THREAT ASSESSMENTS

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DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL COUNTERTERRORISM CENTER
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Islamic traditions are vastly underreported, including those of the Sufis, who have come into conflict with the Islamic State.
I often hear students refer to the “Wesleyan bubble,” a term meant to suggest that life on campus is somehow apart from the world. In some respects, it is—by design. The opportunity to take a course with no apparent connection to anything practical or career oriented is part of the search for meaning and unexpected connections that lies at the heart of liberal education.

In many respects, though, the bubble is illusory. Wesleyan students regularly become engaged with life beyond the campus while they are undergraduates. Casey Dinges ’79 (page 32), for instance, tackled a research topic that led him to interview senior government officials in Washington, D.C., and to gather information from citizens of North Dakota concerning a controversial water project. His senior thesis pointed him directly toward a career with the American Association of Civil Engineers in which he has sounded the alarm about the state of U.S. infrastructure.

I’ve heard so many Wesleyan graduates say they draw on their liberal education every day in their work, including Nick Rasmussen ’87 (page 14). As director of the National Counterterrorism Center, he says the skills he gained in the College of Social Studies enable him to synthesize information from various intelligence agencies and give our nation’s highest officials cogent assessments of threats to our safety.

Rasmussen is a recipient of the National Intelligence Distinguished Service Medal (2017) whose work doesn’t grab lots of headlines but does save lives. His is an inspiring story, and inspiration can be found across our alumni landscape, including among our newest graduates. Rebecca Winkler ’16 (page 68) developed a senior thesis through work with the Mahouts Elephant Foundation and is now project manager for Walking with Elephants. Her efforts help provide income to a Karen hill tribe village in Thailand and enable elephants to thrive in their native habitat.

Undergraduates take their interests beyond the campus in too many ways to enumerate here. Whether through service-learning courses that marry theory to practical work in the community, refugee resettlement in Connecticut, innovative projects funded by the Patricelli Center for Social Entrepreneurship, or efforts to address environmental issues locally and worldwide, students display a spirit of practical idealism in delightfully surprising ways.

At a time when truth is under assault and facts are denied, the challenge for liberal education is significant. Now more than ever, we need individuals who can translate intellectual rigor into action beyond the university and take courageous stands regardless of political backlash. As Karen Donfried ’84, president of the German Marshall Fund of the United States, puts it on page 20, “If there are things that we as Americans think are right and care about, we should stand up for them.”

—William Holder ’75, editor

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IN OUR NEXT MAGAZINE WE WILL BE LOOKING AT ISSUES AND EVENTS THAT SHAPED WESLEYAN’S HISTORY. SUGGESTIONS? PLEASE LET US KNOW: WHOLDER@WESLEYAN.EDU.
Many students choose to complete two or even three majors during their undergraduate years. In the Class of 2017, 288 students—an impressive 38 percent of the class—graduated with two majors, while eight students triple-majored. Often the majors are closely related, but more than half of students cross divisions with their choices.

President Michael Roth once told a group of students and their families: “In a liberal education, what happens is you get used to discovering combinations of things, of methods, of ideas, of sounds, of smells, of tastes, that everybody else thought would never go together. And once you put them together, when you’re successful, people think, ‘Gosh, why didn’t I think of that?’ Because the combination of things that you are exposed to can be the new common sense 20 years from now.”

Cameron Arkin ’17
I fell in love with neuroscience the first week of the intro course. I didn’t think I had it in me to be accepted into the art studio program, let alone juggle two insanely demanding majors, but the whole point of choosing Wes was so that I didn’t have to give up one passion for the other.

I decided to center my painting thesis on the integration of my two fields. The neuroscience of perception and the neural interaction with art is a flourishing field right now, and working in a music cognition lab for two years with Prof. Psyche Loui made the conversation about the brain and creativity unbelievably tangible and mind-blowing.

Now, I am working as a clinical research coordinator for the Spina Bifida Clinic at Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital of Chicago and plan to go to medical school within the next couple of years.

Lucia Salwen ’17
Double majoring in art studio and math was never my plan. I took Drawing 1 my freshman fall, and then kept taking other art classes. I always felt that they balanced out my life.

I didn’t intend to major in math either. But I found that I really enjoyed the rigor and emphasis on clear, concise thinking.

I believe that art and math are very related because they are both visual subjects. When you are trying to solve or even just understand a math problem, you often have to visualize it. This can be easier or harder, depending on how many dimensions you’re working in!

Keyonne Sessions ’17

I chose theater and psychology purely based on my interests coming out of high school.

My majors complement each other, allowing me to connect and engage easily with others, coming from a place of confidence. Psych has also provided me the ability to interact and analyze individuals to figure out how both parties can benefit.

Having both helped with my career choice. My knowledge of psychology made it easier for me not only to be able to “transform” into my character as an actor, but also allowed me to look critically at theater pieces and identify the psychological challenge that exists for actors. Now, I am hoping to land a job in Denver working in human resources.
WE MUST CONTINUE TO CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS WITH DIFFERENT BELIEFS TO ENGAGE WITH ONE ANOTHER, BURSTING THEIR PROTECTIVE BUBBLES OF SELF-AFFIRMATION ...
We hear it all the time: The cultural and economic context into which our graduates enter is a global one. For many years, Wesleyan has energetically recruited students from across the United States because we believe that geographical diversity can be helpful in creating a campus in which students learn from peers with experiences, hopes, and ideas different from their own. Following a similar logic, in the last decade, we have doubled the percentage of students who come from outside the United States. The goal is to foster intercultural competency among our students—to increase our students’ capacity to learn from and work with people from a variety of cultures. The professional and personal lives of our graduates will, in many cases, be characterized by cosmopolitanism. No doubt many students will continue to discover their own histories and affirm their own identities here, but that will be happening in a context acknowledging a variety of identities and cultures.

Wesleyan recently launched the Fries Center for Global Studies to accelerate the effectiveness of the cosmopolitan education we offer. The mission of the Fries Center (honoring Trustee Michael Fries ’85) is as straightforward as it is important: to help “all members of the Wesleyan community achieve the knowledge, language skills, and sensitivity each person will need in order to exercise effective and responsible citizenship in an increasingly interdependent world.”

Whether or not one considers oneself a “global citizen,” there’s no denying the interdependence of peoples across the globe. At Wesleyan we emphasize intercultural communication, and we want our students to gain knowledge of other times and places so that their experience is informed by differences as well as commonalities. The Fries Center places enormous value on adaptability, compassion, and cultural self-awareness with respect to the world beyond our borders. These are qualities that will stand our graduates in good stead as they navigate their lives beyond the university.

Wesleyans involve themselves in many issues of widespread international import. In the fall of 2015, a group of students founded the Wesleyan Refugee Project, dedicated to advocating for refugees, raising awareness of their predicament, tutoring, and assisting international organizations seeking to address this growing crisis. Some of the students are currently working in refugee camps in the Middle East, while others are helping local Middletown organizations pave the way for refugees to have an easier transition as they settle in this country.

Climate change is one of the greatest international challenges of our time, and here you’ll find many Wesleyans at work. Whether through research sponsored by our College of the Environment or policy work at the highest levels of international diplomacy, students, faculty, and alumni are finding ways to make a positive difference in a difficult political context. We can’t “opt out” of the climate, and we can no longer simply ignore the disastrous consequences of continuing to grow a carbon-based economy. To do so, only courts further catastrophe.

Global studies and global awareness must also include issues of security and international relations. It is urgent for us to understand the sources of terrorism and how best to combat the deadly violence instigated all over the globe in the name of religion and ideology. At Wesleyan, students look deep into these issues in such courses as Bruce Masters’ The Modern Middle East, Ioana Emy Matesan’s Comparative Politics in the Middle East, Peter Gottschalk’s Muslims and/in/of the West, and Douglas Foyle’s International Security in a Changing World.

Global awareness is a core feature of liberal education at Wesleyan. You can find it in economics and film studies, history and philosophy, environmental science and religion. A broad education that uses a variety of perspectives to understand contemporary issues of importance depends on a rejection of parochialism. We must continue to inspire students to grapple with ideas that they would never have considered on their own. We must continue to create opportunities for students with different beliefs to engage with one another, bursting their protective bubbles of self-affirmation and opening themselves up to ideas from other parts of the world.

When lecturing in China about a hundred years ago, the American philosopher John Dewey emphasized: “Where material things are concerned, the more people who share them, the less each will have, but the opposite is true of knowledge. The store of knowledge is increased by the number of people who come to share in it. Knowledge can be shared and increased at the same time—in fact, it is increased by being shared.” At Wesleyan, our efforts to increase global awareness will be a vehicle for sharing knowledge widely—and, in the process, increasing it “for the good of the individual and the good of the world.”
When 18-year-old Audrey Pratt of Needham, Mass., received a ticket to see Hamilton for her birthday, she never dared dream that Lin-Manuel Miranda ’02, Thomas Kail ’99, and members of the all-alumni Hamilton Prize Selection Committee would soon be deliberating over her work, and the work of seven other finalists, in their search for the first-ever recipient of the Wesleyan University Hamilton Prize for Creativity. But on May 17, Pratt discovered that a dream she never dared dream could still come true, when her short story, “Thorns, Black and White,” was announced as the winning submission for the four-year full-tuition scholarship.

Pratt has been a writer ever since she can remember. At her home—where she lives with her parents, Betsy and James, her 15-year-old brother, Ian, and her 6-year-old yellow lab, Zoe—you might find her any day of the week working on any number of projects that might someday become novels, stories, or films.

For Pratt, it’s the mental exercise of taking an idea and stretching it to its limits, and beyond, that quenches her writerly thirst. “There’s always a seed somewhere,” says Pratt. “I remember reading Everything’s Eventual, by Stephen King, about a global conspiracy, and finding out that it was inspired by a dream he had about someone pouring money down a storm drain. The fact that he was able to pull it and stretch it and bubble it out into this fully formed story? That’s what I love doing.”

Pratt began working on her prize-winning submission—a dark coming-of-age fairytale set deep within a primeval forest—almost two years ago, after seeing a comic about how less than 5 percent of the ocean had actually been explored. “I remember thinking: What if, instead of going deeper and deeper into the ocean, we went deeper and deeper into the forest. What would we find? What if there were human beings who had grown up in this lightless, intense canopy world? What would they be like?” she says.

The story was just one of the many pieces in progress Pratt had in her Google Drive folder at the time. And while she considered submitting others—including a romantic horror story and an urban fantasy—she chose “Thorns, Black and White” because its surreal imagery and fantastical storyline were more “out there” than some of her other pieces, with a Brothers Grimm-like feeling that evokes the work of one of her biggest influences: Neil Gaiman.

“I love sci-fi and fantasy. I love the idea of exploring other worlds and of building and creating alternate microcosms that exist with somewhat different rules from ours, but also with rules that co-exist with ours,” she says. “I knew I was taking a risk by submitting ‘Thorns, Black and White,’ but I’m glad it paid off!”
FROM HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR TO HAMILTON PRIZE WINNER

As a member of Needham High School’s Class of 2017, Pratt was a captain of the speech and debate team, a member of the National Honor Society, and a member of the school’s all-female robotics team. Her role: ensuring that changes made to the robot were documented in writing. “Trying to get STEM people to write things can be like herding cats,” she laughs. “I said, ‘just tell me about it, and I’ll type it up.’”

Pratt’s involvement with the robotics team gave her the opportunity to explore the intersection of her two main areas of interest: writing and science. “A lot of brilliant people can’t communicate the ‘big ideas’ to people who don’t have the same pedigree,” says Pratt. “That’s one of my big things—communicating about science in a way that makes sense to people. If we learned how to communicate about it better, more people would understand what’s going on and we’d have less of this kind of elitism and distrust of science.”

With a dual interest in cognitive neuroscience and creative writing, Pratt focused her college search on schools that offered established programs in both the sciences and the humanities, because, as she explains, “I didn’t want to have to choose what I wanted to do before I even went to college.” In her junior year at Needham High, Pratt made plans to visit several colleges that had piqued her interest. First on her list: Wesleyan.

“Even though it was pouring out that day, I loved it immediately,” says Pratt, remembering her visit. She was especially struck, she says, by what she calls the school’s “non-competitive vibe.”

“It seems like everyone wants to do well, but for their own sake—not at the expense of someone else,” says Pratt. “It’s the mentality of: We do our best work when we contribute our best together; not some kind of Darwinist survival of the fittest.”

The more she learned about Wesleyan’s open curriculum, the more she recognized just how well Wesleyan’s educational philosophy meshed with her own. “Wesleyan’s distribution requirements were so open that I knew that not only could I have a great experience in both the humanities and the sciences, I could actually explore both at the same time instead of having to choose between them,” says Pratt. The opportunity to do research as an undergraduate was another plus. “The resources that are available at Wesleyan are not only great, but they’re available whether you’re a graduate or an undergraduate. That’s something you don’t find everywhere.”

Pratt wasn’t going to Wesleyan for its reputation, however, but for its educational philosophy meshed with her own. “Wesleyan’s educational philosophy is not the rule of the fittest; it’s the survival of the fittest.”

Realizing that Wesleyan was where she wanted to spend the next four years of her academic life, Pratt applied early decision, submitted her application for the Hamilton Prize, and by mid-May found herself not only accepted as an incoming member of Wesleyan’s Class of 2021 but also short-listed as a finalist for the prize.

“I remember when I first saw who was actually on the judging panel,” she says, ticking off the names of several committee members. “Matthew Weiner, Craig Thomas and Carter Bays, Amanda Palmer, Amy Bloom, Daniel Handler. I thought to myself, okay there’s no way I’m going to win. In a million years, I’m not going to win. The best-case scenario? Lin and Tommy Kail and the committee members actually read my work. And that, to me, was the best thing I could think of, honestly.”

In early May, Pratt’s best-case scenario became a reality. “When I got the e-mail saying I was a finalist, I just thought, wow—they’re actually going to read it!” she says. Less than a week later, a phone call brought news she hadn’t even allowed herself to imagine up until that point. “The phone rang, and it was President Roth,” says Pratt. “I really thought he was going to say, ‘I just wanted to say thank you for submitting work’—and instead he said, ‘congratulations!’” she recalls. “That was a moment of much celebration!”

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Several months later, Pratt continues to be amazed by the outpouring of goodwill in response to her achievement. “I started a Twitter account about three days before I won, and everyone on the committee was retweeting at me,” says Pratt, shaking her head in disbelief, still. “Tommy Kail called me—I can actually say I played phone tag with Tommy Kail!—and we talked about it. And when I DM’d with Lin, I made a weird reference to one of the Saturday Night Live promos I saw when he was hosting the show, and he was so nice about it. ‘Wow. That was a deep-cut reference,’ he said, in the nicest possible way,” she laughs.

This summer, Pratt is spending her time catching up with friends, visiting with extended family, and preparing for life at Wesleyan, where she intends to double major in creative writing and cognitive neuroscience, and perhaps to explore the Writing Certificate, too. And while she’s fully aware of the expectations that come with winning an honor like the Hamilton Prize, she’s able to deal with the pressure by remembering why she was selected in the first place.

“The expectations are pretty high right now,” she says. “So whenever I feel the pressure, I remind myself that being chosen for the prize means that what I’ve been doing, is working.”

Pratt doesn’t have any concrete plans to publish “Thorns, Black and White” at the moment, but she’s open to the possibility of doing so in the future. Right now, though, she’s taking things day by day. “My plan,” she says, “is to just keep learning. To keep reading, keep writing, and keep taking advantage of the experiences that come my way because of this incredible opportunity.” —BY LAURIE KENNEY

Submissions for next year’s Hamilton Prize are due Jan. 1, 2018, the regular decision deadline for Wesleyan’s Class of 2022. For more information, visit wesleyan.edu/hamiltonprize.
Faculty, staff, students, and alumni recently gathered for the dedication of the Fries Center for Global Studies.

Housed in Fisk Hall, the center includes the Office of Study Abroad; Fellowships, Internships and Exchanges; Language Resources and Technology; and Language and Intercultural Learning. The center was dedicated in recognition of the generosity of Board of Trustees member Mike Fries ’85, vice chairman and CEO of Liberty Global, the world’s largest international TV and broadband company with operations in over 30 countries and 45,000 employees outside the U.S.

In his remarks at the dedication, Fries recalled Wesleyan’s role in helping him become a global citizen. “When I arrived in Middletown I was pretty myopic about the world. I had no clue I would someday launch a multinational business like this, but Wesleyan gave me the confidence and perspective to see beyond borders and tackle anything. The Center for Global Studies provides an incredible platform for generations of Wes students to make the world smaller, embrace new challenges and opportunities and define their own role as global citizens.” Fries also noted that he is committed to helping all members of the Wesleyan community achieve the knowledge, language skills, and sensitivity to exercise effective and responsible citizenship in an increasingly interdependent world. He had also spoken about his career with Gordon Career Center Director Sharon Belden Castonguay in a Careers By Design podcast titled “Take A Risk.” Listen at: wesleyan.edu/careercenter/cbd_interviews.html.

Director of the Fries Center for Global Studies Antonio Gonzalez, professor of Spanish studies, noted, “Our emphasis on intercultural communication, experience, and knowledge reflects the value Wesleyan places on adaptability, compassion, and cultural self-awareness with respect to the world beyond our borders. These qualities and practices put Wesleyan’s liberal arts program at the forefront of global education and are the hallmark of responsible global citizenship.”

The Fries Center for Global Studies offers space and technology for a wide range of learning styles and activities. A generous commons area can be used as a venue for special events and provides large displays for presentations or watching international events. Students will find places to study and to convene, both in the commons area and in the Language Resources and Technology (LRT) area, a multipurpose space that provides flexible seating, located across the hall and equipped with desktop computers and laptops to accommodate the needs of an entire class. Student attendants staff the LRT, which can be used for teaching, testing, workshops, and study. A multimedia classroom with telepresence equipment allows Wesleyan easy collaboration with other schools in the United States and abroad. The audio visual workroom enhances the center’s production capabilities, complete with a recording studio, a digital editing workstation, and a video production studio.
GIFTS FOR THE COLLEGE OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Wesleyan’s College of the Environment (COE) has received two major gifts that together will provide $6.5 million in endowment support to its programs.

Essel Bailey ’66 and his wife, Menakka, have increased their support of the COE with a new $4 million commitment that will fund a multi-pronged effort to extend the work and themes of the Menakka and Essel Bailey Think Tank throughout the campus, says Barry Chernoff, chair of the COE and the Robert F. Schumann Professor of Environmental Studies. This latest gift from the Baileys brings their total gift to the COE over time to $7.5 million.

The Robert F. Schumann ['44] Foundation has given Wesleyan $2.5 million to establish the Robert F. Schumann Institute of the College of the Environment. The institute will be charged with integrating approaches to learning, research, and communication regarding environmental issues, as well as extending the work of the COE’s educational programs within and beyond Wesleyan. Schumann’s lifetime giving and gifts to Wesleyan from his estate and foundations total $7.5 million. The Robert F. Schumann Foundation was created by Robert F. (Bob) Schumann, Wesleyan Class of 1944, who died in 2011. His sons, Ford Schumann and David Schumann, are the foundation advisors.

“Wesleyan is committed to graduating informed citizens who will become involved in a broad range of environmental practices and policy-making,” said President Roth ’78. “We are so fortunate that Essel and Menakka, and the Schumann Foundation, believe deeply in the work of the College of the Environment and are generously supporting its curricular initiatives and its outreach to communities beyond our university.”

“At a time when some are calling into question the value of environmental science, it’s refreshing and reassuring to receive generous support from those who have such a clear view about the importance of decision-making based on scientific evidence,” says Chernoff. “These gifts will benefit Wesleyan faculty and students for generations to come.”

Chernoff is planning a variety of initiatives to engage the wider community in Think Tank themes, such as next year’s topic: Disruptions to Disasters: Confronting the Human-Environmental Relationship.

The Bailey’s gift will also support a Distinguished Visiting Scholar and an Endowed Experience Fund, which will provide internship learning opportunities for students of all majors with financial need who are pursuing experiences related to environmental research. The Baileys are also funding an endowed scholarship for juniors or seniors who have demonstrated exceptional academic accomplishment and are pursuing the environmental studies linked major or the environmental studies certificate through the COE.

The Robert F. Schumann Institute of the College of the Environment is intended to provide students with life-changing experiences that will develop their ability to address environmental issues. It will initiate or enhance programs in global studies; civic engagement; arts, environmental (in)justice and sustainability; and food security and agriculture.

The institute will emphasize project-based learning, with courses in which students participate in faculty-led research teams. It will provide students with internship opportunities, working with specialists outside Wesleyan. Students will also be able to take new courses in food security that integrate research on the two-acre Long Lane organic farm. Furthermore, the institute’s program will develop the arts as an instrument of engagement, sustainability, and communication.

The institute will have a broad reach beyond campus, as a sponsor of symposia and workshops. Additionally, faculty-student research projects will lead to final products, such as research papers or performances.

“Our intent is to push out the work of the COE, to be an expeditor and catalyst for many projects with partners on and off campus,” says Chernoff. “The Baileys and the Schumann Foundation are contributing greatly to our mission of changing the trajectory of humans on the planet for the better.”
GAME ON

PHOTO BY STEVE MCLAUGHLIN
MEN’S LACROSSE CAPS HISTORIC SEASON

In this historic season, the Wesleyan Men’s Lacrosse team won the NESCAC and Little Three Championships, capping it off by reaching the NCAA Semifinals. Here, Cardinal All-American midfielder Taylor Ghesquiere ’18 celebrates after a goal during the NCAA Quarterfinal game against No. 3 Bates College at Jackson Field. Wesleyan won a 14-13 thriller. The team finished the season ranked No. 4 in the country with a 20-2 record.
THERE’S NO APP FOR A GOOD SWING DANCE

_Alive and Kicking_, a documentary by writer/director Susan Glatzer ’87, offers the Lindy Hop as an antidote for what ails us in the electronic age.

**ALIVE AND KICKING.** Susan Glatzer’s documentary on the current popularity of the Lindy Hop, a swing dance born on the streets of Depression-era Harlem, may convince you that the dance is the tonic to cure a host of modern-day ills—from an individual’s social isolation, PTSD, and depression, to society’s racial and political polarization. She has individual testimonials on these. Not only that, but the documentary itself, with its jazzy soundtrack and fast-paced footwork by eclectic real-life aficionados, will most likely leave you humming a jazz tune, snapping your fingers in an eight-beat rhythm, and looking for the nearest Lindy Hop dance hall.

Glatzer, a film major as an undergraduate, is a producer—as well as a former film studio executive at Paramount and past board member of the International Documentary Association (IDA)—but the impetus to make this film was never a hidden desire to step behind the camera lens, she says. Instead, she was pulled into directing by her passion for swing dancing, a hobby she picked up in the late ’90s during a difficult time, when “I knew that if I could just drag myself to the dance each week, I’d have joy in my life again.”

Initially, she had the idea for a short film “about a couple in their 80s whom I knew in the swing dancing circuit—and everybody wanted to dance with them.” She tried to interest colleagues on the IDA board, but had no takers, so “since I wasn’t a film maker and I had a very big day job, I just let it go.”

But it didn’t let her go. A visit to The Big Easy, its history steeped in jazz, swing, blues, and dance, lured her back to the concept and amped it up. “In New Orleans, the culture is just so vibrant and rich,” she recalls. “It’s sensual in every manner of speaking. And it just hit me that this documentary should actually be a feature. I still didn’t think I’d be directing it.”
Eager to entice a friend to direct the movie she imagined, Glatzer brought her to a couple of events. “She told me, ‘This is really fantastic, but I won’t be able to get to it for a while.’” So Glatzer started shooting, just a bit, getting footage she hoped could be used in a sizzle reel to raise money for production. Time went by; her friend’s timeline got pushed back; Glatzer kept on shooting. “Finally, I realized that I was directing it,” says Glatzer. “Or, as I like to say, ‘I got a little pregnant with it and took it to term.’”

In retrospect, Glatzer is glad. “I think a nondancer would have come up with a very different film.” For instance, the “big competition” would have been an easy trope, yet a film pitting dancers against each other seemed at odds with the familial ethos she loved about this community. Instead, she focused on depth within individual storylines: Steven and Chanzie, L.A. dance partners who team up to make a career in competition, hoping to leave their day jobs and teach full time; the Swedish Decavita Sisters, Emelie and Rebekah, former psychologists who enjoy the appeal the duo finds on the circuit and struggle with a health setback; and Evita, a passionate dancer and Lindy Hop teacher who travels the world.

Perhaps the most succinct expression of Glatzer’s theme comes from Evita: “Swing dancing is the pursuit of happiness,” she declares. It’s reiterated by other dancers and the host of experts Glatzer interviews, including legends such as Frankie Manning, dubbed the ‘Ambassador of Lindy Hop.’ Born in 1914, he was one of the original Harlem dancers who appeared in the 1941 film, *Hellzapoppin*; and when the 1980s saw a resurgence of swing, the retired postal worker was summoned back to the limelight, teaching the moves he’d created so long ago to a new generation of feet eager to jump and jive.

Glatzer also interviews those who are bringing swing dancing back to its roots in Harlem and to other predominantly black communities—noting that cultures as unlikely as Sweden and South Korea have built a strong base of Lindy Hop aficionados. Still—“I didn’t want to make an educational film about swing dancing,” says Glatzer. “We told you the things that you absolutely needed to know, and everything else, you could experience.” The settings run the gamut: international competitions, intimate practice sessions, weekend “camps,” hotel-room parties, and beginner classes. Glatzer provides the access and sits back with the viewer to marvel at the breathtaking acrobatics performed uptempo. She recalls the time their assistant editor, Gabriel Urbina ’13, was viewing dailies of a competition and stopped to stare at the screen. “That is not how gravity works,” he insisted.

As she continued, Glatzer realized she had a further reason to direct. “I wanted to use the lens of swing dancing to address some troubling aspects of our society,” she said. “We use screens to communicate: we work, go home, watch TV, get on our computers. That is not a life. You cannot do a swing dance without connecting with other people, conversing with them, touching them. There is no app for a good swing dance.”

“Frankie Manning would talk about a dance as a three-minute romance. The Lindy Hop is improvisational, so you are communicating with the other person all throughout, reading their body language, figuring out what they’ll do next and what you’ll do, too. At the end of the dance, you feel like you could finish each other’s sentences. It’s a street dance, so it’s about having fun, making your partner laugh, and being as goofy as possible. Obviously our film focuses on amazing dancers—but this dance is for any age, any size, any background, any gender.”

Begun in 2011, the film premiered at South by Southwest in 2016 and was picked up for distribution. Initially Glatzer was disappointed when it was put off until 2017, but “it’s been a blessing to have the film come out, post-election. People have been responding to its message in very heartfelt ways.”

“The Lindy Hop cuts through factions and layers of mistrust,” she says. “Once you’ve danced with someone, you see beyond stereotypes. It’s in coming together that we realize we’re more alike than we are different.” —BY CYNTHIA ROCKWELL
NICK RASMUSSEN ’87
IS PREOCCUPIED BY
TERRORISM AND PREVENTING
ANOTHER 9/11.

BY GABRIEL POPKIN ’03
and his inner circle anxiously watch aerial footage of one of the highest-stakes and riskiest operations ever carried out—a team of elite Navy SEALs raiding a fortified compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan. The leaders back in Washington don't know for certain whether their target—terrorist leader Osama bin Laden—is actually in the bunker that President Obama has just sent the SEALs into. They also don't know if the troops will make it out alive. It's a moment that will forever define a presidency.

You probably didn't notice Nick Rasmussen's right shoulder peeking out from behind John Brennan, President Obama's assistant for homeland security and counterterrorism, in the famous photo from that tense evening. But in another photo, now framed on Rasmussen's wall in the director's office at the National Counterterrorism Center in McLean, Va., he is shown briefing President Barack Obama while the nation's top political and national security figures—Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, and CIA director Leon Panetta, among others—listen intently.

Rasmussen has staked out an increasingly influential position at the center of the nation's counterterrorism conversation since the 9/11 attacks thrust the issue into the forefront of American consciousness. His assessments of the intelligence on bin Laden's whereabouts contributed to one of President Obama's biggest foreign policy successes. He has helped break down barriers between intelligence agencies that obscured a full picture of Al Qaeda's operations and points out that no such mass-casualty attack by a foreign terrorist organization has occurred in the United States in the more-than-15 years since. He is now helping to modernize the country's counterterrorism arsenal yet again, to counter emerging threats from nimble, Web-savvy organizations such as ISIS.

Most remarkably, friends and colleagues say, he has done this high-level work with an almost unparalleled degree of self-effacement, competence, and nonpartisanship. Rasmussen's reputation for providing superb analysis and advice and remaining calm under pressure has led to his serving under three presidents, through two political-party transitions, and has elevated him to the nation's top counterterrorism post, from which he seems to command universal respect.

“He's not a person of any pretension or bravado or anything like that,” says Martha Crenshaw, a terrorism expert at Stanford University who taught at Wesleyan from 1974 to 2007. “He's someone who wants to get the job done and done well, and who's concerned about the mission.”

“I can't imagine anyone I would trust more, given the issues he has to address,” says Jonathan Schwartz '87, cofounder and CEO of CareZone, a tech company that helps people manage their families' health care, who has known Rasmussen since they roomed together at Wesleyan. “He has a fantastic mind with an unparalleled capacity to really understand all the nuances and be able to come to a conclusion that likely saves lives and prevents things from happening that no one will ever know about.”

Nick Rasmussen sports a neatly trimmed, greying goatee and an intense, penetrating stare. Despite this imposing exterior, friends and co-workers describe him as a congenial colleague, a passionate fan of D.C.-area sports teams, and a gifted mentor dedicated to keeping his fellow Americans safe.

Rasmussen had his sights set on government from an early age. He was born in 1965 and grew up in the D.C. suburb of Fairfax, Va. His father worked in the Department of Education, eventually becoming its senior-most civil servant; his mother was a teacher in the Fairfax County school system. One of his brothers joined the military and has served multiple tours in Afghanistan.

At Wesleyan he gravitated to the College of Social Studies (CSS), famous for its intense interdisciplinary curriculum merging history, government, economics, and social theory. There, he says he learned to synthesize vast amounts of material quickly, build persuasive
arguments, and express himself clearly and persuasively—and grammatically. “I still can’t split an infinitive,” he says. More seriously, he adds, “I draw on the training I got from that core curriculum literally every day.”

Friends recall his smarts, his studiousness, and his efficiency at digesting large quantities of assigned readings and producing weekly papers that propelled him to the top of his class. While Thursday nights found many students banging out essays on dorm-room electric typewriters well into the wee hours of Friday morning, Rasmussen typically had his assignments wrapped up by mid-afternoon Thursday, before many had even started, recalls fellow CSS-er Tilden Katz ’87, who now works at the firm FTI Consulting in Chicago. “Nick was the cleanest, clearest writer.”

Professors agreed. “His essays showed an ability to think insightfully and organize the ideas clearly, gracefully, and at times dramatically,” CSS professor Nancy Schwartz wrote in an evaluation. “He can think analytically and strategically, and enjoys doing so.” Schwartz recalls that “he cared about world politics and had good judgment about how nation-states deal with each other and emerging situations.”

Though set on a career in government, Rasmussen arrived at Wesleyan without knowing how he would pursue his goal. He was turned on to foreign policy during a course taught by former U.S. ambassador to Tanzania John Shirley, who was a diplomat in residence at Wesleyan at the time. During his junior year, Rasmussen interned for a semester in the Department of Defense Asian Affairs Office, and he was hooked for life. “It was very seductive,” he says. “It was important stuff—it was exactly what I wanted to be doing.”

After picking up a master’s degree in public and international affairs at Princeton, Rasmussen interned and then worked as a foreign affairs analyst in the State Department’s Bureau of Political-Military Affairs. His first job included negotiating for U.S. forces’ access and basing in Middle Eastern countries following the first Gulf War, which ended in 1991. From 1994 to 1996 he supported the U.S.–North Korea Agreed Framework, which slowed down North Korea’s nuclear program for almost a decade. He then spent five years working on the Arab–Israeli peace process.

In late summer of 2001, Rasmussen accepted a job as director for Regional Affairs in the Office of Combating Terrorism in President George W. Bush’s National Security Council (NSC). Six days before he was due to start, terrorists linked to the Al Qaeda network carried out the deadliest attacks on U.S. soil since Pearl Harbor, killing nearly 3,000 people. To many U.S. security officials, the 9/11 attacks provided a powerful dose of humility: They had let down a country that had counted on its government to detect and thwart such threats.

The attacks also injected an additional urgency to their work: Many in the government believed that other major attacks were being planned. During the months after 9/11, Rasmussen’s office staff tripled in size to around 15 people, and its workload expanded proportionately. He facilitated nearly 100 meetings, which collectively formed what he calls “almost a continual conversation” about Al Qaeda and the region of the world it was operating from.

“No matter the pressure, Nick was always composed and focused on the task at hand,” recalls Michele Malvesti, who worked with Rasmussen at the NSC and is now a professor of practice in international security studies at Tufts University. Even when others might let emotions overtake reason, she says, “Nick was able to be deliberative; he was always able to calmly evaluate both sides of any argument.”

From post-9/11 discussions emerged a consensus to create an information hub with access to all intelligence, whether that intelligence is collected overseas or here at home. The National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) was born, and Rasmussen took a job there in 2004, producing assessments of U.S. counterterrorism policy and strategy for President Bush and the NSC. Rasmussen describes the agency as an “honest broker,” with the goal of helping others make decisions. He and his colleagues take in and fuse information and
intelligence from the CIA, FBI, the Pentagon, and other agencies, and brief top officials, often including the president. The heart of the center is a high-tech “operations room” where analysts watch banks of computer and TV monitors through which information from around the world pours in.

The intelligence community has been criticized at times for not sufficiently synthesizing this information. But by reducing what Rasmussen calls “stove-piping”—a tendency for information at one agency to not mix with that held by another agency—he says the NCTC has given intelligence professionals the access they need to help thwart sophisticated planning operations before they reach action stage. “We’ve made tremendous progress in our ability to detect and prevent a multi-actor, catastrophic attack like 9/11.”

In October 2007, Rasmussen rejoined the NSC. When President Obama took office in 2009, he chose to keep Rasmussen on—a testament, colleagues say, to Rasmussen’s professionalism and ability to work with and gain the trust of colleagues. “Rasmussen’s ability to remain in close proximity to two Presidents [now three, as the current administration has kept him on as NCTC director] … is a tribute to his deep substantive knowledge, cool temperament, and the fact that he is not a politico but a reliable professional,” wrote former Princeton classmate John Sivolella, now a political science professor at Columbia University, who called Rasmussen “a quiet American hero.”

The NSC role put Rasmussen at the center of the discussion leading up to the bin Laden operation. He and others spent months trying to determine
how likely it was that bin Laden was in the compound and the risk to the lives of U.S. forces sent in to take him out. As the picture became clearer, Rasmussen repeatedly briefed President Obama and senior staff, while keeping anyone who didn’t need to be in on the conversation out of it—which, he wrote in a recent reflection, led to some “very uncomfortable moments” with colleagues. He also recalled 38 anxiety-filled minutes as around 20 of the country’s top officials waited in the Situation Room to learn whether the operation was successful. They saw one of the raid’s helicopters crash, but once the SEALs entered the compound, they had no information on the operation’s success until it was over. “It’s a scene you never forget,” Rasmussen wrote.

The scene also reflects another key to Rasmussen’s approach to counterterrorism: the importance of teams. “He’s somebody who is entirely built around teamwork,” says Audrey Tomason, an officer at the National Intelligence Council who worked under Rasmussen at the NSC (and who is indirectly responsible for Rasmussen not appearing in the famous photo—he says he had positioned himself so that she could get a better view). “Nick is someone who really builds teams around him and empowers those teams to do their best work.”

Tomason also notes the importance Rasmussen places on managing the stress of working in such a high-pressure field, breaking up long workdays with group lunches and keeping televised sports games on in the background when immediate threats force staffers to work over weekends. He and his wife, Maria, travel when they can, including to the Philippines, her home country. But he admits that in his job, “you never totally check out.”

The year after the bin Laden operation, Rasmussen left the White House and took the deputy director job at NCTC. When the agency’s director left in 2014, President Obama nominated Rasmussen to replace him. As director, Rasmussen spends less time directly analyzing intelligence, focusing more on synthesizing and communicating the work of hundreds or even thousands of analysts at his agency and others. “Often I end up being the spokesperson for a very large intelligence community, presenting our integrated view of the terrorism threat environment.”

Rasmussen and his team have also adapted to the new reality. They consider traditional sources of intelligence as well as the vast expanse of publicly available information, including social media. To supplement human analysis, they are experimenting with advanced computational techniques known as machine learning to comb vast quantities of data for meaningful patterns. They work with social media companies to identify how terrorists are using their platforms and what new methods they are using for dissemination. They also work with communities to help them identify the signs of radicalization. Still, he says, determining what information is relevant is a perpetual challenge. “It’s not just a haystack; it’s a mountain of haystacks,” he says. “We can’t hire enough analysts; technology also has to be part of the equation.”

The threat environment he has found himself facing differs starkly from the one he encountered during his first stint at NCTC. While Al Qaeda remains a primary counterterrorism concern, the group calling itself the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, commonly known as ISIL or ISIS, has taken center stage and operates from a completely different playbook. Rather than have a centralized leadership plan sophisticated attacks, ISIS recruits potential terrorists via the Internet and encourages radicalized people in Western countries to carry out “lone wolf” shootings and bombings of the kind that have become all too common: San Bernardino, Paris, Manchester. ISIS strategy has dramatically shortened what Rasmussen calls the “time from flash to bang”—the time from when a person is radicalized to when that person carries out an attack. This compressed timeline has presented steep challenges to the counterterrorism community, Rasmussen says. A 2016 NPR profile of Rasmussen described the situation: “Counterterrorism Chief Sees Gains on the Battlefield, Stubborn Threats at Home.”

But Rasmussen and his team also have adapted to the new reality. They consider traditional sources of intelligence as well as the vast expanse of publicly available information, including social media. To supplement human analysis, they are experimenting with advanced computational techniques known as machine learning to comb vast quantities of data for meaningful patterns. They work with social media companies to identify how terrorists are using their platforms and what new methods they are using for dissemination. They also work with communities to help them identify the signs of radicalization. Still, he says, determining what information is relevant is a perpetual challenge. “It’s not just a haystack; it’s a mountain of haystacks,” he says. “We can’t hire enough analysts; technology also has to be part of the equation.”

