

Hello Fellow Alumni,



April 1, 1990

Here we are on the second newsletter to you. We wish to thank those of you who sent us their reflections of Greer. They made me remember tree planting, the movies, the Daisy Dining Hall, and they carry on to other memories. Please pass on any of your thoughts so we can include them in another edition of the newsletter.

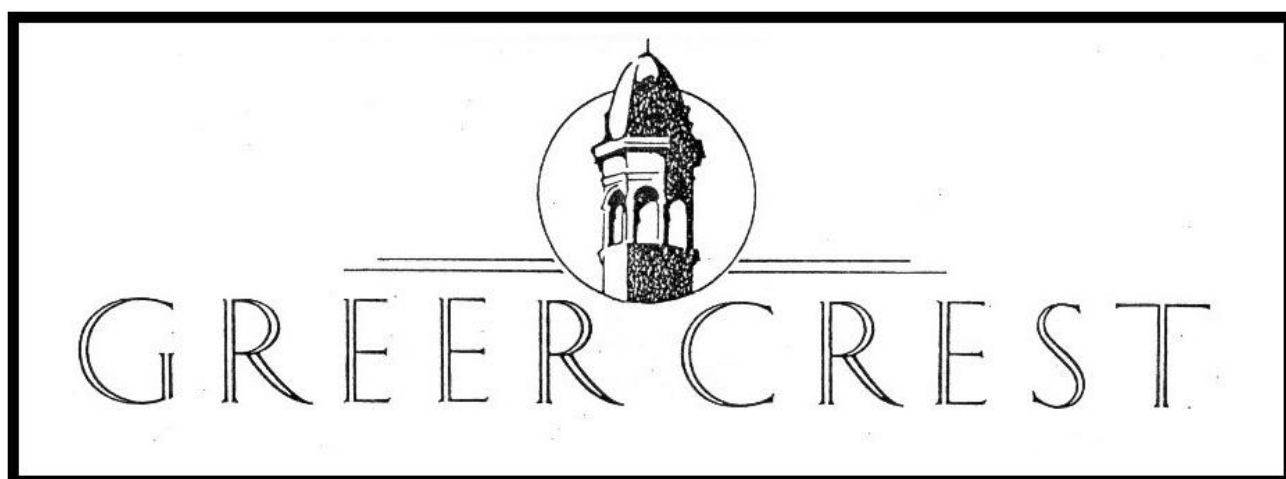
The snow has fallen, the temperatures are cold, and it is winter in Dutchess County again. We see skis, snowmobiles, sleds and can remember the good times we had in the winter at Greer.

Those of you who live in the south don't know what you are missing.....at least spring is on the way!!

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The situation involving the selling of GreerCrest Retirement Community and some the Greer Woodcrest campus has been partially resolved. A contract was signed by the Board of Greer Woodcrest and Healthy Care Continuum. It must now go before the Attorney General for final approval. When this happens, the sale will become final and once again, Greer changes its identity. It will still be known as GreerCrest but will be under the umbrella of Health Care Continuum. And on paper will be Millbrook Health Continuum.

Mr. Ray Hartman who will become the owner has decided to change the "logo." It used to be a lovely tree, but he has chosen (in our opinion) an even better design. See if you don't agree! This is the cupola that was on the roof of Main House. It is now located on the top of the Highlands Building at GreerCrest.



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### Reflections of Greer

Remember Tree-Planting Day at Hope Farm in the '30's? Mr. Bacon and Mr. Fink were always in charge. Everyone was involved. Adults supervised and the biggest kids stretched and move the rope. Each team had its own colored ribbon to follow. When the whistle blew, the rope was moved several feet.

A big lad would dig a hole, another carried the evergreen seedlings in water and the smaller lads put the tree in the hole and heeled it in. In this way several thousand trees were planted under the watchful eyes of adults who tried to make sure no corners were cut. The carrot at the end of the stick was the picnic of hotdogs, soda, watermelon, and other exotics not in our regular diet. BUT, the picnic did not start until all the trees were planted.

