

KNOX



CLASS

NOTES



Top right: **Nancy Knapp** '75 missed her 50th Reunion thanks to adventures in Japan, Thailand, and Laos. "See you next Reunion," she shares with her classmates on page 54.

Middle left: Meet **Steve Batcha** '03, pediatrician and a four-time American Ninja Warrior, on page 64.

Bottom right: Freelance photographer **Becky Duffyhill** '15 loves taking creative portrait and women's sports photos. Learn more about her adventures with women's professional athletics on page 67.

The Anderson House Legacy

By Elsa Swenson Teel '67, Resident of The Anderson House



STEVE DAVIS '12 (4)

For the 1966–1967 academic year, Anderson House was an experimental self-governing dorm with no house mother and no hours for a select group of senior women at Knox College. This breakthrough in eliminating the curfew for these women came after several visionary Knox women students worked with the College Women's Council to address the inequity of the women's curfew.

Following the success of this “experiment,” in 1968 senior women had no curfew, and by 1970 all Knox women enjoyed the freedom of unrestricted hours.

Honoring the legacy of this Knox College milestone started at our 50th Reunion in 2017, when a group of us who had lived in Anderson House met for breakfast at the Gizmo. We decided that we didn't want to wait five years for the next reunion before we got together again. So the following fall, we met in Seabrook, Washington, and then, in 2019, we met in Santa Fe, New Mexico. When the pandemic put our get-togethers on hold, we started Zoom meetings once a month. We

enjoyed hearing about books we were reading, our travel adventures, and our grandchildren's activities.

In 2024, we started talking about what our Anderson House legacy at Knox College might be—should we raise money for a lecture series on Women's Studies or for a scholarship for women? Then in spring 2025, I suggested the possibility of commissioning an artist to paint/draw Anderson House and then gift it to the College. We all rallied around this idea. We had our legacy!

Several members of our Zoom group (Dorie Campbell Tichenor '67, Nancy Rabenstein Pielemeier '67, and Wendy Hummel Hill '67) met up with former Knox Regional Philanthropy Officer Jake Secrist at Knox Club meetings in their home towns and eagerly related our legacy idea. Jake was supportive in helping us develop this legacy and introduced our group to Angie Olivas '18, associate director of the Knox Fund, who introduced us to a former Knox art student, Kevin Dera Cox '24. We contacted him, and, after seeing some of



At left: The commissioned drawing of Anderson House by Kevin Dera Cox '24.

At right: Elsa Swenson Teel '67 introduces artist Kevin Dera Cox '24 during the ceremony honoring the legacy of the Anderson House.

CLASS NOTES

his drawings, we knew he was our artist. From two old photographs of Anderson House, he drew and framed our legacy vision!

At the same time, Jake introduced us to Associate Professor of Educational Studies Deirdre Dougherty. She began joining our Zoom meetings, as did Angie, and, together, we started planning our dedication event at Knox in conjunction with Professor Dougherty and her student Delaney Edsall '27's presentation of Living on Campus in the 1960s.

Now the fast track began. We chose the date, the program was printed, and we secured our flights and hotel reservations. The excitement started to escalate!

On Thursday, May 7, 2026—60 years after living in Anderson House—we gathered in the Seymour Library at Knox College for our presentation event.

The program, mostly coordinated by Professor Dougherty and her students, included an amazing pop up archive exhibit facilitated by College Archivist Joseph Taylor; 1960s music playing in the background; era pictures projected on screens around the room; the entire Knox College Choir singing the Knox Hymn; President C. Andrew McGadney giving the opening comments; Associate Professor of Classics Hilary Lehmann as our moderator; Professor Dougherty and student Delaney educating us on women at Knox College in the 1960s; our relating some of our memories, plus honoring our deceased Anderson House members; and then hearing evocative words from our artist, Dera.

At the conclusion of the program, six of the Anderson House women, Ruth, Anne, Dorie, Elsa, Wendy, and Nancy, gathered together in



the front of the Abolition Lab in the Library and dedicated our Anderson House drawing to Knox College with these words written by Wendy:

“Today we are gifting Dera’s evocative and beautiful rendering of Anderson House to highlight its story and its contribution to the rise of self-determination for Knox women. Although 60 years later we may primarily be curiosities, we are hopeful that there is still a spark of connection and a link in spirit with today’s liberated and accomplished Knox women.”

We thank everyone involved in this Anderson House Legacy event, and we are grateful that our Anderson House drawing will be an enduring reminder of our story.

◆ Knox students and friends explore the Knox in the 1960s exhibit that accompanied the Anderson House program.



◆ Left to Right: Ruth Margaret Mesing '67, Anne Talley Turner '67, President C. Andrew McGadney, Dorie Campbell Tichenor '67, Elsa Swenson Teel '67, Wendy Hummel Hill '67, Associate Professor of Educational Studies Deirdre Dougherty, Delaney Edsall '27, Nancy Rabenstein Pielmeier '67, and Kevin Dera Cox '24. Class of 1967 Anderson House Zoom Group members and donors not in attendance: Katherine Linquist Adams, Constance Ann Bond, Helen Geraldine Gilbert, Diane Koeppel Madsen, Ruth Margaret Mesing, Nancy Rabenstein Pielmeier, Janet Sanford Westfall.

We are Knox. You are, too.

If you attended Knox for one year, two years, or graduated with honors, you are a Knox alumnus/a. You are the best reflection of Knox College and the education it provides. So, keep us informed. Tell us what you've been up to, if you've been promoted or honored, or simply say hello.

Here's how:

Contact your Class Correspondent, or have other media sources send us press releases, articles, and publicity.

Please send information about births, marriages, and deaths directly to:

Alumni Records
Knox College, Box K-230
Galesburg, IL 61401-4999
Email: records@knox.edu

Send all other updates, correspondence, or questions to:

Enzo Nagao
Associate Director of Engagement
Knox College, Box K-230
Galesburg, IL 61401-4999
Email: classnotes@knox.edu

Please note that Class Notes may be edited for space and in accordance with the Knox Style Guide. If you are submitting photos, please send high-resolution images that are at least 300 dpi.

Update your contact information:



1950

Bob Willett will celebrate his 100th birthday this fall. In response to my request for news, he writes, "All I can think of to impart to you is my Centennial Cruise coming up in October. A short five-day jaunt across Bahamian waters to celebrate 100 years of survival—the Great Depression, two wars, a tsunami, uncounted elections, prostate cancer, heart attack, fibrillation thing, 13 years of volunteering in developing countries, one year in Saipan, and six books. Good stuff includes Knox, Sigma Nu, great friends, beautiful wife, 63 years with Donna, three loving kids, two ancient cats, and no mortgage. Been a good ride."

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1955

Morton Weir has a lot to celebrate this summer. "Ceil and I will celebrate our 70th wedding anniversary this summer at a family reunion in Gatlinburg, Tennessee. Twenty-five family members will join us there, including eight grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. We will also celebrate my 92nd birthday, which happens to fall on one of the days we were able to gather."

CLASS CORRESPONDENT:
MEGAN CLAYTON
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1956

These class notes will begin with information about the latest recipient of our Class of 1956 Scholarship. He is **Vincent Tang '28** from Morton Grove, Illinois. At this reporting, he had not yet declared a major, but he is interested in computer science and photography. We wish him well.

Of interest is that the market value of the scholarship on March 21, 2026, was \$74,197.58, and this year, Vincent received \$5,236.68 from the scholarship fund. It's such a satisfying feeling to realize we have helped so many students enjoy the benefits of a Knox education.

My request for class news produced...absolutely nothing. I will end this on a personal note after learning about the passing of **Marilyn Foster Weidman**. A favorite memory is the Pi Phi Pow Wow in our senior year. Neither of our fiancés was able to join us for the event, and we decided to be a pair. Marilyn, president of the group, was Big Boss Fos, and I was Side Kick Rick, and we did have a delightful time.

Do you have any favorite memories to share for the next *Knox Magazine*?

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1957

CLASS CORRESPONDENT:
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1958

With a few exceptions, the Class of '58 has "gone dark." One new contact is **Barbara Berke Diehl**. She shared only our freshman year, but is interested in keeping Knox ties.

► Barbara was one of a group of eight students from Thornton Township High School in the Class of '58. She has fond memories of freshman year with friends **Mary Mullins Hinz** and **Carolyn Long Scott**, as well as **Mike Ruffolo** P'92's dance band—both in high school and at Knox.

► After leaving Knox, she married, and they were off to complete her Purdue grad husband's ROTC two-year tour. The tour kept them on the move, spending much time in Germany. After 12 years, 13 addresses, and four children, they eventually returned to the States, settling in Virginia, where she now lives. She found time to complete her education and had a successful career in finance.

► **Ron Moline** sends the following e-mail: "With the death of **Tom Stockert** several months ago and that of **Jim Winebright** many years

ago, I am the last surviving member of what the three of us called the Triumvirate. Believe me, I was along for the ride. It was a gift to be identified with these unique, brilliant, and, as it happened, gay young men who had a significant impact on so many of the best and brightest of our Knox Class of 1958. Of course, they were closeted.

I remember thinking—believing really—that conservative Republicanism was a quaint, antiquated relic of a previous era that was destined, as they say, to the "dust bin of history." Could any of us have imagined how politics would look in the second quarter of the 21st century? For that matter, could any of us have imagined that we would still be alive in that quarter-century?

My wife, Barbara (Oberlin, 1964), and I maintain some semblance of equanimity by devoting considerable financial and emotional resources to helping prisoners and, as we like to refer to them upon release, returning citizens. Barbara is the coordinator for the pen-pal program of the Illinois Unitarian Universalist Prison Ministry Program. I am an active member.

I am ending my half-century or more of teaching psychotherapy to psychiatric residents this year, because of my advancing deafness. State-of-the-art hearing aids suffice in small groups, but in a classroom, my hearing loss precludes my full participation and guidance. I may continue to do one-on-one supervision of residents at UIC (University of Illinois at Chicago) next year, but we shall see. Meanwhile, our love of travel has diminished, and we doubt—no, we're certain—that a 70th anniversary trip to Italy is not in the cards. My hobby for almost two decades has been the study of Italian, and I hope to continue an Italian conversation and literature group as long as my hearing permits, as well as continue to do some mentoring. Life is good."

► From Brenda Isaacson, wife of **Roy Isaacson**, Colonel US Army Retired: "Roy fell in January 2026, resulting in a hip fracture needing surgery. The surgery was successful, but the challenges that his Parkin-

son's presented were too much to overcome. Roy passed on March 1, 2026, with his family at his bedside. He was buried in Arlington National Cemetery."

I hope all of you are enjoying a good spring and summer. Celebrating our nation's 250th birthday in July reminds me of many patriotic parades when we were children, as WWII came to a close. In our neighborhood, all the kids would gather—my brother was always the flag bearer, I twirled my baton—10 or 15 of us marched through the neighborhood frequently!

I will watch for any news from all of you—this column also can be used for sharing memories, especially of Knox days.

CLASS CORRESPONDENT:
PAT CRAIG RUFFOLO P'92
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1959

Nell and **Howard Dillon**, formerly of New York City, now reside in the North Hill independent living community at 865 Central Ave, Apt 1-202, Needham, MA 02492. Email: hdillon37@gmail.com.

► Had an interesting conversation with **Mary Coyne Karau**, who now resides in an independent living community in Bend, OR, where she has a daughter and family. She moved to Bend from Madison, WI.

Also, had an interesting and fun conversation with **Georgia Raft Souris**. Georgia is a happy and contented lady. She and her husband have been living in Gilbert, AZ, for 31 years. They are still vertical and dealing with aging issues. The Sourises are active in their church, and both received awards for years of active service. They have two sons. Unfortunately, one lives in CT and one lives in GA, so visits are rare.

► I heard from **David P'88** and **June Pomatto Harris '60, P'88**. They report: "We have been married for 66 years and are still moving forward, at a slower pace. Dave retired from a 27-year career in the US Army, spent most of his time with light in-

fantry, 82nd Airborne Division, 7th Infantry at Ford Ord, California, and as deputy commander of the Berlin Brigade. Behind the wall, he commanded the Brigade in the 7th Division, the Battalion in the 82nd, and retired as chief of staff of the Infantry Division. He did two tours in Vietnam. June taught school in Georgia, North Carolina, California, and Guam. She headed up the Women's Professional Association in Berlin and spent time at Hitler's Eagles Nest for association meetings and history." Dave retired from the Army and spent eight years as the assistant city manager in Salinas, CA, before moving to North Carolina. He and June operated a real estate firm for a short time. They left the real estate business, and Dave worked for a government agency for the past 20 years before finally retiring in 2016. Son **David '88** graduated from Knox, and son **Richard** heads up the division of a large real estate company. They have four grandchildren and one great-grandchild and currently reside at their beach house in North Carolina.

CLASS CORRESPONDENTS:
CONNY TOZER
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1960

Recollections of trivia, according to Artificial Intelligence, can increase with age, based on the phenomenon known as "Inhibitory Deficit Theory." According to this hypothesis, older adults are less able to suppress or ignore irrelevant thoughts and actions than young adults are. No longer being offended by being labelled an "older adult," I was comfortable asking classmates to share any Knox trivia that came to mind or had recently come to their attention. I offered this example: In 1860, Knox awarded its first honorary doctorate to **Abraham Lincoln**. Previously, the College only awarded honorary master's degrees.

Among a number of fascinating trivialities that **Mary Kent Knight, L.H.D '25**, using ChatGPT, gathered from Knox Archives was, "From its

earliest years, Knox stood out for its progressive spirit. It was among the first colleges in the nation to admit both women and African American students, opening doors that many institutions kept firmly closed." Additional items of interest have been woven into an article for the *Fifty-Year Club Bulletin*.

► Otherwise, **Bob Bennett** shared this news: "Last August, after Lynne died, I chose to go through with the move we planned. I now live in a retirement center and have largely adjusted to the different lifestyle. Not being a good cook makes the daily meals a real benefit. Golf is, unfortunately, a victim of my AFib-oriented shortness of breath. However, the shortness of breath has abated, but the loss of strength from months of lesser activity is unlikely to be restored, no matter how hard I try; the old guy is not as disciplined as he once was. Try not to be too negative because I am really doing quite well. Still maintain all my old relationships at my club and can still drive (a real blessing). Have lunch scheduled with **Dianne Mitchell Townsend P'91** and daughter Tracy next month [April]." Bob added, "One of my great regrets is that, while at Knox, I did not take classes from Professor **Paul Shepard**. I just finished re-reading his *Man in the Landscape*, written while he was at Knox, and it is still, after all these years (published in 1967), a wise and engrossing book, still relevant, that I discovered after I had left Knox." He also asked, "Are any alums left who took classes from Shepard? It would be interesting to hear from them."

► **Dick Riggs** sent this update: "We have been living in Ft. Worth, TX, since 2013. We lived in NJ 1963-2013, where I earned an M.A., an M.S., and an Ed.D. I was a professor of mathematics at New Jersey City University for 48 years and retired in 2012 as professor emeritus. I miss teaching; mostly I miss the students. While in NJ, I sang in choruses that performed in Carnegie Hall and local venues. One concert included Jerome Hines as soloist, and another shared the program with Dave Brubeck's trio. More recently, I sang the Catholic Pentecost service in Latin while

sharing the music with a Mongolian priest in the upper room in Israel (scene of the Last Supper). I miss singing now. Emma and I are doing well. I seem to be recovering nicely from kidney cancer. I still drive, but have to be very careful with my lower limb neuropathy. We do not travel the world now but try to stay home with our little dog, Pepper, who is 21+. Fortunately, all you have to do is step outside to see the beautiful world that God has given us for free."

► **Hal Lander P'86, P'88** wrote, "I'm doing pretty well and happy to be extant. Most days, Marie-Claire and I walk a mile along Burnt Mill Creek behind our home here in Wilmington, NC, where we enjoy our own little wildlife sanctuary in our backyard. (Marie-Claire is known as the "Owl Whisperer" by her photographer buddies.) We check on what the Ibis colony is up to and find out if the wood duck offspring have hatched. We also see all kinds of herons and other birds and critters like alligators. When I do my other exercises, I listen to podcasts, such as Fresh Air and Farmcraft 10. I'll spare you the organ recital and boringly long list of medications. We still do some travelling. Just last week, we travelled to North Carolina's Ocracoke Island and Outer Banks, a trip we have made several times in the past. But this time it was really special because we were escorted by my Knox grad kids, **Rob '86** and **April '88**, and Rob's wife Linda. We especially enjoyed seeing the lighthouses and visiting the site of the Wright Brothers' first flight. Last year we visited Marie-Claire's family near Angers, France, and spent some time on the picturesque Île d'Yeu off the coast of Brittany. I'm grateful for my Knox education and the opportunity to know you and **Mary Lu** and many others in the community."

► A closing triviality from my memory, not AI: In 1960, Fred Schubach's was the only Galesburg store where you could buy polo shirts with alligator embroidery and skin-tight chino slacks with belts in the back. How's that for an example of Inhibitory Deficit Theory?

CLASS CORRESPONDENT:
DICK AFT
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1961

Jim Valentine has been busy writing. You can find his first book on Amazon. He wrote, "For some interesting anecdotes, see the first chapters in my book, *Jimmie*, about our life beginning on our first dates in 1959 at Knox College's Sadie Hawkins Day Dance. **Judy Gleason Valentine** '62 and I finally had a real marriage in 1962. This remembrance may ring a bell for some of our classmates."

► From **Richard Redenius**, "Not much going on with me. I am still able to travel and love it. Recently visited my grandchildren in the Philippines and plan to see friends in Germany next month."

CLASS CORRESPONDENT:
MEGAN CLAYTON
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1962

Calvin Ebersole divides his time between Brookfield, WI, and Miami, FL. His travels, Calvin reports, consist mostly of monthly commutes between Miami and Brookfield, where he owns and manages several properties.

► A brief conversation with **Bill Carsrud** confirms that he and **Beth Young Carsrud** continue to live in Washington state following Bill's retirement as a professor of mathematics at Gonzaga University. They split their time between their 15-acre property of pine forest and meadows and trips to New Mexico and Utah, where Beth continues to enjoy her photographic skills.

CLASS CORRESPONDENT:
CYNTHIA MORSE LATTA
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1963

Jo Mannino Hockenhull writes, "An organization of which I was a founding member (oh, so many years ago), Pan Arts Northwest, decided to do a short member profile of my personal art history

this spring. You can find the article in their April 2026 Newsletter." Jo was an educator at Washington State University, where she founded the printmaking studio. From printmaking and art, she moved to women's studies. Her work has been featured in numerous national and international exhibits, as well as in permanent collections in the Seattle Art Museum, the Hallie Ford Museum of Art in Salem, and the Portland Art Museum.

► From **Paul and Eileen Klimick Schoaff**, "Many of us have been in transition, from downsizing our living arrangements, or really retiring, or traveling, or moving closer to family. After retirement at 60, we moved to Florida to be close to our older son and first grandchild. But 10 years later, they moved and, after a year of visiting almost every month for birthdays, performances, and holidays, we followed them to North Carolina. Our new house was only 20 miles away, but 14 years later, we somehow got older. We now live only two miles away in a retirement village, and our grandchildren are involved with jobs, college, and grad school. We are finally done with getting rid of what we didn't need, putting it in storage, and selling our house. We are now getting involved with new people, new activities, and new interests of the grandkids. We have been to all 50 states, Germany, France, Italy, Scotland, Brazil, Mexico, and Canada. We are hanging on to our passports since our grandson is going to McGill University in Montreal for music. So less cooking and cleaning and more new things to do, we hope. Best wishes to all our classmates who are also getting older."