“BUT I WOULD ALSO ARGUE THAT WE HAVE MORE CAPACITY TO DEFEND OURSELVES—MORE CAPACITY TO KEEP OURSELVES SAFE—THAN WE HAVE EVER HAD BEFORE.”
Wesleyan’s founding president, Willbur Fisk, famously called for a liberal education that would benefit not only the individual but also provide for “the good of the world.” Those words have been a defining characteristic of Wesleyan ever since, and today alumni, faculty, and students contribute in myriad ways to public dialog about issues pertinent to the well-being of humans on the planet. In the pages that follow, we ask several alumni and faculty for commentary on topics related to global stability and the work of Nick Rasmussen ’87 at the National Counterterrorism Center.
MARSHALL PLAN AT 70: DO THE TIES STILL BIND?
**Karen Donfried '84**, president of the German Marshall Fund of the United States, previously served as special assistant to President Obama and senior director for European affairs on the National Security Council at the White House, leading the development and implementation of the president’s European policies. She was a recipient of a Distinguished Alumna Award from Wesleyan in 2014 and is currently an alumni-elected trustee.

**Q:** What does the success of the Marshall Plan say to us today, 70 years later?  
**KD:** I’ve been spending a lot of time looking back at the Marshall Plan because of the 70th anniversary. The organization I now run, the German Marshall Fund of the United States, was established on the 25th anniversary of the Marshall Plan to strengthen trans-Atlantic cooperation in the spirit of that plan.

Two keys goals of the Marshall Plan were to bind the U.S. and Europe more closely together and to encourage European cooperation. These legacies are both under challenge today. It’s very interesting to look back 70 years at a period that most people would say was a high point of U.S. diplomacy. What kind of enlightened self-interest that drove U.S. policy then can define how the U.S. should respond to the challenges we face today?

**Q:** You’ve said that the German Marshall Fund is stepping up its efforts to explain each side of the Atlantic to the other. Why is there a need for this effort?

**KD:** We have a U.S. president who seems to have a very different perspective on the relationship with Europe than did his predecessors. Whether they were Democratic or Republican presidents, they held an assumption that a strong relationship with Europe is in the interest of the United States. That view has prevailed for the past 70 years. During the campaign, we heard then-candidate Trump talk about NATO, our main security alliance, as being obsolete. We heard him say that the European Union is fine, but it doesn’t really matter if the U.K. is followed by other countries leaving. We’ve seen him be very critical of Germany’s defense spending. That’s actually been a long-standing U.S. criticism of our European allies: that they should be doing more. But the style and the way President Trump has been saying it are quite different.

Then there’s this question of whether American citizens appreciate what Europe means for their daily lives. I think a lot of Americans are not aware, for example, of the extent to which European investment creates American jobs.

**Q:** Much has been made of Chancellor Angela Merkel’s comments that Europe needs to stand more on its own. Would that be a good thing?

**KD:** I think a stronger Europe is good for the United States. The interesting question is whether the U.S. will be a stronger force in uniting Europe by being seen as unreliable or by being the reliable partner we were for the past 70 years. What we’ve seen over the past decade is that U.S. support for European integration has been a positive force for the development of the European Union (E.U.). Now that’s being turned on its head, which may actually galvanize political will. The jury is out on that.

**Q:** Can Germany and France hold the E.U. together and respond to legitimate demands for reform?

**KD:** The E.U., even before the Brexit vote last June, was under tremendous pressure. There have been real challenges to the common currency. Greece features most prominently in our minds right now, but it’s not only Greece that has rocked the Eurozone. That’s ongoing. Then you had an aggressive Russia on Europe’s eastern border that seized Ukraine’s sovereign territory. The immigration and refugee influx has seemed almost overwhelming to some E.U. member states.

You have the threat of terrorism on the European continent, the rise of populism, and the Brexit vote. So there was this sense of despair within the E.U., and now, in June 2017, there seems to be a window of opportunity because of the election of Emmanuel Macron in France.

The French and Germans have traditionally been the engine of the E.U., so the question is: Can they put forward a reform plan that breathes new life and energy into the European Union? That’s what everyone is waiting for.

**Q:** How much does the ability of France and Germany to make progress in the E.U. depend upon internal issues in France?

**KD:** Macron has to deliver on economic reform within France. That will be the key that unlocks German willingness to step back on some of its austerity policies. Germany and France have a different view of what the right recipe is to solve the Eurozone crisis. Germany has been more on the austerity side, France more on the side of giving a growth impulse to weaker economies. You need to have a compromise between Germany and France. So if you get them on the same page, you can mobilize the other E.U. member states.

**Q:** How critical is NATO to the future of the liberal democratic order, and should the U.S. continue to play such a large role in it?

**KD:** I think NATO is very much in the interest of the United States. There’s no question that President Trump feels a deep sense of grievance and believes that Europeans have taken advantage of us for decades. But the debate around defense spending is complicated. Yes, the U.S. accounts for close to 75 percent of defense spending in the alliance. The U.S. is also a global military power in a way that no European country is. There is substantial defense spending among the Europeans. Every European country, and for that matter Canada, a NATO member state, agrees that it needs to spend more. This became crystal-clear when Russia annexed Crimea in 2014. Since then we have seen our NATO member partners do more on the defense side. The trajectory is moving in the right direction, but it’s not going to happen overnight. All of these countries have multi-year plans to get to 2 percent GDP spending on defense, which has been the guideline in NATO. In my view, we should continue to
Robert Hunter ’62 is a former U.S. Ambassador to NATO who is recognized as a principal architect of NATO’s post-Cold War strategy. He has served as senior advisor at the RAND Corporation, a member of the National Security Council, and director of the Center for Transatlantic Security Studies at the National Defense University. He was foreign policy advisor to Senator Edward Kennedy and is a member of the American Academy of Diplomacy.

A longer version of this article first appeared in Lobelog, a foreign policy blog (lobelog.com).

Debate in the United States during the first several months of the Donald J. Trump presidency has focused intensively on the role that Russia played in the 2016 U.S. elections, and on contacts between Trump supporters and Russian officials. These are not trivial matters. But they have implications far beyond the “real facts” of Russian actions; the impact they could have had on the outcome of the U.S. presidential election (almost surely marginal); and ties, if any, between Trump and Company and the Kremlin. The imbroglio is having a major impact on U.S. foreign policy and will very likely limit, because of U.S. domestic politics, American flexibility in dealing with...
Moscow—indeed, potentially reducing our capacity to pursue policies in our inherent national interests.

To understand how we got into this position, it is necessary to take a step back and examine the broader picture.

Almost never discussed in the United States is that Moscow did not out of the blue adopt policies at odds with and in many instances hostile to the West. Perhaps this was bound to happen; perhaps Moscow’s assertiveness, lack of respect for other countries’ security requirements, meddling in foreign politics, and unwillingness to abandon the classic notion of spheres of influence are part of Russian DNA. But seeing whether Russia could be induced to play a constructive role in mutually beneficial security and other arrangements, beginning in Europe, was not adequately tested. For too many people in the three U.S. administrations preceding Trump’s, Russia, once put down (as the Soviet Union) was to be kept down, however untenable that proposition always was and at variance with the West’s core security and other needs.

It didn’t begin that way. In 1989, U.S. President George H.W. Bush proposed an unprecedented grand strategy for a “Europe whole and free” and at peace. He understood that Russia must not be treated as Germany was by the 1919 Treaty of Versailles, which, by assigning full blame for starting the World War to Berlin, sowed the seeds for German revanchism and World War II. Bush’s vision was translated into a set of interlocking steps. Central Europe was taken off the geopolitical chess board and Russia was offered a chance to play a major and respected role in the future of European security.

But even before Putin came to power, Washington lost interest in Bush’s vision. After NATO added three Central European countries to the alliance in 1998—in part to
surround” Germany with NATO, to reassure everyone that the German past was well and truly buried—the United States pressed for more NATO expansion, up to the Russian frontier. The George W. Bush administration unilaterally abrogated the 1972 U.S.-Soviet Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, one of the few remaining symbols of Russia’s great power past and likely future. Then, most consequentially, the 2008 Bucharest declaration on Ukrainian and Georgian membership, NATO thus provided Russian nationalists with evidence that the United States was seeking to “surround” Russia. (The 2016 NATO summit recommitted the alliance to the folly of prospective Georgian membership, even though few if any allies would be prepared to honor the resulting security commitment if Georgia were attacked.)

Matters came to a head in early 2014, when Ukraine’s president, Viktor Yanukovych, rejected a European Union association agreement in favor of economic support from Russia. In addition to popular resistance (the “Euromaidan” protests) that forced him to flee the country, the United States actively worked to install a prime minister, Arseniy Yatsenyuk, sympathetic to the West. Russia’s seizure of Crimea followed soon thereafter—whether provoked by U.S. actions or merely excused by them. Ironically, the U.S. intervention in Ukrainian politics (following Russia’s exercising its influence with Yanukovych) was more consequential than what Russia did in the 2016 U.S. elections. But global politics is littered with double standards. The problem arises when they get in the way of calculations about how to build relationships that have a chance of meeting the legitimate needs of all parties.

Russia’s seizure of Crimea, aggression elsewhere in Ukraine, and other pressures in Europe cannot be excused, nor its violation of formal agreements (the 1975 Helsinki Final Act and the 1994 Budapest Memorandum). Nor can Russian interference in the U.S. presidential election campaign be justified by the fact that the United States has itself for decades actively and regularly intervened in the politics and elections of dozens of countries around the globe. But the “Russia scandal” enveloping President Trump, however much he has contributed to it, is depriving the United States of the chance to explore whether there can be a true “reset” of relations with Russia, fully consonant with U.S. and Western interests.

Ironically, Donald Trump has shown a better understanding of the need for a new, mutually acceptable basis for relations with the Russian Federation than did either George W. Bush or Barack Obama. His valuable instinct, however, is now being buried beneath the fundamental debate about his presidency, which is feeding so much of the Russia scandal, in major part for U.S. domestic political reasons. In this context, the interests of the United States and the West are clearly losing out.
Joseph Cassidy ’86 is a Wilson Center fellow and former State Department foreign service officer. Follow him on Twitter @cassidyjosephp. The following is excerpted from an article of his published by the Wilson Center.

President Trump seems to conceive of domestic counterterrorism efforts as analogous to a police roadblock. Potential terrorists, like vehicles, wait in single file, pull up to the checkpoint, are evaluated, and are either stopped or allowed to proceed depending on whether they pose a threat. If only our vetting can be made “extreme” enough, we can apprehend those intending us harm.

Although they may be loath to admit it, many of the President’s critics embrace similar logic. They believe we can safely welcome immigrants granted security approval because the experience of living among us, enjoying our rights under law, and having access to America’s economic opportunity renders newcomers largely immune to subsequent disloyalty. That is a powerful story, and overwhelmingly true in American history, but not an axiom.

A more accurate roadway analogy for domestic counterterrorism might be a traffic circle. The danger from other vehicles can come from any direction, it can arise spontaneously, and safety depends on continued vigilance and a set of rules about behavior, enforced by law, but also by convention.

The death-by-rotary scenario is imperfect, of course, and not just because the number of casualties on American roadways dwarfs the number of victims of domestic terrorism. The threat from politicized violence is neither omnipresent nor existential. But our fixation on vetting—the necessary but not sufficient “checkpoint” part of domestic security—has distracted us from a more pressing issue: preventing radicalization of citizens and immigrants already here.

The worst recent terrorist attacks in the United States (e.g., Boston, San Bernardino, Orlando, Ohio State) have all been perpetrated either by U.S. citizens or those with legal permanent residence.

As former Deputy Director of the CIA
Michael Morell wrote recently in Foreign Policy, “Protecting the country’s borders is important, but the United States has done that with great success since 9/11—including security enhancements as a result of the rise of the Islamic State. The primary threat is now at home.”

While refugee resettlement is more controversial than it has been in a generation, security hawks and humanitarians should still be able to agree that successful assimilation of refugees already resettled in the United States is consistent with both national security and humanitarianism.

Currently, when refugees arrive in the United States, the immediate programmatic emphasis is on employment for those who are work-eligible. A minimal level of economic assistance usually lasts for no more than nine months (and resettled refugees even have to reimburse the government for the cost of their airfare).

This immediate immersion is a good thing, and it is part of the explanation for why integration of refugees into American society has been more successful than in some European programs that discourage or bar immediate employment.

Given what can go wrong when resettled refugees do not successfully integrate, however, we should consider extending monitoring and nonfinancial assistance beyond the initial nine-month period.

In particular, we need to do a better job ensuring speedy acquisition of English language skills and cultural and civic integration. This would not only help refugees understand and thrive in the United States, but polling data suggests it also would increase popular support for resettlement.

One useful mechanism would be to establish regional ombudsperson offices charged with ensuring resettlement success and reporting to the Office of Refugee Resettlement in the Department of Health and Human Services.

Ombudspersons could encourage beneficial networks of social service providers to ensure those in need get disability or mental health services (particularly important for refugee children who may have PTSD symptoms like anxiety, anger, or depression). Such networks would help address assimilation problems as they arise, like workplace misunderstandings, issues with children’s participation at school, or disputes with neighbors or local authorities, like zoning boards.

Ombudspersons could facilitate federal engagement with state and local authorities and host communities to increase transparency of the program and allay suspicions. Such engagement could include helping local authorities in refugee magnet communities plan for stresses on schools and other social services.

Finally, a longer post-resettlement monitoring period would allow regional ombudsperson offices to coordinate with federal and local law enforcement—not just to watch for potential security threats, but to ensure that resettled refugees feel safe in their communities and are willing to cooperate with police.

Criticism of refugee resettlement has been exaggerated, sometimes irresponsibly. Yet proponents of resettlement should avoid the temptation to dismiss criticism out of hand. While public polling has produced a wide range of findings (and partisan interpretations), a considerable number of Americans appear, at the very least, to be uneasy about refugee resettlement.

No one—least of all the resettled refugees themselves—is well-served by a system that can be caricatured as cavalier in its risk assessment, imprudent in its expenditures, hesitant to enforce democratic values, and haughty in forcing refugees on resentful communities.

Successful assimilation of resettled refugees can reduce the number of domestic security threats, while helping to identify those that do exist. It will shore up popular support for resettlement and humanitarian activities more broadly. And it will boost our economy by tapping refugee skills, while demonstrating to friends and foes the vitality of our national community and the universal attraction of our values.
CONFLICT OVER A MODEL OF ISLAMIC PLURALISM

BY PETER GOTTSCHALK
Professor of Religion Peter Gottschalk’s research and teaching concentrate on the dynamics of cultural interpretation and conflict in the context of Islamic, Hindu, Christian, and scientific traditions. He is interested particularly in understanding how assumptions of mutual antagonism form between groups despite evidence of religious confluence. A version of this article appeared on the online news site The Conversation (theconversation.com), “an independent source of news and views from the academic and research community.”

On February 16, 2017, a bomb ripped through a crowd assembled at the tomb of a Sufi saint, Lal Shahbaz Qalandar, in southeastern Pakistan. Soon thereafter, the so-called Islamic State claimed responsibility for the attack.

In recent times, such attacks have targeted a variety of cherished sites and individuals in Pakistan. These have ranged from the 2010 bombing of the tomb of another Sufi saint, Data Ganj Bakhsh, to the murder of a popular Sufi singer, Amjad Sabri, in 2016.

As a scholar of Muslim and Hindu traditions, I’ve long appreciated the various and influential roles that Sufis and their tombs play in South Asian communities. From my perspective, the repercussions of such violence go far beyond the scores of bodies strewn around the damaged shrine and the devastated families in one geographical region.

Many Muslims and non-Muslims around the globe celebrate Sufi saints and gather together for worship in their shrines. Such practices, however, do not conform to the ideologies of intolerant revivalist groups such as the Islamic State.

Here’s why they find them threatening.

**WHO ARE THE SUFIS?**

The origins of the word “Sufi” come from an Arabic term for wool (ṣūf). It references the unrefined wool clothes long worn by ancient West Asian ascetics and points to a common quality ascribed to Sufis: austerity.

Commonly, Muslims have viewed this austerity as stemming from a sincere religious devotion that compelled the Sufi into a close, personal relationship with God, modeled on aspects of the Prophet Muhammad’s life. This often has involved a more inward, contemplative focus than many other forms of Islamic practice.

In some instances, Sufis have challenged contemporary norms in order to shock their Muslim neighbors into more religiously intentional lives. For example, an eighth-century female Sufi saint, known popularly as Rabia al-Adawiyya, is said to have walked through her hometown of Basra, in modern-day Iraq, with a lit torch in one hand and a bucket of water in another. When asked why, she replied that she
hoped to burn down heaven and douse hell’s fire so people would love God, without concern for reward or punishment.

Many Sufis are trained in tariqas (brotherhoods) in which teachers carefully shape students. 

Rumi, for example, founded the famous “Mevlevi” order best known among English speakers as “whirling dervishes” for their signature performance—a ritual in which practitioners deepen their relationship with God through a twirling dance intended to evoke a religious experience.

Some Sufis—men and, sometimes, women—came to gain a reputation for what were viewed as their insights and miracles, so that they became guides and healers for their communities. The miracles associated with them may have been performed in life or after death.

When some of these Sufis died, many common folk came to view their tombs as places emanating baraka, a term connoting “blessing,” “power,” and “presence.” Some devotees considered the baraka as boosting their prayers, while others considered it a miraculous energy that could be absorbed from proximity with the shrine.

For the devotees, the tombs-turned-shrines are places where God gives special attention to prayers. However, some devotees go so far as to pray for the deceased Sufi’s personal intercession.

A PLACE OF INTERFAITH WORSHIP?

So, why do some groups like the so-called Islamic State violently oppose them?

I argue that there are two reasons: First, some Sufis have deliberately flouted the Islamic conventions of their peers, which has led many in their communities to condemn their unorthodox views and practices.

Second, many Muslims, not just militants, consider shrine devotion as superstitious and idolatrous. The popularity among Muslims and non-Muslims of tomb veneration alarms many conservative Muslims, although very few have resorted to violence in opposition.

When a Sufi tomb grows in reputation for its miraculous powers, then an increasing number of people begin to frequent it to seek blessings. The tombs often become a gathering place for Hindus, Christians, Sikhs, and people from other faiths.

Special songs of praise—qawwali—sung at these shrines express Islamic values using the imagery of love and devotion.

However, Islamist groups such as the Taliban reject shrine worship, as well as dancing and singing, as distracting from a properly Islamic life (hence their assassination of the world-famous qawwali singer Amjad Sabri).

SUCCESS OF SUFI TRADITIONS

Sufi traditions reflect a vastly underreported quality about Islamic traditions in general. While some revivalist Muslim movements such as the Wahhabis and other Salafis see only one way of observing Islam, there are others who embrace its diversity.

Many Muslims proudly defend Sufi customs such as shrine devotions because they are so integral to Muslim and non-Muslim communities, not only in South Asia but throughout the world. For many, these sites offer an Islamic expression of what it means to love God.

In fact, historically, in many regions of the world Sufis have been highly successful in adapting Islamic theologies and practices to local customs for non-Muslims. For this reason, Sufi traditions have been credited for the majority of conversions to Islam in South Asia.

It is only with the global expansion of Islamist revivalist groups in the last century that the urge for absolute conformity has become so strong. Even then, a majority of Muslims accept divergent Islamic practices.

Given the popularity of Sufis, it’s no wonder the so-called Islamic State objects to such models of Islamic pluralism.
In the wake of the attack in Manchester, England, what have we learned about ISIS and its strategy? What does ISIS gain by attacks such as this (whether or not ISIS is actually responsible for this one)?

EM: ISIS has been fighting on two fronts. The main front from the beginning has been in Iraq and Syria, but as the group is starting to be militarily weakened and the appeal of the caliphate is losing steam, ISIS is increasingly focusing on a second front: inspiring attacks in the West.

Instead of a central decision-making process and direct coordination from its core leadership, now ISIS is shifting towards focusing on propaganda that can inspire individuals to stage attacks, or it is relying on handlers and a loose network of supporters to encourage acts of violence. In this sense, the Manchester attack confirms that ISIS is now developing a decentralized global network in a similar way to Al Qaeda. As the group is becoming weaker on the main front, staging high-profile attacks becomes an important element of propaganda that signals resilience and global reach. This is no longer about building an actual state, but about maintaining its reputation and projecting power and resolve. The Manchester attack fits perfectly with this logic, and the intentional targeting of teens only increased its shock value.

You’ve written about social movement theory. Briefly, what does this theory say about how ISIS frames its public messages?

EM: Social movement theory argues that groups are very strategic in what kind of messages they deploy, and that they are acutely aware of what can resonate with their audiences. ISIS has a gargantuan propaganda machine in multiple languages, and it customizes its messages depending on the audience, capitalizing on whatever grievances are most salient for a particular community or locality. For instance, there has been some reporting that before the recent attacks in Iran, ISIS had been increasing its Farsi propaganda and calling on the Iranian Sunni minority to revolt against the Shia regime.

You’ve also written about the limitations of military power in fighting ISIS. What, in your view, should be the elements of a comprehensive strategy to degrade ISIS?

EM: At home, the main options are hardening targets and strengthening intelligence. But if ISIS is not coordinating attacks, and only inspiring them, it becomes almost impossible to fully eliminate the risk of individuals resorting to violence. We see that very well with gun violence in the United States, which kills significantly more individuals than so-called lone-wolf terrorism ever will. What you can do is to respond much more effectively to reports from the community and minimize the access to lethal weapons. My fear is that in the current political climate we might see a spike in violence from hate groups and from people motivated by the fear of ISIS, perhaps even more so than attacks by ISIS-inspired individuals. I think the discussion around reducing violence needs to be much broader than simply fighting ISIS.

In Iraq and Syria, a military campaign against ISIS can weaken the organization, but it cannot kill the idea of the Islamic State, nor does it address the reasons for armed action. Organizations can be militarily defeated and even disappear for a while, but if the underlying grievances and motivations persist, it is usually only a matter of time before they metamorphose into new entities or emerge in different areas. If you want to pull the rug out from under ISIS in Syria, you have to work toward the resolution of the civil war, and you have to be willing to engage and negotiate with all types of armed actors. The strength and appeal of ISIS depend not only on its military capabilities and propaganda but also on the strength and perceived legitimacy of its competition and opponents. Many armed groups in Syria are willing to demobilize if
the regime is removed, but they have to have credible exit options from violence, and they have to be offered security guarantees—in other words, they need to know that if they give up their arms they will not be killed by their opponents, and fighters will have to be reintegrated in society.

In my research I find that the leadership of a group can play a critical role not only in staging armed attacks but also in driving a group to demilitarize and denounce violence. You may weaken an armed group and temporarily reduce the threat of terrorism, but in my view the real victory is if the group revises its ideology and actively promotes nonviolent alternatives. I am not suggesting that ISIS currently has leaders willing to undertake such revisions, but focusing solely on decapitation and destruction certainly eliminates any such possibility in the future.

What can the U.S. and its allies do to reduce the level of instability and conflict in the Middle East?

EM: This is an interesting question that seems to assume that it is either America's responsibility or in America's national interest to reduce conflict in the Middle East. There are plenty of people who would disagree with both of those assumptions. On the question of responsibility, you have, on one hand, growing levels of war fatigue and rising support for isolationism among many Americans, and, on the other hand, you also have many people around the world who perceive America's intervention in the Middle East as a neo-imperialist form of meddling that amounts to a hypocritical and ultimately solely self-serving foreign policy. Is it in America's interest to solve the conflicts in the Middle East? To some extent yes, because conflict can spread and weaken allies, disturb global markets, and breed terrorism. But most conflicts in the Middle East do not pose an existential threat to the United States, and in some cases, to solve the problems might mean compromising America's alliances and economic interests.

This being said, the U.S. could play an important role in solving conflicts if it shifted its priorities and some of its approaches, so that it would emphasize human security, development, and sustainability. We could also push much more rigorously for negotiations; invest more resources in peacekeeping and stability operations; and work much more closely with the U.N. and with international organizations. ★

To what extent is Israeli–Palestinian conflict fuel for ISIS, versus other sources?

EM: The Israeli–Palestinian conflict is a highly resonant issue for many audiences, and in a vague way it has also come up in some of the ISIS poetry and propaganda, but mainly as one of the many grievances and injustices facing the global Muslim community. Unlike Al Qaeda, for instance, in whose rhetoric this conflict featured prominently, for ISIS the main issue has never been the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. From the very beginning, ISIS has been about the war in Iraq and the conflict in Syria.

GLOBAL STABILITY

Emy Matesan
Planning a trip to the nation’s capital this year? You may get a firsthand glimpse of our country’s infrastructure problems: overcrowded airports, massive traffic jams, delays on the Metro—but walking still works, if the weather cooperates.

“When I get into a car, the first thing I get is traffic information,” says Casey Dinges ’79, senior managing director at the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE). “It’s an obsession here.”

Infrastructure represents more than a commuting challenge to Dinges. In 1998, he and his colleagues developed the ASCE’s much-quoted Report Card on America’s Infrastructure, which provides detailed analysis of 16 infrastructure systems ranging from aviation to wastewater. The overall grade in the six Report Cards issued since then has ranged from D to D+ this year. That dismal assessment probably comes as no surprise to air travelers or anyone trying to cope with the Washington Beltway at just about any time of day, but most Americans may be far less familiar with the nation’s inland waterways system, for example, where ships and barges displace the equivalent of 51 million truck trips per year. Its grade: D.

Presidents from Bill Clinton to Donald Trump have cited the Report Card, and it is constantly mentioned in media reports on infrastructure. More and more, infrastructure is in the news. Sometimes the reasons are spectacular, as when a massive fire caused the collapse of a portion of I-85 in Atlanta earlier this year, but Dinges points out that a water main breaks every two minutes in this country. Something bad is always happening.

The point of the Report Card is not just to raise awareness of the need for much greater investment in infrastructure, but also to prod government at all levels to take action. Dinges notes that states and localities are active, but the federal government has been “treading
water,” stymied in part by toxic political discord over funding mechanisms such as raising the gas tax. The federal portion of the gas tax hasn’t increased since Clinton was president and has since lost 40 percent of its purchasing power. Meanwhile, even deeply red states such as Georgia, Indiana, Tennessee, and Utah have raised their state gas taxes (23 states in all in the past five years).

“We can’t just keep kicking this can down the road,” Dinges says. “We need for something to happen at the federal level.”

Dinges is not a civil engineer, but Wesleyan provided him with his first taste of the profession. A government major, he wrote a senior thesis, titled “The Prairie Boondoggle,” about a $1 billion project authorized by Congress in 1968 to divert water from the large Garrison Reservoir on the Missouri River in western North Dakota to the water-hungry eastern portion of the state. His thesis had all the makings of political drama: two powerful Senators from North Dakota, a heated debate between supporters and opponents, environmental impacts that included imperiling two of the largest lakes in Canada with non-native species, and a treaty violation with Canada. Dinges drove to North Dakota to see and hear about the controversy, and to Washington, D.C., where he spoke to North Dakota’s senators and to the commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation.

He could hardly have asked for a better introduction to the high stakes of massive, federally funded infrastructure projects.

“Infrastructure,” he says, “is where engineering and politics come together.”

After graduation, he got his first job with U.S. airports serve more than two million passengers every day. Congestion at airports is growing; it is expected that 24 of the top 30 major airports may soon experience “Thanksgiving-peak traffic volume” at least one day every week.

The United States has 614,387 bridges, almost 4 in 10 of which are 50 years or older. Just over 56,000 — or 9.1% — of the nation’s bridges were deemed structurally deficient in 2016, and on average there were 188 million trips across structurally deficient bridges each day.

The average age of the 90,580 dams in the country is 56 years. As our population grows and development continues, the overall number of high-hazard potential dams is increasing, with the number climbing to nearly 15,500 in 2016.
Ironically, one of his first tasks was to coordinate a grassroots and lobbying campaign to defund the Garrison Reservoir project, an effort helped by two Congressmen who, as avid duck hunters, were alarmed that the project would harm a migratory flyway. The Garrison project ultimately became a much more modest series of public works improvements.

Dinges took a position at the ASCE, the nation’s oldest engineering society, in 1986. The organization was then headquartered in New York, but Dinges joined the D.C. staff—all 2.5 of them. Ten years later, the organization moved to a sleek building in Reston, Va., a planned community in the suburban ring around Washington.

“My executive director at the time said, ‘Case, we’re in D.C. now, so put us on the map.’ He was a man of few words,” Dinges says.

A 10-year-old Reagan administration document devoted to infrastructure, “Fragile Foundations,” became the impetus for the ASCE Report Card. Congress had done nothing about “Fragile Foundations,” but Dinges and his colleagues astutely included the state of the nation’s public schools in the first Report Card, knowing that then-President Bill Clinton had a particular interest in them. Sure enough, Clinton cited the report and honed in on schools.

The Report Card has made the ASCE a go-to destination when infrastructure hits the news. The 2007 collapse of the I-35 bridge in Minneapolis, for instance, generated hundreds of media calls to the ASCE and landed Dinges on the McLaughlinGroup, a hard-hitting commentary program.

Infrastructure has long been a bipartisan national priority. President Abraham Lincoln had a vision for uniting the country by railway. Railways and inland waterways had a crucial role in the development of the country, but the national infrastructure project most familiar to everyone is the interstate highway system. First conceived by President Dwight Eisenhower as a defense-related project (he had once had the dismaying experience of trying to take a military convoy across the country), the 50,000-mile interstate highway system (combined with 100,000 miles of U.S. highways) handles 44 percent of all traffic in the United States, 75 percent of heavy truck traffic, and 80 percent of tourism traffic.

The federal government has covered most of the cost of constructing interstate highways, but maintenance falls heavily on the states, which may account for their greater willingness to raise gas taxes.

Even if Congress breaks its logjam and raises the gas tax, as the ASCE advocates, Dinges points out that growth in the use of alternative fuels means that, over time, the nation needs to look at other means of funding infrastructure. He believes that eventually we will migrate to a system based on vehicle miles traveled. Already, new methods of charging for highway use are popping up, such as differential pricing systems. In the D.C. area, for example, it’s possible to bypass miles of stalled traffic on alternate, and expensive, toll roads. It’s not difficult to foresee a not too distant future in which we pay depending upon how much we, as individuals, drive on roads—local, regional, and interstate. Dinges notes that the implications for commuting are interesting to contemplate.

Technology may also help. As future cars become equipped to communicate with roadway systems and with each other, more efficient and safer use of highways—with fewer traffic jams—will likely become possible. Self-driving cars summoned with an

Drinking water is delivered via one million miles of pipes across the country. While water consumption is down, there are still an estimated 240,000 water main breaks per year in the United States, wasting over two trillion gallons of treated drinking water.

Most electric transmission and distribution lines were constructed in the 1950s and 1960s with a 50-year life expectancy, and the more than 640,000 miles of high-voltage transmission lines in the lower 48 states’ power grids are at full capacity. Without greater attention to aging equipment, capacity bottlenecks, and increased demand, as well as increasing storm and climate impacts, Americans will likely experience longer and more frequent power interruptions.

The United States’ 25,000 miles of inland waterways and 239 locks form the freight network’s “water highway.” This intricate system, operated and maintained by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), supports more than half a million jobs and delivers more than 600 million tons of cargo each year—about 14 percent of all domestic freight. Most locks and dams on the system are well beyond their 50-year design life, and delays are experienced by nearly half the vessels that pass through the system each day.
A nationwide network of 30,000 documented miles of levees protects communities, critical infrastructure, and valuable property, with levees in the USACE Levee Safety Program protecting over 300 colleges and universities, 30 professional sports venues, 100 breweries, and an estimated $1.3 trillion in property. In 2014 Congress passed the Water Resources Reform and Development Act, which expanded the levee safety program nationwide, but the program has not yet received any funding.

Today [the rail network] carries approximately one-third of U.S. exports and delivers five million tons of freight and approximately 85,000 passengers each day. U.S. rail still faces clear challenges, most notably in passenger rail, which faces the dual problems of aging infrastructure and insufficient funding.

More than two out of every five miles of America’s urban interstates are congested, and traffic delays cost the country $160 billion in wasted time and fuel in 2014. One out of every five miles of highway pavement is in poor condition, and our roads have a significant and increasing backlog of rehabilitation needs.

[Excerpted from the ASCE Report Card on America’s Infrastructure]
HISTORICAL ROW

LEITH JOHNSON
University Archivist

SPIT AND POLISH

Wesleyan student Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) trainees on Andrus field, 1917.
WESLEYAN AND WORLD WAR I

In 1914, The Great War—known later as World War I—broke out in Europe. As United States entry seemed imminent, the Wesleyan faculty approved the formation of a Reserve Officer Training Corps in December 1916. After the U.S. Congress declared war on Germany on April 6, 1917—100 years ago this year—375 students enrolled in military training. Wesleyan became a war campus.

Wesleyan joined with 525 other colleges and introduced the Student Army Training Corps (SATC) in September 1918. Created by the U.S. War Department, the SATC provided students with college and military education. Two hundred seventy students out of a student body of 409 were inducted. They were divided into different branches of service: infantry, artillery, and machine gun; aviation; quartermaster corps; chemical warfare service; and premedical. Courses included Military and Scientific German, Surveying and Map Drawing, War Issues, Hygiene and Sanitation, and Military Law, among others.

During the 19 months that America was at war, college life at Wesleyan “took on a belligerent aspect,” as Carl F. Price, Class of 1902, observed later. “Minor sports, dramas, dances, were dropped. The students were in army uniform, rose early in the morning to drill, were allowed no cuts from classes. A trench seamed part of the back of campus, and armed guards challenged all comers.” Dormitories became barracks. A mess hall that served 500 was built on Wyllys Avenue. During the fall of 1918, The Wesleyan Argus published only two issues, one at the beginning of the semester and one at the end. Wesleyan’s war commencements in 1917 and 1918 emphasized patriotism, but to smaller crowds. Many degrees were given in absentia.

Some 1,200 Wesleyan faculty, staff, students, and alumni provided military or civilian service. Lieut. Wilmer E. Herr, Class of 1915, became Wesleyan’s first casualty on April 8, 1918. In all, 26 students and alumni died.

With the signing of the armistice on November 11, 1918, it was over. Middletown held a huge celebration that night, with Wesleyan’s SATC unit marching second in the parade. The campus returned to its pre-war concerns. The ROTC vanished, barracks became dorms, the mess hall was demolished, the trench was filled in, and students danced again.
The Rooks, a Brooklyn-based band featuring Graham Richman ’11, Spencer Hattendorf ’12, and Garth Taylor ’12, rock the house at the Saturday night all-campus party under the Andrus Field tent.
KAREN DONFRIED ’84
Karen Donfried is president of The German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF), a nonprofit focused on strengthening transatlantic relations and headquartered in Washington, D.C., with seven offices across Europe. Before assuming this role in April 2014, she was special assistant to the President and senior director for European affairs on the National Security Council at the White House. Her government service spans positions in Congress and the Executive Branch, including the State Department and National Intelligence Council. She holds a master’s degree from the University of Munich and a PhD from the Fletcher School at Tufts University. She serves as a senior fellow at the Center for European Studies at Harvard and is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. A government and German double major at Wesleyan, she was elected to Phi Beta Kappa, received the Prentice Prize for excellence in German, and was a Keeney Scholar, earning her degree with high honors. She was named a Distinguished Alumna in 2014.

JOHN B. RHEA ’87
John Rhea is president, Corporate Finance and Capital Markets, of Siebert Cisneros Shank & Co., LLC, a full-service investment banking company founded in 1996. Previously, he was a senior advisor to The Boston Consulting Group and is a founder and managing partner of RHEAL Capital Management, LLC, a real estate development and investment firm based in New York. From 2009 to 2014, he was chairman and CEO of the New York City Housing Authority, appointed by Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg. Prior to that, he spent 15 years in the financial services industry. His current nonprofit affiliations include service as a director of Red Cross Greater New York, Rush Philanthropic Arts Foundation, and the University of Detroit Jesuit High School and Academy. Rhea was twice named to 100 Most Powerful People in New York Real Estate and 75 Most Powerful Blacks on Wall Street. A College of Social Studies major at Wesleyan, he earned his MBA from Harvard Business School.

SHANA SIMMONS ’03
Shana Simmons is a corporate counsel at Google Inc., where she manages a team that supports Google’s growing Cloud business. Previously, she was an associate at Cleary Gottlieb Steen and Hamilton LLP in its New York and London offices. She earned her law degree from University of California, Berkeley School of Law (Boalt Hall), where she served as the diversity editor of the California Law Review; development editor of the Berkeley Journal of African American Law & Policy; and co-president of the Law Students of African Descent. While in law school, she interned at the East Bay Community Law Center, focusing on projects to empower low-income communities of color. A College of Social Studies major and a Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellow at Wesleyan, she was an active contributor to the student of color community, serving in leadership positions with Ujamaa and the Student of Color Council, as well as coordinating the Student of Color Pre-Frosh Weekend. For her academic excellence and contributions to maintaining Wesleyan’s racial diversity, she was awarded the Vanguard Prize, established by black alumni.

FRANKLIN SIRMAN S ’91
Franklin Sirmans is the director of the Pérez Art Museum Miami (PAMM). Previously, he was the department head and curator of contemporary art at Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) from 2010 until fall 2015. There, he organized Noah Purifoy: Junk Dada. He also organized a number of other exhibitions and co-organized Human Nature: Contemporary Art from the Collection. From 2006 to 2010, he was curator of modern and contemporary Art at The Menil Collection in Houston, where he organized several exhibitions including NeoHooDoo: Art for a Forgotten Faith. He is the 2007 David C. Driskell Prize Winner and he was the artistic director of Prospect.3 New Orleans from 2012–2014. An English and art history major, Sirmans wrote his honors thesis on Jean-Michel Basquiat, working with Professor Peter Mark. Shortly after graduating, Sirmans’s thesis became the chronology for the 1992 Whitney Museum show and catalogue on the artist. He received a Distinguished Alumnus Award in 2016.

KIKI KENNEDY P’16, ’20
Kiki Kennedy is an assistant clinical professor of psychiatry at Yale University, where she leads an advocacy training initiative for the Department of Psychiatry and supervises psychiatry residents in psychotherapy for the Connecticut Mental Health Center and the Yale Long-Term Psychotherapy Clinic. She is also in private practice in New Haven, Conn. Her professional affiliations currently include membership on the Council on Advocacy and Government Relations for the American Psychiatric Association, membership on the Committee on Psychotherapy for the Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry, and service on the executive committee for the Austen Riggs Center, a nonprofit psychiatric hospital in Stockbridge, Mass. She holds a doctor of medicine degree from the University of Connecticut and a bachelor of science from Brown University. She also serves on the boards of several environmental and arts organizations in Connecticut. Volunteer service for Wesleyan includes speaking on a parent panel during WesFest 2015 and hosting a This is Why campaign event in Hyannis Port, Mass. She is the mother of Kiley ’16 and Teddy ’20.
1938

HELLO TO ALL fellow readers. Just wanted you to know that the graduates I check in from with the class of '38 are down to two now. I am sure there are other gentlemen out there, but I have exhausted my options for finding them. Please—if you have, or know of, any news from someone I have missed, please do not hesitate to pass it along. My address is at the bottom of this column.