And, what was the popular cry of the day? "Woodchuck Hold!!" to the innocent, this meant, "be careful and don't get hurt." Despite those watchful eyes, the lad with the trees went to the woodchuck hole. Others screened the view and a dozen of the seedlings were planted in the woodchuck hole. However, enough of the trees were properly planted and many of them grew to maturity. In fact those trees were pictured and an article written in the *New York Conservationist* in the late '60's. The articles did not mention that we were slave labor and the Hope Farm really knew how to keep us working at something all the time.

When I became a teacher later on, I adopted their philosophy – "Keep them busy, or they'll certainly keep you busy."

**Bob Irwin-1937**

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We used to ring chimes when the Dining Hall was opened, and many a time I couldn't wait to get in, because we had hidden a heel from a fresh loaf of bread on our chair. And of course, I remember the Dining Hall being closed before I got there. ---**Kasper Knutson** -1934-1938

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After nine months under the Nazi regime, I managed to escape. But the Austrian quota for immigration was exhausted, so I decided to sit it out in England. Owing to British regulations, even though, I had my first graduate degree, I had to be a house maid. It took six years for the American visa to get through.

I arrived in America in 1944, and – I was scared of America. I had the European image of America in my soul. This is a materialistic country – everyone runs after the rolling dollar. How will I ever fit into the culture???

Attempting to obtain a teaching position, I consulted a teacher's agency in New York City. They suggested Greer. "We feel you will be happy there." I was. I loved the students, the faculty, the whole atmosphere. I lived at Ledge. One night (it was the houseparent time off) we sat together and chatted. I asked the students, "Surely you must have noticed how 'green' I was when I first come to Greer- everything was strange to me, the language, American educations, philosophies, etc. You could have taken advantage of me, yet you were so kind and cooperative to me. How come?" I received a touching answer. "Look, you have been kicked out of your country as we have been kicked out of our homes. You seem like one of us". I loved it.

In 1950, I married Arthur Freitag, by that time, he was divorced from Ruth, who taught Biology at Greer.

**Herta Taussig Freitag** 1944-1948

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I remember the Friday Night Movies. If we did to have too many demerits, we could go. Mr. Behrends used to sit in the back and when the movie was over, he would always look at my eyes and if it was a sad one, he'd say "You had another good cry."

I'm so thankful that the last year I was at Greer was also Mr. Behrends' last year. He went all out to raise money for Greer and kept it going. The years I spent at Greer were my best years. We were all lucky to go there.

**Helen Zarakovitis**

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Thank you for all your reflections. Please keep them coming. It is important that our newsletter keep people in touch. We do have a bit of news for you. "Mr. Wayne Holton is retiring from IBM the end of the month." Good luck in your retirement years, Wayne.

The Directory is almost finished. Thank you all for your patience with us. It will be on its way to you before the next newsletter.

HAPPY SPRING TIME to all of you.

Please keep in touch. We cannot do this newsletter without you. Remember, every one of you is special. We are all family. We are look forward to being together again.

As Always,

*Mitzi*  
&  
*Jim*

Dear Fellow Alumni



October 11, 1990

We greet you and in a way, feel sorry for you as this is a very pretty time of the year in this section of the country. The leaves are all colors and it is a pleasure to go out and look. There are things to report and some things, like the sale of GreerCrest is still on hold at this time.

Mr. David Reis, who is a gentleman involved in buying real estate is working on purchasing GreerCrest. He will turn over the management of GreerCrest (which may be renamed Millbrook Meadows) to Life Care. Life Care is an organization that has been in the business of running retirement communities for many years.

The residents at GreerCrest are very enthused about this change of plans. It looks like it will be the best solution for all concerned, but nothing is final as of yet. Mitzi has spoken to Mr. Brucella of Life Care, and he is aware of the Alumni Association and what "Greer" meant to us.

What will happen is anyone's guess, but at least Life Care knows about us.

During the summer, this writer and his wife saw some of the alumni on a trip to the west coast.

