



The Hope Farm / Greer School
Alumni Association
Newsletter



Spring 2022
Volume 15 No. 2

Hearing from you during the Holiday season

The Greer School Alumni/Staff Association was very pleased to hear from many of you during the past holiday season. It is wonderful to keep in touch with all of you as the years pass by. The alumni association wants to continue to be a viable and important connection for all of us. There is no substitute for on-going connections with family and friends, because in the end, these connections are all that matters. As we “age gracefully” these connections become more important to everyone, and I am very glad for this aspect of our life’s experience.

We heard greetings from the following alumni/staff:

Pat (Dean) Hilsinger, Jim Anderson, Cherlyn (Geiringer) Luberto, Doug and Janet “Mitzi” (Schaefer) Berry, Karen (Townsend) Hargy, Anne Joe, Linda (Wilson) Cavanaugh, Charmi (Neely) Mulvihill, Stanley Elbe, Pam (Pequeno) Williams, Peggy (One “t” Mathewson) Sparks, Armin Ali, Roland Herwig, David Abel, Bertie and Wistar Wood, Harry McCandless, Russell Golden, Hildi (Walton) Plunkett, Liz Rivera, Bob Jenkins, George Fisher, Diane Hawkins, Georganne (Clarke) Garbus, Pam (Stobbe) Todd, Diana Munzer, Rick Fischer, Mike Ennis, Pat (Jordan) Picco, Nick Anderson, Mark Speakman, Bob Ildefonso, Roger Russoman, Jim Elliman, Mike Stolting, Syd Nesbitt, Daniel Simonds, Jack Rolston, Marion Percy, Jim Mathewson, Don Miller, Anne (Meyrowitz) Foster, Scott Ledbetter, Peter Guild, Tony Vaz, Justine “Susie” (Murray) Scott, Stan Austin, and Karin (Venetian) Green.

Marion Percy reported that she had recently shifted to working part time and now is loving time to paint, stitch, and read. Her latest painting

project is completing a lighthouse sketch that her father (former Greer Staff member **Tom Percy**) did. She is trying to blend her style with her Dad’s. **Karin Hargy** and her husband Don visited with several of their children but were disappointed that a planned trip to Sicily Italy had to be postponed twice, but they did enjoy celebrating husband Don’s 80th birthday. **Bertie and Wistar Wood** donated a gift in honor of the Greer School students to **Heifer International**. This humanitarian association’s mission is to end hunger and poverty by providing livestock and sustainable agricultural training to struggling communities around the world. **George Fisher** has moved back to the Poughkeepsie, New York area after having lived for several years in Florida. **Rick Fischer** said that he could hardly believe it has been 64 years since he last lived in Daisy cottage with his parents, **Joe and Bea Fischer** when they were Daisy Cottage houseparents. He hopes to send me some of his parent’s photographs of their time at Greer. **Pam Todd** still has so many positive memories of all aspects of her life at Greer and added that it was very special to have Eleanor Roosevelt speak at her class’s 1955 graduation. **Stan Austin** gave an update on his wife Margaret and his children. One of the highlights for Stan was a trip to Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks with his son Ben. **Liz Rivera** enjoyed a trip to the west visiting Seattle, Washington, San Francisco, Reno, and Lake Tahoe to visit family and friends. **Roland Herwig** continues to enjoy taking long walks each day and reports that his wife Cary attended a Writer convention in Oklahoma. “Breckinridge”, her novella was a first-place winner in one of the categories, and her novel, “Justice Denied” won an honorable mention award. **Linda Cavanaugh** reports that daughter Julie is still involved with the special Olympics in Bocce and Bowling. Linda

enjoyed the Greer gathering this past year and a Cavanaugh family gathering this past October. Last of all, Linda said that her daughter Julie has attended all of the Greer reunions since she was a little girl, and she could join **Tony Vaz** as an honorary member of the class of 1961! **Syd Nesbitt** regrets not being able to attend last year's gathering, but he really enjoyed face time with the class of 1961 attendees during the gathering. He talked with **Don Berger, Bob "Ildy" Ildefonso, Bill Monza, Anne Meyrowitz, Nicky Anderson, and Linda Wilson**. He said that the contact with these good people felt to him as if it were just like being there. **Ellinor (King) Burke (now Lumb)** also joined her classmates for face time during the gathering. **Stanley Elbe** sent his greetings and the sad news that he lost his wife this past September. The alumni association sends condolences to Stanley. In the same vein, Peter Guild's younger brother, Gerald, said that his older brother and former Greer student had passed away at 83 years old in 2020. We send our regrets to Gerald. **Armin Ali** reflects the feelings that all of us have as he reported being weary of mask wearing, regulations and protocol. He and his wife Moona have five children, seven grandkids, and 6 great grandkids. His youngest daughter, Amina is completing her 22 years as a US Pretrial officer in Armin's old jurisdiction, and in addition, Amina has successfully run a court diversion program. **Anne Foster** especially enjoyed last fall's gathering at the restaurant in Verbank and said **that the common thread** at the gathering was that although 60 years had passed since their graduation from Greer in 1961, we are as Anne said, "still family". The attendees also said that they were thankful to have attended Greer. Last of all, they were happy that former staff member, **Isabel Morton** joined them at the gathering. **Peggy Sparks** says that due to the pandemic, many of us have used our isolation to clean out closets, bins, basements, attics and garages, haven't we? She is sure right on that!