The news to report comes from my conversations with Curtis Smith and Art Kingsbury's wife, Diane. First up, Curtis reports, for a person who is enjoying his 100th year, he's doing pretty darn well. While he is still putting up with congestive heart failure, he stays mobile and enjoys his outings with his son, Phil, whom you might remember lives nearby. Curtis has continued with his singing and it clearly brings him joy. He has found a "small in number, but strong in voice" group that lives in his community. This makes it very convenient to get together and do something he has truly loved for many years. He has been blessed with visits from both of his daughters, who live on the West Coast. In the last issue you might remember we mentioned his daughter, Susanna, was dealing with some health issues. Curtis is glad to say he is back at work. They have some strong genes in their family. While we did discuss politics, Curtis is very respectful to the Wesleyan magazine and asked that we keep things brief. Rev. Smith has taught me a thing or two over the years. These times are challenging for me politically, and he gently reminds me to keep up the fight for the good of all humankind, putting my energies towards making a positive difference in this world. Thank you, Curtis, for reminding me and all those who read these words.

Apologies again are in order since I didn't time it correctly to grab a moment reminding me and all those who read these words.

1947

REUNION YEAR

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1948

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1949

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1950

I RECEIVED THE following messages from Bill Spanos and Cliff Milner:

Bill writes, "I recently became a professor emeritus of SUNY-Binghamton because of health reasons, but I continue to produce what I think is urgently needed scholarship about the benighted age we live in."

Bill has published more than 20 books since graduating from Wesleyan. He writes, "For those who are not scholars in the humanities, I recommend my World War II memoir, In the Neighborhood of Zero (Nebraska University Press 2012), which tells the story of my witness as a prisoner of war in Nazi Germany to the Allied firebombing of Dresden, a memoir that might be usefully contrasted to my fellow regimental comrade Kurt Vonnegut's novel, Slaughterhouse Five."

He is now writing an autobiographical account of his "errant education" tentatively entitled Thrown: Searching in the Void for an Intellectual Vocation.

Cliff writes, "From the new world travel! Last fall I took a Viking Rhine and Danube River cruise and enjoyed it so much that next week I am going on a Prairie Home Companion cruise to Scotland and Norway. I'm a widower now (three
I'm hoping to dig up more news as the year rolls along. From Dianne. Sadly, Don passed away in December. Alzheimer's, but continued to live at his home in Fayetteville, Ga, across the street he continued to do some writing.

He had continued his writing of science texts right to the end. Howard Goodrich wrote that the Goodrich clan had moved to the Indianapolis area. Howard and his wife, Darlene, had moved there from St. Louis. Howard wrote that they're still involved in the ministry, as is their youngest daughter, and he continued to do some writing.

Les Areh, who was at our 65th Reunion, is another hearty survivor. When Don Sharp's daughter, Dianne, wrote, Don was in an advanced stage of Alzheimer's, but continued to live at his home in Fayetteville, Ga, across the street from Dianne. Sadly, Don passed away in December.

I'm hoping to dig up more news as the year rolls along.

Our 65th Reunion has come and gone, as have the 65 years since our graduation in 1952! Our commencement program listed 162 graduates in our class. The college's current listing of our class numbers 90 survivors for whom there is good contact information. There were eight of us present for our class banquet, the highlight of Reunion. The years have taken a toll!

This was the first of our Reunions in memory without our esteemed Master of Ceremonies, the late Charlie "Rogo" Rogovin. No one could ever take his place as MC and no one tried on this occasion.

Present at the banquet were Joe Friedman and his wife, Barbara, of NYC. Attending their own 35th Reunion were their daughter and son-in-law, Ellen '82 and Sam Bender '82, and two granddaughters. Joe is still fully engaged in the real estate title insurance business, serving as EVP and chief underwriting counsel of Regal Title. This was the first Reunion for Dwight Herrmann and his wife, Leslye, of Lemoyne, Pa. They are parents of Leslye Ash '85 and Jane '90. Dwight is a retired consultant with the Pennsylvania Bureau of Public Works. Ralph Moody and his wife, Lydia, came all the way from their home in Palm Harbor, Fla. Ralph is a retired lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Marine Corps, in which he spent his career. Bob Porter of Canton, Conn., attended with his daughter, Sarah Porter '86, and grandson. His wife, Connie, suffers from Lewy body disease and was not able to attend. Bob is retired from the Travelers. This was a special weekend for Al Ward. His daughter, Carolyn, attended our banquet. His granddaughter, Hyunji Ward '17, graduated that weekend. Al's daughter, Kathryn Ward Koch '81, and grandson, Hyunwoo Ward '20, were also on campus. Al resides in Lewes, Del., and, unfortunately, is a widower. He is a former Wesleyan trustee and is a retired partner of BakerHostetler, a leading international law firm.

Our class president, Bill Wasch, another former trustee and a recipient of Wesleyan's highest alumni honor, the Baldwin Medal, was there in force with his children, Christina and Fred '92, and two grandchildren. His late wife, Susie, never missed a Reunion and will always be an honorary member of our class. Bill is challenged with Parkinson's, but with the help of a superb support team, continues to carry on an active life. John Wood, his wife, Pat, and granddaughter, Megan, were there from Indianapolis. John has had a long and successful career practicing law, most recently with the Indiana Department of Child Services.

Jerry Bobbitt, a retired physician now living in Naples, Fla., had planned to attend, but was forced to cancel due to some medical issues. Tom Collins and Mary Ellen, of East Hartford, Conn., had also signed up, but could not attend at the last moment. Believe it or not, Tom, who is now 94 and older than all of us, practiced law actively in the Hartford area right up to the end of 2016. Your scribe and his wife, Joyce, attended and led the singing at the banquet with gusto. We live at Seabury Retirement Community in nearby Bloomfield, Conn.
It is with enormous regret that I report the death of John Jakobson on Apr. 7, 2017, in NYC. An Eclectic, John played tennis and squash at Wesleyan and graduated with honors and distinction. After Harvard Business School, he purchased a seat on the New York Stock Exchange and pursued a career as a personal investor. He served Wesleyan for years as a trustee and was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Laws degree. Among his immediate survivors is his son, Nicholas Jakobson ’05.

I am also sad to write of the death of Bruce Munro on Feb. 2, 2017. Bruce was an Alpha Delt and, as a pre-med, could usually be found in the labs. He went on to Emory Medical School, became an obstetrician-gynecologist and practiced for over 40 years in New Jersey. Of Scottish descent, Bruce was active for many years in all things Scottish.

We extend our deepest sympathy to all of John’s and Bruce’s families and loved ones on their great loss, in which we, too, share in our own way.

I have heard from Dick Kellom and Walter Grunsteidl, the latter a German Fulbright Scholar who was with us for only our senior year. Unfortunately, I have reached the 800-word limit imposed on class notes so cannot report further on them.

Finally, a significant highlight of the Reunion for me personally was the agreement of Joe Friedman to succeed us as scribe of these class notes. It has been a pleasure for me to stay in touch with so many of you while fulfilling this position and I look forward to the new insights that Joe will bring to our class notes.

WITH CONDOLENCES TO the families, the deaths of John R. Parsons, 85, Jan. 27, 2017, and John P. Gorsuch, 85, Feb. 15, 2017, are reported. John Parsons, of Worcester, psychologist major and president of Sigma Nu, served in the Army, and was employed by Connecticut General Life and as a consultant before founding Parsons, McKee & Co. in 1976. John was northeast Ohio’s go-to expert for pension plans. He was active in the school system and the library as a resident of Avon Lake. He is survived by his wife, Joyce, four children, 12 grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren.

John “Jack” Gorsuch, of Denver, Beta Theta Pi and history major, went on to Yale Divinity School and was ordained an Episcopal priest in 1956. He served churches in Washington, D.C., Great Bend, Kan., and Yakima, Wash. In 1985, he founded the Center for Spiritual Development in Seattle. Retiring in 1992 as executive director, he continued practicing in the Northwest. He moved to Milwaukee in 2014 to be closer to family. Jack passed away shortly after learning that his nephew, Neil Gorsuch, was a Supreme Court nominee. He is survived by his wife, two daughters, and three grandchildren.

As for me, before driving to our New York farm for the summer, I will attend the installation on June 9 of my daughter-in-law, Mother Tracy, as priest of the Episcopal Church of St. John, Apros, Calif. My son assists with the driving from Oklahoma to New York.

In less than a year, our 65th Reunion will offer an opportunity to return to campus and renew friendships. During the winter send me a note of your thoughts about Reunion.

1953

1954

HELLO, ’54 CLASSMATES. Many thanks for prompt responses from eight of you...Here’s what you told me: Terry Hatter denies being 85 (yet!). He and bride Trudy are recently back from a wonderful European trip, having visited their son, Scott ’92, and “putative daughter-in-law” in Postiano, Italy, followed by Belfast to visit oldest granddaughter, who is getting a master’s in conflict resolution there before starting Penn Law School in August. The Hatters wrapped up their trip with a visit to Edinburgh, prior to heading home.

Terry said they attended a very special memorial service for our beloved classmate, Bill Christopher, in Pasadena. “Many of Bill’s cast and crew from M.A.S.H. came from across the country to show their love and respect for this fine man.”

Bud Johnson and Lynn are well into high school and college graduations. This year it was two high-schoolers, the gal off to Colgate, the boy to Notre Dame.

Next year: Wake Forest and Georgetown.

Jeff Lockhart and Donna are blessed to have one daughter and son-in-law—the Reverend and Mrs. Jon Robbins—living near them in Vero Beach, Fla., where Pastor Robbins is building St. Paul’s, a new Anglican church, a block from the beach! It will be finished in September, and we’re all invited to the dedication ceremony!

Sad news, guys. Carol Ann writes that Dick McCray “left this world on Feb. 24, 2017, with me by his side in our home in Massachusetts.” Dick was buried on Apr. 28 (their 27th wedding anniversary, and Dick’s high school football number) in Chester, Pa., his birthplace. There was a memorial service for Dick at St. Luke’s Hospital in NYC in late May. He had spent 40 years practicing and teaching there.

Bob Schnuer and Vickie migrated back to NYC on May 10 after a “wonderful Florida winter in Boca Raton,” which included a private Wesleyan gathering at a Miami art museum managed by a “spirited” graduate, including a breakfast with President Michael Roth ’78. Bob and Vickie will be back in Boca in late October. Don’t hesitate to call if you’re in the area (917/862-5141).

Lenny Stolba married off his equine veterinarian daughter in March. Len’s “boast/roast/toast” was well received.

Ann reports she and hubby Bruce Storms are well and happy, having especially enjoyed their swan-song-cruise last December—a “wonderful part” of their lives. The Storms’ daughter, Katy Storms Denman ’89, has three teenage sons, one an Eagle Scout. Bruce and Ann recently saw Win Richmond, who is looking forward to summer in his Rhode Island home.

Dr. Jim Yashar and bride have spent the winter in Palm Beach over the past 10 years. Jim is in good health and thus is able to take advantage of much Palm Beach offers. They traveled to Morocco this year to experience a totally different culture. Their grandson is off to Emory College in the fall, and granddaughter will be a senior at Penn. The Yashars will be spending the summer in Boston, except for a trip to Italy in July.

Finally, your scribe, Bob Carey, and bride Libby (Callaway) again enjoyed Sanibel Island, Fla., in January and February, then traveled to Jonesboro, Ark., in mid-May for a granddaughter’s high school graduation (off to University of North Carolina at Asheville), then to Charleston in early June for a Callaway family reunion, and finally to San Diego in mid-June for two grandkids’ graduations and an 85th birthday bash for Bob.

That’s it, guys. Please don’t hesitate to e-mail me any time with developments. My new e-mail is popsicarey@gmail.com. All the best to all of you.

1955

ALWAYS A JOY to receive words from classmates in response to requests for updates for our class notes. Once again, I do want all of you to know how much I appreciate being able to share words that you submit. It does make the task of serving as your class secretary an enjoyable one even after more than 50 years of the assignment.

Stuart Rapp sent word of the death of Charlie Hume, who passed away in March. His late spouse, Patricia Johnson Hume, predeceased him by several months and a celebration of life was held in April for them both in Saugus, Mass., in the church Charlie served in the early days of his career-long ministry in the United Church of Christ. Stuart and Charlie were fraternity brothers in Delta Tau Delta and roomed together for three years. Bob Pooley joined them as a roommate for two of those years. Both were active competitors on the swim team. Charlie was well known as the “classic bass voice in our then-famous Wes male quartet, the Jibers.” As Stuart concluded in his notes, “He has passed, as they say, but he is far from forgotten.”

A short e-mail from Jim Shepard, our world-class traveler, mentioned his great Alaskan trip last year, but to my surprise, he indicated he has nothing in the works for an adventure this year. I’m willing to bet I’ll receive several paragraphs detailing the highlights of his 2017 travels before the year’s end, and if so, you can bet I’ll share them with you. When not on the road or planning where to visit next, Jim continues with his work as a medical expert witness, enjoying family life, and time on the golf course.

John Ineson wrote of the difficult adjustments that must be made when a loving spouse’s worsening dementia makes it necessary to move her into a special care unit dedicated to caring for those with Alzheimer’s and dementia. In 2013, Lori and John moved to Williamsburg, Va., into a continuing care retirement community after he
retired in 1994. He said that he is “now adjusting to living alone. Not easy after 59 years.” John, our thoughts are with you!

Freshman roommate Drew Clemens sent thanks for continuing to serve our dwindling class. His wife, Julie, has been class secretary for many years for her class of 1952 at Northfield Mount Hermon School, from which my younger daughter also graduated. He mentioned that he knows it’s a lot of work, but much appreciated by her cohorts, “as are your reports to us.” A Rhine River boat trip from Amsterdam to Basel is planned for October. He still does some teaching in Case Western Reserve University’s University Hospitals psychiatric residency and in the Cleveland Psychoanalytic Institute, and serves on the boards of the American Psychoanalytic Association and the American College of Psychoanalysts, the latter in which he is completing a tour as president. Both Julie and Drew continue to sing in Choral Arts Cleveland, a 47-year-old classical choir that they helped found. Drew mentioned that they go butterfly counting and tagging, and enjoy their cottage on Lake Chautauqua, N.Y. They’re in the process of “disgorging” their accumulated stuff over 54 years to move to an apartment in a nearby retirement village. Drew sends “greetings to all our surviving classmates, and a moment of sad reflection on those who have left us.”

All remains well with Marianne and me here in “paradise.” We’re planning a trip to Nebraska in August to meet newly expected family members, as two of Marianne’s nieces are scheduled to give birth in July. Despite a lot of rain and wind this year, I have been able to log 2,357 miles on the bike to date (6/17), including an 84-mile birthday ride with two younger members (75 and 77) of our bike club in April. And yes, we did the entire ride in one day! Still look forward to the rides and the social time spent with my cycling friends.

As always, may good health and happiness be with you and your loved ones throughout the year.

DONALD J. BRAVERMAN
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1956

THERE’S A HOARY joke about two old guys at a reunion. First guy spins a long, convoluted tale about his horrendous near disaster. Wide-eyed, the other guy asks, “Did you live?” First guy responds, “You ought to see me now!”

Last December, I had an aortic valve replaced, but, thanks to the evolving wonders of modern medicine, I went into the hospital on a Tuesday, came home on Thursday, and started cardiac rehab the following Monday.

Barry Passett asked, “George, what in the world are you doing with heart disease?” Darned if I know, but I’m pretty well back to what’s normal for me, thank you.

Walt Ebmeyer chipped in: “I had a similar heart problem in 2002: aortic aneurism pulling the valve apart. But in those days they opened the chest, put a nylon sleeve on the aorta and a titanium valve above that. Three weeks in the hospital! Things have changed for the better. Moved a year ago to a building for ‘active seniors’ in Silver Spring, Md. Dave Frickie’s grandson is in my granddaughter’s sixth-grade class. Is there a Washington Wesleyan club I could join?”

Back to business. Jay Kaplan writes: “I have been devoting most of my time to four activities: 1. The Cosmos Club (cosmosclub.org); 2. The Explorers Club (explorers.org); 3. The National Gallery of Art, where we are members of their Circle; 4. So You Want to Be an International Lawyer? (A book I have written which is now being edited and hopefully will soon be published)

“Both my wife, Ann, and I still enjoy good health. I retired from the practice of international law and have cut back on my exploration. In the past we climbed live mountains in Morocco.

“We placed an Explorer’s Club flag and white roses on the grave of John Glenn on the day of his funeral in Arlington National Cemetery. He was honorary chair of the Explorers Club and a member of our chapter, of which I have been president.”

This from Dick Bauer: “Dave J. Cox visited Ginny and me. He’s talked over 100 countries visited by this point, and still counting. Most recent discussion topic for my Linden Ponderers seminar: ‘Does religion make us better, or nastier?’ No one fell asleep; but there was no blood on the floor either. Still truckin’, albeit a bit slower.”

In brief: Dick Boyd: “Nothing really here to report from Marshpee on Cape Cod. Doctors’ visits, grandkids, and gratitude.” Bob Calvin: “We are leaving for a few days to visit friends in Wisconsin.” Dave Frickie: “Beryl and I are doing well here in Silver Spring, Md. Classmates and friends are welcome to visit.”

New digs: Dick Smith: “I retired for the third time after 22 years at The Jackson Laboratory in Bar Harbor, Maine, where I had been doing eye research with mouse models. Linda and I downsized, so we moved to a smaller home in Orland, Maine.

Did you know that many alumni also fund charitable gift annuities, a gift that provides an immediate charitable tax deduction and pays them income for life? And some establish multiple annuities, creating more income for themselves and a greater gift to Wesleyan. A life income gift for Wesleyan is mutually beneficial.

A charitable gift annuity (CGA) is a simple contract between you and Wesleyan. In exchange for your irrevocable gift of cash or appreciated securities, Wesleyan agrees to pay a fixed sum to one or two people each year, for life. Funding a CGA with appreciated assets may also provide additional tax advantages.

If you’d like to talk about whether an estate or a life income gift would be a good fit for you, we invite you to contact us!

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plannedgiving@wesleyan.edu
860/685-5775

Four of our grandkids live nearby.”

Also Peter Gardiner: “Last year, after losing my wife, Jean, to pancreatic cancer, I moved back to Florida from Michigan. I’m in Port St. Lucie on the Treasure Coast. (Move coincided, so had to miss Reunion)"

And, of course, here’s Bob Runyon: “Sheila and I are happily ensconced in our new apartment. It was the unique ordeal of downsizing from a large house in which we had been accumulating stuff for 36 years. A welcoming treat was watching a Canada geese couple in the pond just below our apartment window. The two birds seemed inseparable, always so close and attentive to one another. Then for several weeks, there was only one. Sheila said that the female must be away giving birth to her offspring. Just yesterday, she called me to watch the activity on the pond. There below our window was the happy couple with...
five little goslings paddling close behind. The lifelong bonding habits of Canada geese are one of nature's wonders.

“When people ask about our future journeys, I tell them about our latest long trip—house to apartment in six months: two miles’ distance, still in the same zip code! The next real trip will be to Charlotte, N.C., in September, where Sheila will be conducting official conference duties for her Omaha chapter of P.E.O.”

Bob is stepping down from his role as class co-secretary. Over the past several years it’s been our good fortune and pleasure to have him as a partner—always helpful, full of good ideas, and devoted to Wesleyan and the Class of 1956. Thanks, Bob.

Gordon Rogers informed me of the death of his father, G. Ford Rogers III (Ford was a member of our freshman class, but transferred the following year), writing: “Dad died after being bedridden for almost nine years. We had a memorial service for Dad on May 7, 2017. My mother preceded my father in death 25 years ago. I was Dad’s full-time caregiver the last nine years after he became incapacitated.”

“Dad told me some stories of his time at Wesleyan. He loved to laugh and share stories at times. I think laughing helped him hang on all those years. God answered our prayers and gave him more time after he almost died that first time in 2008, just two weeks after my Grandma had passed.”

“Our travel business, Anchored Eagle Travel, helped us stay afloat as a supplement to his Social Security. I was able to work on that from home while taking care of him. Originally, he was going to do all the bookkeeping for our business and I would work with the clients booking travel. Dad was a great bookkeeper. He retired in 2000 as the docket manager of a major law firm in Chicago and he needed all his attention to detail and skills there.”

GEORGE CHIEN

1957

REUNION YEAR

LATE MAY OUR class celebrated a Reunion on campus—the 60th for those who are still keeping statistics. The weather was more or less cooperative, especially for the Saturday programs; sun broke through and the campus was in its best-dressed mode.

1957 turned out at some 33-strong, comprising classmates and guests. The roll-call of Wesmen is as follows: Paul Schweber, Jack Braimtayer, Bill Riess, Herb Camp, Hal Ochsner, Gordy Wilmot, Bob Smith, John Allison, Bob Sharlet, Art Typermass, Whitie Johnson, Rusty Cloves, George Willauer, Rod Henry, Jim LaCrosse, Mike Stein, Ken Travis, and Jeff Williamson. Math majors will note this list as being in random order and English majors please excuse the usage of any additional nicknames; should I be in error, please correct me.

Jeff Williamson’s WESeminar on American income inequality was standing-room only in a large Fisk Hall classroom. He was introduced by Richie Adelstein, economics professor. The subject matter covered income inequality that predates the founding of the Republic to contemporary times. His book is titled Unequal Gains: American Growth and Inequality Since 1700 (Princeton, 2016; with Peter Lindert).

Copies available at the campus bookstore sold out quickly. Jeff received Wesleyan’s Distinguished Alumni Award in 1987 and served on the Board of Trustees from 1988-1994. Along the way, he authored some 22 books, of which the aforementioned is the most recent.

At our Saturday night dinner, our guest speaker Mark Hovey, associate provost and professor of mathematics, provided a sense of what it is like to teach at Wesleyan today. He emphasized that faculty are encouraged to combine teaching and research that is unique among smaller liberal arts colleges. Accordingly, Wes students have exceptional opportunities to engage in primary research with their professors. The interaction results in positive experiences on both sides of the desk. Mark cited as an example his own daughter, having transferred from Brown because she felt there would be better opportunities to collaborate with faculty.

Professor Hovey was introduced by our dauntless emcee, Whitey Johnson, who conveyed greetings from retired Professor Bob Rosenbaum, who has recently turned 101!

I know I speak for 1957 in expressing gratitude for the tireless efforts of Mark Davis ’96 and Jenna Starr ’15 in developing and bringing about the events comprising our 60th Reunion, not the least of which was working with our own Reunion committee on the planning phase thereof.

Jim LaCrosse mentions that granddaughter Tha LaCrosse ’21, daughter of John LaCrosse ’85, is in this year’s entering class. Pride in continuing generations at Wes.

Mike Stein reports that on the Saturday afternoon of Reunion weekend he and fellow Deke brothers, Rusty Cloves and Bob Sharlet, attended a meeting and rally (organized by Bill Daley) aimed at re-opening the house. He said there were nearly 100 alumni, undergrads, and guests in the house living room, all in high spirits.

Allen Fitz-Gerald continues to refine his play, Prisoners of Hope. The play is being tried out at college venues including SUNY Potsdam, as well as associated education conferences. It was summarized at The SUNY program as “Mother and son vs. father and daughter….with billions at stake. The climate crisis hits home.” Allen extends appreciation to Paul Schweber for his advice along the way.

I picked up some commentary to the effect that the class is moving inexorably toward the front of the parade as our Reunions progress. I recall as an undergrad looking on at that parade tradition, and wondering “Who are those guys?”—much like Butch and Sundance asked as they were pursued throughout the West. Well, in Middletown it is those who march proudly around the banner.

I GUESS WE are quite content in our golden years. We have fewer responses to my Lyris plea. Is that good news?

Dick Goldman had much to report. He and Patty had just returned from Florida, and the Massachusetts weather in early April was not conducive to golf or tennis. He congratulates me on my election to the Wes Baseball Wall of Fame. He received a long e-mail from John Watson. John hopes to make our 60th Reunion in 2018. Dick is on a quest, and I believe a valid one, to establish a group of Wes grads who are lawyers in Boston who will meet and
look for opportunities to refer business to each other. Any in the class who are lawyers in Boston or know interested people, contact Dick.

John Spurde: "It doesn’t matter how slowly you go, as long as you do not stop. —Confucius."

Bing Leverich responded, "Never look back. Something may be gaining on you." —S. Paige.

To which Tom McHugh said, "Never make predictions, especially about the future." —C. Stengel. "You have got to be very careful if you don’t know where you are going because you might not get there." —Yogi Berra.

And the finale from Joe Mallory, citing a cartoon of doctor and aging patient, "Stop telling me I’ll live to be 80 years old. I am 80 years old!"

Wolfraam Thiemann, a German foreign scholar, responded to his birthday postcard saying, "Wow! Thank you, guys. I was struck flat completely." He’s still busy in environmental research and astrobiology and said that fellow scholar Uri Kogelschatz, passed away in 2016. He also remembered fellow physicist Paul Boynton 61, who visited Wolfram in Germany with his grandsons three years ago.

Marty Weil, night editor of The Washington Post, has discovered the power of Twitter. "I am a couple of months beyond my first year of Twitter. I would like to call on the school’s wisdom and tech knowhow to see how we can reach the greatest number of alumni, family, and friends. Anyone missing out on this edifying opportunity, because they are tragically unaware of it, is missing an awesome tool."

Hugh Lifson just returned from the Badlands where he did a series of watercolor paintings and sepia drawings.

Skip found classmate Richard Moores in Bellevue, Wash., via the birthday card effort. Class secretaries do not sleep either!

David Britt updated his record: "Pulse: (pause)—yes. Mouth: still running. Hearing: when convenient. Hair: vaguely remembered. Health: executive summary—very good, considering details available at yawn, zzz. Mental health: fine, except for the constant witch-hunts and conspiracies against me. Aging: I hope to continue to do so a while longer. Pace: each year it takes longer and longer to do less and less and I’m almost at the point of doing nothing full-time."

He and wife Sue have moved to Chapel Hill, N.C., for summers, and stay on Amelia Island for winter. European trips in the works, "geezers" regularly, and he chairs the Education Trust in D.C.

Elaine O’Neill sent word of Peter’s death. Our thoughts are with her. Olin Associates have more fun! Please join and enjoy it!

And finally, the last word from Satchel Paige: "Age is a matter of mind over matter. If you don’t mind, it doesn’t matter."

■ SKIP SILLOWAY silloway@gmail.com 801/532-4311
■ JOHN SPURDE jspurde@aol.com 212/644-4858

1960

I WAS DEEPLY saddened to learn that Charlie Smith passed away in May after a long illness. Charlie was our class agent for many years, and we are indebted to him for his tireless efforts on our behalf. We will miss his kindness, unfailing optimism, humor, and deep engagement with the world. He was a sociologist who specialized in social theory and economic sociology. He held several professional institutional roles, including faculty member (Queens College and The Graduate Center, CUNY), long-term editor of the Journal for the Theory of Social Behavior, department chair of sociology, and dean of social sciences (Queens College). He was also active in his synagogue. He is survived by Rita, his wife for 53 years, daughter Abigail 92, son Jonathan 94, four grandchildren, two sisters, and a brother. Before his passing, Charlie was informed that our class scholarship had been renamed the Charles W. Smith Class of 1960 Scholarship Fund in his honor.

The passing of Dick Huddleston in January was a significant loss to our university community. He was class secretary and agent, and a director of development at Wesleyan. The following appears in the published obituary: "Dick dedicated his life to his family and supporting nonprofit institutions which provide educational opportunities for youth and adults. His love of his children and grandchildren was..."
expressed by his playful character and ability to think ‘outside the box.’ He successfully shared these gifts in his career helping children and adults all over the world. A passion for travel and exploration of different countries and cultures was a constant theme in his life, motivating him to study six foreign languages, live abroad, become an airplane pilot, and learn to cook excellent Italian food.” He is survived by Lindsey, his wife for 56 years, children Kathy and Michael ’90, four grandchildren, one brother, and one sister. The Richard H. Huddleston ’60 P’90 Wesleyan Scholarship has been established in his honor.

In June family and friends held a luncheon to celebrate the lives of Dick and Charlie Smith and to dedicate the Huddleston Lounge in Downey House and the adjacent Smith Patio so that they would be forever memorialized on the campus they loved so much. It’s only fitting that these two close friends and extraordinary Wesleyan fundraisers were honored together.

Rick Garcia is president of the National Academy of Economic Sciences of Bolivia. In May, he appointed internationally known Dr. Francis J. Ayala as honorary fellow because of his extraordinary contributions to a better understanding of the human species and the capacities of planet Earth. The people in charge want expansion to go on indefinitely, but the size and resources available on this finite spheroid are limited. Setting aside a few nature preserves will not mitigate the consequences of unceasing growth, whatever they may be. It’s difficult-to-impossible to predict exactly what will happen, but it probably will be global catastrophe.”

From Bob Hausman.

editor of their newsletter; the layout man is Burr Taylor ’61. I also enjoy my friendship with another Russian historian, Phil Pomper, recently retired from the Wesleyan faculty, and my barbershop singing with the Uncalled Four.”

Alan Wulf wrote in: “I had a great reunion with Dave Boesel. Dave is involved in many things, most notably fervent, active work in the political arena. Dave is a black-belt martial arts expert and was elected president of the American Ju-Jitsu Association.” Alan visited Wesleyan in May and had dinner with Bing Leverich ’59.

I am happy to report that I am now back home. It is a blessing that the left ischium of my pelvis has healed well. I was at Mt. Baker Care Center from Jan. 1 through Mar. 4, where they prepared me with physical and occupational therapy for reentry into my normal surroundings. It was good to resume driving and restart activities such as yoga, contra dancing, and hiking. In addition, I visited the Wesleyan campus with my niece Liz in April and was impressed with the activities taking place on Science Saturday.

SAL RUSSO: salandjudy@hotmail.com
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1961

THE TIMING WAS perfect for Joe Miller, who wrote: “You hit me on my 78th birthday, and I’m feeling frisky enough to pitch in this time around. Three years retired from teaching African history at the University of Virginia and finding the ‘sweet spot’ of this stage, I’m now at my own pace. What the youngsters out there bring to the encounter is energy and imagination, and what I have to offer at this point is experience. They write the books and I try to help them make the most of all that good work. My oldest daughter, a Mayan archaeologist, has a freelance career in tourism and horses in Yucatan, and my youngest son is in 11th grade at our local friends school. We have no plans to abandon our hilltop here in Charlottesville with the view of the Blue Ridge. For years the D.C.-area Green Scum (Alpha Delts to the uninitiated)—Dickson, Bloomfield, Wagner, and I, plus one or two from ’62—got together regularly, but we haven’t been so good about it lately.”

This was a cute response from Howie Morgan: Singing as we travel and reach! Residence now in Vero Beach. Keeping a place in Deer Isle, Maine But Home is still in dear old Wayne! Trying to keep those lbs from the door, Hope old Wes has their feet on the floor! Ain’t life grand?

From Larry Krucoff: “After leaving Wesleyan, I ended up in Chicago, where Carole and I got hitched. I worked my way through graduate school in anthropology, and went into marketing research. In 1971, I started my own firm and ran it until retirement in 2015. Carole worked in museum education, becoming head of education at the Oriental Institute Museum at the University of Chicago. Now retired, she continues her museum associations by being a docent at the Art Institute of Chicago. While I was working, I tried to develop retirement skills. These developed into golf, baking, cooking, writing, play readings, and traveling with Carole.”

Dan Elliott is in assisted living in Cleveland with “a swimming pool and a work-out room with beautiful physical therapists who work me out. My Wesleyan daughter is in Cambridge, doing criminal justice projects. My youngest is married, employed as an athletic trainer, part-time with the Brooklyn Nets and with Long Island University. My son, Dan, participates on the Surface Transportation Board in Washington, D.C., and is married to an electrical engineer, with two stepsons. My son, Tim, does computer installation projects and lives here in Cleveland.”

Pete Drayer and wife Sandy are still in a retirement home. He is a senior judge until the end of this year.

Paul Dickson’s latest book, Leo Durocher: Baseball’s Prodigal Son, was published in March by Bloomsbury Press. He is working on a book tentatively titled The Rise of the Fishbowl Army, which is about the 1940 peacetime draft and the creation of a modern army in the days before Pearl Harbor.

Al Williams and Ed Knox get together regularly with Wendy and Huguette-Laure. “Being in D.C., health issues and grandchildren must now vie with politics as topics of conversation.” They are interested in catching up with other alumni.

From Foster Morrison: “There is a serious mismatch between the goals of the human species and the capacities of planet Earth. The people in charge want exponential growth to go on indefinitely, but the size and resources available on this finite spheroid are limited. Setting aside a few nature preserves will not mitigate the consequences of unceasing growth, whatever they may be. It’s difficult-to-impossible to predict exactly what will happen, but it probably will be global catastrophe.”

From Bob Hausman.

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Unlike am I to be found
In the Wesleyan annals of renown,
Yet I do try the fates to confound,
By remaining at best above ground.

Hausman has two sons and seven grandchildren. He went to St. Paul, Minn., in 1977 to teach at Lutheran Seminary and has been there ever since. “Between my children and grandchildren,” he writes, “we have made our mark at Carleton College, Macalester College, Hamline University, St. Thomas University, and the University of Minnesota. Unfortunately, I have been unable to persuade any of them to matriculate at Wesleyan. There are still two more grandchildren in the public schools and one in the womb, so who knows?”

John Rogers reports living at the Del Webb Sun City Community in Indian Land, S.C. “Great retirement area with golf course, two community centers, walking trails, and three pools. I retired from financial services in 2015, after 46 years, and am enjoying time with five children and 14 grandkids in Maryland, New Jersey, and Kentucky. We have traveled to Alaska, Iceland, Norway, France, Nova Scotia, Michigan, Wisconsin, Texas, and many national parks.”

Glenn Hawkes’ son, Jesse, is an actor and human rights activist living in NYC. They came to Middletown in April to attend the Samuel and Dorothy Frankel Memorial Lecture delivered by a Wesleyan alumna. Both enjoyed an afternoon coffee with Emil Frankel, who had just driven over from UCConn, where he had a speaking engagement. Glenn reports: “Much of our conversation centered on ‘3rd floor Clark’ our sophomore year—Bob Hausman, Swede Wilson, Ernie Hildner, Jack Woodbury, Jack Mitchell, and Russell Mott.”

2016

REUNION YEAR

A THEME TO not only our own 55th Reunion, but the entire Reunion and Commencement Weekend, was a tribute to the indomitable, friendly spirit of Gina and John Driscoll, who received the Raymond E. Baldwin Medal, Wesleyan’s highest alumni award, for their years of extraordinary service to Wesleyan.

Tributes from Wesleyan officials and members of all classes showed the love and appreciation for John and Gina beyond just our class. They received a long standing ovation when the alumni association president praised them at the Saturday Wesleyan Assembly. At our post-assembly lunch, President Michael Roth ’78 thanked them for their service. At our class dinner Saturday night, former president Colin Campbell, our honored guest, spoke eloquently about their dedication to the entire university community. And the Douglas Cannon made its first appearance in 10 years in John’s honor (more about that later)!

Twenty-three members of our class joined the festivities. On Friday afternoon, Robin Cook [see page 79] participated in a WESeminar, “A Conversation with Wesleyan Writers,” and many class members were invited to the president’s reception honoring leadership donors and volunteers. Our initial class event—the 55th Reunion Reception—was then convened at the Patricelli ’92 Theater.

Saturday morning, we gathered for coffee at Boger Hall for a wide-ranging conversation, led by Bruce Corwin, class president, on members’ own lives, and reflections on the impact of the Wesleyan experience. Following the traditional Parade of Classes and Alumni Association meeting, we joined Reunion classes from 1940 through 1966 at a catered luncheon.

Our class dinner was held in the atrium of the Gordon Career Center. One of the highlights was the awarding of Wesleyan University Service Awards to Phil Calhoun and Jim Gately. Phil was honored for his service in the Admission Office, as acting secretary of the university, as an assistant to President Campbell, and as “an enabling founder, benefactor, and head coach of the first Cardinal crew team.” Jim was honored for being “an active force” in our class in organizing Reunions, encouraging support for the Class of ’62 Scholarship fund and the Freeman Driscoll International Scholarship, and hosting Wesleyan events in Philadelphia. We shared a moment of silence after the names of 35 deceased class members were read aloud. Bruce closed the dinner by urging everyone to start thinking about making our 60th Reunion another success.

Thanks to the members of the class who participated in Reunion Committee phone calls to plan the events: Robin Berrington, Phil Calhoun, Bruce Corwin, Dick Dranitske, John Driscoll, Dick Dubanoski, David Fiske, Jim Gately, Dave Hedges, Bob Hunter, Bob Kragman, Gene Peckham, and Rick Tuttle.

Oh, yes. The Douglas Cannon. Early arrivals to the Saturday night dinner were treated to the sight of the Douglas Cannon sitting on the reception desk. Wesleyan photographers were on hand to take a picture of John Driscoll with the cannon, and shortly afterwards, officials took it away. You may recall that during our college years, the Cannon had been stolen in November 1959 and then recovered and remounted in April 1961. After many subsequent removals and reappearances since that time (Wikipedia has a good history, if you’re interested), it was last seen briefly at a 2007 Inauguration reception for President Roth.

There has been speculation that the Cannon is actually in University hands. Hmm. When the cannon arrived, there were over a half-dozen university photographers, public relations officials, and security personnel on hand. After the brief photo-op with John, the Cannon was quickly covered and whisked away—with the efficiency of a U.S. Secret Service operation—into a waiting Wesleyan security van. Hmm. The Wikipedia article was updated by the next day to refer to the Cannon’s “reappearance at the Class of ’62 Reunion dinner.”

At the Saturday morning session, Bruce expressed regret that our class agent, Phil Putnam, was unable to make the trip from his home in Essex due to a longstanding illness. Phil subsequently said to me by telephone that he was undergoing treatment that he hoped would lead to PT and then being able to get around with a cane. Sadly, instead Phil took a turn for the worse. At the end of June, he passed away in the Middlesex Hospital Hospice unit. Phil had a great spirit, and served our class well. He will be missed.


Charles Seibert invites classmates to read an essay he published describing “a cautionary tale” of the 1960s as a result of his political activity in the civil rights and anti-Vietnam war movement (dailyburn.com/2017/02/28/ghost-senator-joe-mccarthy-haunts-philosophy-graduate-student-guest-post).

Steve Trot has become involved with the Boise Philharmonic Association, which he says is “a long way from ‘Michael.’” He chaired the committee selecting the conductor/music director and was in charge of programming the past two seasons. He writes, “My sophomore class in Music Appreciation at Wesleyan with a professor whose name I can no longer spell—Alex S.—got me started, for which I am very grateful.”

