mark Poutenis, Class of 1988**  
Lunenburg, MA

No words can express—not even those of our craft's masters—my gratitude for your passion and teaching me how to be on time.

**Hannah Grady, Class of 2000**  
Brooklyn, NY

Finding appropriate words is harder than any French translation you ever assigned! There's no phrase in any language to describe your influence, so I'll settle for "thank you" — you gave me confidence to take on roles I didn't know how to play because you seemed sure I'd get it eventually. Whatever else you taught me, you taught me trust.

**Ken Robbins, Class of 1992**  
Tiverton, RI

Many thanks for your years of service to Bromfield. Drama Club was an important part of high school for all three of us, and we so appreciate all the time and energy you devoted to us as actors, students, and people. Best wishes!

**Kristen (Gasser) Lawrence, Class of 1983**  
Leamington Spa, England

**Gretchen Gasser-Ellis, Class of 1985**  
Essex, MA

**Erika Gasser, Class of 1990**  
Sacramento, CA

From Drama Society to the *Mirror*, you helped me and countless others find our places at Bromfield. You're an icon!

**Molly Jacobson, Class of 2006**  
Providence, RI

In my darkest hour, you showed me the light. You transformed my life, and I can never thank you enough. Congratulations!

**Maria Alberti, Class of 1995**  
Orlando, FL

Thank you for taking a chance on me. You sparked a transformation that has propelled me to new and wonderful places. Bon courage, mon ami.

**Molly Seavy-Nesper, Class of 2008**  
Bryn Mawr, PA

McGarty, what a legacy! Thank you for everything.

**Kate Herring, Class of 1999**  
Anchorage, AK

Your passion and commitment have been amazing gifts to Bromfield. I am blessed to have been part of the experience. Enjoy your retirement! Thank you!

**Silvi Pirn, Class of 1983**  
Wilmette, IL

On behalf of the gawky and shy kids of the world, I want to send you an enormous thank you. You saw potential in me and gave me a place to belong. That made all the difference. You will remain the teacher that made the biggest impact on my life.

**Laurie (Hirsch) Wisneski, Class of 1992**  
Redondo Beach, CA

McGarty, you've been an inspiration for so many, and your programming is a shining example of the benefits of arts in schools. Thanks! Enjoy your retirement!

**Kim (James) Mason, Class of 1983**  
Bowling Green, KY

Mr. McGarty was my teacher, my director, my community service advisor, but most importantly, he still is my friend.

**Connor Davy, Class of 2009**  
Washington, DC

McGarty's passion, vision, and commitment to his students has coaxed genius from the shy ones (this I know!), and has led a full generation of fortunate students to realize their potential and love the craft. For this, dear friend, we love you savagely!

**Adam Sawyer, Class of 1993**  
East Boston, MA

Just like *Mr. Holland's Opus*, but instead of a grand symphony performance it's a page in the local newspaper ... that, and Richard Dreyfuss isn't involved.

**Rick Mace, Class of 1998**  
Maplewood, NJ

Michael McGarty was the least controlling of my mentors at Bromfield. Rather than dogmatically push me toward a certain theatrical style or canon, Michael even allowed me to criticize his own directorial choices. Thanks, Michael, for letting me improvise.

**Steve Hayward, Class of 2006**  
Harvard, MA

It's been a crazy, agonizing, spectacular, exciting, heart-breaking, and funny journey from Bromfield to UMass to NYU to off off Broadway to Broadway to regional opera to television to MTV to Nickelodeon to Sundance to Hollywood, with the last nine years working on *Scrubs*. Thanks for making it all possible.

**Susan Bolles, Class of 1978**  
Los Angeles, CA

McGarty taught me a self-confidence I had previously never experienced. He taught me how to be creative, be professional, and collaborate. Thanks for sending me down a great path, McG!

**James Malley, Class of 2003**  
Los Angeles, CA

Thanks for your help on the third-quarter project, and I enjoyed standing in for Jeff Watkins.

**Matt Marr, Class of 1981**  
Harvard, MA

"The mind is an empty vessel waiting to be filled." Mr. McGarty, you've influenced my perspective and future in life, and I couldn't be happier.

**Matt Marteny, Class of 2007**  
Floral Park, NY

Proud to have been your student. Prouder to be "the daughter you never wanted." Proudest to be your friend. Love you!

**Jenn Robb, Class of 1983**  
Brighton, MA

From lecture hall, to boiler room, to cafeteria, to Cronin, to Boston...your guidance made us shine regardless of the venue. Thank you.

**Beth Murray, Class of 1989**  
Mission Viejo, CA

Retirement? Pamplemousse!

**David Marble, Class of 1995**  
Waltham, MA

So, when you go crazy with boredom in your retirement, will you run up to random people yelling, "TWO FOOTBALL FIELDS?" Love you, Dad!

**Caitlin McGarty, Class of 2001**  
Oakland, CA

At Bromfield I knew you only through French verb conjugations (you could turn even those into musical theatre), but the art you brought out of my classmates profoundly affected me, long before I became a performer myself. Those memories are vivid still; and the warmth of your continued mentorship and friendship, over the past 20 years, has been an enduring gift! You mean so much to all of us.

**Montana Miller, Class of 1988**  
Bowling Green, OH

Forget love of theatre, etc. ... The thing I remember is McGarty's sense of fun, love of life, and calm in the face of panicked teenagers.

**Christine (Duff) Krugler, Class of 1981**  
Nevada City, CA

Mr. McGarty, you're a heckofa guy. Congrats on your retirement, and thanks for all the memories. Bromfield won't be the same without you. Mamasameanmama-papasapoorpapa-baybesabaaaadbaybee!

**David Railsback, Class of 2004**  
Saratoga Springs, NY

Thanks for everything you've done for me. You've always been a guiding voice with good advice. I'll remember the Bromfield Drama Society with warm memories and will hear you saying, "I don't care how you get it done, just get it done!"

**Bizzy Herbolzheimer, Class of 1995**  
Littleton, MA