Alumni Association Annual Gathering

Plans are underway for our Saturday, September 24th gathering as I am working with the director of the Fountains-at-Millbrook and her staff to organize our day at Greer this coming fall. Plans

include a light breakfast and luncheon in the high school auditorium. Gate House continues to undergo renovation and if this process is complete, I will organize an early dinner at Gate on the same day. By the way, the plans for the final changes at Gate are awesome, and you will enjoy seeing what has been done to our Gate House, which includes an outdoor swimming pool in the field between Gate and the boys' field! Watch for final details of our gathering, and a registration form in the summer issue of our newsletter.

We get Letters

From Suzanne (Keith) Sorrentino

Sue was and Administrative Assistant who lived in Daisy after her parents left Greer and after she had finished high school. She said that it was with much sorrow that she was the last person living in Daisy before it was brought down—"what a magnificent one-of-a-kind building Daisy was; by that time, I had become part of the staff working at Main House. So, between being a student and staff member I was blessed indeed to be a part of Greer for over 17 years". When her parents were houseparents at Daisy, they started out with 20 boys, but that number eventually went down to 12. Those who lived at Daisy during the years Sue was in school were **George and Doris Groh**, who lived in the basement apartment. Sue remembers a day when dear Doris found a live snake in her bed!!! Sue and her parents lived in the Main floor apartment with a beautiful fireplace in the living room. Relief house parent **Sylvia Shumer** had a 2nd floor apartment with her dog; Willie and **Earl and Olive Greendale** lived in another apartment on the 2nd floor—this couple headed up Greer's laundry facility. The 3rd floor apartments were occupied by **Warren Olsen and Ruth Freitag**. "As for me", Sue adds, "I lived on all three floors of Daisy as a student with my parents and then when I worked for Greer. In sum, we were all privileged and blessed to be a part of Greer". Finally, Sue adds a very sincere "Thank You" to the Alumni Association for providing the newsletters as they are very much treasured and appreciated.

From Marion Percy

"I am the middle child of former Staff Members **Tom and Cynthia Percy**. Leila was the first born,

and David the third child". They both now live in Maine, and I live in Connecticut. My father passed away in 2019 and my mom is approaching 92 and lives in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. "When I left Millbrook I attended Briarcliff College in Westchester County, New York. I married after graduation and have stayed in the area ever since. I currently have two grown daughters and a perfect granddaughter!"

"As a shy kid, I felt a little on the outside of things, but the Greer alumni newsletters always make me remember riding my bike all over the campus area--- to the cow barn to see the calves, or to Camp Barbey, or the apple orchard. We were so fortunate to have that lovely campus".

Here is my "story to tell—it's about cats." We had many cats when my family lived at Bittersweet. I hadn't had any in my adult life until a few years ago. My former husband had a cat named Camillo. After Camillo had a stroke, my girls decided to have a close friend take care of her until a permanent home could be found. One of her friends was allergic to cats!! My eldest contacted me and with tears said that the cat had to go, but most shelters euthanized elder felines, and Camillo was 16. I said to let Camillo move in with me and my birds. This is what mother's do right? I called him Millo, and it was as if he had been waiting for me all his life as he was so affectionate, so playful and so much fun. He hardly noticed my cockatiels. We had three happy years together. Yes, my daughters teased me a lot, but I thought that Millo was the reincarnation of the black cat, Pooka I had as a kid who had loved me.

From Stan Austin

I remember a staff member named George. Lebanese. Quiet, unassuming. Not much over 5 feet tall. He worked in Greer's kitchen and was very kind and soft spoken. He always carried gum in his pockets for the Greer kids. I later discovered that he was very intelligent, and he wrote pamphlets for newly arrived immigrants or how to navigate American culture—George was an unsung hero.

I remember great ice-skating parties behind Rapallo cottage with a fire in a barrel and hot chocolate and s'mores and sledding across that big field from the main building all the way to Rapallo.