► "The very special freshman women's dorm, Whiting Hall (formerly a Civil War hospital), had many rules. My favorite was that if you were entertaining a beau in one of the downstairs parlors, four feet had to be on the floor at all times! To live there felt like being a part of history, for sure." Good memories from **Judy Uhle Aaronson**.

► "After chairing our 40th, 50th, 55th, and finally 60th Reunion for our outstanding Knox graduates, I have been forced by my health

to end my trips back to support my favorite college in the whole world!" wrote **John Sauter**. "My consolation prize is that I will still plan to provide one more D.C. Knox Club event for a Cubs/Nats game in Washington this August. When we did this a couple of years ago, we had about 30 attendees. We are hoping for another very successful event! Thank you to all of you for the opportunity to participate and share so many great memories over so many years. Veritas!"

CLASS CORRESPONDENT:
RAMONA REED LANDBERG
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1964

Michael P. Johnson, Ph.D.: "I am currently sitting with a cup of coffee on the balcony of a cabin on a Viking ship, enjoying the dawn over the Turkish coast, and **Terry**'s request prompts the following thoughts. My partner, Maureen, and I regularly do the NYT crossword puzzles, travel together, and enjoy the fine arts (both at home in State College and on our travels). It is often the case in these contexts, when I recognize a painting or sculpture, or know a bit of Western history, or recognize a style of classical music, or have an appropriate Shakespeare quote at hand, that Maureen quietly says, "Knox College," acknowledging the breadth of my Knox education. I give thanks to Professors **Bennett, Brady, Grutzmacher**, and **Hane** for the courses they taught outside of my major that have enriched my life for more than 60 years. I also give thanks to my peers (**Sue Deller Ross, Nancy Schmid Stanley, Mike Weiss, Michael Ford, Bill Bomash**), who introduced me to the likes of Betty Friedan, Saul Bellow, John Coltrane, and Zoltan Kodaly. They also helped to shape the leftist, feminist perspectives that have informed both my personal life and my work in sociology and women's studies. I might also note that my ex-wife (**Terry Johnson** '65), with whom Maureen and I are still close friends, often has the same experiences. Thank you, Knox!"

► **Al and Karen Hummel Crumbliiss**: "We remain in the house we

built in Durham in 1980 and enjoy the peace, the forested yard, and sitting on our deck among the trees. We are members of various social groups, mostly Duke friends, and enjoy time with our son, Jeff, and his family (in Durham). We see John (in DC) at the holidays and at the beach! Karen loved a special week in June, taking our granddaughter, Si-ena, 18, to Paris. Al moves forward, reading constantly, thinking about science, and listening to music. His stroke prevents him from using the computer, which he so regrets. He stays healthy and now has a "stair chair," which is good for avoiding falls!" [Ah, yes. At our age, stairs can be bears!]

► **Ralph Bouma** writes: "A couple of months back, I had lunch with my Knox freshman roommate and fellow Beta pledge, **William Mudgett**. Hadn't seen Bill since the Knox 25th Class Reunion. Many will not remember Bill, as he flunked out after too much partying and zero studying. Bill landed on his feet, graduating from the University of Illinois with a degree in architecture. After graduating, Bill moved to Fort Myers, FL, and was one of the first 100 certified licensed architects in Florida. He went on to develop a highly respected architectural firm and currently enjoys his retirement."

► **Terry and Val Klopccic** have begun downsizing in anticipation of a 2027 move closer to the three of their kids who live near Baltimore. Twenty six years of accumulated treasures require a lot of "get real" decisions; e.g. "I know I'll never again visit those shelves of textbooks; but ..." And deciding what furniture will fit into a smaller house yet to be bought is a challenge. But at our age, 500 miles and two days is a long way from the nearest kid, so it's time to make the move.

► In response to my class e-mail, **Karen Freedlund McCauley** wrote: "Like you, I'm downsizing out of consideration for those who come after me. [Very considerate!] I'm still teaching astrology and psychology online, plus enjoying my grandson's adventures and visits. My 80s have been pretty enjoyable so far."

► **Mike** and **Marsha Pope** report that there is nothing to report. They are well!

► From **Yutaka Horiba**: “I had the pleasure of traveling with my ol’ roommate at Knox, **John Thomas**, and his wife Donna, to “show off” my native country last November. We stayed in Tokyo, Yamanakako, in the foothills of Mt. Fuji, and Kyoto. I was struck to see the recent upsurge in the number of foreign tourists visiting Japan—42 million last year alone. We enjoyed the golden foliage of Nikko, Kyoto, and Nara. Donna was also happy to see the timely international quilt exhibits in Yokohama, quilting being her great hobby. I am very pleased that the enormous gulf I once felt between our two countries has narrowed considerably.”

► A very understanding note from **Pam Norton Nelson**: “I know how difficult your job is, and I really don’t have anything to talk about, but I am still alive! Still in my house, still driving, though not at night anymore. I belong to two book clubs, a couple of organizations, and manage the family properties, not a full-time job but a surprising amount of work. I think I still have most of my marbles. Because I married twice, I have 11 grandchildren who keep me busy occasionally, although they’re not little people anymore, ages 15 to 30. Now they come for dinner or bring their girl/boyfriends for inspection!” (How flattering!)

CLASS CORRESPONDENT:
TERRY KLOPCIC
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1965

Looking back on our freshman year at Knox, **Bill Smythe** writes: “I was one of nine from Maine Township High School, which split into East and West while we were students there. The other eight were: **Amy Lawrence Freiman**, **Marcy Tuttle Vedral**, **Dan Wiberg**, **Dick Crooker**, **Warren Johnson**, **Scott Harrod**, **Don Waddell**, and **Barb Dymond Hofflander**. (Interesting side notes: The actor Harrison Ford, known as a shy person, was in the class ahead of us. Hillary Rodham Clinton, who

was in the class four years after us, lived two blocks from Harrison Ford and five blocks from my house.) After Knox, my career took me to Kalamazoo, MI, where I met and married Margaret Gallagher in 1979. When I was transferred back to Chicago in 1982, our 1-year-old daughter Emily and I moved into the Park Ridge home that I grew up in after updating the house. My mother, who had been widowed six years earlier, moved into a nearby condominium. She and Margaret became good friends, and she often came over for dinner or to watch her grandchildren, Emily and Will. Built in 1912 by my grandparents, four generations have called our house ‘home’, six generations have slept in it, and each of those six generations has or had a ‘William Smythe’. Family has played an important part in our lives. While I was an only child, Margaret was the seventh of 14 children who grew up in Woodstock, IL, and remained close after they went their separate ways. Every year on the first Saturday of October, her living siblings, which now number eight, come from seven different states and both coasts to our house to celebrate the birthday of their now-deceased sister Rita, who had Down’s Syndrome and was much loved by all. Margaret lost two more of her siblings this year, so we are keenly aware that if you don’t take time to see people now, you may never see them again.”

► **Ken Grimm** sends greetings to ‘65ers from Gainesville, VA. He updates his family status as follows: “Dorothy and I live in an over ‘55 (way over!) community near our son and his family. Our daughter and her family are in Charleston, SC. We have two granddaughters who are graduates of Clemson, and a grandson who is at VCU in Richmond. Our youngest granddaughter is a high school freshman and soccer/basketball star! Sorry I missed our 60th, but Dorothy is not able to travel or be alone at this time. Peace to you, class readers!” (When Ken could not make it to Homecoming last fall, he suggested a virtual class Reunion on Zoom. **Wendel Swan** has since volunteered to host the meeting, and classmates

are asked to weigh in on this novel idea for a future Reunion.)

► **Glenn Schiffman** sends this update: “I’m working on a memoir titled *This Happened, Even If It Didn’t*, teaching writing part-time at the Community College, and hanging with the grandsons, my main reason for stickin’ around.” He adds, “I procured a sweet condo with a view of Bad Rock Canyon (the gateway to Glacier Park) at the Montera in Whitefish, MT. Google it.”

► **Joe Thompson** writes: “I’m involved in an email group that includes several Knoxies who chatter about all things musical. In the past, we spent time identifying the first rock & roll song, which seems to be ‘Rocket 88,’ recorded in 1951 with Ike Turner and his Kings of Rhythm as backup. That led to our current question: What was the most recent decent rock song? For the sake of argument, I suggested ‘Walkin’ on Sunshine’ recorded by Katrina and the Waves in 1985. So, I would put the entire era of decent rock music at 35 years, 1950 to 1985. (That would include the entire Elvis and Beatles oeuvre, of course!) If you visit Marshall, NC, this is the ONLY music you will hear from the speakers at Ingles grocery store or Zuma’s coffee shop on Main Street. Anything before that is Perry Como-ish, and anything after that is just plain noise. Prove me wrong! Finally, I’m not interested in arguing about current events—just old times and old music. They say your music preference is set according to what was playing when you were 14. This is what was playing in 1957: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=awk-Mzd1Rmg8>.”

► **Wendel Swan** writes, “Since our Reunion in October, I have reflected on how much Knox has physically remained the same and yet how much different the atmosphere seems now. Perhaps the consistently empty Gizmo contributed to that. The dining hall was greatly improved, but Old Main was fantastic because it remains unchanged. Seymour Library has wonderful improvements, but the traditional rooms remain fabulous because they are unchanged. It was

great to see so many Phi Deltas and to talk with them and others about significant post-Knox events rather than pretend we were still undergrads. **Burney** P’90, P’93, P’96 and **Susan Lillie Dunn** ’66, P’90, P’93, P’96 promised to visit **Diane Lipke Swan** ’64 and me when they were on the East Coast, and they did just that last weekend. We’d love to see other classmates when we travel; Chicago and Colorado are two of our possible 2026 destinations. Everyone is welcome to visit us here in Alexandria, VA. Our email is wdswan@erols.com.”

► **Gary Moses** and his wife, Marilyn, also invite you to visit. Gary writes, “We have plenty of space for all who want to simply share activities such as hiking, biking, skiing, and fishing. House Rule 1: ‘There are no rules.’ Springtime in Colorado is always interesting...one month with daily record high temperatures followed by one that is unseasonably cold, with only Stage 1 Drought in common.” Gary has been involved in local politics, especially the June primaries and November midterm elections. “My balcony facing the first hole of a men’s tee golf course will be covered with political signage. I get five minutes of messaging to a captive audience.”

In the last issue, Gary encouraged everyone to submit a *Small World Story*, and he gave his second-best one as an example. Now he follows up with his favorite unlikely encounter, which occurred in the late sixties when he and his first wife, **Suzanne Wehrheim Brascugli** ’66 (now deceased), were serving in the Peace Corps in Cali, Colombia: “While we were travelling in Peru, we visited Machu Picchu. Spotting someone that looked familiar, Suzanne asked, ‘Is that you, Sissy?’ Yes, it was her roommate, **Halcyon (Sissy) Schomp Blake** ’66, who came to Knox from Denver like me. I could live another century without a comparable coincidence.”

► I have a story of my own to tell, and I bet many others do too. Let’s make *Small World Stories* the theme of our next Class Notes, but as always, whatever you have to say will be appreciated.

CLASS CORRESPONDENT:
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1966

As careful readers of *Class Notes* will attest, Knox College Class of 1966 has been among the missing for many of the past few issues. With our 60th Reunion coming up in October, we wish to reverse that and break all records for Homecoming attendance this fall.

► **Tom Anderson** P'89, P'93, GP'22 writes that, "In some ways, I may have never left Knox. After graduation, I worked at Knox for nine years, mostly in admissions. My brother-in-law, **Bill Fuerst**, graduated in 1969. Our two sons, **David** and **Kyle**, graduated in 1989 and 1993, respectively. Our granddaughter, **Katie Anderson**, graduated in 2022. All have benefited greatly from Knox. I spent several years as a member of the Knox Board, a talented group that I admire. Many of our best friends in life are Knox people. The College has been very good to our entire family."

► **Allan Penwell** took a geology course last year, which revived his fondness for the teachings of DeMott and Moore at Knox. "I am treasurer of a national Vietnam veterans organization, which has almost 500 active members. My latest project has been digitizing 20,000 feet of my dad's 8mm movies taken from 1948 to 1975. They are on the YouTube channel, *The Bruce Penwell 8mm Movie Collection*. Search the thumbnail photos for a picture of me at the steps of Old Main and enjoy a clip of our 1966 graduation."

► **Ann Bartlett Heim** still lives in Lake Forest, IL. "Have been retired from Lake Forest College for many years now—was the associate registrar. Sadly, my husband, **Mike Heim**, died two and a half years ago. Our daughter also died nearly four and a half years ago, and I am raising my grandson. He just turned 17 and is a high school junior. Never a dull moment! I think of our days at Knox so often and with much fondness."

► **Beth Funk Irish** reports, "Since moving from La Quinta, CA (i.e., Palm Springs), to Orange, CA, five years ago after my husband's death to be closer to my sons, I have become quite involved with church activities. I help in the nursery, food distribution, Sunday making sandwiches, am the president of the Disciples Women, co-chair the Grief Group, host book discussions, and Bible Study. I also attend the activities of the Women's Club of Orange when feasible. In the past three years, I have enjoyed bus tours of Nova Scotia, the fall colors of New England, and the best of Eastern Canada. Health issues have curtailed my travels this year, but maybe I will be courageous and attempt one more solo trip. The desire is still there. A recent joy was seeing my stepson's two daughters, my granddaughters, whom I hadn't seen since his passing more than 15 years ago."

► **Jim Johnson** returned to Central Illinois in mid-April from wintering in Florida. He finds that "it is easy to appreciate eight months of summer with two each of fall and spring, sort of like an extended version of moving the clock forward and back."

► **Mary Jacobson** writes that the Knox community has provided many friends and opportunities over the last 60+ years, starting with her marriage to **Jay Matson**, class of '65. Interactions with classmates **Steve** '65 and **Mike Baylor** '64 and their families, **Gary McCool** '65, **Gary Moses** '65, **Diane Trout-Oertel** '65, **Nancy Uss Crooker**, **Joe Thompson** '65, and **Bob Misiorowski** and wife **Elise** have enriched her life.

There have been "good meals, good talks, and good writing with **Thomas Cook** '05 and **JoAnna Novak** '07, and their son, **Nova**." Mary is appreciative of the contributions Knox faculty and administration have made, especially **Owen** and **Laurie Muelder** (both '63 and P'96), **Doug Wilson** (English), **Rick Ortner** (art), **Justin Haynes** '04 (jazz ensemble), and **Roy Andersen** (economics) and his wife, **Corine**. Concluding, she notes, "For me, Knox is the gift that keeps on giving."

► Thanks to classmates who responded with program suggestions and encouragement: **Doug Bayer**, **Jim Bronson**, **Joan Dillenback**, **Judy Ducay Moen**, **Geri Kelly Nielsen**, **Pete Holstrom**, **Nancy Hubbard Stanley**, **Judy Huffaker Hammond** P'98, **Bill McVey**, **Bob Misiorowski**, **Greta Kallio Nagel**, **Larry Sommers** P'98, **Steve Tagge**, **Nancy Uss Crooker**, and **Vicki Webster Hieronymus**.

Best wishes to all. Keep those cards and letters coming.

CLASS CORRESPONDENT:
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1967

Rick Uebner: "After living in the house we built more than 50 years ago, **Jetty** and I have decided to move from Cathey's Valley, 12 miles east, to the town of Mariposa, CA. Leaving four acres with its maintenance issues and stairs all over the place was a timely decision. So we are moving into the metropolis of Mariposa (pop. about 1800). We are still at the western edge of Yosemite National Park and invite you to come and share this delightful area and the natural beauty that it features. We have already begun setting up our ceramic studio so we can continue expressing ourselves in clay."

► **Elsa Swenson Teel** has an article in this issue on the Anderson House Legacy. For the academic year 1966 to 1967, Anderson House was an experimental self-governing dorm with no house mother and no hours for a select group of senior women at Knox. This breakthrough in eliminating the curfew for these women came after several visionary Knox women students had worked with the College Women's Council for several years to address the inequity of the curfew for women. Following the success of this "experiment," in 1968, senior women had no curfew, and by 1970, all Knox women enjoyed the freedom of unrestricted hours.

The group of women who pioneered this effort came together to commemorate the occasion at Knox

in May, commissioning an artist to paint/draw Anderson House and then gifted that painting to the College. Former Knox art student **Kevin Dera Cox** '24 completed the artwork. See the article on page 42 of this magazine for details of the event!

CLASS CORRESPONDENT:
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1968

Kathy St. Cyr was the only responder this time. She wrote: "I returned recently from a visit to Knox to attend the Anderson House celebration. As you may recall, the 'Anderson House Experiment' of 1966-67 was the first time Knox women were allowed to govern themselves, set their own code of conduct, and have no hours. Dean **Deborah Wing** finally put the proposal of the College Women's Council to President **Sharvy Umbeck**, and he somewhat reluctantly approved it. Twenty-two senior women applied to live in the off-campus Anderson House, with the signed permission of their parents. Two Knox professors and a group of current students did a wonderful project researching Anderson House and the 'Anderson House Experiment.'"

The event and presentation took place on the afternoon of May 7, in Seymour Library, in what we knew as the Upstairs Reading Room. Six of the 12 still living women who lived in that house during the 1966-67 school year returned—**Wendy Hummel Hill** '67 (NM), **Ruth Mesing** '67 (CA), **Nancy Rabenstein Pielemeier** '67 (MD), **Elsa Swenson Teel** '67 (WA), **Dorie Campbell Tichenor** '67 (WV), and **Anne Tally Turner** '67 (OR). **Mary Mangieri Burgland** P '97 and I represented those who benefited from their exemplary conduct and scholarship in the 1966-67 year, as senior women in our class had no hours. All those women who returned were fellow students whom Mary and I knew well and were our friends.

Mary hosted all of us and a few spouses for a delicious dinner at George and Mary's home on Wednesday evening. The event

at Knox took place on Thursday afternoon. President C. **Andrew McGadney** gave opening remarks, and each of the Anderson House attendees spoke about “the experiment,” life for women at Knox in the 60s, recognition of the artist of the painting, and finally a dedication of the painting. I don’t know where the painting will be hung, but if you recall Anderson House, which housed both women and men at Knox, find the location and painting next time you come to campus—our 60th reunion? I’m so glad I attended and had a wonderful time reminiscing and talking with these very good friends.”

CLASS CORRESPONDENT:
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1969

Hello class of ’69. Many of you responded to our AI ChatGPT’s (Harley’s) short description of the Class of ’69. In case you missed it the first time, it is repeated in this column. Thanks so much to those of you who responded.

“The Knox College Class of 1969 emerged during a period of intense social and political change, and its members often reflected that spirit. They were typically intellectually curious, socially aware, and willing to challenge traditional norms. Many students engaged actively with issues such as civil rights, the Vietnam War, and freedom of expression. A strong sense of community and liberal arts appreciation shaped their academic lives. Graduates were often adaptable, thoughtful communicators with a commitment to civic engagement. Their experiences at Knox fostered independence, critical thinking, and a lasting dedication to lifelong learning and meaningful societal contribution.”

