



The Hope Farm / Greer School
Alumni Association
Newsletter



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Thanksgiving at Greer, 2016 ---a renewal of a cherished tradition.

Our Thanksgiving gathering in October proved again to me that "one can come home" and renew what was one of our greatest Greer traditions. A summary of this wonderful gathering follows.

Friday, October 21st

During Friday afternoon, several of us came to the high school auditorium to decorate it with a Thanksgiving theme. Joining Sandy and I in decorating the high school auditorium were Vera Lee Jones and her son and daughter-in-law. Tom King, Roland Herwig and his wife Cary also joined in to help make the auditorium look beautiful. We put pictures of the Greer buildings all around the auditorium, and in addition, put up autumn colored crate paper and added table decorations to give the auditorium a very special Thanksgiving appearance. Just before dinner, we were joined by Pat Monza, Bill Monza, Bob Jenkins, and Doug and Mitzi Berry.

For dinner on Friday evening, we were all invited to the home of Doug and Mitzi Berry for a special

home cooked dinner. All of those who had decorated the auditorium were invited to the Berry's home and we were joined by Amos Berry for a very relaxing and memory-sharing dinner: great food and great friends.

What could a Friday evening at Greer be without a movie in the auditorium, so several of us headed over to watch the movie, "The Intern," and were joined by a few residents of the "Fountains-at-Millbrook." It was fun to watch an excellent movie in our auditorium and be warmed by the memory of Friday night movies attended to many years ago.

Saturday, October 22nd

Doug and Mitzi Berry, and Isabel Morton welcomed us at registration with breakfast treats as we gathered in the auditorium on Saturday morning. At the same time, Anne Foster and Tony Vaz carried on their tradition of organizing a breakfast for the class of 1961 at a local eatery. Because of Anne and Tony's efforts, the Class of 61 always has the best turnout of alumni at each reunion. At 11:00 A.M. we all went over to the "Chapel-of-the-Child" for a renewal of our Thanksgiving service. Pat Jordan decorated and contributed two beautifully decorated Thanksgiving baskets so that we could donate food to two local food banks in behalf of the Greer School Alumni Association. Do you remember how Dr. Randle Elliott always encouraged former students to contribute the cost of one dinner for each of us at Thanksgiving? We were then asked to write a thank you note to those alumnus. This year's donation was our association's way of giving back to others for what was done for us at Greer each year. Pat did a wonderful job of

making these two baskets look just like the ones each grade put together as part of our Thanksgiving tradition years ago. Over \$200 dollars in food and contributions were collected, and we were grateful for all who helped continue Greer's generosity to those in need in the Dutchess County area.

At the chapel, we sang one of our four traditional Thanksgiving songs and after each song, there was an opportunity for those 45 in attendance at this chapel service to stand up and share a memory and/or feeling about Greer. Those who spoke at this service were: Bob Jenkins, Anne Meyrowitz Foster, Bill Monza, Penny Harned Scoggins, Elizabeth Rivera, Nick Anderson, Maureen Meyer Miller, Glenn Fillman, Mark Speakman, Andy Sewell, Pat Jordan Picco, and John Hudnor. It was so special to listen to the memories expressed by these good alumni: it again affirmed that Greer had a positive impact on our lives. I left this service wishing that all could have had the time to express their feelings and memories of Greer and Thanksgiving.

At the end of the chapel Thanksgiving service, we all proceeded to the high school for our dinner. Bob Jenkins said grace; we sat down to enjoy a complete Thanksgiving meal which was served to us by the "Fountains-at-Millbrook" staff. At the end of the dinner, there was no trip to the "Ravine" (though Tom King assured me that it still exists as he hiked to it during a recent reunion), but there were several options for all of us to continue our celebration. Some went to visit down at Gate House and several of us remained in the auditorium and spent several hours remembering all of you and enjoying the chance to reflect about many things.

Later in the evening, there was an informal gathering at Gate House as nine of us, as well as the manager of Gate House, continued spending time together and sharing our thoughts and memories.

Sunday, October 23rd

The weekend ended on Sunday afternoon as I again was able to show one of the Greer reflections

DVD's to the residents and staff members of the "Fountains-at-Millbrook." As in the previous showings to the residents, they had lots of questions about all of you and what it was like to be a part of the Greer experience.