2013

BILL ROBERTS SCOUTED out the class of ’62’s Reunion in preparation for our 55th, over next Memorial Day Weekend. He said it was both interesting, with good class presentations/speakers, and fun. He talked with the ’62 organizers and alumni office co-planners. We are looking for eager volunteers to assist in planning and welcome ideas for activities. And it is not too early to save the date.

Fritz Henn wrote: “I am still reordering my life following the death of my wife, Suella, nearly two years ago. We were married 51 years. I have started a final clinical study on a new target we discovered, which appears to play a major role in depression. We are using deep brain stimulation in intractable cases of depression with some, but not uniform, positive results. Nonetheless I decided to turn the study over to a group at Baylor and have retired from Mt. Sinai. My last psychiatric talk will be next week in Berlin, where I am on a jury and we will give a single investigator 4 million euros (Fresenius Foundation Award) in the hope of finding a major game-changing approach to treating depression. Amazing process of selection: international jury, remarkable proposals and a hopeful way to conclude my psychiatric research life.”

While he still lives in D.C., he’s bought a summer house on the eastern shore of Maryland and is hopeful to turn it into a “summer camp” for his five grandchildren, ages 8-16. Buying that house and fixing it up was part of the reordering mentioned above. As was his taking the two eldest kids to Namibia and Botswana, where they went to several game preserves and saw the Big Five, as well as many other African animals.

John Costsworth wrote, “I have been teaching history and serving as Columbia’s Provost since 2011. Living in NYC with wife of 53 years, Pat. Our daughter, Anne, lives with her husband, Jon, and two adorable grandkids (Emma, 10, and Alex, 8) just a few blocks away. My last book was a co-authored world history textbook published by Cambridge.”

He travels to South America and more recently to Europe, as Columbia has a worldwide network of related or cooperative programs. His wife, Pat, is now retired, but was a librarian at the University of Chicago and an administrator at Harvard. He fondly recalls his time at the John Wesley Club, “a great home for all campus radicals and misfits! We had some unusual speakers—Jack Kerouac who was boring (not high/too high?), and a communist, Herbert Aptheker. I don’t
know how we got him, but he was very interesting. I think the administration was upset by his presence."

John’s junior and senior year JWC roommate was Martin Nicolaus, who wrote from his home in Berkeley: “After a fun career doing this and that, much of which the interested person can look up on Nicolaus.com, I recently retired from the practice of law. Also retired from the leadership of a nonprofit I had founded that created a network of recovery meetings for people wanting to get free of alcohol and other drugs via a positive, secular pathway: LifeRing. Much of my energy now goes to celebrating the beauties and combating the uglies of a local park, Cesar Chavez Park, in the Berkeley Marina, the subject of a blog I write fairly regularly. I also write a blog on topics ranging from international politics to local events to electric cars.” Additionally, he has written a number of books. He’s been married to Sheila for 10 years and has two children from a previous marriage. He and Sheila enjoy traveling and once spent a month in Ecuador.

Steve Miller is tired of the West Coast and is determined to move to Chicago, his wife Carolyn’s hometown. They’ve been married 21 years. When I called, he was busy with moving plans, which included finding an apartment just big enough for them and their two big dogs, a large standard poodle and an equally large English setter. He is a great enthusiast of the latter breed, which he says mostly goes unrecognized on both coasts but is much admired in the Midwest. He’s fairly confident it will not go unrecognized in Chicago.

Steve was a full professor in the department of management at Cal State and has been retired six years. He praises the great teachers and the breadth of courses at WesU, recalling that since we were required to take electives, he picked a course on theater, a subject he knew nothing about. But as a result, he developed a lifelong interest in theater and later became a docent for the Berkeley Repertory Theater.

Please let me know if you want to hear about a particular classmate or about one who has never appeared in this column.

Martin Nicolaus

Ron Young

1964

QUOTATION FROM A friend of about our age: “I had always thought it would take much longer to get to be this old.”

This was part of an update I received from Duane Starr, but some of our classmates didn’t reach our age. I think mostly of Stephen Thuet, who was killed flying a combat mission over Vietnam. I’ve visited the Vietnam Memorial a number of times, never failing to spend a moment in front of his name etched in the black marble. I remember some of the controversy when the design of the memorial was first released. It’s a profound experience each time, recognizing heroes in a conflict that should never have been. The moment President Kennedy was killed, these heroes were sentenced to their fate.

Interestingly, in preparing my notes, I received sharing from Ron Young because of a mix-up in classes. In 1995, he attended a meeting of middle-aged anti-war activists and octogenarian former OSS (predecessor organization of the CIA) officers who had served with Ho Chi Minh’s Vietnamese forces fighting the Japanese occupation during the closing months of World War II. The American officers supported Ho’s appeal to President Truman urging U.S. support and recognition for Vietnam’s independence. Truman never replied. Instead, the U.S. financed the French war to recolonize Vietnam. It’s worth reflecting on how our country might be different today if we had recognized Vietnam’s independence in 1945, and initiated normal relations then, rather than 50 years later following our American war.

Chris Chase shared that wife Karen (a non-smoker) was discovered to have a small tumor in her right lung. The mid and lower lobes were removed in early December. Thankfully, neither chemo nor radiation was required. Recovery has been steady, and for this and other reasons, they’ve chosen to enter a retirement community in Hanover, N.H., earlier than planned. With tongue-in-cheek, they find downsizing fun. Chris completed his report with these words: “Still, the last couple of years have had their joys. We have been able to spend time with our now 6-year-old grandson. I have enjoyed reading what I want to and when, from dry treatises on wealth distribution (anyone else read Piketty?) to family documents in Italian, to poetry in Old French, having learned these languages in the last three years.”

Duane and wife Nancy are still living in Oak Ridge, Tenn. Duane retired from Oak Ridge National Laboratory’s Global Security Directorate in 2011 and does occasional work there as a “casual employee.” He puts together computer models of uranium enrichment cascades. His recent work included participation in an assessment of the Molecular Laser Isotope Separation (MLIS) for enriching the 235 isotope of uranium. When he removes his thinking cap, woodworking, hunting, fishing, and singing are his passions. Like others of our mid-70s age, a significant amount of time is spent in doctors’ offices.

Speaking of doctors, Dave Best retired, about three years ago, from a very rewarding practice of nephrology, with a sideline of biomedical ethics. He and his wife have been living at the same address in Virginia Beach, Va., for 41 years. They are building a home in Cape Haze, Fla., hoping to have it ready early next year.

In July 2016, Dan Davis, M.D., retired after 19 years with the FDA Division for Bone, Reproductive, and Urologic Drugs. It was a fine second career after 20 years in private practice in obstetrics and gynecology in western Massachusetts. He enjoys skiing, golf, and tennis, and has been doing some part-time consulting this year. His wife, Suzanne, is an ordained United Church of Christ minister and very busy with her church work. They travel more now and hope to see their three grandkids more often.

I wrote a book about my attending baseball fantasy camps in the 1980s, and I have Hollywood people looking at a possible movie. I became friends with many of the former players from the old Brooklyn Dodgers, and it has been a personal loss when many of them have passed. The amazing thing that happened for me was playing baseball at an incredible level in front of my heroes. In 1986, 16 Hall of Fame legends who coached the campers named me the most valuable player. I called my dad at that time, and his reply was priceless: “Now, you’re MVP?”

1965

DEAR CLASSMATES, THANK you for some very good responses to the recent request for news.

Fred Newschwander writes: “I am reluctantly realizing and accepting that my body is no longer young, so I am trying to adapt and maximize what it can still do. The downside: A spouse’s horseback injury and health issues led to mental health problems which led to an unwanted and untimely divorce. Therefore, at a time when I was working on my bucket list I no longer had anyone to play with. My friends say they are too old for the kind of activities I like to do. Those

Kyle Abraham/ Abraham.In.Motion

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who are young enough still have jobs and on weekends are busy with family activities. The upside: The Bucket List check-off continues. I have completed a book of stories from my 38 years as a mixed-practice veterinarian. Last year I did a 10-day wilderness horseback tour of Iceland, riding 20-40 miles per day in the rain between wilderness huts. This summer I am returning to Botswana for a rerun of a horseback camera safari where we ride across the veldt between rustic tent campsites. Continuing a love first developed by choir director Richard Winslow at Wesleyan, free moments are filled by singing at nursing homes in an a cappella octet. My horses have already worn out a set of horseshoes this spring.

Tony Schuman has been appointed interim dean of the college of architecture design at the New Jersey Institute of Technology. He observes: "At a time when a number of you are dialing it back a bit, I am dialing it up. The dean of my college retired last fall after 25 years on the job. I am not a candidate for the permanent position, but I agreed to steer the ship until the new chief is in place."

Condolences to Paul Larson’s family. In a very fine obituary he is: “remembered for his compassion for others, his kindness, his spirit, and his generosity. His unconditional love for his family was always his first priority. He was quick-witted and always had a joke at-the-ready. He believed laughter was the remedy for all. He truly loved his country, Christmas, and the 4th of July, as well as boating and beach vacations in Maine. He also was a diehard Red Sox fan. He was a friend of Bill’s for 15 years, which brought him serenity and peace. He firmly believed in giving back to one’s community. He served as a Darien youth sports coach, Holmes School PTA co-chair, and Darien Boat Club officer. Paul served on the Darien RTM and the Board of Education. He was a member of Darien Kiwanis Club, Darien Men’s Association, the Country Club of Darien, and St. Luke’s Episcopal Church. After moving to Norwalk in 2004, Paul became an officer with the Norwalk Association of Silvermine Homeowners, a volunteer at the Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk, and a member of the Norwalk Community Chorale."

Paul was born May 22, 1943, in Bristol, Conn. As a Cardinal, he captained the track and cross country team and was a member of Kappa Nu. Paul received his MBA from Rochester and was a U.S. Naval Reserve supply officer aboard the U.S.S. Calosahatchee, and retired as a Lieutenant Commander. He began his career as a securities analyst at Chase Investors Corp., was then an assistant vice president at the General Electric Pension Fund, and finally an equity analyst/portfolio manager with General Reinsurance.

Steve Flance writes that Gary and the Wombats provided some of that good old rock and roll for the New Mexico Children’s Foundation in April. The Jacob’s Robe Wombats continue to serve worthy causes and to amaze all of their grateful fans! For me, anyway, they are one of my greatest college memories!

Bob MacLean writes: “Just passed my 40th year as a professional ski instructor. Still flying and part-time flight instructor with an interest in an air charter business out of Palo Alto.

“Two years ago started a new business in the food world. We are introducing Yolá yogurt topping in grocery stores, competing with ReddiWip out of a pressurized can, bringing a yogurt product to that category. Check us out at yolawhip.com.

“Lots of travel, not unlike my life in high tech and medical devices, from which I retired 12 years ago. Winter finds me in Colorado enjoying the outdoor life. Fall and spring in Baja, Mexico, and the rest of the year staying in touch with family and friends and challenging myself with an occasional golf game with Phil Russell, Pete Whiteley, and Lynn Edwards. Old roommate Ralph Jacobs remains a constant source of entertainment on and off the airwaves.”

Bertel Haarder spent his junior year at Wesleyan (1964–65) and credits his experience in Middletown as a positive influence in making policy as Danish minister for education and research for 15 years. He writes: “After more than 35 years in the Danish Parliament and 22 years as cabinet minister for 10 different ministries, I’m now back in Parliament, running for a seat in the upcoming election. We have removed all age limits in the public administration so, my age—72—is no problem. I’m very engaged in European and Nordic cooperation. For seven years I was in the European Parliament, and recently I was president of the Nordic Council. In Denmark we note with satisfaction that the American president is not speaking for the American people nor his administration when he salutes Brexit and courts Marine Le Pen. A century of warm and cold wars has taught Americans—I hope—to value European cooperation.”

Bertel, Bob, Steve, and Fred: Many thanks for your thoughtful communications and warmest wishes!

PHILIP L. ROCKWELL  prockwell@wesleyan.edu

1966

CONGRATULATIONS TO GENE Bunnell, professor emeritus, Department of Geography and Planning, University at Albany (SUNY), on the publication of his new book, Transforming Providence: Rebirth of a Post-Industrial City, the subject being of pressing importance as we confront our nation’s decaying cities. Gene, who “studied for my PhD at London School of Economics and Political Science,” and his wife, Lynne, will “celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary later this summer by traveling to Scotland.”

A number of our classmates followed Gene into the academy, doing so with distinction. David Luft, professor of history at Oregon State University and author of numerous books, tells me he will send a fuller update once he has finished his latest book, The Austrian Tradition in German Intellectual History: 1740-1938/1939. For 39 years James Russell, also a professor of history, taught at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, where he served as chair of the department before retiring in 2009. He and his wife now live in Worcester, Mass. He added, “I still like to give lectures in the community on American history topics.”

John Lapp, having “left Wesleyan to marry Linda Conner and pursue a PhD in economics at Princeton,” took “an assistant professorship at North Carolina State University,” where he focused on “monetary economics and financial markets,” being “equally drawn to research and publishing, teaching and curriculum, and various aspects of administration.” He writes that it “all worked out well enough.” I’ll say. John retired in 2011 as the Alumni Distinguished Professor of Economics. Professor of Psychology, Phillip Shaver, who retired from the University of California, Davis, in 2015, received this past September an Honorary doctorate in the social sciences from Stockholm University in Sweden. The award ceremony, formal dinner, and after dinner dance were held in the Stockholm City Hall, where Nobel Prizes are awarded.

We have professors, we have adventurers. Peter Monro, naturalist, newspaperman, and landscape architect, writes: “Although I was unfortunately unable to attend our 50th Reunion, its downtown plume brought me (and Jill) three mini-reunions here in Maine, with fellow Betas Jim Brink and Gene Bunnell and their wives. While the 50th Reunion was taking place, I was volunteering as an hospitaleiro, co-managing a refugee [camp] on the Camino de Santiago de Compostella pilgrimage route. I had just completed that trek as my personal challenge at 71. Learning to unicycle was my 70th birthday challenge.”

Peter Spiller, now living on Anastasia Island, chairs the board of directors of the St. Augustine Lighthouse and Maritime Museum, a Smithsonian affiliate. In April, he and his wife, Debbie, “took a repositioning cruise from Fort Lauderdale to Rome, followed by slowly wandering through that city, plus Florence and Venice.” In August, Peter took his “annual canoe expedition...from Sioux Lookout, Ontario, to and down the Albany River, fly[ing] out 22 days later from First Nation settlement Eabametoong.”

I envy the Peters, and meanwhile, Richard John Rohfritch writes: “Larry, I’m jealous! For several years, my wife, Marta, and I have wanted to retire in Durango—just down the road from you.” Richard, who “retired after 45 years of working for big chemical companies” in Houston, has “become literary after writing business e-mails for so long—I’ve starting collecting and reading poetry, and I am compiling a bibliography of Donald Hall’s writings...I took freshman English from Richard Wilbur at Wes in 1967, but it took me about 50 years to get back to poetry.”

Frank Burrows and wife Carol have retired, living with beloved dog Mandy in Boynton Beach, Fla. They plan to escape the heat this year, renting a waterfront cabin in Maine with thoughts of kayaking. Great note from Robert Dearth, who “continues to work with the Chi Psi fraternity chapter at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, as an alumni adviser and officer of the Lodge Property management organization. I also facilitate the alcohol awareness and anti-hazing annual undergraduate educational program mandatory for all new brothers of the Lodge.” Our inspirational leader, Robert Crootof, writes: “After 40 years in our 300-year-old house in Norwich, Conn...we sold it (finally) in March, and will now divide our time between Wolfeboro, N.H., and Sarasota, Fla., with travel to visit children in Manhattan, Bozeman, and L.A. We had many tears at leaving the family home, but more memories of having lived in a house that suited us so well for those wonderful years.”

Let me conclude with a celebration of generosity and thoughtfulness. Essel Bailey and his wife, Menakka, recently gave $4 million to Wesleyan’s College of the Environment, their total gift to COE now being $7.5 million. Congratulations and thanks to Essel and Menakka for this gift to our students, this gift to our planet—that will serve both for generations to come. (See page 9.)

LARRY CARVER  carver1680@gmail.com

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Kudos to Mike Feagley, Rick Nicita, the Reunion committee, and Wesleyan’s Reunion and Commencement machine for so effectively putting together our 50th Reunion. For me, both the planned events and the unplanned events combined to allow for many memorable moments and meaningful encounters.

The planned events included, especially, Friday morning’s innocuous sounding “continental breakfast.” At that event, in a room on the second floor of Olin Library, Howie Foster (that rare quarterback who becomes a psychoanalyst) proposed to the group of 20-25 that we collectively address one of four questions. I don’t remember all four questions, but it doesn’t matter, as we didn’t really address them. We did, however, have a lively and engaging discussion about the meaning of a Wesleyan education, about whether Wesleyan had become too left and far out to attract students it should be attracting, about whether Wesleyan was no longer as committed to real diversity as it should be, about why Amherst and Williams and even Bowdoin and Trinity have done better than Wesleyan on various ratings, and much more, until we were kicked out of the room so they could set up for the next event (I am sure conversations about these issues continued throughout the weekend).

The planned events also included a memorial service for those of our classmates who have died, a session conceived and planned by Brooks Smith, Peter Kovach, and Ted Smith. Peter opened the gathering with a poem. Ted read each of the 37 names on the college’s list of those of our classmates who have died. For about half the names, one classmate or another had prepared to speak for a minute or two and did, and then he or Peter dropped a piece of glass into a large bowl (a Kovach-inspired eastern ritual). For the other names, there was either a moment of silence, followed by Peter dropping a piece of glass into the large bowl, or someone spontaneously rose to speak about that person (as the Quakers say, moved by the inner spirit). So there we went, alphabetically, remembering those who died long ago, a while ago, or more recently. And Ackemann... Jim Branigan... Myron Kinberg... Henry Regnery... Andy Ulrick... The remembrances were moving, thoughtful, and sometimes funny (he set a chair on fire and threw it out the second floor of Clark Hall?).

There were many seminars taking place on campus. One of my favorites was given by former faculty member, Leslie Gelb, who went on to work in various high-profile jobs, including writing for the New York Times and president of the Council on Foreign Relations, about why those who conduct our foreign policy continuously make mistakes (Gelb was introduced by Professor Emeritus Karl Scheibe). Another was a panel on political dysfunction with three knowledgeable and impressive Wesleyan alumni, one of whom was Senator Michael Bennet ’87. Yet another was a panel discussion about Hollywood featuring (our own) Rick Nicita and Professor Jeanine Basinger.

The planned events also included three dinners, all set in choice locations—the Thursday night dinner in the Patricelli ’92 Theatre, the Friday night dinner with the president (“Dinner with the President! Dinner with the President”—see Woody Allen’s Bananas for the reference) in Beckham Hall, Fayweather, and the Saturday night dinner in Olin, overlooking the football field.

But it was the unplanned events that led to many memorable encounters. I was a bit late to one of the seminars, and by the time I arrived it was so packed that I couldn’t get in. I got a cup of coffee and sat down at a table in the Usdan Center, and over the next hour, old (and getting older) friends wandered by, stopped and sat down, and we caught up—John Neff ’66, Dave McNally ’66, Dave Garrison (there was one that got away—I saw across the room, but did not get to talk with, Harry Shallcross). It was like sitting in Downey House in 1965 or 1966, killing an hour in an enjoyable way, talking with whomever walked by after they got their mail.

My favorite comment? “I climb trees for a living” (but, Jerry Smith went on to say, even though he climbs trees for a living, his Wesleyan education has enriched his life in many ways).

My favorite outfit? At the Saturday night dinner, blue seersucker jacket, bow tie, shorts, leather shoes, black socks (Sandy Van Kemen ’66).

As those of you reading carefully have noted, there was a crew of guys from ’66 hanging around. They had such a good time last year at their Reunion that they came back this year for more (the three I have mentioned, and, also, Larry Carver ’66 and Rick Crootof ’66). It was great having them there. Also floating around the periphery on Saturday were Sandy See ’68, and Rick Voigt ’68, in part to attend the annual meeting of the Mystical Seven, but also to do some preliminary planning for their 50th next year.

It is quite a production, preparing all these Reunions AND Commencement on the same weekend. I always leave these events in awe of Wesleyan, a class act, in awe of Wesleyan alumni in general (who give such good seminars, and ask such interesting and informed questions in such an articulate way), and in awe of my classmates for all kinds of reasons.

Richie Zweigenhaft rzweigen@guilford.edu

1968

Business First: Our 50th Reunion is coming up. I know I will be there, but am not so sure about you (May 24–27, 2018). Stuart Ober (ober@stuartober.com), Sandy See (alexander.h see@gmail.com) and George Reynolds (green- olds@sandpointefunding.com) continue looking for guys willing to help out.

Local: I had an urge to continue walking, so I used this winter to get my right foot reconstructed. Made me house-bound which, especially in view of the great and amazing things seizing our nation, left me glued to the tube (in deep denial, watching countless Law & Order reruns). Judy, as her just desserts for her latest interests, is studying film at Wes. Loves it.

I had a chat with Tim Polk’s widow, Lucy. She and the kids are managing. Still teaching in St. Paul. Taken up golf. I met Wesleyan’s Imam, Sami Abdul Aziz, and his wife, Bright, personable couple who are the center of a vibrant community. Report good support from the administration. Harrison Knight polished up his pickle ball game in Bonita Springs last winter. Paul Spitzer was the subject of a lovely magazine article in Cornell’s Living Bird. Michael D. Terry ’69 was very explicit that “you do not take me or yourself too seriously” as he continues to write about his cancer journey. His treatment center, Houston’s MD Anderson Cancer Center, continues to use some of his material in their outreach. Bob Runk ’67 has always impressed me as a particularly good-natured guy and I’ve attributed his good vibes to his love for music. Well, it continues. Check out his new stuff on iTunes by searching for “Bobby Runk” and “RunkRock.”

Wig Sherman—whose good cheer and gossip over the years has made him
your unacknowledged associate class secretary—and I caught up recently. After Wes, he served in ‘Nam in the Army working with IEDs—a most unenviable assignment. Then Wharton, and a very successful run on Wall Street. Mid-life two things converged which changed his course: second thoughts about his career, and the prolonged illness and ultimate death of his daughter, Whitney, at 13. He then got a master’s in education and planned to teach in his hometown of Wilton, Conn., but instead got approached about joining the Board of Education, which he did. (That precluded his teaching in town.) He toiled mightily and with distinction on the Board (“more hours than I ever put in on Wall Street”). As its chair, he addressed the graduating class several years, most thoughtfully ruminating—as the son of a gas station owner—on the meaning and obligations of affluence to the high school’s graduates in this very upscale town. In Vero Beach for the last five years, Wig keeps up with a lot of brothers from the Lodge. Ralph Boynton ’69 lives in his complex, and Bob Newhouse is planning to move in.

I caught up with John Mergendoller, a southern California native, now in the Bay Area. (There was a picture of him online and he looked both well and very California.) After Harvard’s School of Ed, he did his doctorate at Michigan and enjoyed a Fulbright in Geneva. Most of his career was with the Buck Institute for Education, an outfit that works face-to-face with 15,000 educators worldwide each year, advancing project-centered learning. John is quite involved with music, playing acoustic guitar and mandolin in groups. His wife, Jessica, has a doctorate in anthropology and taught at UCSF’s medical school. Their son, Jacob ’11, lives in Brooklyn and works in the tech world, while their daughter, Julia ’07, works at Berkeley’s Latin America Studies Center. He keeps up with some of his Beta brothers: Frank Philippelli, Bud Bourke, Bob Knox, and Dick Cavanagh.

Brian Frosh, a Columbia Law School grad, is Maryland’s attorney general. An April 11 article in the Baltimore Sun opined that he “doesn’t have an A-list air about him. But late in the afternoon on the General Assembly’s final day, he was greeted like a celebrity when he walked onto the floor of the Maryland General Assembly Committee Chairman Thomas ‘Mac’ Middleton threw an arm around him. Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Chairwoman Joan Carter Conway kicked up a foot, and all three smiled broadly for a photo. ‘We love our A.G.,’ Middleton said.”

“We love our A.G.,” Middleton said.

“The occasion for the article was that Brian had “emerged from the annual 90-day [legislative] session as one of the major winners.” Drawing on ties he cultivated as a 28-year member of the General Assembly representing the Silver Spring area, Brian succeeded in gaining for the attorney general position itself a considerable boost in power. In this newly empowered role, he is expected to defend Maryland’s reformed money bail system, to fight against sharp-venue price increases, and for the rights of emigrants. Though a trusted figure in Maryland politics, he has ruled out a run for higher office.

In closing, I’d note I am writing this on May 26 and, if everything goes as it should, we will be together next May 26 celebrating our 50th—which to my mind, leastwise, is a big deal. Humor me and show up.

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1969

VISAKHA AND KEN Kawasaki: “Don’t know Whether to Laugh or Cry,” is posted at belief.org. They have maintained a level of humility and compassion longer than most.

Bob Dombroski said, “Anita and I spent the winter in South Carolina low-country. Daughter Ariel is at Columbia pursuing a PhD in clinical psychology. Back to Traverse City, Mich. Check out the new biography of Richard Wilbur. I remember him as a teacher and neighbor in Portland.”

Lynne and Bryn Hammarstrom are “both retired, living on a side-hill farm in Tioga County, Pa. Active in blocking chemo-fracking. Can’t stop it, but try to make it less damaging to air and water. Daughters live in Greensboro, N.C.”

Harry Nothacker urges classmates to read the op-ed by President Michael Roth ’78 in The Wall Street Journal from May 11.

Pete Pfeiffer hopes my black-sheepish behavior won’t hurt our class image. Politics is exciting these days. Nobody has any idea where we’re headed.”

Bill Demicco “retired after 47 years in medicine. Living in an old farmhouse in Maine. Painting watercolors, but undiscovered. Still married to Marie. In touch with Phil Walls.”

Tom Earle is a “grandfather of three. Spent Christmas in Australia. June in Italy with wife’s Norwegian family. Recommend SPQR by Mary Beard for Roman history. Aloha.”


Paul Malrose sent photos on Facebook.

Steve Knox’s daughter, Caroline ’03, gave birth to Jensen Knox Lindow on February 26, the first Knox boy of the new generation. Always a good turnout from our era at the men’s basketball golf outing.”

Fran and Paul Dickman “toured North and South Cyprus, focusing on archaeology. Multiple sites. Neolithic, Greek, Roman, Byzantine, French, and Ottoman buildings and ruins. Reducing my pediatric pathology work.”

Tony Mohr’s ’60s are behind now, age as well as decade. Just finished a messy trial between mother and son. My essay, Rainy Day Schedule, is in an anthology of California writers—Golden State 2017.”

Alex Knopp “looks forward to 10th year of teaching in the Yale Law School Clinic, fifth year with NAACP Legal Defense Fund, and second year as president of the Norwalk Library. Wife Bette finished her first time-travel novel.”

Patty and Paul Nimchek send “congratulations to Jim Martello, who was inducted into the Wesleyan Baseball Wall of Fame. Jim’s 16-inning 1-0 shutout of Amherst was one of the night’s highlight stories. Jack Sitarz driving in Greg Wrobel was the difference.”

John Bach had a letter to the editor in The Nation.

Charlie Morgan helped found the Hungerford Family Foundation, a genealogical association. I edit the Hungerford World Tree, which placed second at the National Genealogical Association conference in Raleigh. I am also an officer of the Mayflower Descendants and the Myles Standish Colony.”

Carol and Maurice Hakim ’70 bought an antique home in nearby Clinton. We get together for dinner and evenings out. They maintain a residence in Palm Beach Gardens. Maurice has a bottling plant in Toronto for his organic tea products, while Carol works in commercial real estate. Their daughter, Alexandra, lives in NYC and works for Omni Communications.

Darius Brubeck’s “granddaughter Lydia Elmer ’17 graduated Phi Beta Kappa.”

Bob Watson “has a new hip and resumed running. Daughter Joanna is a graduate intern at Yale-New Haven. Son Mark is in Cartagena, where he manages property and is opening a restaurant.”

Don Logie ’68 wrote, “There’s a September American Bar Association Journal article describing Jamie Kalven’s efforts to expose and combat what appears to be rampant police brutality in Chicago. Many years ago Jamie completed a law book started by his late father, constitutional law professor Harry Kalven.”

Doug Bell’s company “harvested 550 acres of hemp, whose CBD is not intoxicating. Skype me at Douglassbell.”

Bill Schroder’s blog, “YourInnlerRhino.com going well. Close to 1,000 posts.”

John Wilson’s blog, ”writes for Karma Automotive in California. First car delivered. First grandchild (son) arrived January. Visited him in Barcelona in March. Great trip. Best to all.”

David Siegel said, “After 22 years of college tuitions, sent in last payment. Attended son Leon’s graduation from Albert Einstein College of Medicine. Retirement beckons.”


Always love,

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1970

ALOHA, ALL. FIRST, my apologies for the late request for news. As far as I can determine, it was attributable to some technical glitch that prevented my receiving the reminder a week or so before a second reminder, which somehow did reach my inbox.

Nonetheless, I had e-mails from a few of our classmates, so here goes.

Charlie Holbrook is starting his 14th year teaching history at Beaufort High School in Beaufort, S.C. ‘Leslie and I spend June and July at our cottage in South Lyme, Conn., and I am auditing a history course at Wesleyan by Professor
Nathanael Greene. He is still teaching and hasn’t missed a step! When the issue of retirement comes up, Leslie reminds me that Professor Greene is still teaching! Once a teacher always a teacher. Also, Gene Legg is teaching at Rock Ridge High School in Ashburn, Va.

John Sheffield wrote, “Almost 48 years of a great marriage, two happy grown-up daughters, one excellent 4-year-old grandson, recent crewing opportunities on sailing vessels—Honolulu-Vancouver and Houston-New Orleans-Key West-Bahamas—make life worth living.” I have to say I’m a bit envious, John, having wanted to sail like that, but never having done it.

Jim Pickering posted the following on Facebook: “This will sound silly, and I may well have suggested it before, but as quickly as classmatess are passing on, and in honor of the fact that our senior year was never completed, why not have our 50th WesTech Reunion a year or two early? Having reconnected with a number of classmates through this medium I think it would be cool to hang out in person, tell lies, and maybe pound a few Budweisers all these years later.” I put it out to you, classmates. What do you think?

Lawrence Madlock wrote: “I retired from the University of Tennessee on February 1. I am going to Ghana for two months to help build a clinic and classroom in a village with Crossroads Africa, the same organization that got me started doing these trips 50 years ago at Wesleyan. My wife, Yvonne MAT’72, just got back from a graduation at Wellesley where we had dinner and pictures with Hillary. My middle daughter got her PhD in clinical psychology from George Washington University. Edwin Sanders ’69 and I visited Thurman Northcross ’71. He’s hanging tough.” Thanks for that update. Our thoughts are with you, Thurman.

Just returned from a semi-annual trip to Maryland to visit with my incredible mom, still active at 94. On the way back, I had some time in Seattle, so I jumped on the light rail to downtown and then walked uphill to visit REI, armed with my 35-year-old REI camera bag purchased at that wonderful old warehouse store. While browsing through what seems to be very upscale stuff for outdoor activities, I was approached by a gentleman who, noticing my Red Sox cap, the team jacket over my arm, and my Wesleyan shirt, asked if I was lost. Turned out to be Silas Wild ’69, one of the incredible group of runners during our Wes years. Silas remembers Bill Rodgers very fondly, mentioned Bill Tom and the other Punahou boys, and spoke well of Dave Davis ’93 and his TV work. He couldn’t shed any light on the whereabouts of his Beta brother Pete Weber, my freshman-year roommate. Moral: Wear your Wesleyan shirt while traveling.

Was unable to see Bill Rodgers in Boston on the way home from the visit in Maryland, he needing to rest after having just run two races, one in Green Bay, Wis., and one in Rutland, Vt. He mentioned that another Wes runner, Bart Wendell, lives nearby. One of these days, I expect Bill to show up for the Kauai Marathon.

The trip to see Mom and family began to turn into a baseball odyssey of sorts: Had tickets for a game in Baltimore (versus the Red Sox) a few hours after flying in, then we went to another game a few days later. I already had decided that I needed to address an item that’s long been on my bucket list—get to Fenway Park—so I had booked a flight from Baltimore to Boston as part of my return trip from Maryland. Got to Fenway after a long flight delay. Detroit won that one, so I decided to go to a game the next night, despite my early-morning return flight the following morning. It was a good game, with exactly the same technology that actually is pretty exciting, and is designed to make automobile use unnecessary in cities and suburbs.

Ed Swanson says, “In April I got together with Jim Redwood, a member of our freshman class who later transferred. Jim teaches securities law at Albany Law School. He and I spoke on the phone with Chuck Lucier ’70.” While his primary focus is corporate and securities law, Ed is now managing director of SMI Group L.I.C., and president of its broker-dealer subsidiary, SMI Capital Markets.

Steve Voohees became Facebook friends with Mark Merlis, who has published several novels. Dave Lindoff says daughter Ariel ’05 is having her graduation (called supplication!) in July from Oxford with a PhD in education. She’s already publishing a lot and hoping to land a job at the same school as her partner, a Brit named James. Filmmaker son Jed is living in Baltimore with his girlfriend. Steve is writing for High Times and Salon, plus his own collectively-run news site Thiscantbehappening.net.

Vic Pfeiffer is retired and is involved with four organizations in Chestertown, Md. Daughter Alexa ’06, along with his son-in-law and two granddaughters (ages 9 months and 2-1/2 years) live in San Diego. He gets together with five other Wesleyan friends—brother Steve ’69, Rick Ketterer ’69, John Stinchfield ’69, Jerry Parker ’69, and Marc Pickard ’70.

Fran Pawlowski encourages all to make the 50th Reunion in 2021.

Robert Beardslee writes, “This is my first contribution to the class notes. I am a bit out of the way here in a small country town north of Sydney, where I live with my Australian wife, Margaret. Taught kids with learning difficulties (I had one at Wes!) for years, and now concentrate on athletes with disabilities. My running career is over now due to osteoarthritis. However, I have kept physically active restoring antique cars and riding my mountain bike.”

From Andrew Glantz, “Since finishing my term as the president of the board of trustees of The Furniture Society, I have been concentrating on work in my shop. I had a hip replaced in March and hope that this and a few other tweaks allow me to be a bit more active this year than last.”

Katy Butler and Brian Donohue are set to be married on June 11 in their backyard in Mill Valley, Calif. “We’ve been living together for 17 years, so it’s not only a wedding, but a celebration of our continuing and deepening bond. We are continually amazed and grateful for our lives together.” Brian is a former hospital equipment salesman who now has a lot more fun working as a professional musician, leading singalongs in nursing home and retirement centers. Katy is writing her second book—about navigating medicine through old age, sickness, and death.

From Bill Boulware: “I am a ‘trophy husband’ now that I’ve pretty much retired. I cheer my wife on in her many endeavors and take care of the household. I try to convince myself that working out is fun, but I know I’m lying. And I’ve reached the ‘maintenance’ stage where multiple doctors are keeping an eye on things, waiting for the final breakdown I suppose. If we were a car I would have traded this body in a long time ago. But given what happens to many our age, I’m very grateful for many things.”

Joe Keller is living on Cape Cod and has a condo in Florida. Still active in commercial real estate company. Two grandchildren in Malibu, Calif. Just won a Massachusetts super senior golf tournament.

Alvin and Cynthia James are living in Cedar Hill, just south of Dallas. Cynthia serves as executive director of education for the Potter’s House of Dallas. Alvin is semi-retired, but serves as executive director of the Metropolitan Economic Development Corporation. At the beginning of 2017, Alvin oversaw the successful completion of a new 142,000-square-foot youth empowerment center building in southwest Dallas.”

That’s it for this time. Aloha.

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1972
REUNION YEAR

OUR 45TH REUNION is now history, and those who attended will concur that it was great fun. The campus was beautiful, and it was great to see old friends, even if we all seem to be getting older and kvetchier. Considering the alternative, that’s not such a bad thing. So here are my random recollections, with apologies in
advance to any attendees I may have omitted. I arrived at Wesleyan on Friday, and camped out by registration to see who was checking in. Thus, I got some time with Jim Shepherd, Steve Goldschmidt, Steve Lewis, Dennis Kesden, Mike Busman, Bruce Throne, and others. At our class welcoming reception at the Stew Reid House we had our only weekend visits with some true notables—Wesleyan President Emeritus Colin Hon. '89 and Nancy Campbell MAL '80 (who have nothing but wonderful memories of us—or so they say), and Chip Goodrich.

Friday dinner was an extraordinary event, thanks to the labors of Andy Feinstein. We took over O’Rourke’s Diner for the occasion, and Brian O’Rourke prepared an elaborate tasting menu for us. Only one dish vaguely resembled a steamed cheeseburger, and the “BYOB” policy led to some fine pairings. My table sipped a marvelous Walt Wines pinot noir, and there were various other wines and single malt scotches passed around. Leon Vinci presented Brian with a copy of Brian’s cookbook, autographed by us.

So it’s fitting to mention two who were unfortunately NOT in attendance. Mike Carlson, 45 minutes before his cab was due to arrive to take him to the airport in London, realized that he had forgotten to renew his passport. (Further comment from me would be superfluous—not that it has stopped me in the past.) Hank Shelton’s plane (after his original flight was cancelled) hit a bird one hour out of Memphis, whereupon that flight, too, was cancelled, thereby making it impossible for Hank to get to Wes in time. We truly missed them.

Most of us managed to be there for the alumni parade, noting that we are getting that much closer to the front. There followed an afternoon of hanging around on Foss Hill and attending seminars and film presentations. Our class seminar, “Western Europe in the 1600s: Between War and Peace,” was presented by Prof. David Feldman, AKA David Harp, just did three “speaking gigs” in three consecutive days in three somewhat widely separated places (after not having done too many lately)—Chicago, Springfield, Ill., and Burlington, Vt. He reports that the speaking component (two large events of about 70 minutes each with 300-plus attendees on harmonica-based mindfulness as it applies to people working in the mental health field, and one smaller event for CPA’s “felt fine.” He adds, “It’s a bit hubristic to say, but I felt pretty much at the top of my form, corporate speaker-wise. But the traveling felt awful. The airports and traffic in the cities bugged me more than usual—is road and air traffic getting busier and less enjoyable, or is it just me? Or both? Or perhaps it is just a function of living most of the time in rural Vermont.”

Sheryl Auerbach says Jerry Richter, her husband of 35 years, passed away almost five years ago. On December 13 of last year, she married Evan Feist, a widower, whom she met through JDate. Evan is a retired veterinarian, and they share a lot of interests, including golf (although she says she’s a mid 30s handicap and he’s single digit), bridge, and birthdays. Sheryl notes that her birthday is July 20. Jerry’s was July 25, and Evan’s is July 22.

