

*"Humanity lives in Harvard-Westlake."*

## *A Collective Search for Meaning*

BY

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**O**n the final day of classes in my senior year of 2010, my crew and I ascended the pergola outside Seaver and built a pirate ship. We christened it the S.S. Kutler\*.

At the time, my focus was single-minded, adrenaline-fueled, myopic - the logistics of our creation occupied me fully. In the ensuing catharsis, I felt a quiet love for my classmates and my school. And in later reflection, I came to believe the making of the S.S. Kutler was a nexus of all the best aspects of Harvard-Westlake.

It saw a group of friends working toward an end that was true and beautiful - not consumed by a petty and fleeting competitiveness, but laboring in the service of togetherness. It was a challenge that demanded the confluence of bright young minds pursuing excellence, not in isolated study, but in a unified determination to create that possessed us collectively to new heights. It was a search for meaning, and in searching, we made manifest our youthful response to truths dark and terrible - not only an homage to the fallen, but a cry of defiance.

So much good must be said of the teachers and administrators who could have reprimanded us, but instead joined us in the search. Humanity lives in Harvard-Westlake. We must never lose sight of it, nor sacrifice it in the pursuit of success.

\*The S.S. Kutler was a "senior prank" in May 2010 and was built and named in honor of Brendan Kutler, a friend and classmate in Harvard-Westlake's Class of 2010, who passed away unexpectedly during his senior year.

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*The S.S. Kutler, built by friends  
of Brendan Kutler '10 in May 2010,  
atop the pergola behind the upper  
school Seaver building*