► From **Kim Adams Post**: “I had a warm feeling reading Harley’s description of our class! I especially loved the last sentence about Knox fostering a lasting dedication to lifelong learning and meaningful societal contribution. My lifelong learning is currently continuing through several women’s growth

groups on Zoom and an annual trip to Northfield, MA, for a week-long experience with like-minded people. (Think about the positive aspects of a hippie commune!) My societal contribution includes a legacy commitment to coaching younger women around career success. I love and miss our class!”

► **Ellen Smith** also reacted. “The AI link—Harley—was fairly accurate IMO. I use AI, ChatGPT in particular, for many queries now. I wonder what the return would be if you substituted the same parameters but Harvard as the subject instead of Knox? I’m joking, of course.” (Editor’s note—see **Mollie Miller Thorn**’s experiment below using Yale.)

Thanks to Mollie’s continual encouragement over the years, I continue to sing and am currently the most interesting alto in St Simons Presbyterian choir. We’re live-streamed every Sunday if you want to see me in action. I also assist our music director in organizing music in our healthy music library. I am the church librarian for the care of about 4000 books and digital assets. This includes keeping my fingers busy on the computer, where we have software linked to the Library of Congress. For the past three years, I’ve been a member of the Savannah Presbytery’s Racial Justice Ministry Team. As a ‘Yankee’ living in the Deep South for 15 years, this collaboration with members of 38 churches is invaluable for learning and living the problems of racial issues. I’m also a member of the Robert S Abbott Racial Justice Institute here in Glynn County, GA. As scheduled, I volunteer at Emory University (11 years) and Mayo Clinic (two years) in Jacksonville with their Alzheimer’s Disease research projects. This mainly involves cognitive testing, neuro-physicals, labs, and other specific initiatives that I qualify for. I am my husband’s primary caregiver. His health is declining as a result of a diagnosis of PLS (primary lateral sclerosis). My daughter is an HR exec in suburban Atlanta, and my physician son is VP of brain and spine at UT Medical in Knoxville. The oldest grandchild will be part of the Chancellor’s Honors College

at UT this fall. My other three grandkids are high school level in art, theater, band, soccer, and automotive technology. Otherwise, I still travel and plan for 10 days in Foix, France, in September, and recently visited the Princeton University Library to investigate a special collections holding from my ancestors.”

► **January Roeschlaub** wrote: “Thanks, Paul, for the heartwarming message reminding me how fortunate I was to spend formative time at Knox with great classmates.”

► From Roaring Fork Valley, **Bob Hirsch** tells us, “My wife and I are now fully retired.” CORRESPONDENT’S NOTE: We’ve asked Bob for a bit more information.

► **Mollie Miller Thorn** writes: “Harley’s” description of our Knox ’69 class to my husband, Phil, had a healthy suspicion. He remarked, “Well, let’s see if it’s just a generic description. Try my class of Yale of 1969! So, I did. It was very different, indeed! Try it yourself with someone our age with a different alma mater. I find AI amazing, scary, intimidating, but mostly very helpful. My grandkids feel differently. Ask your Generation Z (Zoomers) about AI. Our Gen Z grands gave us a huge piece of their minds about AI...all about protecting our environment. Wow! They are really clear: Our Mother Earth stacks head and shoulders above anything positive about AI. We feel a little guilty when we check in with our friend ‘Claude.’ Like all technologies, we need public policy and healthy guardrails around AI. These days, I am always busy. Between exercising, choir rehearsals, and family responsibilities, I am politically active. Mostly, I have projects with the national organizations Swing Left, Indivisible, and Third Act. Unlike in the past when my political action involved specific Democratic Party candidates, these days I’m working more generally to protect our democratic process. I support causes and candidates who support following and strengthening our United States Constitution! This past weekend, I attended a sign-waving event in our county to protest the Data Center, which

is proposed to be built here. The grandkids will be proud of me!”

► Back in Missouri, **Jim Bilhorn** writes, “Really interesting AI observation. I’m living back in the area where I grew up and am amazed at the attitudes of some of the folks I went through school with. Knox exposed me to so many different people and ideas.”

► A board game by **Lou Coatney** (who lives in Oslo) titled *Berlin ’45: Dash to Victory* finally/just came out in Moscow in the magazine *Military Games*. It is still free to print off and play, in English, on www.Coatney-History.com. CORRESPONDENT’S NOTE: We did not make this up!

► **Linda Bernhard Knight**, Ed.D., observes from her Texas home: “Thanks for sharing Harley’s description of our 1969 Knox class! It brought a smile to my face and a sense of continuity to highlights along my career path. The Knox faculty and students truly provided a framework for my life’s work of ‘messing with people’s minds’ through education and science. After many years of teaching Earth and environmental science to children and adults, I am spending a peaceful retirement in north Texas at Bobcat Haven, my five-acre private wildlife sanctuary.”

► **Nancy Miller Staszak** is enthusiastic about Harley! “I love it! AI can sometimes get things so wrong, but this summary was profoundly accurate and reminds me how much I owe to Knox College, our professors, and one another for the meaningful education we gained there. I enjoy serving on our community library board and will run for that office again in the next (2027) cycle. Family, gardening, hiking, traveling, painting, and reading keep me happily engaged. I’m also active in local politics and protests.”

► **Linda Barkwill** was brief. “Impressive.”

► **Ray and Marilyn Abazoris Howell** ’71 spent the spring traveling, which included Costa Rica, Istanbul, and Athens. They can report that thinking you will get your lost phone back using the “Find my

phone” app is mostly a myth. “We know Marilyn’s phone is at the Frankfurt airport and that we will never get it back. Best to everyone.”

► “Little **Bill Howell** here. All is well. Turned 79 this May 21. Have loved this wonderful life, Knox is a good memory. Staying alive...all you need is love.”

► **John Martin** is insanely busy! “Fond memories, mostly that is :), and gratitude to Knox for many friends, while teaching me how to write essays (good as well as bad), and think more or less clearly, plus survive difficult times, on my eventual path to presumably higher purpose and loving service to God, Country, and others. That’s the plan and path.

Continuing also in my service as a member of the California Guard, Captain in the Behavioral Health, Medical Command of the Army. I am being deployed for two weeks this June to work with 850 youth volunteers at the Calif Teen Corps up in SLO—for you non-Calif folks, that is San Louis Obispo). After that, at the end of summer will be going through officer training school (Boot Camp “light” for us older guys—phew!).

Finishing my fun book on crazy life as a boat CPT—7 *Sheets to the Wind*—to be published soon via Amazon, etc. Like my first book, *Psychology Confidential*, it will be one of two kinds of books according to H.L. Mencken—the kind that nobody reads or the kind nobody ought to read (probably both, lol).

Otherwise, paddling along in an interesting semi-retired life with wife Catherine—and seeking another dog (golden retriever hopefully) to join our family after our dear black lab/service dog, Barnabas, passed on to heaven, waiting now for us there. No rush, buddy, but we will see you again then. Love and blessings to you all.”

► From France, **Jeremy Gladstone** shares a sense of loss. “My latest news is of devastation. You recently informed me that **David Bell** had passed away in April, and it hit me like a bullet out of nowhere.

Although we hadn’t seen each other since I stayed with him in New York in 1970, in his aunt’s apartment, the one who was Salvador Dali’s agent in the USA, we had stayed somewhat in touch. I knew he was fighting illness, but his last appearance on a Zoom meeting in February was good old Ding-Dong, ringing strong.

David’s passing came as one more memory on the other side of the playing field. As time goes by, such happenings make life seem more and more unfair. Death is definitely not on my bucket list.”

► **Jim Hallock**, who has recently moved to Mexico, contributes this update. “Now that I’m semi-retired, I’m not so diligent about my electronic world....and that’s a welcome change. Yes, it does feel good to be over the border. When people ask me about the ‘dangers of Mexico,’ I remind them that I left the country with the highest murder rate in the world. I’m also fond of comparing ‘leadership.’ We (Mexico) have as president a Jewish woman who is a climate scientist who just initiated universal and total health care for her citizens. Compare that to the U.S. administration, which denies climate change and has made healthcare impossibly expensive for the average American. Be well, Paul, and if you and yours would like to come visit ‘the best small city in the world,’ (San Miguel de Allende), your room awaits. I mean it. The quote is Conde Nast’s for the last seven years in a row!”

► To wrap up, **Paul Behnke** notes: “Most of us are nearly 80 now, and connections from Knox classmates have been more important than ever before in my life. It’s a real blessing for my wife and me to be surrounded by our five kids and four grandkids and to continue to play tennis and pickleball and, best of all, to enjoy fly-fishing. Mollie, Kim, Ray, and I will be setting up another class Zoom call sometime over the summer. Hope you will attend.”

CLASS CORRESPONDENT:
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1970

Nancy Anderson: “Retirement has me continuing to live in two states: McCall, Idaho, in summer, and Boerne, Texas, in winter—north of San Antonio in the Hill Country. Kids are grown, son is flourishing in San Francisco, working for Google, skiing at Tahoe in winter, golfing, and sailing in summer. Daughter remains in San Antonio, so we see her frequently.

Love my Idaho summers where I play bridge with seven others once a week, quilt with a lovely group of ladies two days a month, and with friends, frequent the national forests to look for edible mushrooms and huckleberries. Then there’s camping in the wilderness by pristine rivers and creeks. Watching elk, deer, red foxes, and black bears around our property.

During winters in Texas, we watch whitetail and axis deer and gray foxes on our property. Every May, a doe will leave her fawn in our yard while she forages in the woods. In the evening, she’ll return to the fawn, and off they scamper. Wildlife is so fun no matter where. Hope all our Knox classmates are enjoying these golden years.”

► **Roger Andersen:** “We haven’t been able to shake the ‘travel while you can’ bug. Still with our original joints, even if not the same energy, we have recently observed two drastically different cultures: Egyptian and Japanese. Lessons galore on both the core of ‘human’ and the breadth of its manifestations. Special thanks to **Murray Baylor’s** P’61, P’64, P’65 humanities course, which started to broaden my world. Best wishes to all.”

► **Dr. Max Utsler:** “I missed the 55th Reunion because I was working a college football game for ESPN. I also do stats work for Fox and CBS. And then it’s time for basketball season. You can see me on ESPN on broadcasts of the University of Kansas hoops. I am stationed on the front row, between the benches, right next to our scorekeeper, who wears the striped shirt. With my glasses and headset, I usually look very professional.

Once the calendar turns to spring and summer weather, I go to work for Major League Baseball with the Kansas City Royals, where I am now in my 14th season as an official scorer, doing 30+ games per season. You won’t see me on TV doing that unless I really do something really stupid.

BTW, I retired from the KU faculty in 2019, but I have gone back to teaching a class in sports marketing for the past three semesters. Bottom line, I am busier now than when I taught full-time. I guess that’s a good thing. Hope all is well in your world. Try not to laugh when you see the abbreviation Dr. in front of my name.”

► **Bill and Donnie Nelson Byers** ’69: “We will be going to Door County, WI, in September for a long overdue reunion with **Dave** P’05 and **Judy Waggoner Lambert** ’71, P’05, Jean and **Dick Garner**, and Pam and **Bob McDonald**. In October, we will head up to New Hampshire for the Nelson family reunion. Overseas travel in 2026 has been preempted by hosting an Airbnb just in time for the World Cup coming to Arrowhead this June/July. We’d like the USA team to play in KC. We are both relatively healthy and blessed to be active. Bill even had his first hole-in-one this spring. He hopes it doesn’t take another 70 years to get the next one.

Take care. Stay busy, happy, and healthy.”

► **Topper Steinman:** “Thanks AGAIN for taking care of our news items for the next *Knox Magazine*.” You remain our savior! Here’s mine: Family first remains my motto. Relatives, friends, and those around us reading this remain in my “next of import.” My wife Carol and I, our two children and their spouses, and our four grands (ages 8-24) reside in Champaign, IL. Yes, we are blessed! We connect often and still get along. Carol and I are enjoying retirement (unlike ALL of them in the working and schooling world). Their time will come. Carol and I do things like exercise, nap, travel (Iceland this July), and volunteer for things we believe are important. Life is good. I hope it is for all of you.”

► **Alan Spear:** “Many events for us. I lost my wife, Judi, to Alzheimer’s a few years back. At about the same time, my “X,” **Kathie Spear** ’71, lost her husband to the same disease. We were able to support each other through the last years for both of them, and Kathie eventually moved here to Batavia, IL, from Savannah, GA, where we are both very active at Bethany Lutheran Church. I have been an organist at Bethany for 20 years, and presented a concert on May 17 to celebrate those years and my 80th birthday—hence, the 80/20 concert.

► **Don Stubbs:** “Just finished one of my last bucket list items. A two-week trip to Ecuador with a week of diving on the Galapagos Islands. Yes, fantastic; turtles, the blue-footed booby (amazing), aquatic lizards, and scallop hammer heads. Nothing like standing on the highest part of the equator and watching water go straight down, swirl clockwise and counter-clockwise, all within 10 feet of each other. Next year, Socorro, Mexico, and the great whites. And at 80, hang up the fins.”

► Speaking of bucket lists, **Nancy** (me) checked off a few of them myself this spring. I traveled to France with a high school friend (Elgin High School, Class of ’66), we managed Paris, Giverny, Mont St. Michel, the Loire Valley, but the true highlight was the Normandy beaches and the American cemetery. Like many of you, my father (**Richard Hoover** ’30), served in World War II and he told stories of his travels through France into Germany. He did not land on D-Day but served under General Patton in the Third Army. He told me that my name came from his time stationed in Nancy, France. I felt very close to him during the entire trip.

Best wishes to all and keep filling and checking off those ‘buckets’!

CLASS CORRESPONDENT:
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1971

Jan Novak Dressel (jandressel3@yahoo.com) exclaims: “SPRING

BREAK! YES! Not a wild time, but a great one. Traveled to Albuquerque to visit **Sandra Husar Ligon** and her family. The treasure of old friendships is that we can connect immediately as if decades haven’t passed by. Photo is fuzzy, but the two of us are out for tea!



► **Elliott Vizansky** (evizansky@gmail.com) reports, “I have many age-related medical issues, but I’m still seeing more than 200 shows from Broadway to concerts.” Elliott continues, “My favorite place at Knox was the two theatres in the Ford Center: Harbach and The Studio. As a theatre major, I was in Rep Term #1, and theatre is still a very large part of my life, including as a Broadway investor in eight Broadway shows and up to being a managing director of an Off-Broadway Theatre. Under the late **Dr. Robert Whitlatch**’s tutelage, my theatre classes also were held there.”

► From **Lynn Strand McIntosh** P’02, P’04, P’99 (lynnmcwho@yahoo.com). “The older we get, the more we realize that life is made up of right turns. It’s a series of sudden decisions that set a new course, sometimes good and sometimes not so good. Knox was a sudden decision I made in August of 1967. Now, nearly 60 years later, **Mark** ’72, P’02, P’04, P’99 and I have five sons, four of whom attended Knox, and five daughters-in-law, one who attended Knox, and 13 grandchildren. We are tired and retired in Columbia, MO. Knox was a great right turn. We hope to see some of you in October to remember all the good times in Galesburg.”

► **John Flood** P’02: (jtflood39@gmail.com) adds, “Sorry, I don’t have

much to add to my last note. Still slowly progressing from my stroke, however, I did pass a little old lady on the track this morning. She thanked me after I picked up her cane. Spending some time watching grandson’s baseball and lacrosse.” John adds further, “I’ve been hooked on patty-melts since hanging out in the Gizmo,” while he was at Knox.

► **Chuck Creekmore** (ccreekm190@aol.com) relates, “My wife and I adopted four Chinese children when I was around 50, in addition to her biological son. My youngest finally graduated from college (RIT in Rochester, NY). I did get one daughter to attend school in Illinois, where she is pursuing a Ph.D. in Sociology at the University of Illinois. I retired last summer, working as an oil and gas landman. Thanks to Billy Bob Thornton, I no longer have to explain what a landman does, even though they take great liberties with the actual functions. As to your request, my favorite place at Knox is the Knosher Bowl—great football players, great coaches, and great friends gathered there. So happy I passed up looking at big time programs so I could play football, having real fun at a College that also gave me a great education, benefiting me in several career paths and life.”

► **Randy Black** (blackrandy014@gmail.com) recalls, “It’s amazing what you remember after 55 years plus. I went to a wrestling match in 1969 when Knox was hosting Grinnell. I went to see several of my brothers, **Cleave Bridgman** ’68, **Dan McDougall-Treacy**, **Ronnie Weingart** ’70, and others. But the star of the match was **Dudley McCarter** ’72. He wrestled at 155 against a guy at 185. I knew the guy from when he was an offensive guard when we played at Grinnell and kicked my ass all over the field. The place was packed with 30 or 40 hardcore fans. The guy laughed at Dudley when he entered the mat. Feinting and dodging this animal for a time, Dudley was able to get a submission hold on the guy that **Dirty Al Partin** had taught him. His legs were straight out at a 60 angle. They slowly dropped to 45, then 30, then the pin. The place went berserk. Stomping, clapping, and

screaming as if there were 10,000 watching. The noise was deafening. Never to be heard again in that arena. Dudley left the ring and said, “Whatever.” Great Knox moment.”

► **Cathy Zollinger Grafton** P’01 (prairiequiltsandmore.com) remembers that “all the Flunk Days were fun. Many, many memories. I have nothing really new for the newsletter, just back from my 20th trip to France, visited my favorite places and added Amiens and the water gardens this time. Still working at the Odell Library 20 hours a week and spending many weekends living in the 18th Century, with this year being an extra special one to celebrate that at least our nation managed 250 years.”

► **Jerry Tatar** (jerrytata1@gmail.com) writes of his Flunk Day revelry, “Every Flunk Day, my roommate, **Jack Kuzanek**, and I would head for the golf course and for our Greater Flunk Day Open. Neither the Kuz nor I played golf, and we may have had some refreshments before we hit the first tee, but we did have fun before we headed back for the movie and more partying.”

► **Laura “Lonnie” Fredenhagen Schaefer** (danilschaefer@yahoo.com) relates, “My news is that in February, my children’s book, *Loki, the Playful Cat*, was published and went on sale on Amazon. My granddaughter, Louise, is the primary illustrator. We had lots of fun working together on the project.”

► **Larry Kusch** (twams67@comcast.net) reports: “On May 14, 2026, I received the following email from **Justin Newell**, VP and director of athletics at Knox:

Dear Members of the 1970 Knox Football Team, It is with great pride and excitement that I share outstanding news with you. The 1970 Knox Football Team has been selected as part of the newest class to be inducted into the Knox-Lombard Hall of Fame, with formal recognition taking place during Homecoming Weekend. This honor celebrates not only an exceptional season but the lasting impact this team has had on Knox College Athletics and the generations that followed.

CLASS NOTES

The Hall of Fame induction ceremony will be held on Friday evening (10/23) as part of Homecoming weekend festivities, and we look forward to welcoming as many teammates, family members, and friends as possible back to campus to celebrate this remarkable group.