When I went to Millbrook high school, Gary Cain and I became close friends and we played basketball all the time against other two-man teams in Millbrook in our gym class in a sort of tournament. I do not remember losing one of these games (of course you are always better in your memory after all these many years)!!! But more importantly was Gary's encouragement and selflessness. He said to me that I was a much better player than you think, but you do not realize it because... "you play too nice. Play tougher and you will improve dramatically." He was right. I never was great, but Gary helped me be the best I could be.

Editor's note: When I was in grad school in Denver, Colorado and Stan lived at a school that his Dad worked at, we would get together every Friday afternoon and play one-on-one games: I can assure you that Stan was still playing "very nice", but at the same time was a good player.

Other Sad News

Frankly, we have none considering how many people died during the pandemic that now appears to be waning. At least we have had no reports of any alumni or former staff members passing away since the last newsletter was sent out.

However, we have been getting back hard copy newsletters addressed to alumni and former staff members with yellow USPS stickers stating **UNABLE TO FORWARD**. We don't know if the addressee has passed away or merely moved without informing us. They include:

Richard Lucas of Miami, FL

Mary Austin Fertig of Sea cliff, NY

Delores Wadeley Filer of Canyon Lake, CA

Vera Vitolo Miller of Hicksville, NY

Elizabeth Tuttle Handel of Heidelberg. Germany

Joe Lopez of Great Barrington, MA

K. Louise Manz of Upper Darby, PA

Dr. Helenjane Weiner Cougan (this one has been confirmed as deceased in Punta Gorda, Florida).

No further attempt shall be made to send them a hard copy unless they contact and confirm a new address. If you know where they are, please let them know of this situation.

This just in, prompting a slight rewrite before publication. Wistar Wood's son-in-law notified me today that Wistar passed away March 11, 2022. A memorial will be held on April 3, 3:00 pm at St. Luke's Presbyterian Church, in Rolling Hills Estates, CA. All are welcome to attend in person or on Zoom <https://youtu.be/P4LEcvTKTAI>.

Greerschool.Org Web Site Update

I have not uploaded the Winter / Holiday 2021 issue* yet, due a pinched nerve in my spine affecting my right (writing) arm, since the first of the year. I received a steroid epidural shot Wednesday (3/16/22) in my neck and will be starting Physical Therapy very soon. I have an appointment with my Orthopedic Surgeon next week to determine if other epidurals are necessary or surgery.

Other family medical matters had prevented me from seeking earlier attention to the problem.

* Both that one and this one will be uploaded to the website as soon as I get some relief. Thank you for your patience. I'm sorry about the lack of photos and graphics in this issue. Blame it on my pinched nerve.

See you in the summer.

That's all for now.

Tony Vaz – Webmaster Greerschool.Org
Greer Class of '61 (Honorary)

In addition to reporting any change of address to Peggy Sparks, you can contact me at tonyvaz@greerschool.org or a521@bellsouth.net

Send newsworthy articles to:

John Hudnor – contact tonyvaz@greerschool.org
Sandy Hudnor - contact tonyvaz@greerschool.org
Peggy Sparks - contact tonyvaz@greerschool.org

or "snail mail" them to the return address on your hard copy envelope.

Hard copy issues will be mailed out anon.

In the next column is a great bit of wisdom emailed to me (and others) by Alum Jim Mathewson to fill out the page and make good sense.

THE CAMELS ARE ON THE HORIZON.....

(Author unknown)

An interesting take on history.....

Thomas Jefferson said something like, "My great grandfather was a warrior so my grandfather could be a farmer, so that my father could be a merchant, so that I could be a scholar".

The founder of Dubai, Sheik Rashid, was asked about the future of his country, and he replied, "My grandfather rode a camel, my father rode a camel, I ride a Mercedes, my son rides a Land Rover, and my grandson is also going to ride a Land Rover. But my great-grandson is going to have to ride a camel." "Why is that?", he was asked. His reply was, "Hard times create strong men. Strong men create easy times. Easy times create weak men. Weak men create difficult times. Many will not understand it, but you have to raise warriors, not parasites."

Add to that the historical reality that all great empires... the Persians, the Trojans, the Egyptians, the Greeks, the Romans, and in later years, the British... all rose and perished within 240 years. They were not conquered by external enemies; they rotted from within! America has now passed that 240-year mark and the rot is starting to be visible and is accelerating. We are past the Mercedes and Land Rover Years.... the camels are on the horizon.

The 'greatest' generation consisted of 18-year-old kids storming the beaches at "Normandy". And now, two generations later, some 18-year-old kids want to hide in safe rooms when they hear words that hurt their feelings. They also want free handouts from the government because they believe they are entitled!

The camels are on the horizon!