From New York City, another one of my very colorful East College roommates from senior year, Edward “Eddie” Nathan, sends us a second note saying that “44 years feels about right to collect sufficient experience to sustain a brief note to my quondam classmates.” He has had two careers: first as an academic, then as a creative director in advertising, most of it in health and wellness. “It’s a living,” he says. He and his wife reside in Brooklyn, though his work is in Pennsylvania. “Two grown daughters, one of them in Finland.” He says his beautiful wife is also New York’s “most decorated dog groomer” (see her website, Soniaspetgrooming.com). For the record, he says he would like to note his “one enduring contribution to Wesleyan. No one will recall, except me, that I was the first to use the ‘Wes’ prefix in identifying our athletic teams for the Argus, e.g., Wescram, Weslax.” He says he had the occasion a number of years ago to write a “Wescheck” in support of his daughter’s application to Wesleyan. “I claim credit as having inspired the name of this tariff, and fully expect to be telling this story, inflamed with ever greater significance, as I continue to slide comfortably into senility,” he says. He sends “All the best to my Wesbros.”

Peter D’Oench Pgo10@aol.com

1974

Peter Heyward Reports The sad news that our friend and classmate, Robert Mankin, died in Paris, France on Jan. 28, 2017, after a long illness. Robert was buried at the Cimetière Parisien d’Ivry.

Robert, who had lived in France since the 1980s, had a distinguished academic career there. At the time of his death, he was a professor of British history at the University of Paris, with particular expertise on the English historian and writer, Edward Gibbon, and Scottish Enlightenment philosopher, David Hume, among many other interests. From 2009 to 2015, he directed and breathed life into the University’s Research Laboratory on Anglophone Cultures, which became a university department as a result of his efforts. Robert had also been serving for several years in Paris’s Cité Universitaire as director of the Fondation Deutsch de la Meurthe, a graduate student residence and cultural center, which flourished under his leadership.

At Wesleyan, Robert was a College of Letters major (Peter believes his lifelong attachment to France began when spent spring semester of 1972 in the COL Paris program). He subsequently took additional time to travel and study abroad and graduated Wes in 1975. Robert was a member of Alpha Delta Phi and, in addition to his academic pursuits, he was an avid runner and club rugby player. Robert is survived by his wife, Danielle Torren, their son, Émile, and his mother, sister, and brother.

Jerri Stroud and her husband, Mike Saville, will relocate to Seattle, Wash., later this summer, where they expect to have more chances to see 10 other Wesleyan ’74 alumni, including Charley Blaine and his wife, Cheryl. Their son, Stephen Saville, is with Amazon, and they’ll be about 10 minutes’ drive from him and their...
granddaughter, Emily.

Monique Witt reports, “We are weathering a few serious family illnesses, but the music is going well. My older son’s Grammy nomination has produced a great deal of work for the audio labs, so he’s very busy, having just returned from a late honeymoon in Paris and Nice.”

“My younger son, Ben, has received exceptionally strong reviews for his first album, Instead, including one from DownBeat Magazine, and numerous U.S. and European reviews. He’s up on radio around the world, and has played jazz at Lincoln Center, The Blue Note, Mezzrow, Small’s, and played Carnegie Hall in late May, in addition to the summer festival season and his weekly gigs.

“Im keeping the label running and playing doubles with a woman who plays with the Canadian National Team, so she carries us. Steven is still lawyering.”

Jaf Chiang provided the following update. “About three years ago my wife, Jeanne Demko, passed away very suddenly. We married shortly after I graduated—so a total of 40 years. She did get to see the ‘promised land’ as she saw both our children grow up to be independent, productive, and full of compassion, as she was.

“I am still finding it hard to adjust to this. I live in the same house in Avon and am still teaching gifted students in math. My daughter will finish her residency in Maine Medical this year and move to Kentucky to begin her fellowship in infertility. My son just finished the PhD phase of his MD-PhD program at Washington University in St. Louis and will begin his last two years of medical school later in June. And I will soldier on as well.”

Jan Eliasberg states, “I have moved into a three-story brownstone in Clinton Hill, Brooklyn, and discovered a passion for interior design. I’ve been restoring fine details of the original architecture as well as mixing in more contemporary influences. There’s a fantastic garden with climbing roses, hydrangea bushes, honeysuckle, and wild raspberries. There are three bedrooms, so let me know if you need a place to stay while visiting NYC.”

“This year I directed several episodes of the new CBS hit show, Bull, with Michael Weatherly. The show shoots on stages in Brooklyn, so I was, literally, 10 minutes from work. Great fun and a great privilege to work on a show in its first season. In June and July, I went to Pittsburgh to direct two episodes of another new show, NBC’s Gone, with ‘Mr. Big’ himself, Chris Noth.

Jan’s daughter, Sariel Friedman ’19, finished her junior year. She’s spending the summer in Germany taking a class at the Frei University. She then has a paid internship working with Steidl Publishing, a premiere art and design book publisher.

Harold Sogard, Marion Stoj, Linda Rappaport, and Sharon Purdie attended the Donors’ Reception during Reunion Weekend—good turn-out for our class! It’s always fun to catch up.

Check out the online class notes at magazine.wesleyan.edu to view unedited updates.

SHARON PURDIE @WESLEYAN.EDU

1975

PLEASE WRITE TO your class secretary:

CYNTHIA ULMAN: cmu.home@cmugroup.com
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BEVERLY DANIEL TATUM ’75
Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria? And Other Conversations about Race—20th Anniversary Edition (Basic Books, 2017)

DAVID GARROW ’75

1976

FOR THIS ISSUE, I asked about retirement plans and got varied and often noncommittal answers. To vary the line-up, the last shall be first.

Jody Binswanger Snider works in media, representing a creative branding and production company, and a small animation studio and filmmaker in NYC. She serves on a family foundation concerned with homelessness and criminal justice reform. Her husband is a teacher and coach at Harvard Business School and Northeastern, and their two sons are working in NYC real estate.

Steve Smith and his wife moved to western North Carolina 31 years ago and that’s where they plan to retire in about two years. Their daughter just had her 10th Wes Reunion, and they plan to visit friends in Mexico later this year.

Joe Reiff won the Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters Nonfiction Award for 2016 with his book Born of Conviction: White Methodists and Mississippi’s Closed Society. Joe figures he has three more years before he hangs up his frock.

Jack O’Donnell has a daughter at Wes who plans to go to law school afterwards. Jack loves working as a criminal defense lawyer, and between that and the tuition bills, no retirement is in sight.

RONALD M. EPSTEIN ’76 MD
Attending: Medicine, Mindfulness, and Humanity (Scribner, 2017)

Connie Bodine McCann attended an all-day meeting of Wes emeriti trustees and watched Donna Morea do an excellent job as chair. Connie has a son at Wes, a daughter working in tech in San Francisco, and another son at a private investment firm in NYC. Connie has been elected to the Spencer Stuart worldwide board of directors and, after 24 years, is still enjoying her senior search work in financial services.

Jimmy Johnson reports that his bike touring business (BikeTours.com) is going strong and that he will be leading tours through Austria, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Greece, and Montenegro in the next five months. Electrically assisted bikes help it all work. (I tried one in California and our nonathletic group drew looks of disbelief as we sped up the hills.)

Leslie Gabel-Brett ended her 10-year tenure at Lambda Legal in NYC and now works as a consultant with Open Communities Alliance, an affordable housing group in Connecticut led by Erin Boggs ’95. In spring 2018, Leslie will be a visiting assistant professor of public policy at Wes teaching a course about social justice movements under the auspices of the Albrighton Center for the Study of Public Life. Joelyn Gray went to L.A. over Memorial Day weekend and visited her sons, Malcolm and Duncan ’09, who work for the Russo Brothers and Hulu respectively. She had dinner with my CSS classmate, Bob Craft, and his wife, Julie. Joelyn has considered retirement, but prefers working.

Jon Cleworth, who is fighting a nearly 40-year battle with MS, is still going
strong and is grateful for his time at Wesleyan and the inspiration he gained there. 
Karen Caplan says retirement is a nice idea, but she is not ready to give up her full-time hospital job as a clinical social worker on a palliative care consult team. Karen finds her work with people at the end of life wonderfully rich, meaningful, and rewarding.

Barbara Birney continues to enjoy the company of her 92-year-old father, Robert Birney ’50, as well as that of her brother Bob Birney ’81. Bob has just given up ‘Old Man’s Soccer’ and is focused on getting the last of his kids through college. Tom Kovar says he thinks about retirement but, with a 14-year-old still at home, he does not plan on it anytime soon.

Cheryl Alpert just started a new career as a full-time real estate agent focusing on Boston and MetroWest and is very active in national and local politics. Her older son, Eben, is working as a business analyst and her younger son, Chason, is graduating from Washington and Lee, and will be working in D.C. for Booz Allen.

As for me, my oldest daughter graduated with a master’s and my younger two from college this month, so tuition bills are no longer a driver. But I still like working and need to stay busy if I am going to stay in sync with my wife, who loves her job.

Outlook: staying the course.

There are a lot of you folks who do not write in—especially, for some odd reason, those whose last names are in the second half of the alphabet. I wish you would.

MITCHELL MARINELLO milmarnello@comcast.net

1977

REUNION YEAR

HAD SOMEONE ASKED me in my youth what a 60 (plus)-year-old would look and act like, I would never have imagined it to be any of the group assembled for our attendance-record-smashing 40th Reunion. It pleases me to be among folks who were happy to just be present in order to connect with fellow alumni. Gone are the days when we felt the need to impress with our professional and personal accomplishments. We all enjoyed hearing about the twists and turns in our individual histories. It was affirming to speak with those folks in our lives with whom we shared another pivotal developmental time in our lives: starting our college days in our late teens.

For most of us, Reunion began Friday evening with a reception that would soften the blow of a nasty commute to Middletown from just about everywhere. Driving into our Reunion class hotel lot, I was greeted by Felice Burstein and John Roxby, a perfect start to the weekend. Both are smitten with their granddaughters, and like most of us, are considering the next move after retirement. At hotel reception, I came across Arlene Lappen and Sue Rappaport Guiney. If meeting up with these two doesn’t put a smile on your face, I don’t know what does. Next I rode with Iddy Olson, soon to be the mother of the groom (my godson), to campus to formally check in. We attended President Michael Roth ’78’s reception and met up with Vanessa Burgess, Jerry Caplin, Sean McKeown, Bob Glasspiegel, Kathy Mintz ’78, and Steve Beauchamp. We then headed over to meet arrivals at the Reunion class reception. Wendy Brown Giardina and Laraine Balk Hope immediately greeted us. Enjoying seeing Jim Lyons, Jim Melloon, and Mimi Wolf at the reception. It was fun hearing Jim’s German inflection and was really impressed by his, as well as Wendy Giardina’s and other alums efforts, in making their way back to campus from far away. I celebrated a mini Newton High School reunion with Richard Parad, Sarah Kendall, and Paul Sheridan. Other notables at the party were Mike Coffey, Jane Goldenring, Claire Greengard, Betty Hecker, Mary Jo Wade, Ron Bloom, Dave Levy, Jim Dowling, and expert t-shirt designer and graphic designer, Bonnie Katz. Also on hand were Lee Arnold, Lisa Brummel with son Noah, Cindee Howard, Helen Taenzer Lott, Earl Phillips, Lenny Stamm, whose music I missed, Miki Saraf, and the first person I met my freshman year, Richard Swanson.

Saturday got rolling with seminars on campus led by many in our class. Sue Rappaport Guiney, Jane Kurz Klemmer, Michele Roberts (our well-deserved class Distinguished Alumnus recipient), and Alan Steele held a panel discussion on mid-life and mid-career changes. Following this was a seminar on “Fake News and Real News: Journalism Today” led by Jane Eisner and Alex Kotlowitz, among others. This well-attended offering featured many classmate including: Doug Green, Susan Berger, and Rachel (Helfer) and Mike Balf. Heading over to the lunch tent I got to catch up with Janet Malkemes and Sharon Adler. A few folks arrived solely for lunch, needing to honor conflicting family weddings and such: Danny Ruberman and world-traveling educators Louise Hazebruck and Steve Rome, who shared stories from their time in Asia. Photographer extraordinaire, Rick Dennett, was busy capturing shots of the assembled gang throughout the afternoon and evening. Kate Seeger and I got to share a fine walk through the art center. It is quite the head-scratcher that I need to return to Middletown to catch up with so many of the Boston-based alumni.

A short while later, a visit with the fine gentlemen of DKE took place at their house on High Street. The usual suspects there included: Jim LaLiberty, Steve Imbriglia, Don Citak, Jeff Gray, Ted Stevens, and Mike Coffey and Iddy. This led to our class dinner at Uidan, which was a great venue to celebrate the 100 participants who turned out. New folks with whom I got to visit included: Wes trustee Jeff Shames, Mark Beams, Don Spencer (who survived his new house construction), Jerry Stouck, Dave Thomas, Bob Roberts, Liz and Will Sinlin, Jim Udelson, and Dave Zabar. We all enjoyed Vanessa Burgess MCing the evening’s salute to our class that included a well-deserved Wesleyan Service Award to a very modest Don Ryan. Though regretting not chatting much with some, I saw from across the crowded room John Fink and his wife from Hawaii, John Gaebe, Jonathan Kliger, Don Lowrey, Marx Brothers aficionado, Hank Rosenfeld, Brad Burnham, Susan Shaw, Bob Rees, and Steve McNutt.

As expected, this was a memorable gathering which nourished the soul as we got to celebrate Friendship in its truest form: old and new. As I have recounted the weekend from memory after almost a week, I am sure that I may have left out other important names who attended. Please let me know that you were present so that you’ll find a way to meet up five years from now. If this Reunion was any indication, we all just keep getting better and better.

GERRY FRANK gfrank@bfnec.com

1978

BILL ADLER “WAVES to classmates from Tokyo,” where he has been living for the past three years. He reports: “I spend my days writing novels and my nights sleeping only when my cat thinks I deserve to. If you like time-travel fiction, pick up a copy of my novella, No Time to Say Goodbye. I’m currently writing a Japanese ghost story.”

Wolfgang Natter proudly announces the graduation of his son, Joseph ’17, an honors physics major who plans to extend this background to “social physics of the law.” Wolfgang has accepted the position of vice president of academic affairs at The College of St. Scholastica in Duluth, Minn. He welcomes contact from any Wes alumnus who reside at or near the borders of Lake Superior and Minnesota.

Rich Order continues to litigate business disputes as a principal partner in the firm of Updike, Kelly, and Spellacy, in Hartford, Conn. He and Denise, his wife of 34 years, live in Simsbury, Conn. Their son Daniel, a graduate of the University of Colorado Boulder, will be attending the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University this fall to pursue a master’s degree in documentary filmmaking.

SUSIE MUHRHEAD BATES sbatesdux@hotmail.com

KEN KRAMER kmkramer78@hotmail.com
1979

KPBS IN SAN Diego named Anne Wilson a community hero for her work in affordable housing as both developer and advocate. Anne celebrated the graduation of Eero Talo ’77 from Wesleyan.

Matt Okun has many reasons to rejoice: “Two wonderful daughters: Lia, a licensed psychologist, and Nina, a personal assistant. My wife and I have three grandchildren. I am still working for the Seattle Public Schools as a teacher trainer with a focus on social justice. I have now been teaching for 39 years! What a long, strange trip it’s been! My advice—savor each moment of life; often beautiful, sweet, challenging, but most certainly fleeting.”

Carol Churrin is semi-retired. She left public education and recently finished another master’s in social work. She’s very proud her son is a licensed acupuncturist and diplomate of oriental medicine. Anyone living in San Diego who needs an acupuncturist—contact Carol!

Casey Dingus works on all things infrastructure related in D.C. [See page 32.] That landed him on CBS Sunday Morning, PBS NewsHour, and NBC Nightly News.

Earlier this year, Jake Walles retired from the State Department after more than 35 years as a foreign service officer, including tours as U.S. Ambassador in Tunisia and Consul General in Jerusalem. He’s now living in D.C., and is looking forward to new adventures outside the government.

Brian Katten took early retirement at Wes in October 2015 after 34 years in sports information. Since then he’s loving all the free time coaching a boys’ basketball team and umping high school baseball. He still follows Cardinal sports religiously and enjoys all the successes of the teams. Go Cards!

STEPHEN ALTER ’79
The Dalliance of Leopards: A Thriller

Julie Hacker recently attended her son Gabe’s RISD graduation, complete with marching band and belly dancer. A week prior, she attended her step-grandson’s graduation from West Point, complete with marching band, but no belly dancers. Opposite ends of the spectrum, but couldn’t be more proud! She has been busy practicing architecture, serving as a preservation commissioner for the City of Evanston, rewriting the design guidelines for Evanston, competing in triathlons, performing in a musical theatre class. Luis Vidal resides in Bridgeport, Conn. He retired from the Department of Social Services in 2011. He works for Family ReEntry, Inc., as group facilitator of domestic violence groups in Bridgeport, Norwalk, New Haven, and Waterbury. He would love to hear from Ines Navarro ’81 and MaryAnn Gonzalez ’82, and is wondering how they are and what they are up to.

Bill Davies and wife Candy downsized two years ago to a 100-year-old home in Poughkeepsie, N.Y.—a trendy place for young artists who can’t afford living in NYC. He retired from IBM/GlobalFoundries in May and is spending the summer rowing, biking, and gardening. They are excited about their daughter’s (Kim ’07) wedding in September.

Alan Saly happily reports that his daughter, Elaine Saly ’09, graduated from NYU Law, and is heading to Seattle to be a criminal defense attorney in the public defender’s office. Any Wes lawyers out there for her to touch base with?

Jono Cobb is back on Martha’s Vineyard for the summer. “During the months following graduation I shared a single-bathroom house on the Vineyard with Maureen Walsh, Deirdre Manning, Bethany Kandel, Spence Studwell, Mike Connelly, Dennis Archibald, and Mike Riera. Whenever I drive past Little Walden, as we named it, I’m reminded of that summer of 1979...”

Thomas Brody, at 65, is still trying to find himself. Wish him luck, he says.

Denise Giacomozzi has been coordinating the Syrian Refugee Project at her church in conjunction with New Vision United Church of Canada. The goal is to raise $50,000 to bring two families of four to Hamilton, Ontario. Contributions can be made by check to: Rockville United Church, Syrian Refugee Project, 355 Linthicum St., Rockville, MD 20851 or PayPal. “On a personal note, my mother passed away in March at the hospice where I have been a chaplain. I am on leave as I mount. Elaine Winie was there by my side for the memorial service, ever the faithful friend since our days as freshmen roommates.”

On a sad note, Ralph Maltese writes in that “On Oct. 22, 2016 my best friend from college, Alan David Avner, passed away after a two-year bout with cancer. Alan was an enigma—a happy loner, a fine musician, healthiest living person I’ve ever known, had a razor-sharp eclectic intelligence, sarcastic wit, love of all things jazz, a respect for all people and all living things, and lived his life with caring, humility and curiosity. Alan was always there for his friends, a confidante, and my best man. He is survived by his father, and his sister and her family. Alan was and will always be my friend.”

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[Ed. Note: Please see the full version of these Notes at classnotes.blogs.wesleyan.edu.]

1980

MARTY SAGGESE WRITES: “I am one of those investors who have benefited from JOEL TILLINGHAST’s investment expertise. I had the chance to sit next to Joel at one of our Reunion dinners a few years ago, and said thank you to him in person. I am looking forward to reading his book!”

JOEL TILLINGHAST ’80
Big Money Thinks Small: Biases, Blind Spots, and Smarter Investing
(Columbia University Press, 2017)

Charla Reinagum writes: “Dan, my husband of 30 years, and I are starting a new chapter this July, moving from the third coast (Chicago) to the West Coast (Napa) less than a week after our daughter. Rachel Schwartz ’11, gets married with unbridled support by bridesmaids Ilyana Schwartz ’13, Janine Petito ’11. Anne Calder ’11, and Joanna Schiffman ’11. Bunny Benenson and Jane Carleton will be celebrating with us. No, we are not retiring. Dan has taken a new position as head of a local progressive private school and I will continue serving as chief environmental engineer for FedEx Express. My commute soon will wind through vineyards instead of interstates. Love to catch up if you happen to be Napa-bound.”

Aleta Staton writes: “I’m thankful to be going into my sixth year with the faculty of the theater department at Quinipiac University in Hamden, Conn. We are building a new theater space this year and look forward to a robust season of productions. I recently attended the Reunion for Wesleyan class of ’81 with Carliss Francis ’82 (PhD and an August Wilson scholar) and ran into my good friend Beck Lee ’82 who happened to be the keynote speaker.”

Jon Martin, professor at University of Florida, writes: “I’m in the middle of a seven-week field expedition to Greenland. If anyone is curious, you can check our Greenland project: grainfluxes.geology.ufl.edu.

Melissa Totten, content producer for MandCo.org, reports in from the Boston region, where she would rather not be living. She misses the desert chaparral and the vast southwestern skies. She remembers a life among like-minded adults. A prisoner of East Walpole, Ms. Totten has no access to culturally diverse people, lives, folkways, or foodways. Instead of writing the book she is outlining, she has become physically and emotionally dependent upon the consumption of cable television’s political coverage. Despite her stupor, she has become an accidental climate activist and an associate member of her hometown’s historical commission. In that position, she has great power. According to the town’s by-laws, the commission may issue a six-month demolition permit delay for “historically and/or architecturally significant buildings.” After six months of considering the value of preservation, an owner is free to pick up the demo permit from the building inspector and rip it all down to the earth below.

JENNIFER FINNEY BOYLAN ’80
Long Black Veil: A Novel
(Penguin Random House, 2017)

Melissa Hewey writes: “Alan Chebuske and I celebrated our first date at Wes 40 years ago in February. We now live in Portland, Maine, where Alan practices dentistry in between taking bike trips around the world. With two grandchildren, one living in Beijing, China (son of Cara Chebuske ’06 and Will McCue ’06), and another in Los Angeles, I am pretty sure the airlines are developing a new tier of elite status just for me.”

Mark Zitter writes: “My daughter, Tessa ’21, was accepted ED1 to Wesleyan and...”

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will begin this fall! She wants to double major in theater and chemistry, sing in an a capella group, and work in Admission as a tour guide to motivate visitors to apply to Wes. Proud to join the ranks of our classmates who are Wesleyan parents. Extremis, the short documentary featuring my wife and her ICU colleagues and patients, was nominated for an Oscar, so she got to go to the Academy Awards. (Couldn’t snag an extra ticket for me—my best shot to be arm candy!) I’m chairing both my company and The Zetema Project (zetemaproject.org), a group of U.S. healthcare leaders focused on policy issues. I’ve also found a second career as an interviewer at venues ranging from Stanford to the 92nd Street Y to the Commonwealth Club. I’ve hosted U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy, ObamaCare architect Ezekiel Emanuel, palliative care doctor BJ Miller, and others. I joined the Board of the Commonwealth Club (commonwealthclub.org), America’s oldest and largest public affairs forum, which will move into a brand new facility on San Francisco’s Embarcadero this summer. This doesn’t feel like retirement, but it’s fun.”

Amy Kroll writes: “We are heading to Chicago for our son, Sam’s, graduation from the University of Chicago. We are thrilled for Sam (and ourselves—no more college tuition!), but wistful as this chapter of raising children closes. We are still in D.C., and I am a partner at Morgan Lewis & Bockius, LLP, watching the daily motorcades up and down Pennsylvania Avenue between the White House and Congress. I hope that all our class members will give to the Annual Fund—I see the value of a Wesleyan education frequently, as young lawyers and law students who are Wesleyan graduates join our firm and consistently excel. I enjoy periodic catch-ups with John Singer and David Resnick ’81, among others.”

KIMBERLY OFRIA SELBY kim_selby@yahoo.com

1981

GREETINGS, CLASSMATES! IT’S Joanne, writing to you from the comfortable confines of a German high-speed train, sipping wine, and admiring the scenery, efficiency of travel, and simple good sense of a country, that has spent decades investing in the confines of a German high-speed train, sipping wine, and admiring the scenery, efficiency of travel, and simple good sense of a country, that has spent decades investing in the...
same time, it sucked.” Indeed, he reminded us that June 6, 1982, was the worst storm in the area since a 1955 hurricane, dumping nearly a foot of rain centered in Middletown, forcing us to graduate in the hot, stuffy, inelegant hockey rink.

Among his remarks, Fuentes told us, “I know that sooner or later, your generation will be facing, courageously and decisively, the human needs in this country: democracy not only in the voting booth, but in the working place; decentralization, reindustrialization, the stamping out of crime, better schools, thorough racial integration and sexual equality, the great technological breakthroughs that can only be achieved through the quality of higher education and investment in research, all of this inseparable from compassion and legislation favoring the poor, the elderly, the handicapped.”

Beck Lee, our witty MC, said Fuentes’ remarks were like a “message in a bottle...speaking to our future selves, when his words might hold the deepest meaning.” Fuentes’ words were prescient, and remind us, as Beck said, that “the spirit for rebellion that was engendered in us then, in the early Reagan years, would be needed now more than ever.”

And then there was the brief reappearance of the Douglas Cannon, which a few of us were lucky enough to see, though I am not at liberty to divulge the circumstances. As you might recall, the D.C. made a surprise appearance in the University’s sesquicentennial birthday cake in 1981 before it disappeared once again in 1982. I have it on strong authority that a few of our ’82 classmates were the 1982 liberators of the D.C. and that following some extensive travel, they returned it to Wesleyan in good faith upon Colin Campbell’s last Commencement.

These “Doug Addicts” have communicated their strong wish that 1) Whoever is in possession of the cannon today has the responsibility and obligation to facilitate the cannon’s return to the Wesleyan community; 2) Every student should know the D.C. story and have the experience of seeing the D.C. sometime during their time on campus; and 3) Whoever has it currently or in the future, needs to record Douglas Cannon’s travels and locations so that the Wesleyan community stays updated on the adventures of the D.C., perhaps via Douglas Cannon’s Facebook page. More news about our classmates in the next notes, stay tuned. But quick congrats to Deedie Finney, whose lovely introduction to the anniversary edition of Shes Not There, the memoir by wife Jennifer Finney Boylan ’80, proves JFB is not the only writer in the family.

And don’t miss Suzanne Kay’s new documentary film, Sullivan: The Ed Sullivan Story, which takes a surprising look at the man who was once television’s most influential personality and his little-known support of black artists at the dawn of television. Check out her FB page, Sullivan, for more info.

Finally, to you guys at the Reunion who suggested my new husband, Peter Eckart ’86, go for the record and don’t stop at marrying just two Wesleyan women: over my dead body. Then you’ll be stuck having to find another willing class secretary.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Fraser | laura@laurafrazer.com

1983

Hi, Class of 1983. It’s hard to believe it’s summer already. The flowers are blooming, and my kids all graduated from college and are planning the next phase in their lives. I continue being a data geek at Rutgers, working on the endless dissertation, and caring for my mother with Alzheimer’s. I suppose this is what they mean by a “full” life. Here’s what our classmates write...

E. Jenny K. Flanagan: “I’ve been living in Rhode Island since 1991, and for the past two years in the trending historic waterfront village of Warren, R.I. We bought a 240-year-old Colonial and rehabbed it. Our two sons, who we adopted from Ecuador in 1994, are now grown and living nearby. Tom ’82 is writing a book on systems science and democratic processes for large groups to solve complex problems. I have been working for the past 23 years as a commercial real estate appraiser, with a specialty in land conservation projects, working for clients throughout southern New England.”

Tim Brockett: “Gold fever has hit my new hometown of Emigrant, Mont. You may remember a few years back we had a huge forest fire that leveled thousands of acres in the adjoining Absaroka wilderness. Many people hiked in the next summer and found previously hidden outcrops and stream beds containing gold. Now the commercial operators are moving in and exploring the area. It is a terrific time for geology students to test their skills. Once again my Wesleyan degrees have come in handy.

“Hunting season went well. My friends bagged several elk, mule and white-tailed deer, a buffalo, and a gorgeous wolf. The wolf had incredibly soft and thick fur. He was stuffed and now poses no danger to people or livestock. I spent several days hiking, prospecting, and camping along the U.S. and Mexican border in March. Hunting, prospecting, and living in the mountains of Montana is wonderful.”

Mark Kushner: “I am still thriving in San Francisco, having opened and operated cutting-edge charter schools around the country for the last 22 years, and now leading my first independent school. I still love skiing (telemark and backcountry now), and playing soccer and tennis. My kids are now 14 and 11, with the oldest attending my alma mater, San Francisco University High School, and already expressing interest in Wesleyan! Please look me up if you are in the area.”

Glenn Lunden: “In February, I married my life-partner, Frank Meola, in a small civil ceremony at the Brooklyn Municipal Building, attended by both of our mothers and
my brother, Jeff. After 23 years together (and a not-so-recent Supreme Court decision), we figured it was time. Besides, we wanted to legitimize our two cats.”

Lynn B. Ogden: “I transferred to Boyden’s New York metro office but haven’t abandoned Portland, Ore., completely. I enjoy catching up with friends and classmates. I am a regular on campus this spring cheering on my daughter, Emi Ogden-Fung ‘19 and our amazing Wes Women’s Lacrosse team who are headed into the NCAA championship for the first time in the team’s history! Go Wes!”

Tim Backer has released “many works so far in 2017, with the culminating CD of a 22-year project, A Platform for Dreams. Classicity (based in Beethoven’s dialect), a reevaluation of understanding 20 years after grad school, having gained insight into cultural politics. European history, the classical music tradition, Chinese philosophy, and women-its-actually-are: The Musing Genie: Thirteen Electric Guitar Explorations (a documentary of sorts about achieving mastery of the instrument as a tool for improvisational classical music in the Zappa tradition); Patriotic Impromptus (a dramatic narrative constructed of seven pass-throughs of the U.S. national anthem); The Four Zoas By William Blake, A Recitation (five hours reading aloud the least-understood top-tier poem in the English literary canon).”

“A Platform for Dreams is primarily a political text, encrypted into sheet music and then recorded and performed. All this has come out of my label, BackWords Recordings, an independent culture production house. The headwind of today’s biz has been an annoyance, but not much more than that. The business plan is to establish rock classical as a genre, allowing reentry of other artists’ back catalogs as well as giving the critical community something to chew on. backwordsrecordings.com.”

Until next time, namaste!

Laurie Hills: Lauriec@rci.rutgers.edu

1984

MICHAEL STEVEN REPORTING this month.

Michael Bailit has been consulting to the State of Rhode Island for several years and in so doing interacts regularly with the CEO of Coastal Medical, the state’s largest private physician practice. (Michael recently realized that Al Kurose was a member of our 1984 graduating class!)

On the opposite coast, Murrey Nelson catches up those of us who are not in more constant touch. She has been in the nonprofit world since 2006, as a development director for several music organizations (Berkeley Symphony, San Francisco Conservatory of Music, Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra & Chorus). She is doing part-time work for the world-renowned male a cappella group, Chanticleer. She serves on various boards and committees, including Sojourn, the multi-faith chaplaincy that serves Zuckerberg (yes, that Zuckerberg) SF General Hospital. (Murrey lives in SF, but reports from a cross-country trip that took her from (Toronto to (Vancouver).

Blake Nelson (no relation to Murrey) continues to write notable young adult books. His novel, Girl, has been in print for 23 years. (Blake says, “It’s a cult classic,” which is slightly different than a classic classic.”) He tips his hat to Jenny Altschuler ’83 for being a trusted reader.

Michael Polgar has been selected to attend a summer seminar at the Olga Lengyl Institute (TOLI.us) to help improve and apply his skills in Holocaust and human rights education. He continues to teach sociology at Penn State in Hazleton, PA.

Andrew Tauber launched a 565-project on Instagram on New Year’s Day, and is posting a photograph each day this year (as andrewtauberimages). His travels include a January trip to Iceland with Lisa, his wife, where his 85-year-old father walked with crampons across a glacier. In April, he and his father went to Paris to view a painting that the Nazis stole from their family in 1940, and which was recovered from a private collection only this year.

Our co-secretary, Roger Pincus, proudly reports that daughter Melanie will be a first-year student at Brown in the fall.

Finally, Jim McGonagle would wager a fair amount that the largest non-wedding, non-funeral, non-Wesleyan-sponsored gathering of Wesleyan folks in some time took place in July at the home of John Ferrara ’88. About 45 Chi Psi fraternity brothers from Wesleyan traveled from 10-plus states to John’s house in North Easton, Mass., partially to show their support for Jim as he fights a battle with advanced prostate cancer. In attendance from the Class of 1984 were Bob Barringer, Gerard Keating, Dave Silver, Mike Kuhn, Steve Peck, Jeff Melhman, Kevin Miller, and Joel Arnius. Others who joined Jim and his classmates were Brian Faeby ’82, Eric Knauß ’82 and Mike Bannon ’82, Bob Hebert ’83 and Todd Mogren ’83, Ken Janik ’85, Carl Cova ’86, Charlie Galland ’86, Doug Muller ’86, Jack Kuhn ’86, Ken Johnson ’86, Tony Rolla ’86, and Pete Crivelli ’86. Jon Hare ’87, Michael Cooper ’87, Stew Murchie ’87, Terry Dee ’87, Tim Sullivan ’87, and Wayne Stearns ’87 and Andy Campbell ’88, John Ferrara ’88, Jim Van Hoven ’88, Steve Worth ’88, and Todd Marvin ’89.

Also in attendance was John Ferrara’s son, AJ Ferrara ’18, as well as Jonathan Dennett ’15, Nick Cooney ’15, and Zach Gandee ’15. Greg Lurito ’17, Matt Jeye ’18, Nick Coppola ’18, and Mike Velasco ’18, Nick Valcenti ’19 and Danny Rose ’19. Jim adds that one Wesleyan DKE brother was there, his brother, Kevin McGonagle ’92, and one ’84 Williams grad, Jim McGonagle’s twin brother, Jack McGonagle. A special guest appearance was made by Tommy O’Carroll, Irish singer extraordinaire, who entertained the group with his Irish ballads and songs. Tommy O first played at Chi Psi in 1982 or so and played many times at Wesleyan. Jim sends a special shout out to John’s wife, Kate Ferrara, who hosted, with a smile, a 14-hour fraternity party in her backyard—God bless her.

Jim would like to share an emotional e-mail that John’s son, AJ, sent to the group a day after the reunion that means a great deal to Jim and truly captured the entire day: “To see the Chi Psi fraternity brotherhood rally around Jim with such resounding strength really exemplified ‘the cultivation of true friendship.’ The thoughts and prayers of hundreds of brothers, old and new, are with you, Jim, in your recovery. The silver chord has never been stronger. The love you guys continue to show to each other after nearly 30 years of life at the Lodge stands as inspiration to the next generation of brothers and gives us a target to shoot for.” Chi Psi Strong!

Roger Pincus: rpincus84@wesleyan.edu

Michael Steven Schultz: mschultz84@wesleyan.edu

1985

PLEASE WRITE TO your class secretaries: Caroline Wilkins: cwilkins85@yahoo.com

Mary Beth Kilkelly: mbkeds@yahoo.com

1986

CHILDREN AND COLLEGE—some news and updates: Sue Erikson Bidwell (Sam ’21 and older brother at Saint Michael’s in Vermont); Peter Crabtree (Owen, Whitman College ’19); Sam Connor (Caleb, Ithaca College ’21); Cathy Cotins (Cole ’21 and brother at Colgate); Hal Ginsberg (Michael, Georgetown ’20); Bill Greene (Corynn ’20); Eric Hamre (Sarah, UM–Amherst ’20); Eric Howard (daughter, Hopkins ’20, sons, URTI ’20 and Stevens Inst. ’19); Ann O’Hanlon (son, Tufts ’21); Alex Rothman (Simon ’21); Sandra Schwartz (Elena, Harvard ’17); Hunter Pearson Slides (Stephen, San Francisco State ’21); Elaine Taylor-Klaus (Syd ’20): Carlie (Masters) Williams (Katie, St. Mary’s College of Maryland ’18).

Sue Erikson Bidwell says, “My husband, Jeremy, and I are looking forward to trying this empty nest thing out.” Elaine Taylor-Klaus has downsized and moved to town Atlanta. “We plan to enjoy two more years of parenting-in-residence with our high school junior before he grants us the next best gift to grandchildren—an empty nest!” Julie Stubbins says, “Empty nesting is living up to its billing; my husband, Peter Jrovsky, and I enjoy our big mutts and the beautiful hiking trails, and see our three adult kids when possible. Ben is finishing an MIT doctorate in microbiology; twin brother Jacob is at University of Pittsburgh, and Sarah is University of Edinburgh. Cathy Cotins is also excited to be an empty nester. ‘My younger son will be third generation at Wes, which has me more excited than I expected. My dad is Arthur Cotins ’48.”

Jeffrey Mendelsohn’s 13-year-old son became a teenager. “Bad news: he’s now as tall as me and thinks he knows everything. Good news: he is memorizing Hamilton and ran for student council.” Eric Hamre has one daughter playing softball for UM–Amherst, while daughter #2 just finished her junior year of high school in Long Beach, Calif., the the East Coast is calling her, too! Sam Connor and his wife were in India for the graduation of their eldest son from the Woodstock School. Asia’s oldest international boarding school.

Timothy Dyke ’86, MALS ’89 published his first book of poetry, Atoms of Muses. He is in his 25th year teaching high school English and in his 32nd consecutive year in the teaching profession. “I occasionally teach a student who eventually goes on to graduate from Wesleyan.” Bill Greene is CEO of Iconic Therapeutics, “living the dream by working 18-hour days and learning much more about HR than I ever thought I would.”

Hal Ginsberg returned full-time to Kensington, Md., and is active in progressive politics via writing and broadcasting on the Internet. “My wife, Mindy Burke, is an ESL teacher at a public elementary school with a high percentage of low-income immigrants. My younger son, William, is hoping to be accepted into a college Naval
ROTC program and to join the Marines as an officer upon graduation.”

Alex Rothman and Nina went birding on the Southeast Texas coast with Dave Warne, where they learned that a large coffee is 32 ounces and soup can be ordered in three sizes: cup, bowl, and bucket. Nancy Dull Heatley is in rural Vermont with her Cornish husband, Gareth, two cats, and dog. She works from home running education and communication programs for the Society for Vascular Surgery and is active on the Planning Commission and the Connecticut River Joint Commission. John Bogosian is excited about moving his business (zingFit) and family (wife Diana; Leo, 8; and Kali, 6) to Boulder, Colo. Hunter Pearson Silides is excited to have landed a job as the chaplain at the Canterbury School in Greensboro, N.C., but will have a commuting marriage for the next 15 months while some kids remain in high school on the West Coast.