1970 Knox Football Team Roster:

Monty Abbott '72
William Allison '72, P'00, P'08
Jerry Baumeister '71
Randy Black '71
Robert Bolier '73
Kelly Cohoon '73
Mike Cavanaugh '73
Charles Creekmore '71
Fred Curry '73
Terry Denoma '71
Gregory Divers '73
Mike Eslick '72
Dennis Farrell '71
Larry Frakes '73
Guy Greene '73
Michael Gutesha '72
Thomas Hall '73
Phil Hauer '73
Michael Hennessey '73
Jim Hauffe '73
John Hubner '72
David Jachim '71
Dennis Kaczmarek '73
Joe Kelly '73
Larry Kusch '71
Mike Manakas '73
Dudley McCarter '72
Mark McIntosh '72, P'99, P'02, P'04
Richard Miers '73
Patrick Miller '73
Raymond Miller '72
Gary Moranz '72
Ralph Norman '71, P'01
David Olson '73
Chris Palmer '73
Mark Perrone '73
Bob Prout '73, P'10
Dennis Radosky '74
Arturo Ramirez '71
James Rhodes '71
Paul Salansky '73
Richard Schwartz '71
Topper Steinman '70
Steven Swanson '73
Jerry Tatar '71
Mike Tracy '72
Max Utsler '70
Rory Wagner '72
Richard Williams '73
John Wombacher '73

Larry adds: "Not bad for a team that went 6-3, but we did 'turn the corner' for Coaches **Dick Bowman**

and **Al Reilly** and began the finest seven-year run in Knox College football history. I am so grateful that I decided to come to Knox and was able to associate with such a stellar group of student athletes. I hope to see you all at our 55th Reunion in October."

CLASS CORRESPONDENT:
LARRY KUSCH
twams67@comcast.net

1972

John Durham writes, "I moved from Santa Fe, NM, to Denver, CO, in October... worked my career in Denver 1975-2010 and have a small family base here...went with the Colorado Knox group to *Phantom of the Opera* last week and met some great folks...very thankful to be healthy and happy!"

► **Kadi Finlayson Meyer** writes, "My news for the ages ...I live in Tinley Park, IL, with Rodney, my husband of 27 years. I bike on local trails and in winter, bike under Avon Park, FL's sun with milder temps. We live in a campground in our fifth wheel. Life teems with people, writing, nature, and spiritual questing. My goal in 2026 is to publish my book—a collection of stories and poems of my life which I began writing at Knox. I'm grateful to still kick the can of life down the road."

► **Wendy Scherwat Ducourneau** writes, "Tony and I are traveling again this year. We flew to Charlotte, NC, to visit several longtime friends, including pledge daughter **Beth Caithamer Kuly** '73 and her husband, Jim. I swam six events at USMS Spring Nationals (short course, yards), a four day meet in Greensboro, NC. We then took Amtrak to Washington, DC, to visit **Jane Debowski Pacelli** and see LOTS of great museums, cemeteries, and various other sites including Frank Lloyd Wright's Pope-Leighey House. Back onto Amtrak to Chicago where a highlight was seeing German WWII submarine U-505. Fun times having dinner with Jan and **Jon Carbary**. Even more Amtrak (!) to Saint Paul, MN, to help bury an old friend.

Finally flew home—Neon (our pup) remembered us, so all is good."

Save the dates: October 14-17, 2027—we'll celebrate 55 years!

CLASS CORRESPONDENT:
WENDY SCHERWAT DUCOURNEAU
wjdsd@jps.net

1973

Greetings from the Class of 1973. Clay and I continue to hang in there, despite a few medical adventures.

► I heard from **Jane Goeltz Stetson**, who writes: "This is my 34th year as a docent at the Denver Zoo Conservation Alliance. I have been lucky enough in the past couple of years to see some of the amazing animals in the wild that I have been talking about for years. This past December I crossed Drake's Passage to Antarctica, landed on the continent, walked through penguin colonies, watched the whales and seals, and took many pictures of ice! Who knows where my next adventure will lead!"

► **Scott Montgomery** contributes: "Marilyn and I continue our wonderful life in Seattle, even as I wait for confirmation of my Canadian citizenship (mother born in Ontario). A move across the border may or may not be in the cards. Our two sons, Kyle and Cameron, both have their own families now, with the latest appearance of Misa (April 24, 2026) to Cam and his partner, Kalyn, who live in the SF Bay area. I'm still teaching at the Univ. of WA and writing (monthly pieces on global energy in *Forbes*), with a new book due out soon about Darwin's impact on modernity. Sad to say I'm not in touch with any of my Knox friends but would like to be. At this age, memories become monuments. My warmest regards to all '73ers."

► **John Straus** writes: "Retirement is all it's cracked up to be. Volunteering occupies a large portion of my time. Recently spent time in Springfield at the State House advocating for us all on legislative issues that comprise AARP-Illinois' agenda. While in town had dinner

with classmate **Dick Schuldt** who is a docent at Lincoln's home there. Occasional phone calls keep me in touch with **Roger Onken**. As always, there's time volunteering for the College, most recently on the Alumni Council Awards committee selecting alumni achievement and service awards. Looking forward to joining the alumni tour to Ireland and Scotland with fellow alums and **President McGadney** in September. One final note: mention of my volunteer work with Lasagna Love, a national network of volunteers providing lasagna dinners to anyone who asks. The demand far outreaches the supply. Check it out at lasagnalove.org."

► Finally, **Tom Smedinghoff** shares the sad news that **Christine Nickle Whitehead** passed away at home on April 20, 2026, following an illness. Her funeral was on April 25.

CLASS CORRESPONDENT:
NANCY BAKOS HUNTER
geo_hunters@myctl.net

1974

The Class of 1976 recently reached out to the Class of 1974 for guidance on creating a reunion yearbook; it is using the '74 edition as a model. This kind of collaboration reflects a long-standing and wonderful Knox tradition of earlier classes helping those that follow. The Class of 1973 advised '74 during its reunion planning, and '74 in turn supported '75.

► **Prairie Fire Chats** wrapped up its first year this past May. From September through May, this new program featured monthly lectures by classmates, professors, and other speakers. After the fun and connection of our 50th Reunion in October 2024, the Class of 1974 Reunion Committee wanted a way to stay in touch, and that is how **Prairie Fire Chats** was born. Each online gathering combined informal social time with a featured presentation. A dedicated website also offers recordings of past talks: <https://knox74.org/>.

► **Allen Kossoy** has continued his journey in competitive swimming and swam US Masters Spring Na-

CLASS OF 1975 SETS NEW RECORD

A new record has been set for a 50th Reunion Class Gift, a milestone made possible thanks to the Class of 1975 and the extraordinary efforts of the Reunion Committee.

In total, the Class of 1975 raised \$4,832,799!

Over the course of the Reunion campaign, Committee members devoted countless hours to reconnecting with classmates through phone calls, emails, texts, social media messages, and personal outreach. Their commitment extended beyond encouraging attendance at the 50th Reunion. They encouraged classmates to celebrate their Reunion with meaningful gifts in honor of their Knox education.

As Committee member Nora Gubbins wrote, "All of the phone calls, emails, and letters made a difference. Such a good feeling knowing our efforts will help future Knox students. We all knew Knox was a special place, and our 50th Reunion reminded us again of how lucky we are to be part of the Knox College family."

The Class of 1975 demonstrated the power of lifelong friendships, setting new standards for Reunion giving, and helping ensure a bold future for Knox Students.



STEVE DAVIS '12

tionals in Greensboro, NC, in May 2026. He medaled with a 9th place in 1000 Free. He will be swimming in Chicago in September at Big Shoulders swim, which is a 5K Lake Michigan swim. He says he has enjoyed the Prairie Fire chats and hopes they will continue.

► **Annie Reinke** continues to travel to Europe as often as possible to escape the current oppressive regime. "In the last couple of years, I've visited the Czech Republic, Austria, Hungary, two trips to France in a six month span, a stop in Rome for a Caravaggio exhibit followed by a week in Croatia, and a spur of the moment jaunt to Ireland left me wanting more. I'm currently planning to explore the Cinque Terre in the fall. Anyone care to join me on my self-guided adventure?"

► **Monta Lee Dakin** spent four weeks this past spring in New England tracing her Dakin roots, one of Concord's earliest families that arrived from England in the 1600s, yet largely absent from history books. Curious as to why, she dug deeper. At the Concord

Library, she combed through the Ancient Records of Concord (1630–1730) and found the Dakins woven throughout town minutes and court documents. A local guide showed her places that still bear the family name: Dakin Road, Dakin Brook, Dakin Field, Dakin Hill. She also discovered artifacts in the Concord Museum linked to a Dakin minuteman. The books may have overlooked them, but Concord itself clearly had not.

A recent documentary on one of Yellow Springs, Ohio's most significant public art efforts was created in part by former Knox College student **Jerome "Jerry" Borchers**. The Wheeling Gaunt Sculpture Project tells how the town came together to install a six-foot bronze statue honoring Wheeling Gaunt, a formerly enslaved man who became a wealthy philanthropist. As vice president of the Yellow Springs Arts Council, Borchers helped oversee both the sculpture and the film; he also appears in the film. The documentary highlights Gaunt's life and the community effort behind the project, commemorating his

legacy, including his gift of the land now known as Gaunt Park. <https://www.ysartscouncil.org/event/watch-the-wheeling-gaunt-sculpture-project-documentary-2025/>

► Episode 25 of Retro Radio Live's Podcast® featured author, journalist, and former NYC musician **Gabriel Rotello** discussing his time at CBGB, the downtown punk scene, the '70s and '80s culture, and his recently published book, *The CBGB Conspiracy*. Set during the glory days of New York's downtown music, art, literary and fashion scenes, the historical novel mixes fiction with real events and people. An even more fun podcast about his book is *Desperately Seeking the '80s*. Gabe found it moving to hear what they had to say about his book: "It's fun reading, is an historical tour of the East Village of a past era and is well written. For a first-time novelist, he created a tightly written mystery with characters you cared about." Link: <https://open.spotify.com/episode/21jdU05ZYeg9l-ntGgHrsG2>

CLASS CORRESPONDENT:
MONTA LEE DAKIN
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1975

Robert Long reports that he "was recently elected to the Board of Directors of Littler Mendelson, P.C., my law firm." Congratulations!

► **Dr. Gwendolyn Carol Webb** reports a big change as she has moved to California as the director of community engagement and retention for the California State University at Fullerton!

► **Sheri Sprung Morrison** writes: "Going to Houston to take care of our grandkids for a few days at the end of April while their parents are helping at the Robotics World Championship. Will visit Johnson Space Center while there. **Barb Epstien** '76 and her husband Julian Gray will be joining Jerry and me in Ashland again this summer for several days!"

► **Nora Gubbins** says, "Nancy Claypool wants me to go with her

to next year's Reunion. Hope you guys will be there too. It was so much fun being part of the Reunion Committee and made it even more special." I've told Nora that we (**Linda Nelson Langston P'07** and **Dave Langston P'07**) have our lodging reservations for the 2026 Knox Reunion. We have so many friends we want to see.

► **Susan Blew** sent a note mentioning a photo of Stonehenge. "We drove by last November and would have stopped but it was POURING! Right now, Dennis and I are in Kyoto, Japan, and are about to do a nine-day pilgrimage hike on the Kumano Kodo, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. We are both excited and nervous in spite of doing lots of preparatory hikes to get in shape." Sue courteously sent me a photo of her and Dennis in front of the Golden Pavilion in Japan.



► **Nancy Knapp** says "See you next Reunion! Hi, Dave. I went to Japan and Thailand and Laos during our great (50th) Reunion. I am so sorry to have missed it all, but we are trying to create a school on the Thai-Myanmar border for refugees.



Tom Coolsen '75 Memorial Gathering

From left to right: Ellen Eaton Franklin '75, Bob Hennes '75, Jim Coolsen, Eric Helgeson '75, Harry Grafton '75, Chris Hill '75, and Jeff Baker '75.

People who don't want the Myanmar army to bomb their schools. The Japan trip was for biking. That was so much fun!" Nancy also included a photo of herself!



► **Shep Crumrine** writes: "Hey David. It was great to connect with you last fall. I've been in touch with several people since the Reunion. **Mike Cinquegrani** also happens to be my cardiologist. It was great to spend time with him as a classmate only! **Claudia Hicklin Kaufman** and I have been in touch regarding our current musical involvements. I've sent her and Professor **William Wilsen** some YouTube links to videos of recent concerts. I play with the Concord Chamber Orchestra. If you are interested, just search YouTube with that name and you will see several links to past concerts. I will be playing our final subscription concert on May 9. I am also playing in "Cellofest 2026" at UW Whitewater. There will be 50-60 cellists playing well-known classical music arranged for four-part cello quartet/orchestra. Reunion was great. It reminded me of why I went to Knox and everything it taught me for my life. I was also in the Violins for Hope ensemble in September and October. The Violins were in residence in Milwaukee for six months and were used by a number of local organizations. It was an honor to be part of the ensemble." Go search YouTube as Shep instructs above for fabulous music!

► **Gary A. Pokorn** writes that he "and wife Debbie enjoyed cocktails with **Bill Foss** '68, P'93 and wife Bea at their high-rise condo in downtown Denver. Great catching up on the 1971-72 Knox freshmen men's basketball team that went 9-1. That was the last year freshmen were not eligible to play varsity basketball in the NCAA." Gary remains busy attending spring semester history and men's health classes at Metropolitan State University of Denver.

► **Jeanne Pankanin Leininger** opines, "With the world's current level of chaos, sometimes I want to fast-forward to the part where everything works out. Meanwhile, I'm escaping to Ireland in September with the Knox Alumni group, and in Oct/Nov to Sicily on a MotoGuzzi motorcycle tour. I still love motorcycling, and I also continue with weekly harmonica lessons. If you ask nicely, I won't play anything!"

► **George Szostkowski** and **Jeanne Pankanin Leininger** hosted a Zoom meeting in late April 2026 as a Re-Reunion and reminder about Knox Proud Days. They were joined by **Linda** and **Dave Langston P'07**, **Gwen Webb**, **Jeff Baker**, **Bob Hennes**, **Carol Hansen** and spouse **Kevin Waite** '74, **Nora Gubbins**, and **Shep Crumrine**.

During this conversation, an inspiring Knox alumni story was revealed that is worth sharing for the positive affirmation it makes about the depth and genuine personal value of those college relationships that we were privileged to create, and we continued to nourish for decades.

► **Carol Hansen** related that "In 2011, I had the idea of getting the group of my friends from Knox, (we called ourselves "World Control") together and hosting them at my and my husband's home in Hayden, Idaho. Finding contact information for everyone was difficult, and Knox was a great resource. The Idaho reunion happened in the summer of 2012, and everyone had a wonderful time. Unfortunately, one of the group, **Tom Coolsen**, was especially hard to find. He was eventually found in Florida, after the event. He responded to a letter that had caught up with him. He wrote how he wished he could have attended the event but had come upon very hard times, both financially and health-related. He added that his car actually did not even run, and he did not have the money to get it repaired. I emailed Tom's letter to **Jeff Baker** who responded saying that he would contribute towards a group effort to help Tom out. I then emailed Tom's letter with Jeff's email to all of the World Control group, even those who had not come to the party. We

raised \$1,500.00 from all sources. We sent Tom a cashier's check and let him know that it was from all his friends. The car was repaired. Tom was unbelievably touched by the generosity of everyone and asked for all their addresses so that he could send handwritten notes to each person thanking them, which he did. Sadly, Tom died only a few years later from heart failure (March 4, 2017) but had left a will asking that his ashes be buried at Knox, a college that gave him a great education and some truly great friends."

► A photograph, from October 2017, was circulated after the Zoom call, picturing family and friends of the departed **Tom Coolsen**, together at Knox to honor his last request. Those friends included **Ellen Eaton Franklin**, **Bob Hennes**, **Eric Helgeson**, **Harry Grafton**, **Chris Hill** and **Jeff Baker**. Tom Coolsen's family was represented by his brother, Jim.

► **Harry Grafton** recalls, "The interment 'ceremony' was held on a Saturday afternoon during a home game for the Prairie Fire. At a quiet moment when sincere and touching words were spoken, the stadium erupted in a loud cheer. Had he been there, I'm certain Tom would have shouted, 'You people have no respect for the individual!'"

CLASS CORRESPONDENT:
DAVE LANGSTON P'07
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1976

Greetings, fellow classmates. We are in full speed ahead mode for our 50th Reunion. Kazoos are being polished, tanning salons are packed, and the Knox hotels are adding zeros to their rates! We have coffees with retired faculty planned (yes, we found some!) tours of the Knox Farm, visits to the Knox Whale, trivia contests, visits to an amenities center named after one of our classmates, visits with the Career Center, sitting in on a class with students, and free rides around campus in a golf cart driven by a Knox student!! Plus, there are dinners, after-parties, and hopefully time for a few naps. Sure hope you

will join us for the great 50-year Reunion this October. It looks like we will indeed have 76 classmates to attend. The Reunion committee has worked hard and has come up with a great weekend (it was a close vote, but no streaking). And, for sure, the highlight will be just seeing our great fellow classmates. Hope you will be there!

► I did receive a few class notes. **Mike Godsil** P'92 sends warm regards from his new warm home in Florida. Mike retired from teaching photography in the art department at Knox College, and now lives with his partner, Janice, in Ocala, FL; he enjoys avoiding cold Galesburg winters and being able to play golf and do nature photography year round...

I also received a note from **Barb Epstien**. Barb writes, "I've been immensely enjoying serving on our 50th Reunion committee and continue to be astounded by the fact that we graduated from Knox 50 years ago! I'm enjoying retirement (almost four years now). Currently volunteering with our county public health department, helping with various projects that can use even just a few hours a week to move them forward. I'm also volunteering with some local election campaigns. My husband (Julian Gray, retired geologist/mineralogist) and I continue to spend a couple weeks in Tucson every February for the huge annual mineral, gem, fossil, etc. event there. This year I had a fun mini-reunion with **Bunny Friedman Faling** '77; I learned from her class column in the previous *Knox Magazine* that she and her husband have been snowbirding in Tucson (from Nebraska), so it was great to reconnect and catch up. Hope to see lots of you in October!

► **Ellen Jones McNair** writes, "I've enjoyed my fourth career change, ostensibly during my retirement. After working as a pediatric speech pathologist in a Nova Scotia hospital and in my private practice in Charlottesville, VA, I worked for a San Francisco-based neuroscience company. At 50 years old, I returned to school to become a high school librarian and finished my career as an educational specialist, a 'change

agent,' in Fairfax County Public Schools, where I provided professional development for teachers. After retiring, I enrolled in two year-long painting mentorships, exploring the creation of large abstract art. Currently my artwork is in two galleries and, I'm looking forward to my second solo show this August. What could make any of this better? My very small family increased by one with the birth of my precious granddaughter last year! Bliss!! I'm very much looking forward to seeing old friends and meeting new ones at our 50th Reunion.

Yours truly recently met with **Mike Widerschein**, who was visiting Chicago for the weekend. (I will let you ask Mike about the convention he was attending.) Mike and I shared *Sellew 1* stories, *Williston Hall* stories, and many, many laughs. He has retired from his nursing career and is enjoying life in Louisville.

I also saw a few classmates at the recent Knox Proud Days Zoom meeting. **Dave Koester** was there, along with **Mike Rubin**. Both are excited to attend our upcoming 50 year Reunion, especially since they haven't been on campus in decades. Finally, I did check the polymarket platform on whether **Charles "Graham Crackers" Woodward** would attend our Reunion. The odds have been dropping over the past few months, which is a good sign that we will see Graham and **Rob "RT" Thornburg**, along with scores of others planning to join us. See you in October.