In reflecting on this wonderful weekend, my only regret was in not seeing all of you who are alumni of this great boarding school: you were certainly missed and we hope to be able to enjoy being with you at our next gathering. Indeed, your presence would add so much more to our gatherings, and I always hope to see all of you at our next reunion. From my perspective, these gatherings are priceless! As each reunion comes to a close, I find that I have ambivalent feelings: an almost melancholy sadness as our time together ends. On the other hand, I feel hopeful to see you again in the next gathering. While it is impossible for me to quantify how many of you have similar feelings about Greer and our friendships, they are very real to me, and I am glad to feel these feelings toward all of you. As I have indicated in a former newsletter, I have been blessed throughout my life to have had many good experiences and associations, but it always comes back to you—my Greer family as well as my own family.

John Hudnor, Greer "63" and BYU "67"

Reunion News

The Greer School Alumni Association is proud to announce that our next celebration will be in May of 2018. The theme of this celebration will be "Memorial Day at Greer," and will include a walk to the cemetery, a short service at the cemetery, and this will be followed by a picnic lunch and a dinner later in the day in the auditorium. More details will follow in upcoming newsletters, and we look forward to seeing you at this renewed celebration of this wonderful annual Memorial Day tradition of Greer. The weather in May will be perfect and there will be extended daylight hours for driving home or to your motel in the area.

Alumni Profiles

This is the continuation of Darryl Hannon's profile and letter from the last issue.

After leaving the Coast Guard in 1985, I started fooling around commercially with computers and electronics, even had a computer store (with my partners) for a while, but couldn't compete with the big guys and gave it up. I did finally make it to college, taking courses in business and computer programming (COBOL and Pascal) at the local community college (even graduated summa cum laude!). I left the CG in North Carolina, and stayed there for awhile, but my favorite place was Corpus Christi, Texas, so that's where I headed in the early '90's. Shortly after I arrived in town, they won out against the competing cities as site for the USS Lexington Museum, and since I was looking for something to keep me out of the bars and off the streets, I volunteered, first as a docent, and ultimately as an aircraft restorer, working for the curator. I'm really proud of what we accomplished on the Lex, restoring the ship and a bunch of old airplanes from rusty buckets of junk to exhibits that could teach museum goers about our country's history. We scoured the country for exhibits. And it was really a weird case of déjà vu for me, since the Lex had tied up in Pensacola years ago when I was in flight training, and some of the aircraft I restored were trainers like the ones I had flown.



Now I'm old and retired and living in Florida. A couple of years ago I got knocked down by a car in a parking lot in Corpus Christi and broke my hip, necessitating a joint replacement (painful; definitely NOT

recommended). The metal implant still gives me a twinge when the weather is just right. Does that mean I qualify as a cyborg weather forecaster?

My daughter insisted I move closer to her so she could keep an eye on me, so as a dutiful parent

needing help I said "Yes, Dear", abandoned most of my stuff in Corpus, and moved to Jacksonville. I seem to have deferred all the medical excitement from youth to senior-hood; I've survived several flavors of cancer and heart problems; now I'm trying to deal with dem ole bones. My ankle, which I broke long ago in a fall while on the Lexington, is now giving me a lot of trouble.

I very much want to come to the reunion this Fall, but the ankle makes just walking difficult, let alone traveling any great distance, so I'll have to wait and see if the orthopedist I'm seeing does any good. Last week he shot me up with cortisone and also prescribed a brace. Here's hoping. I'm living in a 'continuing care retirement community'. Given the health problems I've had, the services it offers make it well worthwhile. One thing that I've really taken to is the Internet and 'social media'. Last year I reconnected with the Percy's through Marion, and have also reestablished contact with some of my Coast Guard buddies through Facebook. I'm taking advantage of 'distant learning' opportunities (I really do enjoy the learning experiences that the Web offers) through places like Hillsdale College, The Great Courses, etc, and I'm trying to relearn computer programming it has changed so much that I hardly recognize the concepts that are used today. Hopefully, I'll soon figure it out. One thing I particularly enjoy is "Old Time Radio". I have quite a collection of programs from the '40's and '50's (Fibber McGee & Molly, Jack Benny, Our Miss Brooks, Johnny Dollar, Philip Marlowe, Bob & Ray), plus podcasts from the BBC in London, various Washington think tanks, NPR, VOA, Australia, Canada, you name it. As far as I'm concerned, the Web is a wonderful source of information, learning, and entertainment.

Anyway, I've gone on for much too long. Suffice it to say that the solid foundations that I learned at Greer throughout my developing years have stood me in good stead all my life, as did my experience in the Coast Guard.

Trust that this finds all of you well and happy.

(Ed. note: Darryl was not able to attend the reunion in October. We prefer to think it was because of Hurricane

Matthew causing problems in his area rather than poor health. We hope to see him the next time.)

