



JOHN TAYLOR BABBITT

Gone too soon, to that space for the pure of heart

By LeeAnne Lan P '02, '07, '09



Pingry student John Taylor Babbitt '07 passed away

on Sunday, February 26, 2006 while playing basketball in his church youth basketball league. He suffered a heart arrhythmia triggered by hypertrophic cardiomyopathy. While the language in Bob Marley's song does not satisfy the dictates of the Pingry Style Manual, the words reflect the spirited personality of John Babbitt. Many of the lyrics of John's favorite music—by artists like Sting and the Police, Eric Clapton and Cream, and Jack Johnson—reflect the loss our children and the Pingry community suffered.

John had a contagious smile that, most simply, made people happy. He had a sharp wit and, as his mother, JoAnne Taylor Babbitt, described, a "very dry and quick" sense of humor. Students, faculty, administrators, and staff members at Pingry all felt the power of his smile. His blue eyes sparkled, his dimples grew, his cockeyed smile made its appearance, and his happiness spread to others.

John was born in New York City on March 20, 1989. The Babbitt family moved to England in 1993, and John began his schooling in Winchester at the Princes Mead School. The Babbitts returned to the states in 1997, settling in Chatham, where John and younger brother, Andrew '09, attended St. Patrick's School. John graduated from St. Pat's in 2003 and began Pingry as a Form III student in the fall of 2003. Andrew joined him at Pingry as a Form III student this past fall. Andrew said in his eulogy of his brother that he "knew him as a son,

"Misty morning don't see no sun, I know you're out there somewhere havin' fun"

Bob Marley

brother, and grandson, but until I joined him at Pingry I didn't realize that he was also 'the popular guy.' "

Sports were one of John's passions. He played basketball and baseball and had recently changed from soccer to football at Pingry. As his father, David Crowell Babbitt, said, "what mattered to John was being a part of the team." Although John enjoyed football and basketball his true love was baseball. He had decided to forgo playing basketball at Pingry so that he could dedicate his time to a workout program to prepare for the upcoming baseball season. In his comments during the school Remembrance Service, teacher, coach and friend, Ted Corvino '94 said that one of the things that made him friends with John in the true sense of the word was that "...we both loved and appreciated nothing more than spending warm spring and summer days running in and out of a baseball dugout, knowing that our grandpas were always in the stands at every game, smiling from ear to ear watching their boys." John loved the Yankees and spent many hours discussing the nuances of Yankee baseball with his grandfather, John M. Babbitt. "Pops" is a favorite Big Blue fan at Pingry. In celebration and memory of John, the members of the Pingry baseball team have put John's initials and jersey number on their caps this year.

The Pingry community lost a true friend with the passing of John Taylor Babbitt. His funny, self-effacing personality, his love for sports and music, his commitment to his friends and schoolmates, and his deep love for his family are noticeable in their absence.

Dear John

By L.N. Thomas '07

Dear John,
Runnin' on empty today,
Just yesterday saw Your smilin' face,
Hear Your voice, hear Your laugh,
Memories come flooding back.
The funniest, the nicest, and
Strongest too,
Who knows what You could have done?
Who knows what more life had to offer You?
Tears and hugs and nothing makes it
Better
Nothing makes it right.
Gone too soon, to that space for the
Pure of heart
Your place can never be filled,
You will always be missed
And Never Forgotten



Andrew and John Babbitt