CLASS CORRESPONDENT:
GEORGE PEARCE
geoknox@comcast.net

1977

Hello, all! Not much news to report; I guess everyone is too busy having fun to write! Next year is our 50th Reunion, and a committee is forming to make plans and suggest activities. We will be sure to update everyone as soon as things firm up, and let me know if you have any ideas for fun class events.

► **Laurie Anderson** got in touch: "I'm happily retired from my

legal career as in-house corporate counsel in Minnesota. Recently, I've been in contact with several friends from our Knox class of '77, as well as '75 and '78 friends, with very sad news. Our dear friend **Rick (Richard) Calvin** passed away unexpectedly in his Chicago home on March 4, 2026. I attended Rick's funeral in Kewanee, IL, our mutual hometown. We had been close friends since fifth grade. Rick and I talked in February about planning to attend our 50-year Reunion. In other news, I stay in close contact with my siblings **Carolyn Anderson** '73 and **Jeff Anderson** '80. And I recently had lunch in Minneapolis with **Deb Raphael Castle**. She and husband **Bob Castle** '78 are retired and also live in the Twin Cities."

► **Gary Jacobson** shared: "My youngest daughter, Caroline, will be married on July 3rd to Hossam Sultan. And Danielle, my middle daughter, is expecting their 2nd child in late July-early August. (fourth grandchild)."

CLASS CORRESPONDENT:
SARAH KAULL
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1978

Faith Miller reported that she was off on a river cruise from Prague to Budapest. Then at the end of June, she is going back to school. Yes, again! Having gotten her MAW in 2025, she is entering an MFA program at the Writer's Foundry at St. Joseph's College in Brooklyn. She's an inspiration for lifelong learning.

► **Carol Shaffner Deitch** has not one, but two, sons getting married this summer. One is in Naperville, IL and the other in Italy. Her granddaughter is 20 months old and luckily lives in Chicago, although that might change to Tampa. If so, she is going to work even harder on her husband to retire! So far, she hasn't won that fight!

► I was so glad to hear from **Ted Harvatin**, who reported that his first-year roommate, **Dave Harvey**, and my second, third, and fourth year roommate, **Doug Floski**, and he are meeting at Wrigley Field on June 29 to watch a ball game to-

gether, but mostly catch up on old times. He says Dave recently retired as a professor of chemistry and biochemistry at DePauw University in Greencastle, Indiana. He is now professor emeritus. Doug continues to practice law in Byron, IL. Likewise, for Ted in Springfield, IL. He says he likes the joke that if we keep practicing long enough, we might learn how to do it the right way.

► **Scott Luthy** reports that life is fairly boring in Central Illinois, although he did lose a couple of 50 foot trees in the recent tornadoes! One was about four feet in diameter. Fortunately, both were well away from any buildings so there was no rush to clean up the debris. He had fun at lunch with a number of Phi Deltas (and a couple of their spouses) on May 11 (which was FLUNK DAY!). In attendance from '78 were **Tom Morgan**, **Bill Anderson** P'08, **Jim Straus**, and **Tim Loch** P'16. From '79 there was **Bob Szyman** and **Brian Sullivan**. From 1980 was **Adrian Mazar** and from 1981, **Glenn Schlichting**. The sole representative of '76 was **George Pearce**. Spouses Carolyn Morgan and Monica "Nicki" Anderson also joined the festivities! Beyond this, he continues to stay busy with STEM tutoring and way too many projects around the home. His solar system is up and running and he says it feels good to not have a very large electric bill anymore! They did have a small but proud gathering of local alums during the Knox Proud event, where they met at a local micro-brewery. One couple even brought their infant son, who Luth thinks would be Knox Class of 2048!

► **Bob Voss** had big news. He reports that although he has been effectively 95% retired for a few years, he is about to officially retire from Twin State Technical Services after almost 29 years. He will continue to work with his one remaining client after he moves to Oregon. After 19 years in California and 29 back in Iowa, he and his wife are going to try something new. They bought a house in Eagle Point to be closer to her relatives, who are all along the west coast. They will be one row of houses away from the golf course, so hopefully he can up his game for

the next Fiji/Phi Delt golf outing. He's sorry to say he won't make it this year because they will be packing. Visitors are welcome (after they get settled).

► **Susan Hughey Walker** is marveling at how busy she is in retirement. She and her husband checked off a couple of bucket list items—they attended the Houston Rodeo in March and read the Bible cover to cover in 100 days. They head back to Africa in July for another three-week series of safaris. She says, "If you have never been to Africa and it's on your bucket list—GO!"

► It was also great to hear from **Edward Lanphier**. He said his 70th birthday and his plans (hopefully) to attend the famous Phi Delt /Fiji golf event in June has brought him out of his long silence. Welcome back! He is retired from a career in pharmaceuticals and biotechnology and now spends half the year in Marin County, CA, and the other half in Glen Arbor, MI. They have four great kids and eight grandkids. He celebrated his 70th birthday a few weeks ago with wife (Cam) and several kids and grandkids in Philadelphia.

► **Michael Wardell** only attended Knox from 74-75, but he remembered me from the hockey club. He went on to graduate from WWU in Bellingham, WA, in 1985, and then law school at UW in 1990. Next month marks 35 years of mostly solo litigation practice. He has one remaining case and is now freed up



A group of Knox alums came together in February 2026 at Bubblehouse Brewing in Lisle, IL, to hear John Drake '80 and Mark Kowal (brother of John Kowal '80) play the blues, including plenty of Grateful Dead. The audience included Mike O'Mary '80, Jim Demikis '78, Bob Hawkinson '80, and Frank Jozefiak '80.

to travel! He lives on lovely Lummi Island. He's kept in touch with **Jim Demikis** and **Michael Kostalik** and is hoping to make it to the Tedeschi Trucks concerts at Red Rocks with them in late July.

► **Tim Hays** and **Debbie Gottfried Hays** '79 now have a third grandchild—their daughter had a boy, born January 21. Both are doing well. They are enjoying watching their kids struggle with parenthood and wonder how they did it back in the day. Tim and Debbie are coming tomorrow to visit us in Colorado and to check a box on their bucket list—we're going to a Santana concert at Red Rocks.

► Rounding out the news, Katherine and I met Cheryl and **Brent Petersen** in Houston in early March for a little break from the cold. Katherine and I had lived there for many years, and we enjoyed showing them our old haunts.

► Note to everyone: We are in the very early stages of planning our 50th Reunion. We are looking for volunteers to join the planning committee. Please consider it. Let me or **Pam Berra Swafford** know if you have questions or are interested. Thanks!

CLASS CORRESPONDENT:
DAVID BATES
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1979

Time to recap the Class of 1979! I hope I get responses sent to my email—sullivanbjp@gmail.com, for the next edition. As of this writing, I am beyond grateful for the information forward by fellow classmates.

► Globetrotting **Rollie Thomas** is once again back home in the Collinsville area putting together travelog presentations to community libraries, Rotaries (Gooood Morning!), Lions Club chapters, Chamber of Commerce meetings, etc. I, for one, can't wait for a docuseries on Netflix. Rollie reports he has six kiddos and seven grandchildren scattered across the USA, which also keeps him moving. I am not quite sure if he retired from being

a probation officer after 35 years or if he visited a probation officer while in the Witness Protection Program. That may be why he keeps visiting new places, just speculating. Wife Connie, a retired high school principal, does travel with him to keep him out of trouble. She says that is like a second full-time career. In his spare time, he crashes weddings of his old Siwash buddy, **Fred Heger** (in Georgia) where he served as Sergeant of Arms, to ensure no one spoke up when the officiant asked if there were any objections. Thanks to Rollie, not a single peep was heard.

Fred, by the way, is trying to set the record for the oldest living hockey goalie still playing in the St. Louis area. He is also having fun reading to kindergartners including his grandson. The book he chose to read was *Brian Baying at the Moon!* A colorful and whimsical look at the college Career of **Brian Cox**. According to Fred, the favorite chapter revolves around Flunk Days in the late '70s. **Brian Cox** states it is all fiction but one always wonders.

► Next on Rollie's nuptial tour was **Eric Jackstadt**, who sweet talked his way into the heart of a beautiful (inside and out) debutante. Congratulations to a wonderful couple. Eric also witnessed the promotion of his son serving our country in the military. Thank you for your service. Eric also was seen crossing the wide Missouri, both the river and state, via his vintage chopper. Let the good times roll. Eric sent along his greetings from the Memorial Day Fireworks in Collinsville, IL. Also in the neighborhood is **Bob Holshouser**, who, in his spare time, is a leading high school referee in the State of Illinois.

► Recently several Phi Delt Alumni gathered for lunch in Naperville, IL, and retold old stories (some even true). **Bob Szyman** and **Tim Loch** '78, P'16 participated.

► Speaking of St. Louis, **Ilese Mauskopf Hoyniak** and husband Dan are living in the St. Louis area to be near their daughter, who is on the faculty at Wash U! Pretty impressive. They also get to celebrate spending time with their

grandchild, Eloise. Dan and Ilese are both retired but busier, it seems, than ever.

► And speaking of books, we are still waiting for **Laurie Dittman's** tell-all on a 30-year career in the mayor's office, city treasurer's office, and mayor's office for people with disabilities. I bet she knows a few secrets from Chicago's City Hall. A life of service deserves high praise and appreciation. Maybe we can get her to Knox to speak with Poli Sci classes!

► As for me, I have started a new PT gig in retirement, serving as the director of partner engagement for a national nonprofit, America in Bloom. I also welcomed my second granddaughter, Sloane Rae, last month. If you are near Lemont, IL, this summer, stop in. The pool is open, the mini fridge is stocked, and the blender is plugged in.

► One final word on a friend and personal hero, **Fred Bucholz** '77. A fellow roommate on Seymour 3 and class act. Fred lived as a public servant rising to be the recorder of deeds in DuPage County. If you did not call him a friend, it was because you never met him. When you think about all that is good with Knox College, the standards and principles this beloved institution espouses, it is Fred Bucholz that should come to mind. RIP Buddy!

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1980

A group of Knox alums came together in February 2026 at Bubblehouse Brewing in Lisle, IL, to hear **John Drake** and Mark Kowal (brother of **John Kowal**) play the blues, including plenty of Grateful Dead. The audience included **Mike O'Mary**, **Jim Demikis** '78, **Bob Hawkinson**, and **Frank Jozefiak**.

► **Dave Workman** writes, "On a beach next to the Naples harbor on the deck of a restaurant in March, three former Siwash basketball legends gathered to catch up. **Bob "Sweet T" Thompson** '78 (MVP/

All Conference 1978), his wonderful wife; **Dan Edwards** '81 (MVP 1981), his dog Filo; and **Dave Workman** (gpa + ppg = +/- 5) had an amazing time recollecting past and current happenings from family, retirement, grandchildren, and many other blessings. It can be said that it produced a feeling of felicity for the participants. It can be said with certainty that during our time at Knox, we were to have a great past ahead of us."

► **Linda Gintert Armstrong** wanted to share that **Ruth Aydt** was presented with the Dr. Martin Luther King Legacy Award by the city of Bloomington, IN, for her many contributions to the community. Linda was able to attend the ceremony honoring Ruth. What an inspiration! Very cool!

► **Merry Sloan Mosbacher, Kim Robinson Hawkinson, and Linda Gintert Armstrong** recently spent time together in Colorado and had the chance to visit the summit of Pike's Peak. They had a great time sharing Knox stories and catching up with each other.



► **Jeff Cernek** writes he and his wife still live in Glenview where he has his law office and practices primarily in Cook, DuPage, Lake and Will Counties. Jeff is also a part owner of a construction company building homes and general contracting. Their three sons are doing well in pharmacy, software engineering and electrical engineering. For fun, he plays lead and rhythm guitar in the band Probable Cause. They have multiple dates this year at Whiskey River, Lincoln Park Greekfest, and Northbrook Days. Jeff also stays busy with motorsports hobbies including snowmobiling, dirt biking, and motorcycling. They have another trip planned out West this year in July in South Dakota. He keeps very busy!!

► **Steve Zocchi** is living in Sonoma, which has been a favorite destination ever since he came to California in 1981. He works in the tech industry, which has been a fun wild ride. He sees incredible things with AI and its unbelievable pace of change. Steve left full-time work several years back but is still a board advisor for tech startups. He takes advantage of the wine country to pursue a couple passions—cycling and wine—and watching the grandkids now get ready for their college experience. Yikes! "Wishing all the brothers health and happiness. Perge."

Colleen and I are enjoying the grandkids, have a trip to Vegas to the Sphere this summer, have our youngest son graduating from UTEP, and our middle son is attending graduate school in Oregon.

Take care all!!

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JOE MOORE

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1981

Tom MacMillan: We were experimenting with Chicago city life by renting in a high-rise the last three years. We liked it so much that we went ahead and bought a place, which we will close on May 29. So we will continue splitting time between a city place on the 34th floor surrounded by millions of people and a deep woods place in the far north woods of Wisconsin. Our family is growing, as we expect a second grandchild, a girl, to arrive in mid-June. I joined a committee of Knox '81 people planning our Homecoming 45th reunion this fall. I will be attending personally and encourage everyone else to attend this year."

► **Jane Strode Miller:** "Last fall I started a podcast, and you can find all 33 episodes at <https://janesplace.com/podcast-episodes/> including my last one posted on May 20 that featured **Andy McGadney**, Knox's president! I am also publishing a children's book series based on

my real dog, Earl. The first book is called *Hugs are Happy* and will be available on my website and Amazon this summer."



► **Craig Behm:** "Claudia and I welcomed our fourth granddaughter on May 17! We have two daughters and four granddaughters—seems right for a football playing Beta! I am still working as president of a \$30 million tech consulting company and still enjoy it! However, the "R" word is discussed often, maybe at the end of this year? I see several Knox alums mostly on the golf course, **Keven Forness**, **Tom Yarotsky** '77, **Tom Stelter** '77, **John Granato** '84, and **Dean Mento**. They also have a Phi Delt golf tourney each year where I get to see Knox alums. We love seeing Knox alumni so if you are ever in Houston, please give me a call! Finally, I get to travel with the NFL Texans and will be on the field in Cleveland November 15th when they play **Todd Monken** '89. Two Knox alums on an NFL field at once!"

► **Tom Castronovo:** "I am currently the director of tennis at Benet Academy in Lisle, IL (Class of '77, benettennis.org) where I coach both the girls' and boys' teams as well. I recently surpassed coaching 500 high school matches since I started some years back. I am also a certified USPTA/RSPA tennis instructor at Naperville Tennis club, part time. I still own Criterion Wealth Advisors in Batavia, IL, and am an accredited investment fiduciary with a primary focus on constructing and managing investment portfolios for successful families. Our kids are all spread out with my oldest son—who is also a tennis professional—employed as director of racquets at a club near Kansas City. My daughter is a critical care nurse in Tampa, FL, and my youngest son works in software logistics for IBM in Raleigh, NC. I

have three granddaughters from my oldest son. We love to travel with them wherever we go. Our winter residence is still in Marco Island, FL, where I get to compete in tennis six days a week. I don't see myself retiring anytime soon as I love what I do and need to stay busy. Hi to all my fellow alums!"

► **Dali Sardar:** "The word retirement does not exist!! Busy sitting on multiple boards and hosting weekend family dinners with eight grandkids. Occasionally golf with fellow Malaysians from the Class of '81. Missing fellow dorm mates like **Doug Furtkamp**, **Howard Gerdorn** and Marty."

► **Tom Woolwine:** "A year of milestones for us. We celebrated our 40th wedding anniversary in April. My mom turned 95 in May. We will welcome our first grandchild in August. And my wife turns 70 in September! Pretty good run. We are grateful. Best to my classmates!"

► **Jim Whitehill** P'15, P'17: "I was fortunate to be selected by The Best Lawyers in America as the 2026 Lawyer of the Year for Real Estate Law in Tucson, AZ. I have been certified as a specialist in real estate law since 1998. I practice real estate, business, and estate planning law with my son, **Andrew Whitehill** '15. See you at Homecoming in October!"

► **Mark Hauer:** "My first novel, *Lovelorn Squids from Outer Space: A Curiously Tart and Tasteful Novel*, was launched on September 7, 2024, and then relaunched in 2025. It's received excellent reviews. Many thanks go to **LaDean Woods** for her editing and artistic prowess. A few notes: The book and an early version of a film script adaptation,



John Nicolau '81, Dave Mitchell '83, Jerry Proctor '82, and Pete Bulandr '82.

Lovelorn, caught the interest of one of the movers and shakers within the Southern Independent Film Industry. The director is in the middle of one movie now. So *Lovelorn* will probably be a 2027 production. He has the cast, crew, equipment, and the locales...all we lack is funding. Feel free to email me at jmhauer55@gmail.com, and if you are interested in the film and how the whole ridiculous creative process came about through a series of disasters... please go here, as well: <http://spot.fund/3hmk9p8sc>.

► As for Team Nicolau ... by the time this is published, my wife will have retired in July, on the 45th anniversary of her first day as an ICU nurse back in 1981, all with the same hospital system (initially Evanston Hospital with one location and now Endeavor Health with nine hospitals). We are fortunate that our four children (three married) and our five grandchildren all live within 30 minutes of us here on Chicagoland's North Shore. As a retirement gift for the two of us, we are spending several weeks in the U.K., Ireland with a group from our church and England on our own (Liverpool and London visiting Beatle-related + other sites). Otherwise, helping with the grandchildren and volunteering keeps us so busy, not sure how we would find time to work. As my father used to say, if we knew grandkids were this much fun, we would have had them first. Looking forward to seeing fellow classmates at our 45th reunion at Homecoming in October.

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1982

Condolences to **Mike Kraynak**, as his wife Peggy passed away on January 2, 2026.

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1983

Margaret Davis: "I am happily creating music and art professionally in Oakland, CA, with the enthusiastic support of my wonderful husband and my two orange tabby cats! I am a proud member of three arts organizations—the Hayward Arts Council, A.R.T. Inc., and the Diablo/Alameda chapter of the National League of American Pen Women. Last year, I held my second solo art show in Hayward, CA. My art is up at www.margaretdavisart.com. I also released my second solo vocal/harp recording, "The Elder Lass"—all-original arrangements of my favorite Celtic and Medieval music. Soundclips here: margaretkristoph.bandcamp.com/album/the-elder-lass. Looking forward to a wonderfully creative year!"

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1984

CLASS CORRESPONDENT:
VALERIE JENCKS
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1985

Amy Sperry Czuba writes, "I just retired from my career in HR at Dell Technologies! We will be moving to Charleston, SC, summer of '26—Mt. Pleasant area, near my daughter."

► **Dale Dilworth** writes, "Hey all! Moved from Mexico City two years ago to the Triad area in NC. Will be semi-retired summer of '26."

► **Alice Barton** '86 writes, "My husband and I are both newly retired and working on renovations to our very old cabin in the Colorado Rockies."