Those of you we missed...maybe next time.

We visited Herb Cuevas and his wife at Sun City West, Phoenix. Also, Herb's sister Mary came by to say hello.

On to Los Angeles, where we visited George Zachary.

On to Penn Valley, California and we visited with Lee Arvidson and family.

We also stopped for a couple of hours at the ranch where Georgia King is and had a nice visit there walking around the farm.

One afternoon this fall we were visited by Hoover Mountcastle, Joe Obregon and Richard Smith here at our house.

Of course we have visited Mrs. Fink, and Wayne Holton and I helped her cut some branches from a tree. She still owes us lunch which we hope to collect soon.

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Planning for the next reunion must begin before too long. We haven't made any hard plans as of this writing but must make them soon, as we must hire a hall and band or whatever. We had planned to use the Greer campus for part of the reunion, but due to the pending sale, we think we should not plan on this. We liked the motel party for Mrs. Fink and think this would be a good plan to do again.

The alumni would arrive during the day and then we would have the supper and party at the motel. Therefore, people could stay there and not have to drive. Sunday morning, everyone could make their own plans for breakfast and getting together with their friends. We could try and meet at the park in Union Vale for the day before and then go to the motel. As you see our plans are very loose at this time and any suggestions that any of you may have would be more than welcome. So, please some response. Thank you.

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We did receive a REFLECTION of Greer, or Hope Farm from **Robert Irwin** and we thank him for it.

Back in the 30's, the lads from Daisy, Rapallo & Gate House ate in the Daisy Dining Room. When all were assembled for meals, one of the older boys (Table Head) was asked to say grace. As a former table head, the idea was to be as brief as possible... ("I'm hungry and don't let the gravy get cold".) The shortest acceptable grace that I can remember was "Come Lord Jesus, be our guest, bless us and our food."

For poets among you, you may remember.....

    "God is great, God is good,  
    And let us thank you for this food.

By his hand must all be fed.  
Give us, Lord our daily bread”.

Then there was the poet laureate of the time who composed this original.....

“Ponti in the kitchen,  
Ninety people fed  
ON three little fishes, and a loaf of Vitolo’s bread.  
Bless the dear old chef  
Who gave us these our rations,  
And bless the dietician, who kept us from starvation”.

Unfortunately the house parent in charge had little humor and no appreciation for creativity and the poet was in jeopardy.

The one who got into the most trouble who had in mind, “Let us remember Jesus when we eat.” Unfortunately it came out “For Christ’s sake let’s eat.”

I also remember a few of those graces. One that sticks out is “Good food, good meat, good God, let’s eat!!”

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**Robert Packer** sent a letter and an excerpt from the letter is as follows:

“I am sure some will remember that one year we hiked out to an old apple orchard (Thorne Cottage) and had a picnic there. The trees had to been cared for in years, no spray had been applied, but the apples were mostly perfect. True, a few of them were wormy, and a few may have been scabby.

This impressed me as an organic gardener from way back. We used no poison sprays and no chemical fertilizers and had less trouble with insects than those who do. And the food grown tastes better, and is better to eat. Poison sprays do kill the ‘bad’ insects, pests, but also kills the ‘good’ insects, which in nature’s balance keeps the ‘bad’ insects under control.

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Again the question, does anyone else have any memories of Greer that they would like to share with the rest of us?

A reminder, we will again be collecting dues after the spring issue of our newsletter. We do hope that you will continue being a member and that you can get other alumni to also join. We also should have another election for president, etc, during the next reunion. If anyone wants the job, please apply. Mitzi and I will be happy to pass the torch on to whomever.

We will let you know more about GreerCrest in the next edition of the newsletter. It is difficult to relate any happenings as things are at the stage where the outcome seems different daily. We also want you to know that the Directory, which has been promised to you for so long, is almost complete. Please have patience.....it is coming.

We do hope all is well with everyone and do wish you all a Happy Thanksgiving. We hope to see you next summer at the reunion.

As Always,

*Mitzi*  
*&*  
*Jim*