Ann O’Hanlon is hoping that Carlie keeps fighting that good fight: Ann is chief of staff to Congressman Don Beyer, vice ranking chair of the House Science Committee, while Carlie (Masters) William is an HIV epidemiologist at NIH and can report that “Yes, it’s very hard to be a scientist these days.” Protesting skills learned at Wes are coming in handy as they man the resistance. Carlie saw Saundra Schwartz (classivist in the history department of the University of Hawaii at Manoa) in NYC, and Saundra and Allison Kaplan (journalist at Haaretz) met up in Boston.

Christine Fleming says “it’s hard to believe how time flies! I often think fondly of my math professor and advisor, WW. Comfort—such an influence on my life, who so generously gave me a ‘mercy B’ in Real Analysis senior year.” Julia Lee Barclay-Morton has created a website for people to share stories about their grandmothers (or other female ancestors): ourgrandmothersourselves.org. Can’t get more Wesleyan than that, now can it?

Additional unedited news is online at magazine.wesleyan.edu.

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1987

REUNION YEAR

THANK YOU TO everyone who made the trip to Middletown for our 30th Reunion. It was a great weekend!

Elizabeth Barnett Pathak thoroughly enjoyed her first Reunion. She caught up with Foss 5 dominates Ellie Margolis, Julie Rioux, Sarah Projansky, Karen Steinberg Kennedy, Bruce Wintman, and Matt Weiner, along with lots of other 1987 friends. Her only regret was missing running into fellow “River Rat,” Simon Heart, at the class dinner.

Brad Fuller “had an amazing time at Reunion. Feels like even though 30 years have passed, those relationships made in the late 1980s continue to deepen and enhance our lives in wonderful ways. I had a blast getting caught up with everyone. I am especially grateful to Andrew Carpenter and Sibyll Catalan who kept the fun and laughs coming all weekend long.”

Sumana Chandrasekar Rangchar is still thinking about how great last month’s Reunion was and realizes more than ever how much she loves her Wes friends. She lives in Montclair, N.J., and she and hubby of 25 years will be official empty nesters next month once their third and last child goes off to college! She works at New York Life, helping parents of children with disabilities navigate resources for financial security.

Judy Pan writes that “there were simply too many terrific people present and not enough time. I even went Friday and Saturday. Thanks to everyone who came back.”

“So great seeing everyone at Reunion,” writes Dan Rauch. “A few updates from me that I’m excited about. I am the inaugural chair of the new hospital medicine sub-board of the American Board of Pediatrics and I am moving to Boston this summer to become the chief of the division of pediatric hospital medicine for the Floating Hospital for Children at Tufts Medical Center. I am also very proud of my daughter, Haley Rauch ’15 who is teaching high school math in Harlem and finishing up the New York City Teaching Fellowship this summer.”

Alisa Kwitney: “Sorry I couldn’t make Reunion, but it’s nice to be in more touch with people like John Dorsey on Facebook. I have some good news—my son, Matt, just graduated from Kenyon College with a degree in math, and my daughter, Elinor, just completed her first year at Bard. I have a new novel, Cadaver & Queen, coming out from Harlequin Teen, and have started Liminal Comics, an imprint of Brain Mill Press. I also have some really sad news. My old friend John Gould ’86, who also went to my high school, died unexpectedly this May of heart failure. He was a professor of speech and language pathology at Elms College and a wonderful father to his sons, Cooper and Griffin.”

Andrew Hall sent the following: “Sorry I missed Reunion. I bet it was a blast. Continuing to be busy playing upright bass in a number of projects. Had a great tour of the West Coast with the instrumental rock trio Big Lazy. We opened up for the guitarist Nels Cline at the fabulous Royce Hall at UCLA, and then drove the next day to Las Vegas where we played in one of the tackiest rock bars I’ve been to. I also joined the Greenwich Village Orchestra in playing Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9, at least most of the notes.”

Nicholas Birns married Isabella Theresa Smalaro (Seton Hall ’92) on May 20 at the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception in South Orange, N.J. Isabella is a biochemist and pharmaceutical professional.

Maureen Craig reports, “My oldest child just graduated from Amherst and starts work in Boston in July. One down, three to go! Life with me is going great. My company is growing, and my husband and I are celebrating our 22nd anniversary this summer.”

Chris Lotspeich, Dan Sharp, Rob Campbell, and Scott Pryce had their own mini-reunion exploring their Scottish heritage and some mountain peaks in May. Finally, I must also say that I, too, loved Reunion. My one complaint was not having enough time to spend lounging on Foss Hill due to too many interesting seminars on the agenda. So many great people I loved seeing—too many to mention, but special thanks to Sibyll Carnochan Catalan and Naomi Meezy for a late night giggle-fest that was truly therapeutic. And to Matt Paul and Jeremy Mindich for a home-run breakfast on Sunday morning. Only four-and-three-quarter years to go until the 35th! Keep coming back! We need to connect to each other more, not less, as we enter this next phase (whatever that means) in our lives.

AMANDA JACOBS WOLF wolfabj@gmail.com

1988

PETER WRITES FOR this issue. Matt Olton reports in: ‘On a picture-perfect Saturday, May 27, in Los Angeles, Ricky Barragan and Samantha Goodman married in front of a small group of family and close friends who included Ricky’s daughters, Blanca ’21 and Lauren ’21 (incoming Wes class), and Samantha’s children, Annabelle and William. A nice Wesleyan contingent was present that included Dr. Suzanne Gilberg, Victoria Harper, Tony Rosenthal, Craig Morgan ’89, and Andy Stern ’87.’

Tim McCallum lets us know that he “had a kid: Logan McCallum, born in October to parents with a combined age of 94. First kid for us both.”

After 23 years at Silicon Valley Bank, Jim Maynard has departed to join MReserve Corp out of Mystic, Conn., cutting his commute down by 80 percent and still makes regular trips to Boston for Red Sox games.

Steve Morison shares: “After three terrific years in Rome we are returning to Cape Cod next year, largely to stay close to our daughter.”

In 2016, Dr. Emily Bliss Gerber joined UCSF Benioff Children’s Hospital Oakland as director of behavioral health.

Majora Carter writes: “My husband, James Chase, and I celebrated our 50th birthdays and our 10th wedding anniversary at a party last winter in NYC with awesome Wes friends: Evie Lovett and her husband, Jeff Shumlin ’82, Leticia Pineda, Schuyler Allen ’90, Steven Toledo ’04, and Sohana Punithakumar ’04.”

Michael and Cheryl Sheffer Rubenstein write in, “We celebrated our oldest daughter Lily’s bat mitzvah in Arnold, Md., in May. We were blessed to be joined by David Lazer, Deborah Edelman Caney, and Gordon Agress ’89.”

Paul Lewis just published the award-winning book, Manual of Section, a comprehensive analysis of the history and the role of section in architecture, already in its third printing and available in six languages. Paul was elevated to the level of fellow of the American Institute of Architects (FAIA), and was promoted to full professor at Princeton University.

Federico Quadrani lets us know he is “the executive producer of The Lead with Jake Tapper on CNN, having moved to the D.C. area from New York four years ago to launch the program.”

Hannah Doress updates: “I joined the steering committee of Resilient Communities Initiative, a coalition of environmental justice groups in the San Francisco Bay Area, including ShoreUpMarin.org, which I co-founded. We moved to Silicon Valley and have been having fun Wes get-togethers among author events with great turnouts for Alex Chee ’89 and Hida Viloria ’90 this year. Some of the folks who turned up included Amy Randall ’89, Jason Dewees ’91, Judith Sansone, Kate Hellenga, Tawnya Dudash ’89, and Samantha Ostergaard ’91.

Amy Randall and Matt Reed ’91 joined us for a DIY progressive seder this year.”

Cecelia Bolden writes, “In June of 2016, I was promoted to chief delivery officer for my company (sdpresence.com). We are a systems integrator with a staff of 150 with offices in Chicago, Charleston and LA. In 2016, I was honored to be selected as a Woman of Excellence by the Chicago Defender because of my work in the Chicago business community, as well as my philanthropic work within the City of Chicago.”
somehow. I’m busy playing and recording with lots of groups. I’m co-curating this series, Soup & Sound (their older one has finished college with plans to start law school in the fall. They are acknowledging his/five.lin/zero.lin/th in Yellowstone by chasing bear and moose with his camera.

JONATHON REPORTS THAT it’s a little quiet on the Wesleyan front after last edition’s Women’s March outburst. Anecdotally, my Facebook has many reports of WesResistance. So maybe y’all are at the barricades this quarter. Kudos.

Stephan Kline is enthused that his older son, Noah ’21, is moving to Middletown as part of the class of 2021. Noah’s younger brother, Benji, seems interested in joining the class of 2023.

Camille Nelson Kotton and David Penstein have exciting news: They each trained together and ran the Boston Marathon!

Dave Eichler and his wife, Diana, celebrated their 20th anniversary last October. They split their time between Denver and Phoenix, where their 11-year-old public relations and marketing agency has offices. This summer, they are planning to acknowledge his 50th in Yellowstone by chasing bear and moose with his camera. He also saw Oven Renfroe ’90 and Louie Maggiotto ’92 on a trip to Los Angeles.

Julie Strauss and Joel Brown are marking 25 years of marriage this summer. Their oldest, Ezra, just completed his first year at the University of Michigan (a tad different than the typical Wesleyan experience). During visiting trips to Ann Arbor, Joel and Julie got to spend some fantastic time with Joel’s former Hi-Rise roommate, David Bradley, a pediatric cardiologist at the University of Michigan hospital, and his family. Younger son Jonathan, a high school sophomore, has at least made polite overtures that he might consider Wesleyan an option for higher ed.

Holly Adams writes that while her life is not terribly exciting at the moment, it is happily filled with family and performance.

Jeff Brez is still living in New York City with his husband Adrian, and their twin boys who are approaching 3. Jeff continues his work with television and film, celebrity advocacy, and not-for-profit partnerships at the United Nations.

Ed Colbert was at a Manchester Monarchs hockey game, where Marc Casper ’90, Tas Pinther ’90, and Brian Cheek ’92 hosted a big Wesleyan group, including coach emeritus Duke and Diane Snyder and their family. He is sorry he missed Mullet Night earlier in the season, but those guys run a great show up there, just like the old days with the Cardinals, and he highly recommends the venue to any hockey fans.

Alex McClennen Dohan and David Dohan are adapting well to the empty nest with both kids mostly gone. In 2017, their younger child started college and their older one has finished college with plans to start law school in the fall. They are enjoying the newfound flexibility in meal planning and weekend activities.

After 20 years in London, Owen Thomas moved to Denmark to train to be an English and French teacher. He has two boys, Oscar (6) and Mason (2), both of whom Owen deems to be as roguishly handsome as their father.

Stephanie Dolgoff built a giant wall of love to celebrate her 50th year with the help of family and friends, including Judy Minor ’90, David Milch, Johanna Pfaelzer ’90, Andie Coller ’90, and yours truly.

Finally, with a light report, I’ll exercise my prerogative to kvell about Madelyn Fried ’19, who completed her sophomore year, including pledging Psi Upsilon, and is heading to Copenhagen for the fall semester. Jealous and proud papa here!

NICOLE CURVIN ’90 was promoted to director of undergraduate admissions at Middlebury College in Vermont. Since 2014, she has been associate director of admissions and coordinator of multicultural recruitment. Previously, Curvin worked for many years with a variety of student populations, from high school students and adults returning to school to artists and designers at the New School (Parsons and Eugene Lang College), Marlboro College, New York University, and the University of Vermont. At Wesleyan, Curvin majored in English, and she holds a master’s degree in education from Harvard University.

1990

HI, ALL! I hope everyone has been enjoying the summer. Here’s the latest.

Meg Steele and her husband are relocating to Bath, Maine, after a two-year cross-country trip in a restored Airstream. The trip included a stint as a national park ranger in Vermont and time volunteering at an Oregon lighthouse and tide pools. Meg still works in education and is “hoping to do some rowing up here, along with lots of sailing.”

Jim Desmond is teaching at the Parker Charter Essential School in Devens, Mass. He’s been there for six years teaching arts and humanities. “My inaugural session of a ukulele elective was mad popular, and I had a blast helping kids play and write songs when not teaching The Odyssey and the end of U.S. slavery. Who knew I would love teaching teenagers so much?”

Page Fortna continues to split time between NYC, where she’s a professor of international relations in the political science department at Columbia, and Portland, Ore. She and her husband, Pete Beeman, migrate between NYC for most academic years and Portland for summers and the occasional sabbatical year. She was touched by the representation of Wesfolk, including from far afield, at her father’s memorial service this spring—Sarah Travis Buck, Carolyn Clark and Dave Patterson, Amy Robins, Jeff Lewis, Ethan Flad ’89, and June Lee ’88. And a quarter century later, Page still gets together one weekend a year with Sarah Travis Buck, Carolyn Clark, Amy Robins, and Amy Scanal.

After living in Zurich, Switzerland, for almost two years, Stacey Rouse Kruckle will be changing countries again. Stacey has accepted an offer as the chief marketing officer at a consulting firm in London, and “will relocate to that fine city with her husband, two sons and dog. Wes folks who will be passing through London are welcome to visit us.”

Tim Corkran reports (via his father John Corkran ’58), that a team of eighth-graders from the school he heads, Capital Day (PK-8) in Frankfurt, Ky., earned a $20,000 prize from Verizon for developing an app, Waste Free America. The app alerts homeless shelters and soup kitchens when restaurants within a 10-mile radius have leftover food available for pickup. The idea developed during an eighth-grade trip to Chicago, where the students were struck by the plight of the homeless. The students will work with engineers from MIT in perfecting the app and make a presentation to a national audience in Orlando, Fla., in June. Tim, who has been head at Capital Day for two years told local media, “We focus on teaching kids how to think and be independent learners...It produces things like this.”

James D. Rosenblatt says, “Hard to believe our oldest graduated college over Mother’s Day from Pitzer College in Claremont, Calif. Her two younger siblings survived freshman year at Sarah Lawrence and junior year at a local high school.”

The law firm that James started 12 years ago now employs eight attorneys and is a full-service business-oriented law firm in San Antonio.

Cari Medd wrote about a new documentary featuring Jill Sung and her family. “Jill was one of my roommates at Wes and I always admired her toughness and devotion to family.” The documentary, Abacus: Small Enough to Jail, chronicles the five-year prosecution of the Sung family’s bank, Abacus Federal Savings Bank, following the 2008 financial crisis. Abacus Bank is a small community bank founded by Jill’s father over 30 years ago to serve the Asian-American community in NYC, and remains the only bank prosecuted in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis. The family’s ordeal culminated in 2015 with a five-month jury trial where Abacus and the Sung family finally prevailed on all counts. The documentary, which was filmed...
Michael also reports that after serving as the federal public defender for the Eastern District of Virginia (EDVA) from 2007 to 2015, he became a U.S. magistrate judge in the Alexandria Division of the EDVA in March of 2015.

Halle Stanford, with the Jim Henson Company, is executive producing a new series, *The Dark Crystal: Age of Resistance*, for Netflix. Son Max just finished his freshman year at Skidmore College and son Theo just finished kindergarten.

After a period of wandering, which involved three moves in 18 months, Scott Timberg and his family have settled back in LA, in a house near USC with a garage big enough for his books and guitars. Scott, who is working as a freelance writer, will be speaking on his book, *Culture Clash: The Killing of the Creative Class*, at a conference in Ireland. The Timberg clan saw Jim Miller during a visit to Joshua Tree.

Yvonne Brathwaite is the new director of programs for Global Kids, a nonprofit educational organization that helps young people in NYC and D.C. build knowledge and skills needed for lifelong success, and to participate effectively in the democratic process. Yvonne interacts with two Welles alumni, principals at schools with Global Kids programs: Luis Genao at Manhattan East and Dave Yazquez at the Bronx Studio School for Writers and Artists.

Todd Denmark vacationed in Florida, visiting his parents, bowling in the International Gay Bowling Organization tournament in Ft. Lauderdale, and topping it off with a five-day cruise.

Brian Howell writes that Marissa Sabio ’89 is now a program director with Outreach Community Ministries, a new position within an organization she’s been with for 10 years. Their daughter, Hannah, will be a senior at Whitworth University, looking at law schools, positions in the Washington state legislature, and running for Spokane city council in 2020. Sam, 17, is planning to launch his music career, and Ben, 14, starts high school, and hopes to join the state champion bass fishing team.

George Irvine writes that Wendy Bellion was promoted to full professor and a named professorship at the University of Delaware. Their son, Luke, is a black belt in Tang Soo Do, and has vast knowledge of the history of Korean martial arts. Their son, Griffin, is a star Little League pitcher. Meanwhile, George is halfway through his dissertation on the changing public roles of American research universities and chairs his city’s conservation advisory committee, promoting sustainable energy and land use in their corner of Delaware.

Rebecca Rumayor completed the CLEO pre-law program at NYU Law School to better prepare for law school, while her son, James, attended YMCA sleepaway camp, judo day camp, and Writopialabs Day camp.

Gregory Mandel is now dean of Temple Law School.

Will Barry is now a member at Miller & Chevalier, advising clients on issues involving white collar and securities enforcement, transactional due diligence and compliance with the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, money laundering, economic sanctions, and insider trading requirements.

Lizandra Vega has joined DHR International as an associate partner in the consumer and fetal practice groups.

Dan Levine and family returned to Bethesda, Md., after a year-long assignment in Chennai, India, where Dan managed leadership development and operations for a technology office The Advisory Board Company has there. Dan has been at ABC 22 years.

Cryptic Michael Reinke writes that he is “enjoying life in the second largest city in northern New England, has seen countless concerts of obscure artists, and has biked 4.5 earth units since 2010.”

Now for the “leaving government” section: Jim Ghiloni is now director of strategy and management consulting for Wolf Den Associates in Virginia. His oldest just completed his freshman year at Lafayette College, and he will be visiting Wesleyan with his youngest, “where I look forward to getting a formal campus tour, something I’ve never actually done.”

Dan Prieto is now an external senior adviser to McKinsey & Company, and serves as an advisory board member and consultant for several early stage Silicon Valley tech companies, with a focus on artificial intelligence and security. Dan is an adjunct senior research scholar at Columbia University’s School of International and Public Affairs. Dan and his wife, Adele, had their second child, a daughter, in May.

Spencer “Kip” Boyer took a more extreme approach, and fled across the northern border with his Canadian spouse, who wanted to use this moment in history to give the family a Canadian experience. Spencer’s splitting his time between Montreal and D.C., doing transatlantic relations and security work with the Brookings Institution, Georgetown University, and consulting firms.

Bruce Peabody and Stephanie Lodish celebrate their 20th wedding anniversary in August. Over the summer, they will visit Alexander Parsons, Aimée Blanchard Parsons, and their children, all future Wesleyan artists-in-residence.

Bruce, along with Jeremy Sacks, Bobbi Adams, and Jerome Copulsky attended Professor Finn’s retirement party in New York. Jeremy writes, “Finn’s comments—and the fact of the gathering itself—reminded everyone of why we went to a small, liberal arts college.” After the event, Jeremy and Jerome caught up with Sam Schneider.

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LEMONY SNICKET (DANIEL HANDLER ’92) & LISA BROWN ’93

Goldfish Ghost

(A Neal Porter Book/Roaring Brook Press, 2017)

Alison Miller got tenure at The University of Michigan School of Public Health. Her daughter, Ella, just graduated from eighth grade. Her son, Wesley, finished third grade and is a massive basketball fan—taking after his dad, Scott (a fact I can attest to on both counts).

In further news on the academic promotion front, Shura Pollatsk just got promoted to full professor of costume design at WKU, and is working on a second book.
Tamara O’Neill is retiring from the military in 2017, after 20 years as a Navy JAG and excited about taking the next step in her career, which is TBD. In January, Kate Edwards started as a research scientist at Datacolor, where she makes instruments to measure the color of paints and textiles. She still lives in Pennington, N.J., with her family. Also on the East Coast, this fall Diego von Vacano ’93 will be a visiting associate professor of political science at Yale.

Wendy Moore Hershey reports a plethora of life changes. In 2016, she remarried and she joined Asset Consulting Group. She is a consultant to nonprofit foundations and endowments, but will also work with family offices and private clients.

Dan Fortmann moved to Paris last year and has been front office manager at Hapimag since January. Anyone who is planning a trip there should look him up!

In other globetrotting news, Elizabeth Liang has continued to tour her intercultural solo show, Alien Citizen: An Earth Odyssey, which has been all over the U.S., Panama, Iceland, Spain, South Africa, and Singapore. It was made into a movie that will be available on DVD this summer.

I close with news of additions to the Wesleyan family. Sarah Tunik teaches high school English and lives in the Bay Area with her husband, Dan Oppenheimer ’89. Their eldest son, Simon ’21, is headed to Wesleyan this fall! Also joining the campus is David Meek’s son Daniel ’21. David’s wife is Lisa Brown ’90, so that’s two multi-generational Wesleyan couples in one class!

That’s all for now. Be sure to keep Paul and me updated with your news!

Paul Coviello
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Chris Richardson has been named trauma medical director at Rochester General Hospital in Rochester, N.Y. Lisa Brown writes, “Daniel Handler ’92 and I just published our latest literary collaboration: a picture book called Goldfish Ghost. It’s about a dead goldfish. In other news, our son’s fish just died. Coincidence?”

Noah Rosen became an associate professor of neurology and psychiatry at Hofstra School of Medicine. He remains the program director of the neurology residency at Northwell Health, and the director of the Northwell Headache Center.

Monique Schaulis is living in San Francisco where she has a great job at Kaiser San Francisco, split between emergency and palliative medicine. She helps dying people opt out of our crazy medical system and focus on what they are hoping for at the end of life. She’s done a lot of work over the last few years with an organization called Vital Talk, which aims to deepen physician, patient relationships by teaching communication skills. Her kids are 8 and 10, and they go to Mandarin school in the city. She still works with Christine O’Brien ’95, and had dinner with Kate Blumberg ’92 and Rachel Williams ’90. She was saddened to learn of the death of Ken Hirsch ’91, a friend and doctor.

Karen Powell and family have moved to Melbourne, Australia. Karen is the director of teaching and a senior lecturer (tax) at Deakin Law School. Deakin University is a large public university with several campuses in Australia. She sold the distillery she founded, Triple Divide Spirits, which is alive and well in Helena, Mont. If any Wes grads come through Melbourne, please do get in touch: k.powell@deakin.edu.au.

Jodi Samuels lives in Sacramento, Calif., with her spouse, Evan, and two cats. She works as deputy director of development and training for the California Primary Care Association, which supports more than 1,100 community health center sites statewide, work she reports feels even more urgent as they fight to maintain the progress they’ve made in California in increasing access to healthcare for all. She volunteers with WAVE, which provides services to victims of domestic violence and human trafficking. She also volunteers for the Alliance Française de Sacramento, and joined the local League of Women Voters to increase her advocacy activities and community involvement. She and Evan have been traveling a bunch (Rome, Austin, and Honolulu) and they’re heading to Panama this winter.

Laura (Davidson) Ross and her husband, Gregg ’90, are moving to Los Angeles in June. Laura will be taking a new job as the head of the upper school campus at the Harvard-Westlake School, and Gregg will be teaching math at the middle school campus of the same school.

Abigail Lorber Clarkson writes, “For years, every time the Wesleyan magazine arrived, I got a pit in my stomach thinking about all the extraordinary alumni who would be profiled, and how humdrum my life seems in comparison. Now I’ve decided to embrace the ordinariness of my life, knowing that there must be many of us who are living quiet lives that may not make headlines, but are nevertheless remarkable in their own way. So here’s the latest from my family. This summer we moved back to Asheville, N.C., after a three-year stint in Austin, Texas, where my husband, J., was in seminary. He received his MDiv degree in May and will be ordained an Episcopal priest in August. Our daughter, Louisa, who has been known to make an appearance in an inflatable T-rex costume, will be starting high school this fall. As of this writing I am looking for a job in Asheville, hoping to continue my role as right-hand-person to top executives.”

After 10 years working at Duke, Anne Beaven is taking a new position running the lymphoma program at UNC Hospital in Chapel Hill. She’s very excited about the new opportunity, not to mention the commute—a mere two miles from her house. Her son, Eli, is finishing up second grade, and her wife leaves for Australia soon for a six-month stint working with Save the Children.

Casey O’Neill, along with his co-host, Keith O’Brien, won the New England Newspaper and Press Association’s Innovator Award for their show, Casey and the Sports Doctor. The show, which is produced by The Day and is available at the day.com/sports/gameday and on Facebook at GameDay-Connecticut Sports, is a sports talk show that features segments on Connecticut sports as well as national sports. Casey and Keith also took third place in the same category for their work on GameDay, which broadcasts high school sports with ESPN quality production.

Warm regards,

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1994

HELLO FROM CHICAGO! In May, I (Samera) met John Lewis for lunch in Boston. It was great to catch up with him after many years. John’s year is already filling up with lots of Wesleyan connections, including dinner with Aaron Yeater. John writes, “Josh Protas, Gabe Meil, and Jonathan Bender are joining me at our family’s shack on a lake in New Hampshire (outhouse and all). The last time we were there was after Josh’s wedding in the late 1990s. Abby was game for including a reunion with her honeymoon. My wife, Suzanne, and I have three kids, ages 13, 11, and 5, and I’m currently footloose and fancy free after 17 years working for Jonathan Bush ’03 at athenaeum. I’m taking a break, planning to re-enter the workforce in the fall!”

In March, I met Sarah Burke in San Francisco, where we had a lovely dinner with our adorable girls (my twins, Sarah and Norah, and Sarah’s Lankila) who finally were able to meet. That same trip, I met up with Ben Fineman, whom I hadn’t seen in years, for dinner.

In other SF news, Olivia Morgan and her husband, David Plouffe, moved there recently. David is at the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative and she is running a gender equity initiative at Common Sense Media. She writes, “Later this month we will release a report on how gender portrayals in movies and on TV impact kids’ development, along with comprehensive guidelines on how to evaluate media for gender equity.” From Southern California, Stephanie Anagnozon is the conservation supervisor at Castaic Lake Water Agency and “survived the drought.”

Further west, Raya Salter left her lawyer gig at Natural Resources Defense Council and moved to Hawaii a year ago with her daughter to work on climate and energy justice issues as a lawyer and consultant. She also is working on media issues.

On the East Coast, Aaron Passell has been teaching urban studies at Barnard and Columbia for three years, commuting from Philadelphia. He sees Jesse Hendrix and Seth Lewis Levin in the city for drinks or food adventures. He also runs into Amy Fiske ’95 often in Philadelphia, who runs the after-school program where his younger son spends happy afternoons.

David Drogin was promoted to professor as he continues his second term as chairperson of the History of Art Department at the State University of New York, FIT. He recently published “Art and Patronage in Bologna’s Long Quattrocento” in a Companion to Medieval and Renaissance Bologna and “Dialogue of the Dogen: Monumental Ducal Tombs in Renaissance Venice,” in The Tombs of the Dogen of Venice. Next March, he will present a paper on Jacopo della Quercia in a session he organized, “The Problem of Style in 15th-Century Italian Art,” at the conference of the Renaissance Society of America.

Stephen Frail wrote from Needham, Mass., where he lives with his wife of 20 years and two boys, one completing ninth grade and one completing sixth grade. After spending over 20 years in educational publishing, he joined MathWorks, the leading developer of mathematical computing software for engineers and scientists.

He writes, “I’ve had the pleasure of reconnecting with several fellow alumni in recent months. Sid Espinosa was visiting Boston, and so Dan Lennon, Raman Prasad, and I met for dinner to celebrate our fresh year at Foss.” Raman, Dan, and David Mulei have planned a road trip this fall to meet up with Aaron “Hash” Hoshide, who teaches economics at the University of Maine.

Dr. Tyrone Williams and I caught up over a Saturday brunch recently. We followed that with an evening out with Tyrone and his wife, and Jennifer Quest-Stern
and Kevin Fairley, who are married to each other, have two kids of their own, and are both in the healthcare industry.

Several of us from the class of 1994 have also started a tradition of returning to Homecoming each fall. David Miles, Deirdre Kelly, Sarah Morgan, Jeff Reilly, Joe Pirret, and I all plan to attend Homecoming again this November.

Jonathan Kirsch is a Fulbright Scholar in Cali, Colombia, for a year with his wife (also a Fulbright Scholar) and three kids. He will be teaching at a medical school, his wife will study organic coffee, and his kids will attend a bilingual school.

David Campbell is vice president of integration management at Dell Technologies in Austin, Texas.

Matthew Fraser is a writer and one of two people running Salem House Press after teaching and studying languages since 1995, and working at the grammar, middle, and high school level. He writes, "My latest book, University, Critical Infrastructure for Children: the Astonishing Potential of New England Schools, features what I consider to be strong points of the Wesleyan Sustainability Action Plan. I also did a comparison of the Wesleyan plan with similar progressive efforts at other universities throughout New England. I enjoyed presenting my previous book, Ideas for America: Let the Sun In at Wesleyan's Earth Month in 2015, and I am looking forward to presenting my newest book to some idealistic hearts and minds at Wes soon."

Please continue to send in updates, and if anyone finds themselves in Chicago, please get in touch!

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- CAISSA POWELL: cdg2000@hotmail.com

1995

DEAR CLASS OF ’95: Bo Bell here, class co-secretary (along with my partner-in-crime, Katy McNeill). This is my first time at the helm for these notes, and I want to set it off with a shout-out to my frosh hallmate, Cheryl Mejia, who just got married! She and her partner, Clare, celebrated with a reception at the White House at end of the Obama administration, and joined the law firm, Latham and Watkins. He will be focusing his practice in New York, but will continue to live in Washington, D.C., Pride parade.

I’ve heard a lot from fellow WesCo alumni, including Ana Maria Kleymeyer, who started working with a new group in D.C., and will be representing the Federated States of Micronesia in the global climate and ozone negotiations, and Danielle Langston, who, with her family, is approaching her third anniversary of living in Brisbane, Australial! Dani is an architect, working on retirement, aged care, and education projects, and she also plays a full concert schedule with the Brisbane Philharmonic Orchestra as assistant concertmaster. Her husband, Carl, has an academic position at the Queensland University of Technology, and their kids, ages 9 and 13, are into their brass instruments and identifying Australian bird species.

Anne Bellows Lee writes: “I just moved to a new place in Santa Monica. Brought my two little girls, a few cats, and the husband with me. I am still project director for research studies of treatment for co-occurring mental illness and substance abuse, working at the UCLA Integrated Substance Abuse Programs. We are always looking for intern and volunteer research assistants—so if you want in, let me know!”

Sabrina Prince has relocated to central Harlem, still delighting her health-care advertising clients while volunteering as a marketing consultant for small business owners in Afghanistan on behalf of Bpeace. She came back from Croatia and is looking forward to a summer of rating the best pizzas in NYC with Jacqueline Moon.

Jason Segal, active in Wesleyan’s Social Entrepreneurship program, writes: “My company, Swift Current, continues to do our best to bring large-scale capital into initiatives to address climate change. Kids (Julia, 3; Ari 2) and family are enjoying life on the Upper West Side.”

Lauren Monchik is still in NYC with husband Davison Paul and daughters Violet (10) and Lina (7). She’s a science educator with Growing a Wild NYC, teaching kids in New York public schools about native plants and pollinators, as well as working on native habitat restoration.

My Wes soccer teammate Jeremy Lurgio says: “I co-directed a short documentary, The Hard Way. It has been a finalist at the Banff Mountain Film Festival and was awarded People’s Choice bronze at the Sheffield Adventure Film Festival. It’s an inspiring story of an 89-year-old ultra runner who does things the hard way to maintain purpose, momentum, and vitality. I will be taking a sabbatical from my job as an associate professor at the University of Montana School of Journalism, where I co-teach a course on how to effectively report stories from Native American communities. My wife, Caroline, and our kids, Lachlan (7) and Amelia (4), will be living in New Zealand, while I work on projects that explore the relationship of indigenous communities with the news media.”

Andrew Neiman is living the dream as a St. Louis actor/bartender/adjunct professor. He’s received a commission to adapt Shakespeare’s Richard III into an hour-long hip-hop production for an Illinois middle school. Later this summer he’ll be co-producing and playing the title character in a production of Chekhov’s Uncle Vanya. Andrew says, “Cheers, y'all.”

Neil Parekh surfs! “It’s been several years since I have been to confinement/ submitted an item for Class Notes. Pam Stumpo ’96 and I moved to D.C. when I got a job in communications with United Way Worldwide. Our daughter, Emily Margaret Parekh, turned 4 years old in April.” He attended the annual Philip Brown Memorial Lecture, where he saw Andrew Fairbanks ’90. “He did my on-campus interview back in the day. Thanks, Andy.”

Randy Jackson and Brooke Leinwand Jackson are in Inwood (upper Manhattan) with children Ty and Frida (twins, 13). Brooke is principal of the NYC Lab School for Collaborative Studies, a public high school in Chelsea. Randy, who has been in the social justice organizing sector—working at local, state, and national levels—is now director of development and planning at ALIGN: The Alliance for a Greater New York. They stay in touch with dear Wes friends—especially Dan Smith, Zeke Volkert ’96, and Julia Lazarus.

Shayne Spaulding checks in: “A couple of years ago, I moved with my husband, Josh Shepherd, and boys Wiley (9) and Kieran (6) to Swampscott, Mass., after living in Brooklyn for nearly 15 years. Small-town living has been an adjustment, but we are enjoying the ocean breezes, our garden, and local politics. I work for the Urban Institute in D.C., a social policy think tank. Lots to write about these days.”

Jen Levine-Fried, now CFO of the National Network of Abortion, writes, “It’s so rewarding to be working for an organization at the forefront of reproductive, social, and racial justice. Last November, I was able to visit with Eric Meyerson and Jennifer Parker Dockray. I regularly see Noam Shore and Noah Rumpf, as we all belong to the same synagogue.”

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[Please see the full version of these Notes at classnotes.blogs.wesleyan.edu.]

1996

HELLO FELLOW ’96ERS. I hope all is well—it’s getting very hot here in Maryland. Should be lots of pool and beach days this summer. A few of you have written in with updates:

- Sam Effron writes in about his promotion to member at the law firm of Mintz Levin in New York. He focuses his practice on venture capital, start-ups and emerging growth companies, fund formation, and crowdfunding platforms. Congrats!
- Amy Costa lets us know that a few ’96ers (Flo Stueck, Kate Treveloni, Esmé Finlay, and Amy) were inducted to the Wesleyan Athletics Hall of Fame last fall as part of the 1994 women’s soccer team that won the ECAC championship. Also, she was the team physician for USA hockey’s women’s U18 world championship where they won gold in Zlín, Czech Republic, in January. She visited with Kate Treveloni in Prague while she was there.
- Nick McQuaid let us know that after 11-plus years in the government, he left the White House at end of the Obama administration, and joined the law firm, Latham and Watkins. He will be focusing his practice in New York, but will continue to live in D.C. He looks forward to being in touch with Wes folks in both cities.

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■ DACQUE TIRADO: dacquerato@yahoo.com

1997

WHILE MOCON MAY be gone, the connections among our class are more solid than ever. It was a thrill to reconnect with dear friends and to find “new” friends in our class who we hadn’t gotten to meet prior to graduation.

We really appreciate the Reunion Committee’s hard work. And congratulations to Kimberly King, the recipient of the Wesleyan University Service Award, and Santi “Santigold” White on her Distinguished Alumni award!

Attending the WE Seminars made us realize what a powerful influence Wesleyan had on us, enabling us to deepen our intellectual engagement with the world during the past two decades. We were blown away by the insight, talent, and raw honesty of our visionary classmates who shared their perspectives on their work at “The Future of Digital Media” (Santi “Santigold” White, Craig Thomas, Sean Brecker, Carter
In other updates... Kubi Ackerman is director of the Future City Lab, a cutting-edge interactive space at the Museum of the City of New York exploring the key challenges and opportunities that New York will face in coming generations. Kubi invites all Wes students and alumni in New York to come visit the lab.

Abby Elbow writes: “After 15 years of talking about it, I’ve finally taken the plunge and moved to Alaska. I’m very happily living near my brother and nieces and other family, am surrounded by beautiful mountains and water and, at this time of year, 19 hours of sunlight! I also made a career change a few years ago and became a nurse, and am now working with Alaska Native moms and babies to improve long-term maternal and infant health and social outcomes.”

Adam Borden writes: “I left The Hershey Company about 18 months ago after launching Kisses Deluxe—Hershey’s trade-up to premium chocolate—and returned to Baltimore to work for McCormick, where I manage the Kitchen Basics culinary stock business. We are having dinner with Adam Bakun and his wife, Ann, in November at Blue Hill at Stone Barns—hoping for luck in getting our reservations.”

Yolanda Denson-Byers graduated from Luther Seminary with a doctorate in ministry. Her thesis was titled, Walk Me to Gate: Christian Practices of Accompaniment with Dying People and Their Families. Yolanda is called as a hospice chaplain and bereavement coordinator with St. Croix Hospice in St. Cloud, Minn.

Jim McLean writes: “I’m working as an emergency department physician assistant in Fort Collins, Colo., where my wife, Heather, and I just bought our house and are raising our 2-year-old, Felix. We just moved out here two years ago from Berkeley, Calif. Great hiking, super family-friendly, and tasty beer! Don’t get to see too many fellow alumni out here, but always glad to hear from people!”

Annika Sweetland is an assistant professor at Columbia University in psychiatry and public health, where she does global mental health research. She is happily married to photographer Nacho Guerra, whom she met during her Wesleyan study-abroad program in Costa Rica in 1997 and reconnected with 16 years later.

Dr. Brendan Armm is a leading nationally board-certified acupuncturist, and doctor of acupuncture and oriental medicine, specializing in orthopedics, pain management, and integrative medicine. He serves on the faculty of one of the nation’s top Chinese medical schools. He is the founder and clinical director of Lotus Integrative Medicine Santa Monica. Inspired by the benefits acupuncture brought his patients, he created BackInBand®, a self-administered acupuncture device that offers affordable and convenient daily treatment for low back pain.

Finally, it is with tremendous sadness that I have to report that our beloved classmate Obi Okobi has passed away. She was principal of City Neighbors Hamilton School, Baltimore City Public Schools in Maryland, and had also worked in various capacities with the Prospect Hill Academy Charter School, The Park School of Baltimore, and Waverly Elementary/Middle School, all in Baltimore; and the Hamden Public Schools in Connecticut. Obi was a source of inspiration and joy to the students, teachers, families, and colleagues throughout the Baltimore district and Connecticu. She personified the love of learning, commitment to students, and dedication to the principles of equity and justice that are the hallmark of a great educator. Obi was an active member of many organizations and communities, focusing on arts and culture, children, civil rights and social action, education, health, human rights, poverty alleviation, and social services. She served as a mentor, motivational speaker, outreach coordinator, and girl’s lacrosse coach. She was an avid runner, participating in several half-marathons. She was on the board of directors of Sheldon Calvary Camp in Conneaut, Ohio, and also on the board of directors of Miss Porter’s School in Farmington, Conn. She will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved her.