► **Julia DiLiberti** writes, "Just went to see **Mark Penn** in Palm Springs, CA. We toured Joshua Tree National Park and climbed some giant rocks on another trail that were a challenge for those with shorter legs. I had the thrill (?) of an earthquake for about 12 seconds and just had a great few days doing all manner of things. (Sidenote...if you need remodeling ideas for your house

and someone with the vision to show you what's possible, fly Mark in. He's amazing at that stuff, has redone four (?) houses, and they've all been gorgeously transformed. **Lisa Crank** is busy as all get out with all of her musical involvement, but we have actual plans to see each other soon for some fun stuff, which is great. In July 2026, I'll be starting an experiment as executive director of the MMLA (Midwest Modern Language Association), while still teaching and having been asked to come back as interim president to the Illinois Community College Faculty Association. I also made it to Paris during my third sabbatical. If I'm not mistaken, **Kendall Dunkelberg** '86 and I have both had three sabbaticals at the same time. We barely knew each other at Knox so I find it a quirk that the rhythm of our professional lives is so similar. Still clanging around on the uke, but I think I peaked in my first year of playing...the upside is meeting fun/funny people who play uke too and who are tolerant of uke-stagnation. The harmonica is my next Waterloo. (No lie.)"

► **Kristin Esty-Ibarra** writes, "Living outside Portland, ME, and loving it! Empty-ish nesters as our son moves to Brooklyn, NY, and continues his studies at CCNY."

► **Ed Janosky** P'26 writes, "My middle daughter attends Lehigh University and recently competed in the Patriot League rowing championship. My oldest is graduating from Knox this year with a degree in neuroscience. My youngest is a rising senior at Oak Park-River Forest High School and doing very well. I'm finishing my third school year of retirement, and I started substituting teaching at the high school. It's been fun seeing my son and his friends at school. They text him about "dad sightings." I keep a work in progress on the easel most of the time, working with brush and ink, charcoal and pastels. I write every day in a composition notebook, and I still play the banjo. I am thinking of starting a Suburban Chicago (near Oak Park) Knox club as I occasionally run into many of you in the area."

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1986

Greetings, Class of '86, and welcome to our reunion year!

Can you believe it's been 40 years since we graduated? Where has the time gone? We've all lived a lot in the past four decades, and many of us have gone far from the woodlands and corn fields of Galesburg. Some of us are working in the same careers we planned on while at Knox; others have changed jobs multiple times. Some have children who have also gone to Knox; others are still waiting for grandchildren. Some have stayed around the Midwest; others are in countries across the world. But wherever we've been, whatever we've done, we are still connected through our experiences at Knox.

The long, long road to Alma Mater is calling us home, where we can share the stories of where we've been during the last 40 years, where we hope to go in the future, and, of course, remember the good times we had at Knox together. I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at Homecoming the weekend of October 22-25!

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1987

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1988

Many from the Class of '88 are turning 60 and sharing birthday posts.

► **Stephanie Martin Danielson** shared that she and her husband, Rob, are preparing for their youngest, Zane, graduating college. His baseball team at U of I-Springfield is hosting the post-season tourna-

ment as the second seed opponent. They are also very proud that both their daughters have re-enlisted their Services to defend our Nation with the Air National Guard! Stephanie started a new job with the county government. While she is learning new things, Rob continues to beautify his customers' homes and businesses. Stephanie shares how amazing time continues to roll on from those fun days at Knox way back when.

For my 60th birthday, I'm taking a girls' trip with my high school best friends to Charleston, SC. As we enter our seventh decade, classmates are marking reaching milestones like retirement, grandchildren, and college graduations. I'm writing this on Knox's Flunk Day 2026, which recalls fun memories—not just of enjoying Flunk Day, but also of guessing when it would happen each year. Please share your Knox memories or give an update about your life; you can email me or reach out directly to the Knox Alumni Office.

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1989

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1990

Brian Coffey: "Update from Southernmost Illinois: **Sterrett Collins** '86, **Brian Coffey**, **Will Becque** '08 and **Bradley Becque** '08, **Jeff Ripperda** '00, and spouse **Kate Wiegmann Ripperda** '00 all live in overlapping community and social circles in Carbondale and Murphysboro in Jackson County, IL. We may be the most concentrated group of Knox-affiliated people in this part of the state!"

► **Darcy Turner:** "Hi, Jeff! And Happy Flunk Day (if it was that day)! Quick update. I've accepted a position teaching Spanish in Knoxville, so I am moving (now actually!) to Galesburg. Thirty six years ago, we all started at Knox:

Now I'm back in town. :) Thank you for writing class notes!"

► **Amy Carlson:** "I am still living in Brooklyn, NY. I missed Homecoming this year as I was shooting an Ira Sachs film, *To the Man I Love* with Rami Malek. Loved seeing the pictures of the Class of '90. Recently, our church, Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church (LAPC), hosted Bishop Mariann Budde on her book tour. My son Nigel is a HS Junior at Saint Ann's in Brooklyn, and my daughter, Lyla, is a sophomore at Williams College. Syd is working at Killphonic Publishing."



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1991

From **Julie Scannell:** "The Class of 1991 hosted a small but mighty happy hour on Flunk Day in May and had a terrific time! **Christine Purtell Deblock** zoomed in from the suburbs of Vancouver, WA, (woohoo! Flunk Day toast) and we shared tales from **Phil Supel**'s more mischievous days (a toast to Supel) while **Andy Davis** walked us around outdoors on a beautiful day in Oshkosh, WI (Carl ignoring the guys in Raub toast). With our novice golfer **Jim Saranteas** (Chicago toast) in Raleigh, NC, we pieced together an intriguing tapestry of memories (and our collective awe of **Roy Andersen**) and similar experiences (Phi Delta reggae party) that is so very Knox. If you're not already connected with us on social media, search for "Knox College Class of 1991 Alumni" on Facebook and "Knox College 1991" on LinkedIn. You can also reach me at juliescan91@gmail.com. Looking forward to seeing everyone in October!"

► From **Christine Purtell Deblock:** "Another year of changes.

Charlotte, our youngest, graduated from high school in June. We took two visits to Knox, and it was a finalist in her college decision, but after having been raised in the Pacific Northwest, she just couldn't envision going to school in Illinois. If it couldn't be Knox, I'm happy that she will be attending Willamette University in Salem, OR. Luke finished his sophomore year at Washington State University. Our oldest, Lee, is working at an assisted living facility and figuring out next steps. Even though Lee is living with us, it still feels a bit like the empty nest is on the horizon. I'm finishing up my term as board co-president at my church and will take a break from volunteering in an intensive role for a while. With a more open schedule, I hope to be able to travel more."

► In April, **Rich Trout** hit the one-year publication anniversary of *Up All Night: An Aspie's Memoir of Chasing Girls in Quicksand*. "I had a great time writing, researching, and publishing the book thanks to loads of help from family and friends, including Knox alums **Jason Wessel**, **Craig Owens**, **Tim Martin**, and **Chris Connor**. The project was the most challenging yet fulfilling of my life other than helping to raise my 20-year-old son, Evan Trout, owner of successful car detailing business ET Cleans in Fredericksburg, TX.

Part 1 of *Up All Night* covers grade school and junior high. Part 2 is my high school and Knox College years. Part 3 is adulthood, the shortest part because we all tend to fall into a routine. Several Knox alumni from 1988-1991 make appearances in the book, including **Jonathan Sheinkop**, **Malcolm Currie**, and the girls from Post." The book can be found on Amazon at <https://a.co/d/025yg72i>."

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1992

From **Celine Gura Mathiessen:** "Hi everyone! I've got some updates to share. As some of you know, I caught the ceramics bug back at

Knox, and what started as a bit of studio pottering has turned into a real passion and, on and off, a second gig. I've always tried to keep a studio wherever I land, just to have a space to create. Recently, I took the plunge and opened an Etsy shop ([redleafpottery.etsy.com](https://www.etsy.com/shop/redleafpottery)) to sell my work. These days, I'm obsessed with flowers and exploring ways to make vases feel like more than just containers. I want them to be part of the arrangement, not just something that holds it. I'm working out of my home studio right now, and I'm also helping to build the Galveston Clay Guild. We're creating a space and opportunities for local clay artists to share, promote their work, and create together."

► **Heidi Leuszler:** "I left Galesburg for an ecology/pollination biology/genetics research project in North Dakota, got lost a couple times, and finished an MS from Utah State University. I went to USU with **Bill Geer**'s daughter, in fact. Got a job at Parkland College in Champaign, IL. It was supposed to be temporary. Just before I was going to leave to learn how to surf in Australia or Costa Rica, I decided to stick around and see how things worked out with this cute guy. A marriage and 24 years later, I am still teaching bio, have two awesome kids, a permaculture farm, and a food manufacturing business with my own line of native foods, and co-packing services for small farmers. I have found my niche. I send students to Knox frequently. I had a chunk of my tallgrass prairie planted by **Peter Schramm**, and I speak with **Mark Brodl** '81 every so often. It was unearthed recently that a good friend of mine here grew up with **Lance Factor**'s daughter! There are always connections with Knox that fall in my path."

► **Anna Blackmon Moore** wrote: "Been an English professor for nearly 30 years at CSU Chico in Northern California. Published my first novel in 2024 and working on my second. Husband, two kids, two dogs, two cats. All is good. I think about Knox all the time and miss everyone. And miss my youth."

► **Jennifer Goldsberry Quandt** wrote: "We moved from Illinois

to NE Iowa in the driftless, and my family and I have never been happier.”

► **Carrie Wild** wrote: “I’ve been in Indianapolis since 1992 and am coming up on 29 years of marriage! I became a full-time artist in 2012 and divide my time between art fairs, exhibits, and a partnership in a co-op gallery in Zionsville, IN. My main medium is watercolor, but over the past few years I’ve been taking printmaking classes and am really into it! You can find me at carriewild.com.”

► **Brian White** wrote: “After graduation, I moved to Chicago. A few months after taking an apartment with friends in Rogers Park, I met the woman who would become my wife. We married in 1995, the same year I started grad school to get a Ph.D. in political science. The degree did not happen, but the marriage lasted. We’ve been married 30+ years, have raised two adult sons, and continue to live in Rogers Park. My career has evolved with a throughline focused on community development. I now own and run a small software and consulting services company, which allows me to work with local governments and nonprofits around the country. I remain in close contact with a handful of Knox friends and always enjoy hearing what folks are up to.”

► **Nan Vorath**: “Nothing major to report. I still work at Marsh McLennan as an Employee Health & Benefits Client executive. It will be four years in September 2026. Autumn graduated from college two years ago, how time flies. She works full-time teaching 4 year olds at a pre-school. She continues to work as a professional actress and has been cast in numerous productions in the Milwaukee area while deciding on her plan for a master’s/Ph.D. program. She plans to move to New York and is at home with Carl and me just saving money. We love having her here!”

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1993

CLASS CORRESPONDENT:
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1994

Hello Knox friends, I was so late in gathering our news this season that I was fully expecting to receive no updates. Thank you for sending them! I’m not a procrastinator, but somehow in my life of increased multitasking and perimenopause, things get pushed off to the side until some weird mental tether yanks me back to realizing I have another looming deadline other than the one I’m already working on.

► **Jerry Zavorka** sent an update: He, **Andrew Wenk**, **Rob McNally**, and **Tolan Pica** ’93 reconnected during a trip to Phoenix, AZ, in March. “After years apart and limited communication, it was great to get together to reminisce about our college life at Knox,” he says. They spent time on the golf course, ate great food, and sat by the pool laughing about the past.

► Some sad news: **Stephanie Ramstad** died on January 26, 2026, surrounded by family. On Valentine’s Day weekend, **Samantha Balasuriya**, **Eric Hutchcroft** ’93, **Tricia Liermann Hutchcroft** ’95, **Madhuri Mansukhani** ’93, **Lori Martin**, and **April Prince Smith** gathered in Minneapolis to celebrate Stephanie’s life. April wrote: “Her memorial service was a reflection of her through and through: warm, humble, thoughtful, and providing the gift to reunite with those whom we had lost touch. We spent the weekend remembering Stephanie, laughing at memories formed at Knox, and catching up on all the intervening years.”

April also shared what’s going on in the lives of others who attended the memorial: “Samantha and her husband run Botanicoir, a company selling coir substrates to commercial farmers worldwide; Eric works for Creston Electronics in curriculum development and training; Tricia is a pre-school teacher for Head Start; Madhuri works for WNS Capgemini; Lori is a middle school

librarian in Evanston, IL; and April runs her own book and manuscript conservation business.”

► And me, it never seems to slow down. I’ve continued with my position as the medical director at the Wound and Hyperbaric Center at Emory University Hospital Midtown in Atlanta, GA, and the chief of rehabilitation medicine at the same hospital. I continue to write creatively and relentlessly submit to literary journals. My oldest just graduated from high school. She’s so ready to start her college experience, and that excitement makes me remember my excitement and anxiety at starting a new life as a college student at Knox. I was talking to a colleague about my daughter, and she expressed a similar nostalgia. “If I had to do college over again, I totally would,” she offered. And I agreed, I would too. Would I do anything differently? Probably. Would I still go to Knox? Definitely. As my daughter launches into this time of her life, I try to impress on her to revel in the opportunities outside her comfort zone. Don’t be afraid to mess up. It could lead you to unexpected places and make you appreciate more than what feels comfortable. Thank you, Knox, for helping me explore more, even if I didn’t take advantage of everything I could have.

All the best, Knox friends.

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1995

“How do you flunk?” was the question I posed with a wink to the Class of ’95. In response, I heard about the amazing and wonderful things our class is doing in the world. I’m not surprised, but I do hope you take time for yourselves once in a while, too. Way to go, Class of ’95! Reach out anytime—not just the day of the deadline—with your notes at defythetrend@gmail.com.

► **Crystle Clark Adams** has been working in workforce development for 26 years now. Her son, Benjamin, graduated from Augustana

College in May, with a double major in religion and theater arts-technical design and a minor in Scandinavian studies. Her daughter, Madelyn, graduated from ROWVA High School the same week. Maddy has committed to Knox for the fall of ’26. Crystal is looking forward to visiting campus more frequently in the coming years. She doesn’t have much time to “flunk” recently, she thinks she might get inspired by an even closer tie with Knox in the next four years!

► **Rob Clark** recently made a significant career change by going to work for Tri-Star Trust Bank as vice president and Bay City Market director after eight years working as senior director of communications and community relations at Michigan Sugar Company. He is opening a new office in Bay City, Michigan, for an incredible company that centers its culture around its “higher purpose.” Rob also serves on the board of directors at the Bay Area Soccer Association, through which they raised \$600,000 to build a new Maplewood Park Sports Complex on Bay City’s East Side, including two new hard-surface soccer mini-pitches and three new full-size basketball courts. The group, working in creative partnerships, also revitalized the entire surrounding park adding a new playground, 10-foot walking paths with exercise equipment, and a plaza with sun shades.

Rob was inducted in the Junior Achievement of North Central Michigan Business Hall of Fame. “Never in my life did I imagine I’d be inducted into a business hall of fame, but it was a wonderful evening in a room filled with people who inspire me everyday to keep building,” he wrote. Rob has also gotten to reconnect with a few fellow alums, including **Ned Earley** ’96, during a weekend trip to the Cincinnati area where he was coaching his youngest son’s soccer team. “It’s always great catching up with Ned,” he wrote. He also caught up with **Cliff Van Dyke** ’51, who was the mind and energy behind many projects in Bay City and Bay County; and **Michelle Allmendinger** ’97, who has been hired as the next president at Delta College

in Bay County, Michigan. “I’m so excited to introduce her to our community and work collaboratively with her to make a positive difference here!”

Rob and his wife Claire celebrated their 26th wedding anniversary in July. Their four boys are all very active and doing well. Owen is a senior at Michigan State University studying kinesiology; August is a first-year student at Savannah College of Art & Design in Georgia studying illustration; Asher is about to graduate from high school and will be attending and playing soccer at Alma College beginning this fall; and Ellis is approaching the end of his first year of high school where he plays soccer and sings in the Select Choir. He recently traveled to Ohio State University in Columbus to sing as part of a master class with his choir.

► **Alex Dye** recently stepped into the role of chief information officer (CIO) at Strattec Security Corporation, where he leads global IT, cybersecurity, data, and digital transformation initiatives. Prior to that, he spent four years with Milwaukee Tool as IT director – solution delivery, focused on driving improved product data management, innovation, and scalable growth. Alex continues to draw on his Knox liberal arts foundation (B.A. in history and French area studies), which he credits with shaping him into a more well-rounded and effective IT leader. Alex recently reconnected with **Srdjan “Andrej” Ostric** ’94 and **Nick Stavropoulos** after far too many years and is hoping to catch up with **Jeremy Butler** and **Peter Brown** soon—hopefully to watch a few World Cup games. Alex and **Jenner Lee Dye** ’93 celebrated their 29th wedding anniversary this



Rob Clark '95 and Cliff Van Dyke '51

fall. Their oldest daughter, Hazel, 19, studied in Valencia, Spain, last summer, and Alex got to see Noah Kahan at Coors Field in August with his daughter Hattie, 15.

► **Nicole Havelka** recently launched her first podcast, “Just Rest: Burnout Tips for Everyday Radicals,” which turns her gift for conversation and asking questions as a marketing tool for her business Defy the Trend, which helps individuals recover from burnout and values-aligned organizations to reduce team turnover and conflict by centering real human needs.

► **Caroline Sciffet King**, who has worked her entire career with the Red Cross, experienced a first recently—completing an international deployment in Winnipeg, Canada, responding to the devastating wildfires throughout the Manitoba province through the Canadian Red Cross.

CLASS CORRESPONDENT:
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1996

A reminder about the 30th Reunion this fall—Homecoming is October 22 to 25, 2026! Plan to come back to Knox to celebrate! Send your news to Kathy at kathybiallas@gmail.com.

CLASS CORRESPONDENT:
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1997

Hi all, I wanted to share a summary of recent outreach and updates gathered from our network. It’s been great reconnecting and hearing where everyone is and what they’re up to. It is high time we step up our game.

► **Jeremy Darnell**: “I live in Gibson City, IL, where I have been serving as a principal (seven years) and superintendent (10 years) with my wife Kim (18 years) and daughter Adlee (15 years). I am your class correspondent because I know we have much to share and can’t complain about not seeing any updates if I’m

not willing to do the work. Oh, and AI makes it way easier.”

► **Jen Hahn Keller**: Jen recently celebrated her third anniversary as development manager at PADS of Elgin, a congregate homeless shelter serving northern Kane County. Outside of work, she is active as an artist and participated in the “Elgin is Home” campaign. Her “Oodle Bus” installation was featured at the downtown market and now travels to elementary schools in U-46. She remains connected with **Mina Farhadieh Girbes** and is open to staying in touch.

► **Colby Butcher**: Colby is currently based in Kansas City and responded with enthusiasm to reconnect. He expressed interest in where others are now!

► **Rachelle Daugherty**: Rachelle assisted in updating contact records. She also shared a photo from a recent celebration and expressed appreciation for the coordination efforts.

► **Christopher Owens**: After more than 20 years in the biopharma industry, Chris recently transitioned following a Biogen layoff and has launched his own consulting firm. He now supports biotech companies with preclinical drug development strategy and business development.

► **Nahyan Fancy**: Nahyan relocated to the UK in 2023 to begin his role as al-Qasimi Professor of Islamic Studies at the University of Exeter. He recently received a £2.3 million Wellcome Trust Discovery Award to lead a major research project on the history of smallpox and measles across the Mediterranean.

► **Sarah Weed**: “The days are long, but the years are short!” A full decade ago, Sarah moved to Colorado, back to her family roots, with her two sons. She says Quinn and Will are great guys, as different as can be, and (sadly) have both chosen to study at Colorado universities and not at Knox. This past winter, Sarah and Will travelled to Australia to visit Quinn while he studied abroad at Macquarie University, only 20 minutes from where he was born!