Alumni Profiles cont'd.

Karin (Townsend) Hargy

Karin attended Greer from 1957-1959, and after leaving Greer she graduated from Morgan High School in Clinton, Connecticut in 1961. Karin was trained to be a librarian and spent over 20 years as a librarian in several states which included: Tulsa, Oklahoma, New Hampshire, North Carolina, and lastly, Connecticut.



In her leisure time, Karin volunteers at her church, reads, knits and loves to Kayak. She has also traveled all over Europe and Asia. She is married with four sons and eight grandchildren.

In reflecting back at the years spent at Greer, Karin loved the school dances and spoke very highly of **teacher, Gayle Houser and Gwen Elliott**. Gwen taught her about etiquette and manners.

Nick Anderson, Class of 1961

Nick attended Greer from 1950 until his graduation in 1961. During his high school years, Nick was active in many areas as he was the Vice-President of his class in his Frosh, junior, and senior years. He participated in football during his entire high school career, and was an active member of Greer's explorers and rifle club. Lastly, he was the recipient of the Brian Morton award.



After leaving Greer, Nick enrolled at CCNY to pursue his education and received an associate degree in Business Administration, and became certified as a CPA. He has spent most of his career as a real estate broker. He is married and has

two children and two grandchildren. In his leisure time, Nick said he enjoys reading (especially at the beach), sail boating, and when he was younger, skiing.

In reflecting back on his days at Greer, Nick said he especially enjoyed the Christmas traditions such as decorating the cottages and the Candlelight service at the chapel-of-the-child. Two teachers that Nick especially enjoyed were **Mrs. Freitag and Carmen DiArpino**. Nick said Mrs. Freitag had high expectations of her students and he thought this was really good for the students in her class. He also stated that **Jim Morton** taught him the work ethic--that he was demanding, but fair. On Nick's bucket list is to sail in deep water in a very large sailboat!

Angela (Oliver) D'Ambrosio

Angela attended Greer from 1949-1958 and then graduated from high school in 1960 from Bayside High School in Queens, New York. She then went to New York University and graduated with a degree in English Literature. Later, she completed her Master's degree at NYU in Communications in 1968. She began her career in the New York City Department of Social Services for three years and that was followed by a thirty year career with the Westchester County Department of Social Services.

She is married and has one child and two stepchildren and one grandchild. In her leisure time, Angela enjoys playing the piano, reading, and some work in the theater. In reflecting back on her Greer days, she said that one thing she especially enjoyed was the vocational training she received, and being able to work with the younger students at Greer's cottages. Her favorite traditions at Greer were Thanksgiving and summers at Camp Barbey. Some of the staff who helped her along the way were **Bertha Packer**, Greer's nurse, who she said was great with the students. She especially enjoyed teachers, **Mrs. Freitag** and **Warren Olsen**. Last of all, she spoke of her love of **Gwen Elliott**, who she said took her under her wings and spent lots of time with her.

Bob Jenkins, Class of 1963

Bob had a successful high school career as he played in all three sports and was the leader of the football team as the starting Quarterback during his junior and senior seasons. He was active in the Student Council and President of his Senior Class.

Lastly, he won the school's cottage award in his sophomore year.

Following his graduation from Greer in 1963, Bob spent time at various jobs before going to college. He worked as an accounting department supervisor for twenty years and then as an insurance agent for eighteen years with New York Life Insurance. He then has been a substitute teacher in the Buffalo, New York area where he lives.



Bob is married with six children (one boy and five girls), and currently has twelve grandchildren, and one great grandchild. In his leisure time, Bob enjoys fishing, golfing, and gardening. In reflecting back on his Greer days, Bob enjoyed sports, especially playing football. He said that Coach **Jack Maddox** has a lasting influence on his life and still remembers a quote that the coach frequently used to motivate the Greer players: "It's not the size of the dog that matters, but the fight in the dog". He also enjoyed days at Camp Barbey and **Mom Mac**.

Another Adventure Story from Darryl Hannon

Fire at Ledge Cottage & How Burt & I Saved the Day

One warm and sunny late winter day, as Burt Berry and I sat in splendiferous majesty on the seat of the school's 1930's Ward-LaFrance fire truck (The old truck had just been replaced with a newer old truck that was much bigger and more capable) in its garage, our favorite spot for verbally solving the problems of the world, Greer, teen-agers, whatever, the Main House siren began to loudly and mournfully wail, and so did we. Neither of us knew how to operate that humongous piece of machinery, and in fact we were committing many grievous transgressions just by sitting on it.