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1999

ED HONG AND a gang of other Wes alumni gathered on idyllic Lake Champlain in Shelburne, VT, during Memorial Day Weekend to celebrate the marriage of their dear friend, Andrew Merz, to the equally hilarious and kind Simone Lichy. Joining their group were classmates Sam Hoyt, Grace Kim, Rebecca Slotnick, Chris Brody, Jesse Feldman, Richard Kruger, and Janice Gabucan Kruger ’98, and our various partners and kids. Ed is happy to report that they are holding up pretty well at 40. Also in attendance were Bill Purinton ’58, Eric Oliver ’88, and Nils Vaule ’98.

Bays, and Maggie McLean Suniewick).

Highlights include seeing Christine Landry, her wife, Megan Reed, and their children, and seeing how much Matt and Amy Goorin Fogelman’s daughters have grown since the last Reunion. We went all fangirl on Mia Lobel, producer of the Revisionist History podcast, and we ran home and watched the 60 Minutes piece on the rise of women’s soccer in Iran, produced by Alexandra Pooolos. Jess was delighted to see her fresh year roommate, Erica Kaiser Schuyler, when she and her sons stopped by the Foss Hill festivities. We enjoyed catching up with Lauren Porosoff. Julie Philips Wolf, Matt Mulvey, Leelaah Rothschild deKoven, and Seth Spector at the class dinner.

We wished that we had had more time to spend with everyone who came to Reunion. I want to give a shoutout to everyone: go to classnotes.blogs.wesleyan.edu to see the list. Let us know if we skipped your name and we’ll get it up ASAP—and send some news!

Josh Suniewick’s family is making a move: “Maggie was made president of digital enterprises at NBC/Universal last fall and has been commuting from Philly to NYC daily. We are looking forward to having a better life balance and more family time with our three boys.”

Abdul Rashed has been commissioned to dance and produce in the U.S., Europe, South America, and Latin America. Abdul sang the praises of his dancer and rehearsal assistant Nik Owens ’12 and dancer Nick Daily ’17.

Lauren Porosoff and her husband, Jonathan Weinstein, have a book coming out, EMPOWER Your Students: Tools to Inspire a Meaningful School Experience. “The book is about helping students notice how their assignments and interactions can be contexts for values-consistent behavior, and to choose those values-consistent behaviors even when it’s hard.”

Andy Hiller lives in Brooklyn with his husband and son, Dante. Twice a year they get a visit from Clara Petit and Wally Eienkel. “We don’t get to see each other often, but the bond is as strong as ever,” she writes.

Derek DiMatteo is working on his dissertation on protest literature and higher education at Indiana University at Bloomington. He won the Winchester Fellowship Award from the Wesleyan English Department this year.

Monica Santana Rosen lives in Chicago with her architect husband and children, Antonio, Marlo, and Ana. She launched a consulting firm, Alma Advisory, providing human capital consulting to school systems across the country. She writes, “I’ve been spending time consulting in Hawaii, Memphis, and Tampa, among others. We have a team of nine and I’m loving life as a start-up CEO, helping others, for people who want to learn about wine in a down-to-earth way, without the snob factor.

Nadia Gardner received a master’s in environmental science and management from the University of California, Santa Barbara in 2006. She has worked for Columbia Land Trust as Conservation Manager for 10 years. She lives with her partner, Michael Manzulli, and 18-month-old son, Matteo Gardner Manzulli, in the forest within a block from the beach on Oregon’s north coast, where they hike and surf.

Breton Leonard-Quick was sad to miss Reunion, and wrote to us from Boston, where he’s been with the Mintz Levin law firm for 15 years. Breton lives in Lexington, Mass., with his wife, Katie, and two children, Thomas and Violet.

You can check out some photos from Reunion at wesleyan.edu/rcr2017 and on the Wesleyan University—Class of 1997 Facebook page. Why not start planning to come back for our 25th Reunion in 2022? We’ll be there. O’Rourke’s menus in hand!

In the meantime, please continue sending us your updates about work, home, family, travel, books, films, podcasts, and adventures big and small.

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[Please see the full version of these Notes: classnotes.blogs.wesleyan.edu]
On January 9, Jennifer Karlin and her husband, Andrew Mullen, welcomed their first son, Maxwell D. Mullen-Karlin, into their lives and their home in the hills of Oakland, Calif. They have fun introducing him to all their Bay Area friends, including Laura Plagman, Jonathan Bloch, Ben Work, Christoph Hansmann, and Lauren Borowsky, and Jen’s current co-resident, Kaitlyn Krauss ’08.

Jose Stevenson and his wife, Dalia, welcomed their first son, Emmanuel Angel, on May 28, born 7 pounds and 15 ounces. They are head over heels in love with him and are adjusting to all the delights and challenges of new parenthood. Jose’s new favorite pastime is staring down at his son sleeping on his chest.

Elizabeth Shulman and her husband, Andrew Mastronarde, welcomed their second redheaded, Canadian-U.S. dual citizen baby on October 5. Her name is Mia Leona Mastronarde. She is a sweet, smiley girl who loves music and finds her brother to be hilarious.

Ike and Liz Botein Walker ’98 live in Acton, Mass., with their two kids, Rachel (12) and Izzy (9). In November, Ike ran the New York City Marathon for the first time, and classmates Dan Ryan, Jac Lahav ’00, Jada Shapiro, and Shanna Handel cheered him on in Brooklyn. In January, Ike started a new job, putting his computer science degree to use as a database architect for GitHub.

Lena Sadowitz moved back to Connecticut with David Andrews’ O2 and their four kids (9, 7, 4, 1). Lena works for Loonies Chaffee and enjoys finding other Wes alumni on campus. She is getting used to a less urban lifestyle, including a barn full of bats and a pond full of frogs. They are happy to have more room for their coffee and baking equipment and they welcome Cardinal visitors!

Susan Landau is a neuroscientist at UC, Berkeley doing research on brain changes in Alzheimer’s disease. Susan and her husband, Pierre Garrigues, have a four-year-old, Gabriel, and a 1-year-old, Claire, who keep them on their toes.

Dani Snyder-Young is joining the faculty at Northeastern University to teach theater. She and her husband and 2-year-old daughter are very excited to move to move to Boston.

Amy Martin was featured in the Houston Chronicle for her work representing an appellate client who was convicted of capital murder. Her husband, Zack Becker, sat a five-day zen sesshin with friends at the Houston Zen Center—and survived!

Abby Levine, who has the privilege of teaching dance back at Wes, reports with a sad and heavy heart that her dearest friend and our classmate, Andy Williamson, passed away unexpectedly on May 5. Many Wes folks have come together in NYC and Los Angeles to mourn and celebrate Andy’s life. Donations may be made to the Andy Williamson Memorial Scholarship Fund at Shire Village Camp.

Eve Andrias, Hannah Blitzer, and Nina Kontos had a joint 40th birthday party with about a dozen Wes friends.

Kevin and I continue to enjoy life at 40 and hope each of you are celebrating this milestone by partying like it’s 1999. Be good, be well, and be in touch!

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KEVIN KÜHLER: kevinkuhler@gmail.com

2000

TONY DUCRET RECEIVED his MFA from the Peter Stark Producing Program at USC in May. He screened SPARKS, a short film that he produced and directed for USC, the night before graduation. Tony will remain in Los Angeles as he pursues opportunities in the television writing and independent feature producing spaces.

A.J. (DeAsses) Hernandez Anderson and her husband, Mauricio (Swarthmore ’00), welcomed their second child, Ronin Quetzal, on February 9, in Miami, Fla. Ronin’s big sister, Sienna Metzli, is almost 4. A.J. is back to practicing civil and banking litigation at Lapin & Leichtling, LLP.

STEPHANIE ELSON BRUNEAU ’00
The Benevolent Bee
(Quarry Books, 2017)

Andrea McKnight sent the following update: “I am still on Cape Cod with my son. I am proud to announce my selection to the 2017 Massachusetts Super Lawyers Rising Star list! This is my fifth consecutive year. It is such an honor! I am still coaching lacrosse, which gets me out of the office for some fun in the spring. Maura Trail-O’Brien, Stacia Poulos Rozanitis, and I went to Florida a few months ago to celebrate Adrienne Smith Chang’s birthday. It was so much fun. I see Julie Hook Bunnell and Jeanne Gabbay a few times a year. I had lunch last weekend with Emma DeSimone ’01!”

Luke Davenport writes, “I am still analyzing data for public schools in the Bronx and Harlem with my business, District Public. I have also gotten involved in grassroots political organizing through a new group called Empire State Progressives. If you live in New York and are looking to get involved, give me a shout!”

Laurny Siegel continues to not be married or have any children and is extremely grateful for this. She’s been bicentral between NYC and LA, where she makes commercials/content with her consultancy, Team Collective, and multimedia art with herself.

Dylan Reilly writes, “For the past year, I have been working for Oscilloscope, a startup in the Hartford, Conn., area. We create technologies for listening to sound (like music) using neural networks. After having just completed a grant from the U.S. Air Force, we are gearing up to release our first product based on the tech: Synchrony. It’s an LED controller that can react to music like a human. As the CTO, I’m responsible for all the software and hardware engineering. If you want to check it out, go to synchronyleds.com. Before that, I had a fun run working as an engineering team lead for the game developer, Venan Entertainment—right down the street from Wesleyan. Unfortunately, Venan fell victim to the fickle nature of the freemium gaming industry and had to close its doors just about a year ago, but you can still find our games in the app store.”

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2001

I (MARA) AGREE with you. It’s maybe a little weird that I’ve held on to this role for so many years. Aside from the sheer and obvious glamour that comes along with being class secretary—and now co-class secretary, thanks to Aryn—why am I still around? In complete truth, when I hear back from folks I get a little electrical charge of inspiration and motivation. This round was no exception. Thanks. And without further delay...

Since 2014, Sujata Sidhu has been the lead legal counsel for We Are Seneca Lake, defending over 650 charges of disorderly conduct and trespassing related to peaceful nonviolent protests to stop a gas storage project in the Finger Lakes. After years of fighting, the legal team has succeeded in getting most of the charges dropped or acquitted at trial. More importantly for We Are Seneca Lake, the gas company just announced that it was discontinuing its plans to expand its propane storage, which was the primary issue necessitating the civil disobedience campaign. Good timing. As Sujata and her husband, Carl, just had a second baby a few months ago. When she goes back to work, Sujata will be teaching a civil disobedience clinic at Cornell Law School and continuing to practice small-town law.

Last year, Elaine Ho opened an educational childcare center, Kiddie Academy of Cambridge, in Cambridge, Mass.: “Any alumni getting advanced degrees at Harvard and MIT—come to drop off your kids at my daycare! There is something new every day as an entrepreneur. It is quite different from my previous 15 years working as an actuary and I love every minute of it!”

Nora Friedman writes, “Teaching Suzuki violin in Brooklyn at the Brooklyn Conservatory of Music and out of my private studio. It’s a fact that Wesleyan off-spring make the best violinists. Openings for ages 3.5 to 7. Anyone interested can get in touch at joyful-violin.com.”

Louisa Michaels works on robots in Pittsburgh, Pa. Her son, Leon, is redheaded, happy, and 7. I can personally vouch for her claim about robots, and also for how awesome her kid is.

Alexis Brooks and husband Brendan Fitzpatrick announce the birth of their son, Callan Brooks Fitzpatrick, on May 12. They live in the Dupont Circle neighborhood of D.C., a short walking distance from Alexi’s work at the U.S. Treasury Department. Jenny Selgrath Rau was able to celebrate the upcoming birth of baby Callan at Alexi’s baby shower in Chicago last March.

Eric Schulteis writes, “I completed my urban studies doctorate from MIT. I’m moving with my partner to Montpelier, Vt., to join the Healthcare Consumer Advocate Project of Vermont Legal Aid as a staff attorney. I would love to connect with WesTech alumni in the area. My email is eric.schulteis@gmail.com.”

“Still working in Houston for BHPBilliton as an exploration geologist,” Adam Goss writes. “Promoted to principal geologist in January, working on deep-water...”
projects in the eastern Caribbean, namely offshore Trinidad and Tobago. Just came back from an awesome field trip in Central Tobago that totally rocked. My wife, Janice, and two kids, Joaquin (5) and Amelia (5), are enjoying the heat and humidity this summer that Houston is known for.

Michael Polson was awarded a PhD from CUNY Graduate Center in anthropology for his dissertation on the marijuana economy in Northern California. He finished out his first job at American University, and he is departing for UC, Berkeley with his boyfriend, to commence a two-year writing fellowship. In response to my request for excellent nonprofit nominations, Michael plugged a friend’s nonprofit. “My friend, Alisha Berry, runs Camp Sojourner, which takes girls from Philadelphia who have little chance to leave the city, to the outdoors every summer and provides year-round social justice-based leadership development for those girls in their communities. Alisha is a tireless advocate for the 100-plus girls, mostly low-income girls of color, and puts a lot of blood, sweat, and tears into making it run. Their website is girlsleadershipcamp.org: people can make donations online if they’re inspired.”

CABESTAN

A Good Idea: A Novel
(Viking Books for Young Readers, 2017)

Flo Anito wrote a song called “In Your Hands” for a Bolivian-based NGO that her husband and his brother co-founded. The Fuller Center for Housing Bolivia seeks to eradicate poverty housing in the country by building homes for families in need. “They are always looking for volunteers to come down and help build homes in Bolivia.” Flo writes, “and it’s a beautiful country that I think a lot of Wesleyan students and alumni would enjoy visiting” (fullcenterbolivia.org).

Kannan Vasudevan performed at L.A. Opera from June 15-18, in a new opera called Thumbprint. Kannan writes: “It is a fusion of operatic and South Asian musical styles and tells the true story of Mukhtar Mai, who has become a pioneering figure for women’s rights. I’ve been involved with the opera for a few years now, including its premiere in NYC in 2014.”

Aryn will be covering the next round. So please send updates her way.

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REUNION YEAR

HAPPY SUMMER, CLASS of 2002. Our fantastic 15th Reunion came and went. Overall, it was an incredible weekend. I want to give a special shoutout to my co-organizers on the planning committee who did an excellent job in recruiting our classmates to attend, especially co-chairs Suzanne Appel and Jamie Novogrod.

Suzanne relocated to New York City and is the managing director at the Vineyard Theater, an off-Broadway theater company dedicated to producing bold new plays and musicals. Jamie left his job at NBC News in NYC to relocate to Los Angeles where he is now the West Coast bureau chief for Vice News.

And thank you to the other organizers—Britton Boyd, who is the FBI supervisor special agent in charge over-the-counter terrorism programs in El Paso, Texas, and Kerry Holahan, who is the managing director of The Bridge Ensemble, a professional 16-voice chamber choir that explores the connection between pre-17th, late 20th, and 21st, century choral repertoire, and Heather Alderfer Abbott, who is the associate registrar at Yale Law School. Kerry also won an award for his service to Wesleyan at our class dinner!

All in all, it was a wonderful weekend of wandering around campus, hanging out on Foss Hill, and attending various events and seminars (extra points for Alex Horwitz’s screening and Q&A for Hamilton’s America and Jamie Novogrod’s panel about fake and real news). I was very impressed by the next generation of Wesleyan students who offered astute observations about the college and the world outside of Wesleyan. It was great to see and meet illustrious alumni across all industries speak at seminars, receive awards, and interact with their classmates in inspiring ways.

The Foss Hill dance party was a lot of fun, as was our wonderful class dinner with retiring Professor John Finn in attendance (though our drinks reception could have used some more alumni in attendance). Some interesting observations only at Wesleyan: finding a pop-up tattoo studio operating out of a creative work space in Hewitt, a freshman making Turkish coffee for her friends out of the somewhat brand new kitchen in Butterfield C, the fact that Mocon was erased from Wesleyan history without any physical evidence for where it used to be, a fleeting appearance by the Douglas Cannon for the first time that I’ve ever been on campus.

We had a great class dinner, where we invited Professor Finn to attend. I had the opportunity to visit the new R.J. Julia Bookstore, Wesleyan’s new campus bookstore located in the heart of Middletown. While I will always miss Atticus and the black bean soup, the new bookstore is incredible and I think it will be a great bridge between the campus and the city, hopefully fostering new and positive interactions between the residents and the students. And in walking the downtown area, I was pleasantly impressed by the amount of new restaurants, boba shops, and stores (extra points to see our mainstays First and Last Tavern, Thai Gardens, and Tuscany Grill still thriving). And of course, a visit to Wesleyan isn’t complete without breakfast at Or Reuven, which is still very tasty after all these years.

I also want to thank everyone who did attend from our class. While I am sure I am forgetting a ton of names, I wanted to give a shoutout to everyone: go to class notes.blogs.wesleyan.edu to see the list. Let us know if we skipped your name and we’ll get it up ASAP—and send some news!

Everyone seems to be doing great and I appreciate everyone attending—now onto our 20th Reunion!

JILL BENSON GUSTAFSON graduated with her master’s degree in nursing and is a certified nurse midwife. She also has a 2-year-old son and lives with her husband, Brett, in Asheville, N.C.

On February 22, Jesse P. Karlsberg and his wife, Lauren Bock, welcomed their first child, Lucey Rose Karlsberg, into the world. The family is living in Atlanta, where Jesse accepted a full-time position back in September as senior digital scholarship strategist at the Emory Center for Digital Scholarship. Jesse edits Sounding Spirit, a series of digital critical editions of vernacular sacred American music published by the University of North Carolina Press, and is managing editor of Atlanta Studies, a digital journal on the Atlanta metropolitan region.

Joanne Alcantara is the executive director for API Chaya, a nonprofit organization working to end violence. They provide direct services to Asian, South Asian, and Pacific Islander survivors of domestic and sexual violence, and human trafficking survivors from all communities.

Leanne Crowley is living in Los Angeles with her husband, Josh, and 2½-year-old daughter, Finley. She is a post-production supervisor, most recently on The History of Comedy, a documentary series for CNN, airing this summer.

Rachel Wallis has spent the last two years organizing Gone But Not Forgotten, a community memorial quilt for individuals killed by the Chicago Police. Three panels of the quilt are on exhibit this summer at the Jane Addams Hull-House Museum in conjunction with the exhibition, State of Incarceration.

After teaching last year in the Yale Music Department as a lecturer in ethnomusicology, John A. Graham is back in Tbilisi with his wife and two kids, working on turning his dissertation on Georgian traditional polyphony into a book. He is running a niche cultural tours business called johngrahamtours.com and welcomes all Wes alumni to come explore the Caucasus region!

After over four years as an assistant clerk magistrate, Samantha Gilimbardo Larson is an attorney at a law firm that specializes in elder care and financial planning for people with special needs. Her husband, Brian, is a Doctor of Physical Therapy student at Massachusetts General Hospital, and her son, Myles, starts kindergarten in the fall. Her daughter, Ruby, age 2½, is crushed that she can’t ride the school bus, too. In January, Sam and Emily Teitsworth traveled to Barbados, and their families will reunite in Aspen, Colo., for Emily’s sister’s wedding in September.

Jesse Soursourian is in production for a documentary about a team of women in Nagorno-Karabakh who work to clear the country of land mines left over from their war of independence.

Julia Marcus moved to the Boston area to be closer to her husband Benny’s family. She’s doing infectious disease research as an assistant professor at Harvard Medical School, navigating the wonderful chaos of a new baby (Lucy) and a toddler (Asa), and reconnecting with freshman-year roommate Cara Herbitter.

Caroline Knox shared that 8 Warren ladies are expanding their brood. Sarah Snyder welcomed Hannah Autumn Snyder in 2016 and Jenssen Knox Lindow arrived in 2017.

Matt Kushner and Lauren Kushner (Brown ’04) are expecting their second child, a girl, in October. Their first, Marian, is almost 2 and is keeping them very busy. Matt is coming up on three years working at Method Studios in Chelsea as a VFX technical director, and Lauren is working as a 3D generalist at AMNH.
WALKING WITH GIANTS IN THE HILLS OF THAILAND

What happens when a Wesleyan student discovers a passion for protecting elephants—and begins her career in a small Southeast Asian Village?—By Rebecca Winkler ’16

REBECCA WINKLER ’16 began working with the Mahouts Elephant Foundation (MEF) through her Feminist, Gender and Sexuality Studies thesis project, Walking with Giants; Ecofeminist Insights on the Tourism Industry in Thailand. The foundation’s Walking with Elephants project provides income to a Karen hill tribe village and allows their elephants to return to their natural habitat. The project also serves as a research hub to study Asian elephants and the ways the village coexists with them. Winkler, now project manager for Walking with Elephants, enjoys a unique perspective into the daily life of these huge animals and the tribe that both depends on and protects them. Visit mahouts.co.uk for more information.

I wake up around 5:15 a.m. to the crowing of the roosters around my house. Today I’m planning to head out with our mahouts (traditional elephant keepers) to the elephants—hiking four miles into the forest—and I won’t be home until late. As I get ready, enjoying a cup of coffee made with beans our neighbor picked, I hear my host grandpa and Manit, our head mahout, calling my name. I know there’s been a change.

I won’t be going to the elephants today, Manit tells me. Instead, I’ll be helping the family plant this year’s dry rice. The shaman has decided that today is a “good day”—so everyone will head out to the new rice plot that has lain fallow for the past six years. Back when I was a student at Wesleyan, I was a planner, making lists and schedules to organize my days. Here in the small Karen hill tribe village, I’ve found that planning more than a few hours ahead almost always leads to frustration. “Go with the flow,” is one of many lessons I’ve learned here, where everyone lives at the will of nature.

However, the next day at 6:50 a.m., Manit is knocking at my door and soon we are walking out to the elephants through the forest, all of us chatting as we go. Suddenly I hear a loud buzzing and feel burning on my arms and face. Wasps! I scream and run away, but I have a number of stings and the pain is severe. Eyes brimming, I prepare to head back home, but Manit grabs some leaves from a specific plant he chooses from among those nearby, chews them up, says a short blessing over the wad, and applies it to my stings. The pain starts to recede instantly, and so does the swelling. He tells me to keep pressing it on my skin and I will be fine.

“Let’s go,” he says and continues walking out to the elephants. Turning back would make me look weak, so I follow him and the others.

We arrive at our four elephants—Thong Kam, Bai Fern, Sunti, and Mario—and the mahouts untether them so they can head off for their day. We follow along. In the past, before cash crop corn farming led to deforestation, the elephants never had to be tethered at night, and sometimes they still don’t when they are farthest from dangerous pesticide-rich cornfields. Our organization is working with the forestry department on reforestation.

In rainy season, the mahouts are always busy finding wild mushrooms that grow everywhere in the forest. By 11 a.m. they’ve gathered a large bag and decide it’s time to cook lunch. They’ve each brought their own rice, chili, and salt. Another mahout, Cha Tor, cuts down some bamboo to make into a cooking pot. Fresh green bamboo won’t burn if it’s got liquid inside it, so it can be put directly on fire as our soup pot. The mahouts find fresh turmeric, lemongrass, and wild herbs, add about 10 chilis, and boil everything together with the mushrooms. The result is a delicious soup that feeds our whole group.
After lunch we track down the elephants. We never know where or how far they’ll walk; it can range from 10 miles on a long day to less than a mile when they’ve found a spot with plentiful food and water. The mahouts are expert trackers, and it usually doesn’t take more than an hour to find them.

Days when the elephants do less walking are a treat. The mahouts set up hammocks to relax, and I get the unique opportunity to observe Asian elephants in their mountain habitat. I wouldn’t be safe if I were this close to wild elephants, so what I’m able to observe here is the clearest picture into the daily life of Asian elephants that exists. Soon, thanks to a grant from the European Outdoor Conservation Association, we will have a couple of post-docs arriving to help us publish research on the life of elephants.

All our elephants have completely different personalities. Thong Kam is 30 years old and our matriarch. She’s had a difficult life, spending a decade of her life chained to a post and away from the forest, and she has never been exposed to forest life. She’s protective of her little sibling, Sunti. When guests come, she will often stop Sunti before he approaches them, as if to say, “You have to know better than to approach strangers!” With the mahouts and me, though, she is completely comfortable.

Sunti, Thong Kam’s youngest, was born in the forest here. He’s learning all of the skills of a calf in the wild, and I expect he will be the most well-adjusted.

Mario is 7 years old. His mother ran out of milk when he was breastfeeding him and he seems to be developmentally delayed—a big tusker whose personality is much more similar to Sunti than to an adult. Mario clearly sees Manit as a family member, running to him, rather than another elephant, for comfort.

I’ve now spent about a year with this herd and their mahouts, and I feel like they’re all part of my family. Like the mahouts, I can see the nuances between Sunti’s approach when he wants to smell me and when he wants to “play,” which in elephant terms means “knock me over.” I still know so little compared to the mahouts, but I do know how incomplete the lives of most elephants in captivity are. I am determined to produce as much awareness on this and to help as many elephants as I can.

We return to the village at day’s end, and after dinner I join my host, Grandma Cee Dee, for a cup of tea while she prepares her betel nut mixture on her porch. She’s a spitfire lady, never afraid to tell you her blunt personality traits she observes at the Walking Elephants Home project—and read more about the Clearest Picture into the Daily Life of Asian Elephants that Exists.

...WHAT I’M ABLE TO OBSERVE HERE IS THE

2004

MEEGHAN WRITES FOR this issue. Thank you to my classmates for taking a moment to share their lives (and allowing me some room for editorial commentary per usual, mostly in the form of happy exclamations). In these strange times of escalating extreme nationalism, racism, sexism, terrorism, elitism, climate change denialism, and all the other negative “isms” out there, I asked to hear about good people doing good stuff, and they have delivered. So check out ‘04’s positive impact in their families, communities, and world.

Saori Imaizumi has made D.C. her home for the past seven years, while spending significant time on the road traveling to countries such as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Kenya, Ethiopia, Tajikistan and Sri Lanka. The main purpose of her travels? To improve quality of education and access to it, increase youth employment, and create an innovation ecosystem. Through her work at the World Bank, she leverages technological and innovative solutions to address these very challenges. Saori is working on the African regional partnership platform called PASET, to enhance applied science, engineering, and technology capacity at the institutional level across Africa. She is happy to hear about any collaboration opportunities for this initiative if anyone is interested!

Eliza Simon is living in D.C., and she and husband Micah welcomed two adorable and energetic little boys, Caleb and Nate, into their family in 2015 and 2016. When she isn’t busy with her family, she is getting it done as an attorney at the Civil Rights Division at the Department of Justice, working on housing discrimination. She feels lucky to still have so many great people from Wesleyan in her life! And we feel lucky to have you, Eliza, and are proud of the important work you’re doing. I am probably embarrassing you, frosh roomie, but it’s true!
Elaina Dellacava completed her psychiatry residency at Montefiore Medical Center as the chief resident, and is starting a fellowship in geriatric psychiatry at New York Presbyterian. She lives in Manhattan with her husband. She has free advice for those coping with the stress of 2017: Do as the doctor does, and get yourself a large dose of family time and improv comedy.

Abraham Lateiner and his partner, Erika, just hit a major milestone: 10 years of marriage! They’ve made their home in Cambridge, Mass., with daughters Estella (7) and Lulu (5). They frequently hang out with Bess Thaler and Sam Fentress, Ben Abrams ’03, and occasionally Tom Peteet. Abe is still mourning the mass departure of other classmates like Ben Morse and Ethan Butler, but is delighted to still be in the same state as Ariel Plishkin. Abe left his 10-year teaching career to do something different: community organizing work to co-create spaces for healing/transformation for people who benefit materially from systems of injustice. This work affirms for him that freedom is possible. The current occupant of the White House is, to him, a sign that the hegemony of rich white men is starting to crumble, and he sees himself as part of a hospice effort for this process.

Carl Cervone graduated from Columbia Business School and co-founded Enveritas, a platform that allows coffee companies to validate the sustainability of their purchasing with complete transparency. Carl lives in Brooklyn with his wife and their 2-year-old son, Lucas.

Bernadette Doykos just wrapped up her PhD in community psychology at Vanderbilt, and is very much loving post-dissertation life in Portland, Maine. She spent quality time with Meriel Darzen and Erin Malone ’03, and got to snuggle the next generation of Wesleyan lacrosse fans (their adorable kids, Nica and Josie). She’s looking forward to a Wesleyan reunion at Rich Renzi’s wedding this summer! Brian and Jessie Adams live in Nashville with their two little boys, Caldwell (4) and Harding (15 months), keeping them quite busy. They’ve had a lot of fun cheering on the Nashville Predators and Wes Lax teams during their respective playoff runs over the spring (side note from my editor/husband, Daniel Creeden: the Predators would have clinched it had it not been for Pekka Rinne. No comment)

Hannah Gay is living in (and loving) Denver. She launched a new website (hannahgay.com) that helps small nonprofit businesses, social enterprises, and ethical brands expand their outreach. She also credits Pia Silva’s book, Badass Your Brand for helping her with her business. Indeed, any entrepreneurs should pick up this book, which is available on Amazon. Pia has contributed to Forbes, been featured in Complex magazine, and has spoken at several entrepreneurial organizations including The Chamber of Commerce, Squarespace, and We Work.

Congratulations to Matthew Mulqueen, who has been named a shareholder in the Memphis, Tenn., office of the law firm Baker Donelson. Matt maintains an active pro bono practice and has handled many immigration matters, including representing refugee children seeking protected status and permanent residence through the Special Immigrant Juvenile process. In 2016, he received a pro bono award from Baker Donelson for his service.

Joseph McElligott is a director of business development at Guggenheim Investment Advisors, LLC. He has been elected the vice chair of the Wesleyan University Alumni Association and Wesleyan’s Binwanger Prize Committee.

Erin Glaser and her family moved to the Philadelphia area and are enjoying their new city! She is working with Adaptive Sports USA to start a sitting volleyball program and is working at Drexel University as an adjunct faculty member in the sports leadership program. She also works with Strive, which focuses on reaching children and youth from underserved communities via interactive leadership programs.

Jesse Young left the Paris Agreement climate team at the State Department. He lives and works in D.C. for Climate Nexus, a New York-based nonprofit that works to highlight the impacts of climate change and clean energy solutions in the U.S.

Dana Wollman is living in Brooklyn and is the executive producer of Engadget. Engadget covers a wide range of tech-related news from tech and video game reviews to entertainment to broader topics related to advanced technology.

Katy Rich has left Brooklyn for the warmer pastures of Durham, N.C. She still works as the deputy editor of VanityFair.com and is delighted to live within walking distance of Aaron Reuben ’07 and Jassalee Landfried ’07.

Arielle Edelman McHenry and her husband have also decided to leave Brooklyn to set down roots in Minneapolis. Congratulations on the newest addition to their family, Mia, who was born in February. Arielle works as a community specialist at the Minnesota Department of Health.

Julie Mathis Monts is living with her husband, Sean Monts, in Tacoma, Wash. She is a director of medical advising for Kaplan Test Prep, where she oversees the advising component of the USMLE (United States Medical Licensing Examination) in Kaplan centers nationwide. Their first child is expected this September.

At the time of writing Nina Eichacker and Johann Patlak are expecting their second child in July. Nina is an assistant professor in the economics department at the University of Rhode Island. Johann is an attending critical care anesthesiologist at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston.

Mike Dacey started his new job as an assistant professor of philosophy at Bates College in Maine. Congratulations on the new position as well as completing his PhD in philosophy-neuroscience-psychology at Washington University.

Alix Sleigh finished her PhD at the University of Southern California, where she studied the health behaviors and quality of life of low-income breast cancer survivors. She and her husband welcomed their daughter, Vera, who joins her big brother Blake. Alix plans to complete her master’s degree in public health and then move to D.C. to work at the National Cancer Institute as a cancer prevention fellow.

Emily Dreyfuss is a part of the 2017 class of fellows at Harvard University’s Nieman Foundation for Journalism. Building upon her work as a writer at WIRED,
Emily is studying how the Internet and social media changes the way history is written.

David Bartlett Bates finished his fellowship at Massachusetts General Hospital and plans to move to Hastings-on-Hudson, N.Y. with his wife, Larissa, and children Pilar and Sebastian. Post-fellowship, David will work as an assistant professor at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York City, where he will do research and practice clinical radiology.

Wesleyan Winter Session is an intensive learning experience:
- Complete a full-semester course in two weeks
- Focus on learning in a small-class environment
- Develop close relationships with faculty and fellow students
- Experience immersive study and concentrated focus
Past courses include Data Analysis, US Foreign Policy, and Intro to Computer Programming.

Portia Hemphill says, “It’s been a busy few years! After obtaining my joint PhD in political science and public policy from the University of Michigan in 2015, I began work as a presidential management fellow in the federal government where I helped bring to scale two interagency President Obama initiatives (Promise Zones and My Brother’s Keeper) and served as the federal ambassador to Gary, Ind., in an effort to increase jobs for youth in the area. I also bought a cute fixer upper in Southeast D.C. that is a job all in itself, but where I now proudly call home. Hopefully we can have a Wes fest at my house in 2018!”

The Class of 2007 has also been making career headlines! Gavin Alexander lives in Brookline, Mass., and works as an associate in Ropes & Gray LLP’s Hedge Funds group. He serves as the co-chair of the board of directors of the Massachusetts LGBTQ Bar Association, and was named one of the “Best LGBT Lawyers Under 40” by the National LGBT Bar Association. Before starting at his firm, Gavin served as a law clerk to the Hon. Ralph D. Gants, chief justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court.

Gabrielle Fondiller says, “The organization I co-founded, Hatua, is now 10 years old. Last year we graduated our first class of 14 students from university. One hundred percent of these young people are now working, earning three times Kenya’s average income.’”

And Sarah Elmaleh writes, “I moved from Brooklyn to Los Angeles in 2015 for videogame voiceover and have been happily working on a range of indie and AAA games, as well as some commercials and TV. Recent roles include voices in Final Fantasy XV and the female Viking Raider player character in For Honor. I’ve also judged the Audio category for the Independent Games Festival, and co-hosted and co-produced the IndieCade awards.” Sarah adds, “I was thrilled to find out about the new Computational Media: Videogame Design and Development course at Wesleyan. If there are other Wes alumni with a foothold in games who want to help me grow and expand the games presence at Wes, please do not hesitate to be in touch!”

As always, please keep sending your updates, career news, and life events to us.

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2008

MATTHEW LINDER GOT married to the lovely and brilliant Amy Foote, and his group, Mobius Trio, is still touring the world playing “weird guitar music.” They will be touring Brazil in June.

Grace Overbeke is in graduate school, pursuing her doctorate at Northwestern University’s interdisciplinary PhD in theatre and drama, where she is writing about Jewish female stand-up comedians. She and her fiancé share a fish named Lucius, who is still alive.

Ruby Corbyn-Ross writes, “Most of my focus this spring has been on my band, Blato Zlato, a six-piece Balkan band with Annalisa Kelly. We released our first album in January and went up to New York to do a CD release tour and play at the Zlatne Uste Golden Festival. We won a grant to produce a music video for one of the songs from the album, which will be released in mid-May (“Miatalo at the Zlatne Uste Golden Festival. We won a grant to produce a music video for one of the songs from the album, which will be released in mid-May (“Miatalo” by Macka Tabala”), got asked to reinterpret a song off the Voyager Golden Record for an upcoming documentary which we’ll be filming in mid-June, opened for and collaborated on a show featuring Nels Cline of Wilco, and we’re putting together another awesome big show for the fall. I’m also singing in a 10-piece Balkan women’s vocal ensemble, Trendafilka, singing and playing guitar with my country-folk duo, Crossing Canal, and teaching reading remediation full-time at the International School of Louisiana. This summer my husband and I are going to India for two weeks and I’m hoping to meet up with some Wes friends there!”

Lyza Nardo’s company, Tipsy Scoop, continues to grow rapidly. She writes, “We opened our first ice cream ‘barlour’ (ice cream parlour meets bar) on May 7 and serve 15 flavors of boozy ice cream and sorbet to patrons from near and far! As COO, I have been busy trying to balance catering, events, wholesale orders, nationwide shipping, and the new retail location. While I am exhausted, I am truly happy and feel so lucky to work with my fantastic team! As if the store was not reason enough to celebrate, I got engaged last month to my Israeli fiancé. Lastly, my future brother and sister-in-law, Yaffa!”

List Olennick is resisting with Indivisible Nation BK. Can’t stop, won’t stop.

Janie Stolar’s rash is clearing up. Marriana Foos writes, “The stars aligned and I found myself adopting a hypo-allergenic rescue cat named Herbie. She is perfect.”

Finally, Behdad Bozorgnia is one of the chief residents at the University of Pennsylvania department of psychiatry and thought it would be interesting for the Wesleyan community to know that three out of the four chief residents are Wesleyan graduates, including Eric Rosoff ’04 and Ashley Un ’09.

Alicia Colleen Zeidan acollen@wesleyan.edu

2009

HI, CLASS OF 2009! Below are a couple of updates from your classmates:

Adam and Lisa Kirke had a baby girl, Lara James, on May 15. Caitlynn McCann Wong and Eugene Wong are proud to announce the birth of their daughter, Kaia Adele Wong. She was born on June 1 and was happily welcomed at home by her labradoodle brother, Hudson. All are doing well and looking forward to moving back to Boston later this summer.

Kwabea Osae-Kwapong married Jim O’Brien on June 30 in New Jersey. Alejandro Alvarado proposed to his beautiful girlfriend of three years, Lindsey Harder (and she said YES!). Wedding plans are underway; festivities will take place in summer or fall 2018.

Gedney Barclay is teaching in the humanities and media studies department at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn after getting her master’s from MIT’s Art, Culture and Technology program. She is a fellow at Skidmore College’s Storyteller’s Institute, working on a documentary film and performance project with Asa Horvitz ’10.

Last August, Anthony Marsella was hired for a full-time football position at Salve Regina University in Rhode Island as a defensive backs coach, special teams coordinator, and recruiting coordinator. He will hold the same position going into the 2017 season.

Lastly, Paul Edwards will be receiving his PhD in American and New England studies from Boston University at the end of the summer and will start his position as lecturer of history and literature at Harvard University.

Hope everyone is enjoying their summer. Thanks for sending in notes!

Alejandro Alvarado ale.alvarado12@gmail.com

2010

GREETINGS, CLASS OF 2010. I hope you enjoy the following updates from our classmates around the world:

Micah Weiss and Nomi Teutsch ’11 were married on May 14. Aaron Freedman has the following report on the celebration:

“Hanukkah/Christmas arrived in May this year as the kickoff of wedding season for many 2010ers. The Meat Locker (167 Vine: Micah Weiss, Gus Seixas, Zach LeClair, and Sam Bernhardt) and Pine Palace (266 Pine: Sarice Greenstein, Joshua Wood, and I) were both in attendance along with many other ‘09, ‘10 and ‘11 grads from Nomi’s crew at the micalandhondonu nuptials. Summer camp weddings are always a good decision. Here’s to many more barn weddings with artisanal kosher pizza by David Schumester.”