► If you haven’t had a chance to respond yet, I’d really encourage you to do so. Even a quick update helps strengthen our network and keeps everyone connected. Whether it’s a career move, a life update, or simply where you’re located now, it’s valuable to hear from you—and it makes future opportunities for collaboration, reconnection, and support that much more meaningful. My email is [jadadkd217@gmail.com](mailto:jdadkd217@gmail.com), and I would love nothing more than for each of us to share and tell our stories here. Thanks to those who helped get us started here and I look forward to more!

CLASS CORRESPONDENT:
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1998

The recent warmth of late spring has inspired the seeds in our tiny Chicago garden to start popping and the cotyledon leaves of our squash plants are doubling in size every day. Chloe and I started some asparagus seeds this year, and we’ve got a few very fragile wisps of asparagus to watch. I’m patiently looking to the years ahead where I might eat home grown asparagus. **Elsie Conwell** ’29 is finishing her first year at Knox and has planted her own metaphysical roots at the Knox Farm and Green Oaks. Son Winston is now 17, a captain on his cross country team, and is very busy with college visits and AP exams. I had the good fortune to hang out with **David Spetzler** this past weekend, while he was in Chicago for business. We were glad to find a moment to catch up and reminisce!



► As the class of 1998, we are enjoying life from far off outposts, bringing art and culture to the cities we call home, visiting far away places, and staying connected to each other as we celebrate milestone birthdays. It’s a joy to share updates from so many of us!

► **Amy Tropp**: “I’m working remotely for a large hospital system and living off-grid on the Lost Coast in Humboldt County. I use solar power, spring water, Starlink, and propane. The view from my cabin is all blue sky, mountain ridge lines, and green valley for as far as the eyes can see.”



► **Phillip and Rachel Michalski Mottaz '99** are still living in the Valley life of Los Angeles. Phillip published his fourth comedy mystery novel, (*WHAT’S THE STORY*) *DEAD & GORY?* last year and has taken full credit for the recent Oasis reunion. Rachel is thriving in her 21st year teaching, and her 11th year as a kindergarten teacher at the Wesley School in North Hollywood. Their son is currently a junior in high school, placing the entire family in college search mode.

► **Geraldine Hendrix-Sloan** shared: “I still work at Minnesota State University-Moorhead as a criminal justice professor, but I thought I would share this experience with the Knox community.

During spring semester, I taught a course on international human rights as a study abroad course. My colleagues and I traveled with 38 criminal justice, social work, and speech language students to five countries. We took a day trip to Winnipeg, Canada, to tour the Canadian Human Rights Museum.



Left to right: Lon Nelson '98, Tony Spizzirri '98, Bob Gluting '98, Sam LeDeaux '98, Craig Roscoe '98, and Ricky Rivero '00, celebrating Bob's 50th birthday.

Funny how we can just take a day trip to Canada from the F-M region (Fargo, ND/Moorhead, MN), as we are only separated by the Red River of the North and a state border, but are very much one community.

Then a few days before spring break, all 42 of us headed to Geneva, Switzerland, then France, Belgium, and The Netherlands. It was quite incredible to share this experience with students focused on humanitarian efforts and peaceful conflict resolution. Two of the highlights of the trip for me were viewing a session at the UN and touring the International Criminal Court, but we managed to throw in a ton of cultural elements, such as architectural city tours and visits to historic sites.”



► **Michael Vanlandingham** checked in: “Things in Arkansas are going well. Tracey just became the general manager of The Avid Hotel in Fayetteville. I am still doing my same jack-of-all-trades at the hotel, the four preschools, the car wash, the rent houses, the Bentonville Mosque and whatever else seems to pop up. My youngest is in high school, participating in band, theater, color guard and is still able to maintain straight As. Tracey and I are getting the most out of being Pawpaw and Gigi to our grandchildren. As I look at turning 50 in June, I am reminded of just how close we are to 30 years since we graduated. I tried to take a little time out last week to Flunk a little. It looked like Flunk Day 2026 was a blast. As always, if you are ever passing through Arkansas, look me up.”

► **Tim J. Lord** writes: “I’m settling into life in the Twin Cities. My wife and I bought a house in St. Paul and have been reveling in giving tours of

the new Playwrights’ Center (where Nicole is the producing artistic director). So if you’re in the Twin Cities, please let us know and come check out one of the public performances here. I’ve been teaching some classes at Macalester and am currently writing a new play, which was commissioned by the actor Billy Magnussen.”

► **Lon Nelson** and his wife **Mandy Bolinger-Nelson** live in northwest suburban Port Barrington, IL. Their two kids are both sophomores. Daughter Kylee is out in Boulder, living her best life at CU and studying integrated physiology and business. She’s just back from a volunteer medical trip to Peru, with a visit to Machu Picchu woven in. Son Jameson is in high school in Wauconda, IL, doing well in school, loving baseball and recently adding golf and basketball to the mix. Lon is the CCO for Natus Sensory, a medical device company headquartered out of Chicagoland, and Mandy is holding down the fort, keeping Jamo out of trouble and enjoying their mini golden doodle, Kala. Lon and Mandy recently had the opportunity to co-host the Natus sales recognition trip to Belize...incredibly beautiful area of the world!!



► The Chicagoland Knox connections are still going strong! Several recently got together for **Bob Gluting's** 50th birthday. Included in the photo are **Lon, Tony Spizzirri, Bob, Sam LeDeaux, Craig Roscoe and Ricky Rivero '00**. Bob, Lon and Ricky still find time to get out golfing every few weeks.

► Thanks to everyone who reads and writes into our column, and thanks in advance to those who share next time. These updates are best when we hear from everyone, so let’s keep in touch!

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1999

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2000

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2001

Slavka Kabakchieva shares, “I have been living in Eugene, OR, since 2013, where I started a family and now have two daughters (5 and 7). I’ve been a professor in the advertising track of the School of Journalism and Communications at the University of Oregon since 2024. I keep in touch with quite a few of the Knox Alumni all over the world and remember our college days warmly.”

► **Matt Lauterbach** writes, “This is my first ever update for the *Knox Magazine*. It’s been a wonderful 25 years. I live in the quiet, green Chicago neighborhood of North Park with my wife, Tanya, and two wonderful goober children, Jasper (9) and Roscoe (6). I’ve followed my passions, which has led me through a few career pivots, from teaching high school to editing documentary films and now my current vocation of creating accessible media for audiences with sensory disabilities. It’s been a while since I’ve had the freedom to indulge in hobbies, but every year I try to take the family on one or two road trips. Highlights have included Glacier National Park, Niagara Falls, and Chattanooga. But nothing beats the honeymoon that my wife and I took to Newfoundland. We’ve returned twice, and soon it will be time for the kids to join us and discover why we love it so much!”

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2002

Erika Kreutzberg Gish and her husband, Brian, recently moved to Phoenix to start their pre-retirement life. Erika transitioned to the Tempe office of the St. Louis-based financial firm she's been with for almost four years, and Brian got his survey license and is working for one of the largest surveying companies in Arizona. All three of the Gish kids are adults now: the oldest is traveling the country checking off national parks, one twin is in her last semester of nursing school and just bought her first home with her long-term boyfriend, and the other twin is a bio/pre-med major playing college soccer with plans for medical school. The whole family is heading to Vegas this summer to celebrate the twins turning 21. Erika would love to connect with any alums in the Phoenix area.

► **Rachel Abarbanell** writes: "I am living in Los Angeles with my husband, son and two cats. I've been working in the entertainment industry as a producer and development & production executive for the last 23 years and currently run the production company, Perfectman Pictures, for TV showrunner/writer/director Alexi Hawley, who created the ABC drama series *The Rookie* and the Netflix series *The Recruit*. I just finished working as a supervising producer on our upcoming pilot, a spinoff series called *The Rookie North* and will be a supervising producer on the upcoming season 9 of *The Rookie*, along with juggling our addition-

al slate of TV and film projects under an overall deal at Lionsgate Television. I love telling stories for a living and getting to make film and TV is an unreal and thrilling experience, even as the business as a whole continues to present more challenges."

► **Eric Miller** finished his executive MBA at the University of Tampa while staying busy coaching Little League and youth soccer with sons Ethan (7) and Aiden (5). Eric and Christelle recently purchased a new home in Lakewood Ranch, FL, and his company, ConstructTRUE, continues to grow.

► **Eileen G'Sell's** first book of non-fiction, *Lipstick*, was published by Bloomsbury Academic in February 2026 as part of the Object Lessons series. The book mines the tensions between femininity and feminism and explores how self-adornment can knock gender norms off balance. It has been endorsed by feminist radical Sophie Lewis, political journalist Zahra Hankir, the New Books Network, and Bookpage. Eileen has also edited a dossier on David Lynch's *Mulholland Drive* that will be published in Film Quarterly in late 2026 for the film's 25th anniversary.

CLASS CORRESPONDENT:
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2003

► **Gemma Truman Billings:** "I currently work in change management at Bank of America, and last year did something I never thought would happen: I got an MBA from U Illinois Chicago with my

IRENE HIGAREDA PONCE '00 A TRADITIONAL NON-TRADITIONAL KNOX STUDENT

A Galesburg native, granddaughter of Mexican immigrants, and member of the Knox Class of 2000, Irene Higareda Ponce has deep roots in Galesburg and with Knox College. She was a non-traditional student when she enrolled at Knox in the 1990s, but her journey as a sociology major and anthropology minor at Knox reflects ongoing support for traditions and causes— family, heritage, or community— close to her heart.



SUBMITTED

What made Knox College the right choice for you?

When I graduated from high school in 1966, I was offered a scholarship to attend Knox College. I was intimidated because, in the 1960s, Knox had a reputation of having rich, smart kids from the Chicago suburbs. So I found a job at a bank and worked, got married three years later, and had four children. I went back to retail work, then was hired by Knox in 1984 at Seymour Library. While working, I spoke with the Director of Seymour Library Jeff Douglas about earning a certificate or associate's degree in library studies through Illinois Central College. He advised me to get an associate's degree. I didn't have a car that I trusted to drive back and forth, so I decided to take a couple of classes at Knox and transfer them as my electives. In 1991, I began taking several courses at Knox, gained confidence, and decided to pursue a bachelor's degree.

Who were your mentors or major influences during your time at Knox?

Jeff Douglas encouraged me to continue my education when I inquired about the possibility. My advisors, Professor of Chemistry Tom Clayton and Szold Distinguished Service Professor Emerita of Anthropology Nancy Eberhardt, were both great motivators.

You are a member of the Hispanic Latino Resource Group. How has your heritage played a role in your life?

I joined the Hispanic Latino Resource Group in 1999, shortly after it was formed. The group's strong mission is education. Since 2002, we have awarded \$62,760 in scholarships, including \$52,900 to graduating Hispanic/Latino high school students and \$7,165 to students to attend Knox College 4 Kids.

Read the full interview at www.knox.edu/irene-ponce



Knox Ultimate Frisbee Team with Knox Alumni at the Natalie Veneziano Winter Whiteout Tournament in February 2026.

company's tuition reimbursement program. Husband **Derrick Billings** '00 and I bought our first house in River Grove, IL, last winter. In January, I celebrated seven years of membership in the 501st Legion, the world's largest Star Wars cos-tuming club. We march in parades, support charity events in our communities and make frequent visits to children in hospitals."

Jaci Wells: "Hi from Alabama! My husband and I are still faculty at the University of Alabama-Birmingham. Our daughter, Vivi, is finishing up first grade. Our dog, Travis, just celebrated his 13th birthday."



► **Steve Bachta:** "I am still working as a Pediatrician at Endeavor Health in the northern suburbs of Chicago specializing in the care of hospitalized children. My girls also keep me very busy at home. We have been competing together in the sport of "Ninja Warrior" in tournaments across the country. They encouraged me to apply for the *American Ninja Warrior* TV show and I have been lucky enough to compete on four seasons. Last season (Season 17) I was finally able to hit my first buzzer and I will compete again this summer 2026 on Season 18. Hope everyone is well at Knox and treating every day like Flunk Day."



CLASS CORRESPONDENT:
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2004

Julia "Allison" Beale Cascio says that in February, the Knox ultimate frisbee team hosted the annual Natalie Veneziano Winter Whiteout tournament in the fieldhouse. "I joined alumni spanning from 1996 graduates to 2025 graduates in forming the alumni team. It's so fun to meet new generations of Knox alumni and trade stories and make friends. I didn't play much this year...but it was still a blast that I'll look forward to next year."

► **Kelly Lave** says: "In June 2025, I left Maryville University as an assistant professor to become an associate professor at St. Charles Community College (both in the St. Louis area). At my new school, I teach introductory physics and astronomy."

► **Mary O'Malley** says that she's still in Chicago, "still helping teenagers navigate college admissions without turning themselves into corporate brands." About a year ago, she started writing "Admitted-ish," a Substack for people trying to "survive modern admissions culture with their humanity intact." She says: "Apparently a lot of people were waiting for someone to say, 'Everyone please calm down.' I own Union Hall Admissions Advising, which just turned five years old—something I'm incredibly proud of. Building a values-driven practice in the middle of all the unnecessary noise has been equal parts exhausting, meaningful, and occasionally hilarious. And this spring, after 25 years, I got to spend Flunk Day with **Jo Bradley** and **Julie Larsen**, which felt like one of those strange gifts adulthood occasionally hands back to you if you're lucky."

► **Matt Nagel** says he's still in St. Louis, "grinding away at the law firm and coaching soccer." On a more exciting front, he says, "I welcomed Piper Danger Nagel onto the team right after Thanksgiving. She's growing like a weed."

► **Erin Spier** says she's still on the southern Oregon Coast. "I've been in private practice as a therapist since 2014 and recently presented at the EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing)

International Associations conference on the significance of Bilateral Movement and Art Making and its implications for trauma treatment." When she's not working, Erin is chasing around her farm animals and driving her boys to swim meets. ("Or trying to beat my previous years Goodreads challenge.") Earlier this year, she also helped **Krista Nieraeth** plant her vegetable garden!

► **Meghan Rockwood Roby** left her position as director of music at St. Anne's Catholic Church three years ago and opened a music instruction studio, Forte Fine Arts, LLC, in downtown Le Sueur, Minnesota. **Joe Roby** '06 works as the city administrator of Le Sueur. They have four kids.

► Your Class Co-Correspondent, **Maggie Claudy**, says she's been substitute teaching for the past several months, in the school district where her kids go to school. "After five years away from teaching, this experience made me realize that I miss teaching a lot, so I have been taking steps to be able to teach in Iowa. The state recently granted me my Master Educator License, as well as accepted my middle school math endorsement from my original Illinois license. I'm currently enrolled in classes through the University of Northern Iowa distance learning program to complete the credits necessary for my reading endorsement. Ultimately I would love to be in an interventionist role because teaching small groups has always been my jam!"

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2005

Marisa Sengstock Banaszak writes, "I have re-enrolled in school! While working full time at University of Chicago Medicine, I am in my first week of beginning my BSN-RN journey through Chamberlain University. I am extremely excited to advance in both my education and my professional goals, allowing me

to help patients on a more personal, consistent level."

► **Ali Birnbach** and her husband, David, welcomed a baby girl, Skye Vivian, in July 2025. Ali told us, "Skye spends a lot of time giggling with her older brother, Graham, who is 4 years old and starts TK in the fall. We still live in the San Francisco Bay Area and love it. Our family recently took a trip out to Cape Girardeau, MO, for a family wedding and then headed south, stopping at Graceland (what a sight, and those suits!) before winding our way to charming Hot Springs National Park in Arkansas. If you visit, don't skip the cold spring mineral water *chef's kiss*. Sending you all a warm California hello."

► **Sarah Wallen Connelly** passed away on April 17, 2026. Sarah was married to **David Connelly** '07. We send condolences to David and all of Sarah's family and friends.

► **Ashley Steinsdoerfer Gottlieb** will begin a fully funded MFA program in Visual Arts at Colorado State University this fall. Ashley discovered her passion for creating art after moving to Reno, NV, in 2018, and she's thrilled to continue her education in art in this way. Thus, after eight years in Reno, she and her husband, Jeff, are excited to relocate to Fort Collins, CO, and discover all the adventures that the Rocky Mountains have to offer.

► **Rebecca Halonen** will attend Mitchell Hamline School of Law on a partial scholarship in the fall of 2026, in their blended, part-time program. Rebecca is residential faculty at Phoenix Community College where she teaches English and creative writing, and she hopes to use her JD to defend academic freedom, as well as advocate for student and faculty rights.

► **Nina Gutierrez Martin** and **Ben Martin** '03 recently bought a new house and moved across town (Monroe, WI). They had lots of fun unpacking, upgrading furniture, and getting settled in. Ben is in year 13 with Jack Link's and is the production manager/assistant plant manager. Nina also told us, "I decided two years of subbing

was so thrilling I needed more and became an educational assistant at one of our elementary schools. Our oldest child has his driver's permit and is keeping me on the edge of my seat daily, while our youngest is wrapping up his last year of elementary school and says he's ready for middle school. They keep us busy with sports year-round, but we know one day we'll miss it. We return to Knox every February for the indoor frisbee tournament and love seeing old friends and visiting campus. Hoping to see a few more of you next year!"

► **Tara Converse Rollins** told us she and husband **Chris Rollins** '04 are still living in Madison, WI. Tara said, "It's hard to believe we have been here (back here for me as I grew up here) for 16 years. I am still working as a psychotherapist at a private practice and have also been doing ADHD evaluations for about six months to add to my skills. We celebrated our son's 3rd birthday in April and can't wait for fun times as the weather gets nicer here in the Midwest. Hope all of our classmates are doing well!"

► **Zach Rothschild** writes, "In 2023 my daughter Rose (age 10) became a big sister to twins (Audrey and Ivy), making us a party of five. I've been a professor of psychology at Bowdoin College for the last 10 years, and this year was my first as department chair."

CLASS CORRESPONDENT:
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2006

Lei Zhang invites us to craft with her, "This has been an exciting year for us! My husband Jason and I have started a new business called ColorVibes Craft Studio in Chicago's Wicker Park/Bucktown neighborhood. ColorVibes is a vibrant, welcoming DIY workshop space where guests can express their creativity through guided craft experiences. We offer a variety of beginner-friendly craft projects suitable for all ages! We are new to business ownership, and it definite-

ly has been a learning experience for us since our grand opening last September."

► **Nar Ramkissoon** provides an exciting career update, "I recently joined a digital health and AI company focused on heart health, and it's been very exciting so far! I was at the American Medical Association for nearly 10 years, working on strategy and policy, so it's a bit of a change, but still in the same field. I also got to go to Hawaii in between for some snorkeling and surf lessons. Still living in Chicago with wife Colleen and goldendoodle Twyla, enjoying big city life!"

► **Kathryn Goldthwaite Longo** writes, "To celebrate my mid-life crisis, I dyed my hair blue, which I have ALWAYS wanted to do."



► **Sienna Watson Beard** and **Jacob Beard** '04 are celebrating! "Our eldest son graduated high school in May, and he is headed to college in the fall! Jacob has enjoyed having three sons. We also fostered kids for 11 years and have enjoyed growing our family. We also recently celebrated our 20th wedding anniversary by traveling to the U.S. Virgin Islands. I got together with **Laura Hapeman** '07 and **Kourtney Cone Grimm** '07, and it was amazing! I also see **Sarah George** regularly. I love these women, and I am so grateful that we are still close after so many years."