It wasn't anywhere near noon, the siren's usual time for caterwauling, and that siren meant Fire! All the men who normally volunteered to operate

the truck, including anyone who knew how to operate the darn thing, especially Vern Ladeau, Herbie Van Anden, George Groh, or Tom Percy, were at some function in Millbrook, and that was bad news.

Somehow I convinced Burt that it was up to us teenagers (or maybe it was the other way round), and since I was already sitting in the driver's seat, I'd drive and he would crank. That fire engine was a serious piece of equipment. It had an absolutely HUGE six cylinder engine, and to start it, the driver set the spark and hand throttle, and mashed a foot down on a pedal that raised all the valves to relieve the compression pressure, while the assistant manfully turned the hand crank. At the appropriate moment, the driver would re-engage the valve train and again adjust the spark, and if everything went as it was supposed to, the engine would start.

Well, Burt cranked and I mashed and adjusted, and, miracle of miracles, the darn thing started!

I slowly and carefully eased the truck out of the garage, boarded Burt, and set off for Ledge. The truck had no synchromesh transmission, so shifting that monster was something that required a tender, skillful touch to coordinate clutch and shift lever and throttle to avoid the dreaded gear-clash. It would have been nice to arrive with siren wailing and lights flashing, but I had no idea how to turn those things on, so we proceeded in majestic silence.

I don't know about Burt, but I had no idea how to operate all the valves and knobs and levers that lurked on its control panel to make the water flow, let alone how to get the engine to shift from locomotion over to operating the water pump. I was doing good just to keep that monster on the road (this was looong before power steering or any other modern amenity on that sort of vehicle). To this day I don't know what we thought we were going to do when we arrived at Ledge, but by God, arrive in style we would!

Before long we were making the turn into Ledge. Between the snow and the little hill there (and maybe some adrenalin), I almost ran the truck into

the building, despite desperately pressing for all I was worth on the brake pedal (mechanical brakes, remember, and that magnificent beast was HEAVY!). Burt ran into the house to check out the situation, while I dismounted and gloomily contemplated all those mysterious knobs and levers, hoping against hope that someone would show up who knew how to work them.

Soon Burt was back with the happy news that it had just been a fluorescent light ballast that been 'smoking', and the problem had been solved by someone turning off the electricity to the fixture before we got there. Whew! Talk about a letdown. But at least we hadn't had to demonstrate how ignorant we were of how to operate the truck.

Happily, I drove back down the Ledge road, past the dump, past the Cannery, past Crest, across Flint Road, past the Maintenance Shop, into the area near the gas pump and the central kitchen, and gingerly put the fire engine back into its garage bay without incident. Burt and I were the heroes of the day (at least in our own eyes), even though we had done nothing, and we didn't even get in trouble for 'joyriding' (I had an unfortunate experience in the food truck one evening the following year, but that's another story).

What a day.

And now a word from the Grinch

This applies only to recipients of "generic" hard copies of the newsletter. Generic copies will cease to be sent out after this issue. The only persons that will receive the standard form of the newsletter (grayscale photos and graphics) are those on record of making a donation to the alumni association in the amount of \$5.00 per year or more. An annual Holiday standard issue will be sent to all alumni, paid or not.

If you decide to donate \$100.00 or more over any period of time (back to 2014), you will receive the deluxe version containing color photos and graphics similar to the e-mail version, which is free



to all having access to the Internet and a current e-mail account reported to the alumni association.

You may donate in someone else's name if you wish; just be sure to stipulate their name with your donation.

As always, send your check or money order to **Mitzi Berry** (only) made out to **Greer School Alumni Association**. Do not send cash. Contact Tony Vaz (tonyvaz@greerschool.org) for Mitzi's mailing address.

Thank you for your understanding.

In-Memoriam

The only deaths that we know of in 2016 are Gwen Elliott, Viola Farley Stiles, Arthur Clarke and Phyllis Pequeno Gue. They have all been entered on the web site **In-Memoriam** page. If we have missed someone, please let us know.

Greerschool.Org Web Site Update

Not much has changed since the last newsletter. Sorry, it has been a busy fall. Thanks to all the folks who sent photos of the reunion attendees (Anne Foster, Jim Anderson and John Nicholas). There were too many to feature in this newsletter, but after the Holidays expect to see them on the **Reunion News** page on the web site.

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.

Send newsworthy articles to:

John Hudnor, Sandy Hudnor or Peggy Sparks

Contact me at the e-address above for their mailing address or "snail mail" news items to the return address on your hard copy envelope.