Jonna Humphries has some exciting job news: “I joined Moog Music Inc., and, in addition to marketing for the brand, lead up marketing for our future of music and technology festival, Moogfest. I’m now based in Asheville, N.C.”

Emily Hoffman has a wedding of her own to share: “On July 3, I married Alex Kane, a freelance journalist, at the Bronx Museum of the Arts with many of my Wesleyan friends in attendance. I have been working as an attorney at the Community Service Society of New York since September 2014.”

Also joining in on the wedding news is Michael Keoni Defrancisco, who got married on Hawaii’s Big Island at Kahua Ranch this past June. Many Wes friends were in attendance including four groomsmen: Jason Krisfeld, Nick Ajello, Eli Bronner, and Kwasi Ansu ’09. It looked like a great time was had by all. See the picture at classnotes.blogs.wesleyan.edu.

Michael Pernick submits the following: “Despite the craziness in the world, I’m doing my best to enjoy life as an attorney in NYC and be part of the resistance. Over the last few months I’ve been doing a lot of pro bono voting rights litigation. In my free time, I’m fighting the Republican health care repeal bill (I was born with a heart defect and I’ve had three open heart surgeries), including traveling to D.C. in May to speak at a press conference on Capital Hill with a few Democratic Senators criticizing the Republican bill.”

Hallie Coffin-Gould graduated with her MBA from the Tepper School of Business at Carnegie Mellon. She will be pursuing a career as part of Thermo Fisher’s Leadership Development Program. She is engaged to Drew Morris and they are living in Pittsburgh with their two dogs.

Lucas Hidalgo is living in NYC and is working at George Washington High School in upper Manhattan as a youth advocate and site coordinator for the 21st Century Community Learning Center.

Peter Hull graduated from MIT in June with a PhD in economics and has moved on to a one-year postdoctoral position at Microsoft Research in Cambridge, Mass. Peter will then head off to U Chicago—first for a one-year post-doc, then as an assistant professor in the economics department.

Finally, Tony Zosherafatian is living in NYC and regularly sees many Wes friends. Tony is hard at work directing and producing I am the T, a documentary about transpeople around the world (iamthefilm.com). The Norwegian chapter of the film, I am Isak, was accepted into the Emerging Lens Cultural Film Festival, My True Colors Film Fest, and the Tassaloniki LGBT Film Festival. Tony is also aiming to direct a documentary about transpeople’s experiences in Trump’s America. In his spare time, he’s enjoying traveling to new places and gradually checking off his bucket list.

That’s all for this issue! As always, feel free to pass along your life updates anytime.

David Layne dlayne@wesleyan.edu

DEVON HOPKINS MADE the move to Brooklyn this spring and started a new job as the director of content marketing at CARTO. He’s enjoying the availability of bodega breakfast sandwiches, a walking commute, and reconnecting with other Wes kids.

Jan Lafountain Melsnick MALS ’11

Storyteller Mike Rossen also has gigs as a teaching poet and copywriter (heywikeros.com). Barbara Fenig and Patrick Cline were married
on May 27 in New Haven, Conn. The couple met at the Wesleyan Writers Conference.

David Puelz wrote in with news about his twin, Charles Puelz. Charles received his PhD from Rice University in computational math. Over the next three years, he will be completing post-docs at the University of North Carolina and New York University’s Courant Institute.

Corrina Wainwright started the MPH program in health policy at the Harvard School of Public Health. She is working at the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene this summer for her practicum project, researching structural violence as a public health issue with the Center for Health Equity.

Mary Weir is at the University of Southern Denmark on a Fulbright scholarship, studying and working with women in prison. This is an area in which she became interested while at Wesleyan, where she was involved with the prison project.

Cheryl Tan is in Singapore, starring in her first TV show, and is leading a musical at the Esplanade, playing a young Dowager Empress CIXi, and doing another musical at the end of the year. Another highlight was playing Juliet for Shakespeare in the Park during which she nearly died. Figuratively. Search for “faculty” on Toggle.sg if you want. She’s changing focus to the commercial side of things to make more money so follow her at @thecheryltan. She’s also teaching singing, less scarly than before. #hireme

Lastly, Joe Giamo, class agent, has an update on the class gift: “Thank you to all of this year’s 2016-17 donors to the class gift and who helped to make the difference for our current undergraduates! We look forward to updating on our success when results come in after June 30.”

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FINN, RUBENSTEIN, ROBERTS HONORED WITH BINSWANGER TEACHING PRIZES

During Wesleyan’s 185th Commencement on May 28, Wesleyan presented three outstanding faculty members with the Binswanger Prize for Excellence in Teaching, photographed here with President Roth ’78 (right). These prizes, made possible by gifts from the family of the late Frank G. Binswanger Sr., Hon. ’85, underscore Wesleyan’s commitment to its scholar-teachers, who are responsible for the University’s distinctive approach to liberal arts education.

John E. Finn, professor of government, has been a member of Wesleyan’s faculty since 1986, serving as chair of the Department of Government in 2007 and from 2009–11 and retired this year. Mary-Jane Rubenstein, professor of religion, joined Wesleyan’s faculty in 2006. She also is a core faculty member in the Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program and an affiliated faculty member in the Science in Society Program. Andrea Roberts, associate professor of the practice, chemistry, began teaching in Wesleyan’s Department of Chemistry in 2004 as a visiting instructor while pursuing her graduate research at Wesleyan.

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2012

I’LL BEGIN BY congratulating all my fellow Cardinals on five years from the nest. I think I speak for all when I say that this time has gone by in a blink of an eye. It comes as no surprise that within these five years, our classmates have been busy changing the world around them.

Hannah Monk graduated with her doctorate in clinical psychology from William James College in Newton, Mass. Congrats Hannah!

Michaela Swee received her master’s and is going on to complete her PhD at Temple University’s clinical psychology program in Philadelphia, specializing in the research and treatment of adult anxiety and depressive disorders. She fills her spare time doing the voiceover for Hera, an intelligent computer operating system that runs the Haphaestus station. Michaela is also working on Wolf 359’s fourth and final season with fellow Wes alumni Gabriel Urbina ’13, Zach Valenti, Sarah Shachat, Emma Sherr-Ziarko ’11, Cecilia Lynn-Jacobs ’11, Zach Libresco ’13, Noah Masur ’15, Michelle Agresti ’14, Scotty Shoemaker ’13, Ariela Rotenberg ’10, Alan Rodi ’12, and Jared Paul ’11.

Julian Silver is working in film and writing with Reiss Claussen-Wolf ’13. When not writing, he is also keeping the LA coffee market afloat with Reiss’ better half, Dana Levy ’12.
Adrian Rothschild is working at Nickelodeon on interactive preschool content for Noggin, which just launched as a revamped iOS app. Adam also started as the director of digital content for the Children’s Media Association, a nonprofit network of producers, writers, artists, and researchers in the children’s media industry.

Grace Ross is living the New York life as a literary agent at Regal Hoffmann & Associates. She recently moved to Brooklyn, and in her time away from reading, she sings in the Grace Church Choral Society.

JoAnna Bourain is starting dental school at the University of Minnesota in the fall. In four years’ time she will be JoAnna Bourain, DDS.

Jake Walkup is teaching at the middle school of his youth in Manhattan. When he is not shaping the minds of our future, he is coaching the school’s first Ultimate Frisbee team, which is vying for a championship in its debut year. Dan Verdejo and Gabriel Finkelstein are also teachers who teach math, writing, literature, science, and social studies classes, among other things. As a previous educator, I can say confidently that this is no easy feat!

Raghu Appasani is finishing up his final year of medical school in Massachusetts, but continues to make frequent trips to NYC to visit his old roommates from Wesleyan. He runs the MINDS Foundation, along with the involvement of many Wesleyan community members and spends as much time as possible in India.

Finally, Peter Frank, Stephen Nangeroni, Drew Hudson, Sam Tureff, and Bill Walen bestowed Alex Meadow, Robert Troyer, Malcolm (Mac) Schneider, and Zach Dixon in the championship game of their 4v4 soccer league. May the best team win!

Allegra Heath-Stout married Laura Heath-Stout ’11 in October, and has been enjoying marriage in Somerville. Allegra runs a fellowship program at JOIN for Justice in Boston, training Jewish young adults in community organizing.

As for me, I am approaching my one-year anniversary at Bridgewater Associates and enjoying the East Coast summer. Wishing the entire class of 2012 continued success, health, and happiness.

Daisy Perez deperez@wesleyan.edu

2013

THE CLASS OF 2013 is one year away from our Fifth Reunion and we’re feeling the feels. Read on to see what we’ve been up to in 2017!

In March, Evan Weber was recognized by Grist as one of 50 emerging green leaders to watch for his work with U.S. Climate Plan, the organization he and Matt Lichtash started at Wesleyan. In April, U.S. Climate Plan re-branded as Sunrise, and is building a movement of young people to make climate action an urgent political priority, with an eye on a major intervention in the 2018 midterm elections.

Janet Cushey launched a private English review service for Korean corporations called Patch English in January and works as an event manager for ShopTalk.

Ben Smith is script supervising on film and commercial sets and has finished his third original screenplay. He's now looking to get his sci-fi comedy podcast off the ground floor once he finds some good improv actors. Any Wes composers, sound designers, or funny people should hit this dude up at basmith@wesleyan.edu.

Bennett Kirschner has assumed the role of kennel manager at Pan-American Animal Hospital, continuing in his role as kennel manager. He was a ski instructor in Colorado for two years before this.

Zach Schonfeld lives in Brooklyn with Ella Dawson ’14 and a 1967 Grundig tube radio he inherited from his 99-year old great-grandma. He had a brief cameo in a Real Housewives of New York City episode about a dog wedding.

After meeting on their first day of freshman orientation, JD Dieterich and Danielle Springer were married on May 27. They celebrated the occasion with many Wesleyan friends including Jeff Giocondi, Emma Caccamo, Lex Johnson, and Elizabeth Rudy, who were in the wedding party. JD is now an MD, having graduated from Mt. Sinai School of Medicine, and Danielle is an assistant editor at Penguin Random House. Congrats to both of them!

Aditi Kini just premiered a music video titled “Park Slope” for OHYUNG ’10 with co-director Hanna Edzel ’14, cinematographer Neo Sora ’14, and actor Stephen Accera ’12. This is on the heels of Inherited Trauma, the exhibit Aditi curated at Local Project for the Long Island City Arts Open Festival featuring Wesleyan artists Hanna Edzel ’14, Hira Jafri, Zain Alam, and Vrakrant Sunderdal Chandel ’15. Performers included Rob Rusli ’10, Matt Chilton ’16, Deren Erts ’16, and Cameron Couch. Get in touch with her if you want to collaborate!

Bryce Hollingsworth quit the oil business. In Europe now!

David Shimomura started a new job with the University of Chicago in alumni relations and development. At the end of May, he put on their largest alumni event, Alumni Weekend, along with the rest of their amazing planning team.

Prince Emeralno earned his MPH from Georgia State University School of Public Health, where he with a concentration in health management and policy.

Melody Olijphant is finishing up a fellowship at Yale School of Medicine in the Child Study Center, and eagerly counting down the days until the Class of 2015 is reunited in Middletown for Reunion.

Gabriel Urbina created a radio drama podcast called Wolf 359 in 2014, which was one of the finalists for this year’s Webby Awards, an award for excellence on the Internet. Their show is nominated in the Digital Audio Drama category. What really makes this a Wes triumph is that the show is a 100 percent Wes production. Wolf 359 is co-produced by Zach Valenti ’12, who is also the lead actor and is co-written by Sarah Shechtel ’12. The cast is rounded out by Emma Sher-Ziardo ’11, Michaela Swee ’12, Cecilia Lynn-Jacobs ’11, Zach Libresco, Noah Masur ’15, and Michelle Agresti ’14. Their original music is composed by Alan Rodi ’12, and their audio recording is done by Jared Paul ’11 and James Schoen ’05. They even did an apprenticeship with current student Claire Shaffer!

Danielle Craig says, “Hey, what’s up? Hello,” to all her fellow 2013ers. She saw some of them to celebrate JD and Danielle’s nuptials over Memorial Day weekend.

Danielle just returned from two months of solo backpacking through Southeast Asia and will start law school at UC, Berkeley, in August. So long to the NYC-Wesleyan crew, it has been a stellar four years. If you live in the Bay, let her know!

Michael Robinson and Lia Monti were married in Pittsburgh, Pa., on June 3, surrounded by countless members of their Wes family. This marks the second generation of Robinson men finding true love at Wes—Mike’s parents Dennis Robinson ’79 and Anne Robinson ’81 met in 1978. Yes, the Beta sweetheart and Wesleyan fight songs were sung, and yes, Buddy wore a bowtie.

Thank you to all my classmates who wrote in, and best wishes to everyone!

Laura Yim, Lyim@wesleyan.edu

2014

THE BELOVED CLASS of 2014 has taken 2017 by storm. Read below for the latest on what they’ve been doing!

Will Dubbs spent the last two years working for Hillary’s presidential campaign, but has now moved to Prague.

After a few years of doing nonprofit and startup work, Alex Cantrell is happily employed as a UX design consultant in Watertown, Mass. He regularly draws upon his liberal arts background during client calls, using authoritative, fluffy language to justify why the website header should not have a lime green drop shadow. He lives in Brighton with his gecko, running shoes, and beer fridge. He accepts one freelance design gig each quarter—feel free to reach out!

Rob Roth, a third-year ENL/ESL K-12 public school teacher in the NYC Department of Education, as well as a recent NYC teaching fellow and Hunter College MA TESOL program graduate, looks forward to embarking on a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant grant to Bogotá, Colombia, where he will support Universidad Nacional students in acquiring English proficiency.

Grace Smith writes, “I just started law school at the University of Michigan and want to do international environmental law right now, but what, exactly, you want to do changes during the course of school. I was a ski instructor in Colorado for two years before this.”

Ellen Alexander just completed her master’s in geology at UCLA, and is continuing in her PhD program.

Maddy Oswald just finished her first year of a PhD program in developmental psychology at The University of Chicago.


Richie Starzec has been traveling around Bhutan for the last few months. He connected with a selective training society, where he is learning the arts of ninjutsu, jiu jitsu, and mixed kung fu.

Henry Cheung writes, “After three years of teaching high school mathematics through Teach For America, I am transitioning to a management consultant position at Oliver Wyman. I will miss teaching, but am looking forward to the travel and the change of pace. If anyone is interested in pursuing teaching through

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ALUMNI ASSOCIATION BESTOWS HONORS AT ANNUAL MEETING

At the Assembly and Annual Meeting of the Alumni Association on May 27, seven alumni received Distinguished Alumni Awards, and one Outstanding Service Award was presented, along with the James L. McConaughy Jr. Memorial Award. In recognition for his many years of service, leadership, and generosity, Wesleyan’s historic College Row lawn was dedicated as McKelvey Green for Robert G. McKelvey ’59 (front row, far left). Also pictured are (front row, l. to r., following McKelvey): Donna S. Morea ’76, P’06, chair of the Board of Trustees; Distinguished Alumni Nicholas J. Rasmussen ’87; Amy Schulman ’82, P’11; Isaac O. Shongwe ’87; and McConaughy Memorial Award recipient Matthew H. Weiner ’87, P’18. Back row: Distinguished Alumni Santi “Santigold” White ’97 and Michele A. Roberts ’77; President Michael S. Roth ’78; Distinguished Alumnus Robert L. Allbritton ’92; Outstanding Service Award–winner Rick Nicita ’67; Distinguished Alumnus Tos Chirathivat ’85, P’14, ’17; and Tracey K. Gardner ’96, chair of the Alumni Association.

Teach For America (or not) or consulting, feel free to reach out!”

Jason Shatz is moving to Chicago to earn a master’s in computer science at the University of Chicago. He writes, “Yes, there is a summer ‘immersion’ program for liberal arts students and others without the proper background. In other words, I’m making up for the computer science studying that I should have done at Wesleyan (at least if I wanted a decent job afterwards)! I still plan to write on the side.”

Maggie Feldman-Piltch is getting a master’s from Georgetown’s School of Foreign Service in the security studies program and started her own national security consulting company called Unicorn Strategies. In March, she led a trip of retired U.S. admirals and generals to Havana, Cuba, to meet with members of the Cuban government on issues of security cooperation. She writes, “On a perhaps less serious note, I recently won the mojito-making contest at the Cuban Embassy here in D.C., and have been declared Best Mojito Maker. Anything else I do in my life will pale in comparison.” She adds, “All other things are normal. Still having my life over run by two obnoxious pit bulls. Still seeing too much of Julian Purkiss. Still seeing just the perfect amount of Izzy Rode.”

As for me, I will be putting my love for the show Suits on the side, and will be starting at Fordham Law School in the fall where I will be focusing on litigation. Have a wonderful summer, and keep the notes and all of the wonderful things you are doing coming.

Your Class Secretary.
MARY DIAZ mcdiaz@wesleyan.edu

2015

JENNA STARR HAS switched positions at Wesleyan! She is now part of the alumni and parent relations team. Keep your eyes open for fun event invitations, and as always, keep sending her your class notes.

Katherine Lu works in human resources at the Mission Neighborhood Health Center in San Francisco. She enjoys hearing more Spanish than English, and is putting her HISP major to the test.

Peter Cornillie earned his certified cicerone, which is the equivalent of a beer sommelier, or someone who knows way too much about beer.

Marissa Castrigno accepted a job writing for the public affairs department of New York-Presbyterian Hospital. She will also be attending the 2017 Wesleyan Writers’ Conference during her time off between positions, and looked forward to a spending few days of early summer back on campus.

Michael Leung gave a presentation on behavioral science at Morningstar Investment Conference—the flagship conference for Morningstar, Inc.—to a crowd of 200 finance professionals! He enjoys his work of incorporating behavioral science methods into software development to help people reach their goals.
Since graduating, Catherine Chase works at the San Antonio Museum of Art and is the assistant to the director for a little over a year. She reunited with her former Wes roommate, Katherine Du. They met up at Reunion and Commencement and ate a lot of dumplings at Tibetan Kitchen.

After two years of sharing a wonderful apartment together, Diana Lin, Angela Yoo, and Elaine Tsui are ready to take the next step in their careers. Following her role as a senior consultant at Booz Allen Hamilton, Diana is looking forward to attending Penn State College of Medicine. Likewise, after spending two years at the NIH, Angela will be heading off to medical school this fall. Elaine will miss them dearly, but is excited to return to academia and attend Princeton’s chemistry PhD program. We are glad to have shared so many great memories over the last two years and look forward to our next Reunion!

Virgil Taylor and Gabe Gordon recently took the Staten Island Ferry. In the stormy Friday evening light, they could see for themselves the possibilities offered by a life at sea. Taylor and Gordon live as one in Brooklyn.

Aletta Brady is moving to Jordan in September for a research Fulbright studying the intersection of drought, water scarcity, and the refugee crisis.

Rebecca Caspar-Johnson is starting law school at Columbia in the fall. Mateusz Burgunder has not changed much since the last issue. He still lives and works in Switzerland. He has met many Wesleyan friends around the U.S., Europe, and on Skype, and he looks forward to more conversations. He is also very impressed by how many of his Wesleyan friends finished marathons.

Orelia Jonathan just graduated from UPenn with her master’s in education. She plans to teach English in China for the summer before heading back to The Lawrenceville School to teach and coach as full-time faculty.

Geneva Jonathan is headed off to Northwestern University in the fall to start a PhD program in clinical psychology in Dr. Evan Goulding and Dr. Cynthia Dopke’s Bipolar Technology Lab.

Hana Elion and JJ Mitchell began singing together at Wesleyan and formed a band called Overcoats. They released their debut album, Young, via Arts & Crafts in April, and performed an NPR Tiny Desk Concert. itunes.apple.com/us/album/young/id1199218160 and youtube.com/watch?v=pXtAhFQhEG4.

Nikku Chatha completed Wes’s BA/MA in math and is working at Andrew Davidson & Co. in New York. She was glad to see so many ’16ers during R&C weekend!

Celia Joyce has been working at New York County Defender Services, a public defense office, since last fall as a corrections specialist. She makes referrals to charitable bail funds, plans and executes regular trips to Rikers and similar corrections facilities across the boroughs, and serves as a liaison between attorneys and social workers, clients and families, and various DOCCS employees. She is preparing to take the LSAT and GRE in hopes of pursuing a dual degree—a JD/PhD in psychology.

Melissa Leung and Sarah Mi frequently ring in Kellyn Maves and Taran Carr throughout their perpetual hunt for authentic Chinese food in Rockville, Md., because Kellyn and Taran have cars, while Melissa and Sarah do not. The group also visited Wes for Commencement, and is planning camping and winery trips for times ahead.

Melissa has moved onto a supply chain management project with IBM, completed a flag football season with her IBM start class, plays on their softball team, toured Rome with her gospel choir, and works on portrait in her oil painting class.

Matthew Stein is a software engineer at YouTube in Mountain View, Calif. In his free time, he plays violin and viola with the Google orchestra, a klezmer trio, and a string quartet, and designs puzzles and puzzle hunts.

Tim Israel is in Portland, Ore., and says, “come chill.”

Michael King has been building a startup that aims to make language learning efficient, organized, and enjoyable: a dynamic curriculum that adapts to your level and your content, placed on top of personalized music and media, language exchange, and spaced repetition flashcards.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE Class of 2017 on your recent graduation! We’ll be reaching out soon for your news, which will appear in the December issue of this magazine.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE Class of 2016 on their recent graduation! We are excited for them to join us as the new additions to the Wesleyan alumni community.

SHASA SEMINAR FOR HUMAN CONCERNS

GUNS IN AMERICAN SOCIETY

OCTOBER 27-28
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Matthew Palmer ‘88 is director of the Office of South Central Europe in the State Department’s Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs. He is a lifetime member of the Council on Foreign Relations and a distinguished graduate of the National War College who counts positions on the Policy Planning staff and at the National Security Council, in Washington, D.C., as well as diplomatic assignments around the world, among his previous assignments. A 25-year veteran of the U.S. Foreign Service, he is the best-selling author of four diplomatic thrillers, including his latest, Enemy of the Good.

How did your time at Wesleyan prepare you for a life in diplomacy?

I was an East Asian studies major at Wesleyan and did my junior abroad in Japan on the terrific Associated Kyoto Program. I joined the Foreign Service in 1992—having focused on nothing but Japan during my entire academic and professional life. My plan was to join the State Department’s “Chrysanthemum Club” of Japan hands who bounce back and forth between positions in Tokyo and on the Japan desk in Washington. At the end of my training, I was assigned to a job in Beijing via Chinese language training and given a little Chinese flag to mark the occasion. I was lucky. That fit in very neatly with my plans. The very next day, human resources called to tell me that the job was being eliminated.

“How do you feel about Belgrade?” the assignments officer asked.

“Is that next alphabetically?” I responded.

“No. It’s Beirut. But there’s nothing open there.”

Such are the vagaries of life in the Foreign Service. I never did make it back to Japan.

All of your books, including your newest, Enemy of the Good, are diplomatic thrillers. Were you always a fan of the genre?

I always enjoyed a good spy story, but I chose to write in the thriller genre largely because of the influence of my father, Michael Palmer [Wesleyan Class of 1964]. He was a physician and the author of 20 medical thrillers, including Extreme Measures and Natural Causes. My brother is a novelist as well. He and I learned from our father how to tell a story, develop characters, and build dramatic tension. On the day my first book, The American Mission, was published, I walked into the local Barnes & Noble and there, on the new releases shelf, was my book sandwiched between my brother’s book and my father’s. Sadly, Dad had passed away about eight months before—but he would have loved that.

You’re a lifelong diplomat. How has your diplomatic career influenced your writing?

My primary protagonists in all four of my books are Foreign Service Officers—FSOs, in the acronym-heavy State Department argot. One of the goals I have with my writing is to demystify diplomacy. The American public has pretty good reason to believe on the basis of the books they read and movies they watch what soldiers and spies do for a living. But the diplomats in popular culture are typically pusillanimous cookie-pushers in striped pants, or soulless bureaucrats doing a deal with the devil—quite literally, in the case of Gregory Peck’s character in The Omen, Robert Thorn, ambassador to the Court of St. James.

The FSOs it has been my honor and privilege to work with are patriots: dedicated public servants who typically work in difficult and dangerous conditions to advance the interests of the United States. My heroes wrestle with the moral dilemmas that are inherent in wielding national power. The question of how to maintain a moral compass while struggling to balance competing interests in circumstances that are murky and ambiguous is a consistent theme that runs through all of my novels, as well as through my own professional life.

Being immersed in your field, and having so much firsthand knowledge of the subjects you write about, how much research do you typically do before starting a new book project?

Quite a lot for my first two novels. The American Mission was set in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Secrets of State was about the India–Pakistan dynamic. I knew something about those countries, but I was hardly an expert. Interestingly, my third book—The Wolf of Sarajevo—was set in Bosnia, a country I know very well. This turned out to be something of a problem for me as a storyteller. I had to struggle against the temptation to include too much detail—too much nuance—to show off how much I knew. That’s bad for story. And story, along with character, are what really matter.

Sometimes, though, I wonder how much I really need to worry about getting the details right. My most recent novel, Enemy of the Good, is set in Kyrgyzstan, a country one reviewer from a reputable publication called “fictional” in what was otherwise a glowing write-up. In fact, the reviewer commended my “highly realistic” description of the place. You’d think, however, that if I was going to simply invent a country, I might have chosen something easier to spell. Maybe even one with a vowel.

Because of your profession and the subject matter of your books, are you required to go through an official vetting process before you can publish your work? And if so, have you ever been asked to change any of your story settings, plot points, or character descriptions because you came too close to revealing a secret truth?

I have to submit all of the manuscripts for review. The reviewers are looking for any classified information that might have somehow snuck into the story. And, yes, I have been asked to make changes which, predictably, I can’t describe. Nothing fundamentally damaging to the story, however.

Did you always want to be a writer, or did your experience as a diplomat make you think, wow, that would make a great book or a terrific character?

I knew for a long time that I wanted to try my hand at writing fiction...eventually. But I needed to find the right story. About 15 years ago, I started working on the issue of conflict diamonds and developing a mechanism for tracking the stones from the mines to the jewelry stores. This eventually grew into something called the Kimberly Process that has helped restrict the trade in so-called “blood” diamonds. This, I realized, was the story I had been looking for. My first book, The American Mission, ultimately featured the trade in conflict minerals like coltan—a metallic ore vital to the electronics industry—rather than diamonds, but I drew heavily on my experiences from the Kimberly Process. And it still took me the better part of ten years to write that first book.

Tell us about Enemy of the Good and its heroine, Katarina “Kate” Hollister. Is she based on anyone you met during your career?

Absolutely. And I expect she knows who she is. Kate is an idealist who struggles against the imperative in our profession to compromise. The title of the novel comes from the admonition that one should never let the best be the enemy of the good. In other words, perfection is unattainable and if you insist on holding out for the ideal you risk coming away with nothing. Diplomacy, like politics, is the art of the possible. Kate rebels against this principle of compromise, and she pays a price for her idealism.

With all the work that goes into creating your characters, can you bring yourself to choose a favorite among them?

I think I’d choose Andy Krittenbrink, the supersmart, kind of schlubby intelligence analyst in Secrets of State. For some reason, I really just liked the guy. Of course, that didn’t stop me from killing him on page 178. Uh...spoiler alert. Sorry.

All four of your books seem ripe for cinematic telling. Do you have plans to turn any of them into movies, at this point in time?

Not plans so much as daydreams, right now. It’s the one thing in publishing that can transform a writer’s career. It hasn’t happened yet, but I think the books I write are sufficiently cinema-graphic that they’d translate easily to the screen. If any of the famous Wesleyan mafia in Hollywood are reading this, give me a call.

One last question, while we’re on the subject: If you had your choice, who would you cast as Kate in a movie version of Enemy of the Good?

I think Emma Watson would do a fabulous job of capturing Kate’s combination of braininess and intensity. Emma: if you’re reading this, give me a call.

READ AN EXCERPT FROM ENEMY OF THE GOOD AT MAGAZINE.WESLEYAN.EDU.
WELL READ

LISA KO ’98

The Leavers: A Novel
ALGONQUIN BOOKS 2017

The Leavers tells the story of 11-year-old Deming Guo, whose mother, Polly, an undocumented Chinese immigrant, fails to return home one day from her job at a nail salon in Brooklyn—leaving Deming alone to navigate a new life as Daniel Wilkinson, the adopted son of a well-meaning American couple in upstate New York.

Inspired by the true case of an undocumented mother who was arrested, jailed, and deported without her son in 2009, author Lisa Ko tells her story through the eyes of both Deming—who struggles to live up to the expectations of his new family while trying to come to terms with his new identity and the memories of his mother and the community he left behind—and Polly, whose deportation is finally revealed years later, when Deming begins his search for her and for the answers to questions that have haunted him since the day she disappeared.

Publishers Weekly says: “Ko’s stunning tale of love and loyalty . . . is a fresh and moving look at the immigrant experience in America, and is as timely as ever.” The book is the winner of the 2016 PEN/Bellwether Prize for Fiction, awarded by author Barbara Kingsolver for a novel that addresses issues of social justice.

RUTH BEHAR ’77

Lucky Broken Girl
NANCY PAULSEN BOOKS, 2017

Lucky Broken Girl is based on author Ruth Behar’s own experience as a young Cuban immigrant growing up in Queens, New York, in the 1960s. In it, Behar—the first Latina to win a MacArthur “Genius Grant”—tells the story of her 10-year-old self, Ruthie, who longs for go-go boots and to move out of the “dumb” class in school, where she has been placed until she can speak better English. Ruthie lives in a one-bedroom apartment with her little brother, Izzie; her homesick Mami, Rebequita, whose “sadness gets so bad she can’t hold back her tears”; and her father, Alberto, who longs to live the American Dream.

Just when it seems the family is on the cusp of adjusting to their new life, a tragic car accident shatters their immediate plans for the future: leaving a teenage boy and his friends dead, a woman paralyzed, and Ruthie confined to a body cast for a year—broken, but lucky to be alive.

“We were scared. We didn’t have money. We didn’t speak English. We didn’t know if they’d ship us back to Cuba. And if we had to flee again suddenly, what would become of me? I was immobile, a girl confined to her bed,” Behar writes in the book’s Author’s Note. “Writing this book gave me permission to return to my youth and re-experience that time, and even better, it has allowed me to make my childhood a bit happier than it really was.”

Written for young readers with a message that will resonate with all, Lucky Broken Girl is a story full of hope and love and the healing power of community, compassion, and forgiveness.

PAUL YOON ’02

The Mountain: Stories
SIMON & SCHUSTER, 2017

In The Mountain, author Paul Yoon introduces us to six unrelated characters who share a common bond across time and place. Uprooted by trauma, great and small, they find the courage to venture alone to unfamiliar places, and into an unknown future, on a quest for comfort. Quiet and contemplative, Yoon’s spare, graceful prose provide room for reflection, as he takes us on a meditative and deeply affecting journey from a sanatorium in the Hudson Valley to a camera sweatshop in Shanghai to a village in the Pyrenees.

A master storyteller, Yoon waits until we know the rules of earlier generations of women do not apply to her own, the control she has always felt over her life was never anything more than an illusion.

Yoon uses her evocative prose to deftly describe moments in her life, from her first kiss with the woman who later would become her wife (“I drifted off down the hill feeling molten and golden and saved”) to the lasting repercussions of an ill-advised affair (“Extricating

FACULTY BOOKSHELF

Resident writer Kit Reed’s latest book, Mormama (Tor Books, 2017), is a supernatural southern gothic ghost story about an ancient family home haunted by a ghost who shares the secrets of the horrific fates suffered by the men and boys who have lived there. The Village Voice calls Mormama “a smart and chilling tale on par with the best of Shirley Jackson, by an author who helped define the American Gothic.”
myself . . . was like shattering a great pane of glass in the middle of a room. Months after I finished cleaning up the crash . . . I was still picking small, vicious slivers out of the soles of my feet.

But it is the description of her miscarriage, as she lies alone on the bathroom floor of her hotel room in Mongolia, that provides one of the most devastatingly intimate descriptions of love and loss ever committed to paper.

“I felt an unholy storm move through my body, and after that there is a brief lapse in my recollection; either I blacked out from the pain or I have blotted out the memory. And then there was another person on the floor in front of me, moving his arms and legs, alive. I heard myself say out loud. ‘This can’t be good.’ But it looked good. My baby was as pretty as a seashell.”

And so Levy’s world, as she had always envisioned it, began to fall apart.

Yet even with the dissolution of her marriage that followed, and the longing for her son that continues, she moved forward into a life she now realized would always be beyond her control.

In 1977, Boston ophthalmologist Dr. Robin Cook ’62 published a book that would spawn a new literary genre, change the public’s perception of medicine (and doctors), and launch a literary career. That book was Coma—a medical thriller about patients who were intentionally placed in irreversible comas during surgery so that their organs could be harvested and sold for transplant on the black market.

Forty years later, Dr. Cook’s meticulously researched medical thrillers have sold a total of more than 100 million copies worldwide, been made into almost a dozen movies and television series—including Coma, the 1978 movie from doctor-turned-director Michael Crichton—and taught the reading public a thing or two about medical issues and ethics along the way, including stem cells and egg donation (Shock), xenotransplantation (Chromosome 6), and the digitalization of medicine (Cell).

This month, Cook will publish his thirty-fifth book: Charlatans, the story of new chief resident Noah Rothauser on a race against time to identify and stop the person responsible for a rash of unexplained anesthesia-related patient deaths before any additional lives are lost. Filled to the brim with Cook’s unique blend of science and suspense, Charlatans once again illuminates the author’s unmatched ability to simultaneously entertain and educate.
The ASD Back-to-School Blues

BY JUDITH NEWMAN '81

Me: “Honey, it’s going to be great! Let’s go shopping for…”

Gus: “No.”

Me: “You can’t wear the same t-shirts you’ve worn for four years.”

Gus: “Nopers.”

Me: “Gus, you’re fifteen. You can’t keep carrying an Elmo lunch box.”

Gus: “Mom, you know I just like the same old things.”

Me: “Well. Okay. Let’s look at your new fall schedule.”

Gus: <trembling lip, slow tears>

Every kid has a tremor of nerves at the start of a new year. But if you’re autistic like my son Gus, there is nothing about the word “new” that holds joy. The word he loves to hear is “same.” Same is Gus’s jam—and there are so many kids like him.

Think back to how you felt the night before the new school year began. Your mind raced: Are the classes going to be too hard? Is that jerk in homeroom going to remember last year’s Incident in the bathroom? And, if you were about to be a senior in high school: Oh my God, will I go to college without even kissing anyone?

Okay, maybe that was just me.

Still, though, there was the thrill of the fresh start. The day I went to buy new school supplies was one of the highlights of my year. Okay, that did not sound as pathetic as it does now when I see it in print. But at any rate, think about your own back-to-school sense of anticipation.

This thrill does not exist for Gus. While his neurotypical twin brother Henry is thinking about school clubs to join, at 15, Gus is clinging to the shores of childhood, desperately hoping nothing changes. He actually loves seeing the kids he knows—but who else will be there, and will they want to text with him? (That is his current definition of friendship—people who will text. This presents some unfortunate situations with telemarketers.)

For the past five years I’ve started the school year by asking him if he is ready to give away his hundreds of Thomas the Tank engines, NYC subway cars, toy buses, and stuffed animals to younger—far younger—kids. “Maybe next year, Mommy,” he says cheerfully.

In spite of my exasperation, I have to remind myself: There are actual, neurological reasons why Gus and kids like him are so fearful of change. A recent article in The Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders explained why up to 84 percent of children with autism have high levels of anxiety and up to 70 percent have some sort of sensory sensitivity: They are lousy at predicting the future. They tend to miss the cues. But it’s not like they’re golden retrievers, living forever in the present—they know perfectly well that there is a future. So combine these two concepts—knowledge the future is coming and being horrible at figuring out what it might be—and you can see how knowing your classroom schedule will be the same as last year’s, or knowing you have the same lunchbox, might be immensely soothing.

When Gus was little, he failed abysmally at those sequencing tests where you’re asked to put story cards in a logical order. He’s not much better at them now, because with people on the spectrum, the ability to infer is damaged. So it must be an awfully good feeling for Gus to know what happens next, which is part of the reason he still watches the same YouTube videos a thousand times, whether they’re tornadoes or Sesame Street. Not that the average kid doesn’t enjoy re-reading the same books or hearing the same song over and over again, but with Gus, it’s a desire for same that’s a different order of magnitude. Remember the fun of going to Rocky Horror Picture Show and mouthing the lines of the characters? Now imagine you want to do that with every movie or commercial you enjoy. Last time I checked there were 347,026 views of “Top 8 Disney Villain Laughs.” I’m pretty sure 347,025 of them are from Gus.

In The Loving Push, Temple Grandin—an autism activist, animal scientist, and probably the most famous person with autism spectrum disorder (ASD)—argues that parents of autistic children need to know how to get their kids out of their narrow grooves. Get them off their safe computers, for example, and get them out into the world to expand their interests and conquer their fears. As I read the book, I realized the sagacity of what she was saying: If I don’t do something soon, I’m pretty sure I’ll be seeing Gus on a future episode of Hoarders, happily nattering away about his inanimate “friends” while picking his way through piles of toys stacked to the ceiling.

But even with these worries, I try to don my Autism Mom goggles, which allow me for see two things. First, these items he can’t relinquish have feelings, and perhaps souls, as far as he’s concerned. I flash back to a day many years ago when there was a bus strike. Gus sat in his room, sobbing. “Honey, what’s wrong?” I asked. (I thought maybe he was worried how he’d get to school.) “Mommy, the buses,” he said, through heaving sobs. “The buses are SO SAD.”

And second? Well, I remind myself of the innate sweetness of his desire for familiarity over novelty. When Gus loves something, he loves it devotedly and always, whether it’s his moth-ridden t-shirts or his mother. He has never said a harsh or unkind word to me. How many mothers of 15-year-olds can say the same?

Gus goes to a wonderful school that does everything it can to help their kids cope with change. Still, his fears, and his desire for sameness, will always be with him.

Recently, a friend was helping Grandin complete a book project. To get the job done, he said, he and Grandin spoke every Sunday at 11 a.m. Not 11:01 or 10:59—11 a.m. One day he told Grandin he might not be able to make their usual time that week. There was a pause. “So, we’ll talk at 11:00 a.m.,” she said.

The secret of life is not to bemoan our kid’s differences, or try to eradicate them. It’s to help them navigate, with those differences, through this world.

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