► **Leanne Lilly** writes with an exciting career update, "Last August, I finally stepped out of academia after graduate school, a brief four-year stint in veterinary general practice, and then academia again since 2016. I plunged headfirst into a major life change, taking a senior director of behavior role inside the ASPCA in NYC in September 2025. In classic veterinary fashion, I have already acquired a dog from work, making it at least one from every job except my internship at Penn. I continue to serve as an associate editor for the *Journal of Veterinary Behavior* and as a member of the behavior education committee for the Midwest Veterinary Conference. This winter, I was fortunate to be invited to VetVacation CE in Puerto Rico, and **Jenni Davids** tagged along."

► **Julio Trujillo** is celebrating a personal milestone: "I got married to Orlando Peña in March of 2025 and had a family and friends celebration in August 2025. It was great to see a few wonderful messages and cards from Knox friends, and classmate **Adam Krause** made it to our August celebration. Great to catch up with Adam and have him meet Orlando."

► **Erica Skog Jensen** writes, "In March, we visited the Kennedy Space Center and saw the Artemis II rocket just before its launch. Shortly thereafter, I started a new position with the University of Wisconsin-Madison. We are gearing up for a big road trip out west to Yellowstone this summer to use the free national parks pass my fourth grader received. Looking forward to seeing folks at Homecoming this year!"



► **Aunda Wang Paul** writes, "Hello Class of '06! I'm long overdue for an update on the Paul family. We've had a lot to celebrate this year. **Jacob Paul** '17 and **Melanie Lash** got hitched! Never saw that com-

ing. The Pauls just got back from celebrating the retirement of Coach **Andy Gibbons**. **Chris Paul** '07 and **Sam Eggert Paul** '10 are headed to Disney for the first time with their littles. **Bridgette** and **Tyler Paul** '19 have just celebrated their daughter's first birthday. **Brian Paul** '13 and my son both had knee surgeries this year, and his wife, **Colleen**, has started a book club with all the Paul wives. I'm not really into book club, but I'm there in spirit. **Andrew Paul** '14 and **Jamie Blue** '16 are moving to Champaign, IL, and will settle closer to family, which we are so stoked about! **Dustin Paul** '04 and I are busy raising our three kids, and our oldest will be college hunting in two years. Possibly, Knox?!, fingers crossed. I'm so excited about life and the family I'm surrounded by. I'm so grateful for Knox and for the chance to celebrate my 20-year reunion. Love you all, and let's stay in touch."

► **Luella Williams Provenza** writes, "Since our last update, we spent time traveling, visiting family and friends in Colorado and Tennessee. We had a lot of fun hiking and experiencing fall weather since it doesn't exist in Louisiana. We're looking forward to stirring up trouble this summer. We recreate Flunk Day randomly throughout the summer, skipping work and camp to have sugar-filled adventures!"



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2007

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2008

Ben Fitzpatrick celebrated turning 40 with Knox friends! He watched the Bears beat the Packers in the playoffs at Soldier Field. He is heading to Italy this summer for **Chelsea DeJonge Fitzpatrick** '10 and his 10-year anniversary. All is well!

► **Brad and William Becque** are making their marks in the Carbondale community. William currently serves as marketing associate for the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute, a nonpartisan nonprofit at SIU dedicated to promoting better politics and smarter government and preparing students for public service careers. He will also be stepping into the role of vice president of the Carbondale Rotary Breakfast Club beginning in July. Following William's term, Bradley is slated to serve as president-elect of the club. In his professional life, Bradley works as a school support specialist at Aspire Academy, an alternative school serving students with behavioral challenges. He is also a Crisis Prevention Institute-certified Instructor, providing training to education professionals throughout Southern Illinois.

► **Andy Fitz** lost both of his parents this year. He is having a rough year.

► After seven years of production, **Brittany Alsot**'s first feature documentary will have its film festival premiere! *Finding Your Laughter* is the story of co-director Arlieta Hall using improv to communicate with her father who is losing himself to Alzheimer's.

► **Erica Stringfellow Tully** is still teaching on the West Side of Chicago,

still living in Chicago with her two delightful children, and seeing many Knox people often (specifically, **Donald Rogers** '09, **Caroline Allen**, **Miriam Gillan**).

► **Miriam Gillan** boomeranged back to Publicis and paid search in April. She enjoyed many delicious meals with **Andrew Caplan** '06 and **Erica Stringfellow Tully**. She has appreciated **Caroline Allen** and **Ian Silander**'s '06 hospitality for brunches. She and **Rebecca Gillan** '93 flunked together before she flew home to Chicago.

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MIRIAM GILLAN
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2009

Drew '08 and **Samantha Pelkey-Flock** continue to survive another day of this late stage capitalistic hellscape with our super adorable baby who probably won't attend Knox if the economy continues this way.

► **Henry Harriman** is in the MFA program for writers at Warren Wilson and has poems published in recent issues of *The Swannanoa Review* and *The Laurel Review*.

► **Maren Reisch Axe** and husband David welcomed their second son, Wyatt, in July 2025, making Declan a big brother. She's never had to use the phrase "gentle hands" so much. The chaos is equal parts terrifying and exhilarating. She still texts with her Knox besties **Jen Hoben**

Quick, Jaclyn Anderson Wangerin, and **Kim Anderson Kasper** almost every day.

► **Sam Jarvis** finished another semester of teaching his one class at University of Iowa and took down the majority of a tree in his backyard before **Kate Heitkamp Jarvis** '12 got a quote to finish the rest of the work after having to assist with guiding branches. Sam is still doing public health things in Iowa, and Kate continues to practice psychiatry and family med. Their daughter Olivia turns 3 this year and will begin her training in martial arts, like her father.

► **Sam Jarvis**, **Kevin Wickman**, **Paul Albertine** '08, **Matt Allis** '08, **Matt Schmalz** '08, **Ben Fitzpatrick** '08, **Mike Callahan**, **Sean Kraus**, and **Alex Nimmer** hung out in Vegas. Everyone survived.

► **Mike Callahan** is living his life a quarter mile at a time.

► **Jake Diller-Schatz** and **John Curtin** still refer to each other as pookie, and it is still adorable. They've been saying it before Gen Z though, so it's very genuine.

► **John Curtin** is busy being a parent. He once told me that you're not a "real" parent until you have two kids.

CLASS CORRESPONDENT:
SAM JARVIS
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2010

Margaret Wehr is still living in beautiful Portland, OR, where she is active in the music community as a session musician for live gigs and studio recordings and as a member of the alt-folk band Lo Pony. In her spare time, she enjoys tackling DIY home improvement projects and spending time outdoors. Margaret is looking forward to performing at Red Rocks Amphitheater for the first time this summer with Chris Pureka as part of a special event commemorating the late queer poet Andrea Gibson. The evening of music, poetry, and film will include the premiere of a new documentary about Andrea's final

poetry performance, accompanied live by the Colorado Symphony in collaboration with Sara Bareilles and other special guests. Margaret is grateful to the friends at Knox who encouraged her as a young songwriter and helped her reach this career milestone.

► **Lauren Assaf-Holmes** recently bought her first house, set new weightlifting personal records, and raised two playful Shiba Inu puppies. She still lives in Orange County, CA, and recently left her Big Law job after nearly 10 years to become assistant general counsel, securities, at Chipotle Mexican Grill.

► **Lily Wirth** married the coolest person ever in September 2024, and the couple adopted a puppy named Zagreus. Lily is in private practice as a massage therapist in Chicago (circadiamassage.com) and performs with various choral ensembles in the area. She notes that her college-aged self could not have predicted that her choral musicianship would one day lead to performing in a holiday burlesque show called *The Naughty Little Madrigal* at Chicago's Newport Theater. If you live nearby and don't have delicate sensibilities, come to her show in December at the Newport Theater!

► **Gloria Feliciano Feltman** continues to live in Chicago with her family and has settled into the West Ridge neighborhood. She is approaching four years of work at Loyola University Chicago's Wellness Center while also running a small private therapy practice focused on supporting the queer community. Her daughter, Dahlia, a future member of the Class of 2042, is finishing kindergarten. Glo's husband, Tim Feltman, is a college counselor who has visited Knox more often in recent years than Glo has while bringing admitted high school students to campus. The family is looking forward to trips to the Oregon coast and the Wisconsin Dells this summer with **Tasha Coryell** and her family.

► **Kara Krewer** and her husband, Andrew, continue to live in Athens, GA, with their pets. Kara recently joined the staff of the University of



Left to Right: Kevin Corley '08, Zach LoMonaco '08, Tim Beishir '08, Andy Gibbons, Joe Garbin '10, Jacob Kuhnline '07, Logan Schroeder '07, Jarrett Corrow '08, Nate Thomas '05.

CLASS NOTES

Georgia Press as assistant editor of the New Georgia Encyclopedia, the country's oldest digital state encyclopedia. She welcomes visits from Knox alumni who find themselves in Athens.

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2011

Happy 15 years since graduation, Class of 2011! We did it! Can't wait to see many of you in Galesburg for Reunion, where I hope to hear your updates in person over a cup of coffee at Innkeepers or a "stuffed breadstick" from Alfano's. Let me know where to find you!

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2012

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2013

CLASS CORRESPONDENT: WILLIAM BUDDING

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2014

The Class of 2014 is busy living in the moment this round. Submissions can always be made via our Facebook group or by contacting Esther/Natalia.

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NATALIA BINKOWSKI KAPLAN

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2015

Jason Deschamps moved to the South Pacific (New Caledonia) and is enjoying life on an island!

► **Becky Duffyhill** is in her second year as a full-time freelance photographer, which has been AMAZING. Her favorite things to photograph are creative portraits and women's sports. She's had the opportunity to document every inaugural professional women's game that has been in Denver (PWHL, WER, NWSL, and even WNBA in Chicago)! She's also a birder and loves using the Merlin.ID app.



► **Marisol Gonzalez Castillo** finally made it as a partner at MacGillis Law Group after six years as a lawyer. She has been working tirelessly with her colleagues and community to help as many families as possible with personal injury! She loves helping the Hispanic community, stating it's her goal to continue to give back.

► **Abby Kravis** is happily living in Norfolk, VA, on a semi-urban homestead with two roommates, one dog, two cats, six ducks, countless bees, and a plethora of edible plants. While working as a physical therapist, she fills her free time with dancing, cooking, community-building, and daydreaming about starting new hobbies such as woodworking and macrame.

► **Kathleen "Kata" Magill** relocated to Dayton, OH, after nearly eight years in Ecuador where she was teaching IB English. In 2013, while studying abroad in Buenos Aires, she met the love of her life. The two married in December 2024. Today, she and her wife have two dogs named Jack and Goku and hope to open an Ecuadorian restaurant before too long. Until then, she is still teaching: English for Speakers of other Languages in a small K-12 school.

► **Brittany Meeker** and fiancé Rev. Joe Lundy are planning their October 2027 wedding. They currently live in Champaign with their two cats, Clementine and Archie.

► **Maddie Mondeaux** finally graduated from Emerson College with an MFA in creative writing (fiction)! She also was promoted to manager, administration at her day job, Cradles to Crayons Boston.

► **Claire T. Neri** is (almost) pain-free following a hysterectomy that removed her oversized uterus and multiple large tumors, including one that filled her entire pelvis, pushing on her sacrum. Her boyfriend, James Geske, and their cats, Nimbus (13), and Mac (5), were wonderful nurses. Since then, she's gotten back into working out and sports.

► **Emily Passarelli** and her husband, Aarudra, are excited to welcome a baby girl in August 2026!

► **David Petersen** and **Samantha Kopelman** packed up to move from Minneapolis to Albuquerque. Knoxville in the area are very welcome to hit them up!



► **Ashlee Pitts** celebrated 10 years in Mississippi! She started a new role as a managing director, corps member and alumni programming with Teach for America: Greater Delta.

► **Cody Sehl** became a manager and is having so much fun with that! He is considering moving to a bigger city like NYC, Chicago, or SF. He's also begun to invest time in his backup career if AI takes his job: coach/therapist.

► **Callie Smith** is happy to share that she is now the proud pet-parent of a charming and sweet Havanese puppy named Rory.

CLASS CORRESPONDENTS:

ABBY KRAVIS CLAIRE T. NERI

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2016

Son Ngo is currently involved in leadership within Vietnam national drug-free powerlifting federation, contributing to competition planning and athlete development in his capacity as general secretary and national referee. Alongside this, he works as a debt settlement negotiator, helping clients navigate and resolve complex financial situations. Balancing both roles has been both demanding and rewarding.

► **Ned Babbott** has been working as a user experience engineer, managing technical assets and improving documentation for the Cisco Crisis Response Team. In this team, he prepares alongside first responders and state agency staff to respond to disasters and mass communication outages. When time affords, he is experimenting with drone technology for Search And Rescue and terrain mapping.

CLASS CORRESPONDENT: ELLEN LIPO

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2017

Jess Chrzan-Malnar and her husband celebrated their three-year wedding anniversary and are expecting a baby in October 2026!

► **Kieran Whittenburg** joined TrueRoll as a software engineer in March 2026.

► **Liz Clay Sienkiewicz** and her husband **Nick Sienkiewicz** '15 are expecting another baby girl at the end of September! Their daughter Scarlett is excited to be a big sister, and they've been hard at work getting the house ready for another little one. Liz spent the summer doing some technical writing work for HP and planting new vegetables and berry bushes in her garden.

► **Moriah Chermak Withers** will be graduating from Life University with a Doctorate of Chiropractic in

CLASS NOTES

June and beginning her associate-ship at Koru Chiropractic in Louisville, CO. She specializes in upper cervical care through NUCCA and the Pierce Results System and is thrilled to be serving her community through skilled, personalized care.

► **Elisabeth Zarnoti** reports that she and husband **Sean Ramsey '18** have had a very difficult year! She shares that “between impossible workplaces, layoffs, the unexpected death of their cat, and aging parent struggles, we have been ‘just okay.’ However, the shining light we have is looking forward to the arrival of our little girl, set to arrive sometime in June.” Elisabeth is excited to share a picture in the next issue!

► **Emma Thornton-Kolbe** is starting a new job as a lecturer at the University of Michigan, where she will teach high-enrollment introductory biology courses the sizes of which are baffling to her Knoxian sensibilities.

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2018

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2019

Reshma Rajan took a cool trip to Canon Beach, OR, with **Shresha Karmacharya '18** and **Ojashwi Sapkota**. They enjoyed the delicious culinary scene of the Pacific Northwest and the stunning environment. It looks like a fun reunion of Knox friends!



► **Shannon Brooks** will henceforth be known as Shannon Maglaya—she got married in August 2025, and even though her husband is not a Knox alumnus, he is now also part of the Knox family! Congratulations :)

► **Shannon Mindlin** shares: “Since Knox, I’ve gotten married and have been thriving with my acting career in the indie scene. I have two feature films in post-production, have worked on multiple short films, and I’ve started journeying into voice acting. I also am the main voice for a world building podcast that centers on the universe of one of my upcoming feature films. The podcast is to help create the parts of the world and history that were not able to add to the film. It is called *The Bleakwood Chronicles* and is being released on Spotify.” What an exciting career! I’ll keep my eyes and ears peeled for more of Shannon’s work.

Dear fellow classmates, thank you for being so open to sharing your life news and contributing beautiful pictures on top of it—it makes your experience come alive for all of us. I have so many memories of interacting with many of you in the hallways, classes, dorms, around campus, and at random Chicago trips. It all inspires me to stay in better touch with my Knox friends, and aside from looking back to many fond memories, I also look forward to new ones :)

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2020

CLASS CORRESPONDENT:
ALLEN IRVINE
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2021

Members of the Class of 2021 have been busy pursuing exciting professional and personal milestones across the country and beyond.

► **Libby Winchester** is based in Charlotte, working remotely

for Stellic, a higher education technology company focused on degree planning, while continuing color guard performances on the weekends. She was also part of Etude Winter Guard during the 2026 season, where the team earned a bronze medal at the WGI World Championships with the highest score in Etude history, and Libby received the team’s “Most Improved” award.



► Meanwhile, **Alyx Farris** is teaching art for Chicago Public Schools in Chicago and is recently married to **Martin Garcia '22**.



► **Ryan Earles** is working in software development for Wells Fargo in Missouri and recently traveled through Japan, visiting Tokyo, Osaka, and Kyoto with two fellow Knox alumni.

► In Minnesota, **Tina Jeon** is pursuing a Ph.D. in learning technologies through the College of Education and Human Development at the University of Minnesota, presenting at conferences and preparing for preliminary exams. She also continues on and off-campus

involvement, including teaching at a local Korean language and culture school.



We wish you well, Class of 2021!

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2022

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2023

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2024

Amira Siddique (she/her): Amira is studying occupational therapy at Washington University in St. Louis. In the meantime, she played Cowboy Bob in *Footloose* for the Med School Musical, sings in a paid choir, and scoops ice cream at a cute shop called Clementine’s.

► **Corgan Ball** (they/them): Corgan moved to Portland, OR, in January with their partner and is currently teaching voice lessons at local music schools. They sing in a community choir that focuses on raising voices against white supremacy culture and oppressions of any kind, with musical works only by living composers. With their free time, Corgan has joined the Portland DSA chapter, is learning how to play D&D, and is enjoying the beauty of the PNW.



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CORGAN BALL**

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2025

If you are interested in serving as the Class Correspondent, please contact Enzo Nagao at *enagao@knox.edu* or at 309-341-7172.

2026

If you are interested in serving as the Class Correspondent, please contact Enzo Nagao at *enagao@knox.edu* or at 309-341-7172.

In Memoriam



PETER BAILEY 74.P05 P08

**MARGO LEE SHIVELY
INSTRUCTOR OF THEATRE &
DIRECTOR OF THE COSTUME STUDIO**

Knox College is sad to announce the passing of Margo Lee Shively, who served as instructor of theatre and director of the Costume Studio at Knox College for 42 years, retiring in 2019. She was born August 11, 1946, in Galesburg, the daughter of Earl John and Margaret Lee Anderson Shay. She married Bruce Allen Shively in 1967, and he preceded her in death in 2016.

Margo attended the Art Institute of Chicago, where she studied fashion design. She was selected by renowned American designer Oleg Cassini, known for fashion and film, as an intern, and then spent nearly a decade designing clothing for the fashion industry before coming to Knox College.

Initially hired as a seamstress on a production for which then Professor of Theatre Ivan Davidson was designing costumes, she rapidly proved so talented a designer and so skilled a technician that Davidson happily retreated

upstairs, and she took over the show. As the lead designer and costume shop supervisor for over 30 years, Margo designed costumes for many mainstage theatre productions across every period and style imaginable, including nearly all Repertory Theatre Terms until her retirement. Due to her efforts, the curated costume collection numbers over 17,000 pieces, including a vintage collection often used for teaching design and technical artistry. In addition to her work in academia, Margo also designed for the Chicago City Ballet, Black Hills Playhouse (SD), Bonesteel Films, Prairie Players, and Moonohope Theatre Productions. She was involved with Vitalist Theatre (Chicago) as a designer, consultant, and intern mentor since its inception in 1997, and consulted with designers from the Guthrie Theatre in Utah, American Players Theatre, and Santa Fe Opera.