On the cover: One of four real photo postcards or gelatin silver prints from the 1910s-1920s from the collection of Natalie M. Curley displayed in Shain Library this fall as part of the student-curated Labors of Love exhibition. To learn more about these images of unknown, working class, everyday Americans—including women, children, immigrants, and Black and Indigenous people—see the story on page 22. For full caption information and to see the other three covers, visit ccmagazine.conncoll.edu.

On this page: Shain Library at night. Photo by Sean D. Elliot
Features

Lee Eisenberg Does It Again  The Hollywood writer-producer had his best year yet. He has no intention of taking a break.

Americana Anonymous  A student-curated exhibition puts the focus on the working poor at the turn of the 20th century.

Mind the (Income) Gap  Income inequality is at its greatest since the Gilded Age. Professor Mark Stelzner explains why.

Save Something Small  Katharine Parsons ’74 tells the story of the people who save beloved pets from wildfire burn zones.

Mr. Stevens Goes to Hollywood  Tim Stevens ’03 arrives fashionably late to the 29th Critics’ Choice Awards.

Departments

Notebook  Solar bloom, In the Round, National Medal of Science, In the Box, Stark Center opens, Connecticut Blood, Hendricks at the Frick, Fast Car, Ink & Tracks

Class Notes  45

Full Stop  A Close Call  64
WINTER 2024 | From the Interim President

When you think you know something well, it’s a sure sign that you need to know more. Being a trustee at Conn was a great experience. As interim president, I’ve found the past six months to have been a wonderful time to learn more, work smarter and work with others to find the right path forward. While I respect history, a president and his/her team must focus on today and tomorrow. I’d like to share some of the most poignant experiences and observations I’ve had that give me confidence about the future of Connecticut College.

The heart and soul of Conn are the incredibly powerful teaching and learning that go on every day. Our students experience a faculty deep in skills and knowledge who want to teach and press students to learn. And our students accept the challenge with gusto. They are active and passionate about their own development in and out of the classroom. I’ve yet to meet a student who belongs to only one extracurricular activity. Usually, there are two, three or four clubs and activities on their agenda.

Along with faculty are a first-rate staff who support and enhance this passion for teaching and learning. Athletic coaches, counselors, advisers and hard-working staff in Facilities and Dining Services and departments across campus—all are invested in our efforts. Sure, there are noise and complaints about many things, and we’re working on remedying many of those issues. Keep in mind that campus noise, good and bad, is about aspirations. We could do better on many things and we know it. That’s the nature of pursuing excellence.

Conn’s critical moment is now. Change is in the air and challenging every campus in America. I’ve come to appreciate the effort of our senior leadership team to identify those things we can and will fix, while also planting the seeds for future success. Improving facilities, addressing salaries, improving employee and student retention, stabilizing enrollment, delivering the curriculum and thinking about new revenue sources are examples. And that’s just my short list.

Fifty-plus years in higher education have hardened me to the idea that talent, flexibility and efficiency are key elements to survive and do well. Yes, it’s nice to have a lot more money and financial stability. However, if you don’t have talent, flexibility and efficiency, you can throw a lot of money at a project and still fail. Conn has these successful traits and we are working hard to develop them even more to face the many challenges before us. It’s what drives my optimism for Conn. A new president will harness the energy of the campus and our alumni, donors and supporters to move the enterprise forward. I have no doubts. For me, learning more about what we do continues to be so rewarding.

Yours,
Les Wong, Ph.D.
While Conn is known for its extensive Arboretum plant collections and exquisite gardens, there’s a new flower in Camel land—a 16-foot solar SmartFlower.

Representing perhaps the most sophisticated sustainability project on campus, the high-tech, sculptural solar contraption is designed like a flower, with petals composed of solar panels. The SmartFlower’s efficiency stems from its functionality that mimics a real flower: The petals fold up at night, unfurl at daybreak and then rotate and track the sun throughout the day, allowing it to absorb more energy than standard, fixed solar panels.

Conn’s SmartFlower, connected to the Woodworth House building, is expected to produce 5,000 kWh each year, or about 40% of the electricity needs of the building.

The project was initiated by Avatar Simpson ’20 when he was a student at Conn. Simpson, an environmental studies major, secured $35,000 for the SmartFlower from the Sustainable Projects Fund, which is managed by the Student Government Association. After graduating from Conn, Simpson earned a Master of Science degree from Columbia University and is now a senior sustainability consultant at Agendi.

The SmartFlower is part of Conn’s extensive sustainability efforts, which include a goal of carbon neutrality by 2030. The College is also in the planning phase for a large ground-mount solar array for the south end of campus that should produce electricity equivalent to about 7% of campus usage.
Top Fulbright Producer

Conn has once again been named a top producer of Fulbright students, according to the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Currently, Conn’s 2023 Fulbright winners are conducting research and teaching in the Czech Republic, North Macedonia, the United Kingdom and Paraguay.

CHAPEL ART

Uruguay-based artist Virginia Reyes Conde P’26 shared this sketch of Harkness Chapel, drawn in a loose style with alcohol markers, on her Instagram page, @por_mil_artes. “Although I have never been to Connecticut College, I receive many photos from my daughter,” she says. “Sketching and painting the place she has chosen to live and study makes me feel a little closer to her and I very much enjoy it. I hope to visit her this year and would love to sketch on site.”

CAMPUS CLUBS WE WANT TO JOIN

- Equity in STEM
- Rethinking Economics
- Sports Analytics
- Blackness in Superhero On-Screen Media
- Student Refugee Alliance

SACRED LAND

During the fall semester, Associate Professor of Anthropology and College Archaeologist Anthony Graesch led a non-invasive geophysical study to scan Conn’s waterfront for Indigenous sites. In collaboration with the Connecticut State Preservation Office and TerraSearch Geophysical, the College will use the results to map out sacred areas and protect them from future construction.

GREEN GROWS THE EELGRASS

Conn is at the forefront of eelgrass restoration innovation, thanks to a recent grant and a partnership with local environmental nonprofit Save the Sound. In October, Biology Professor Maria Rosa organized a group of students and volunteers to glue eelgrass seeds onto hundreds of live clams, which were then placed in the artificial reef at the College’s Kohn Waterfront. Eelgrass is vital to restoring the Thames River ecosystem, and securing the seeds to live clams provides a study surface for the plant to grow underwater.

MOBROC

Fernando Rufino ’25 of Reapers performs at the Musicians Organized for Band Rights On Campus (MOBROC) Arbofest Saturday, Nov. 4. The band was one of the openers for ...
WHAT’S ON THE MENU?

The Indigenous Heritage Month Takeover at Harris menu featured:

- Salmon with crushed berries
- Roast chicken seasoned with juniper and sumac
- Roasted maple glazed winter squash with toasted pepitas
- Hominy stew with turkey
- Wild rice with cranberries
- Three sisters vegetables
- Blue corn cornbread
- Sautauthig with star berries
- Chia pudding with berries and popped amaranth

IN THE ARBO

... Boston-based punk/emo band Trash Rabbit, who headlined. Other bands on the bill included The Venture, New London Boat Club, and LB and the Scene.

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... Boston-based punk/emo band Trash Rabbit, who headlined. Other bands on the bill included The Venture, New London Boat Club, and LB and the Scene.

3x NESCAC PLAYER OF THE WEEK

Men’s Basketball’s David Murray ’24 was named New England Small College Athletic Conference Player of the Week for the third time in his career. Murray, who led the team in points and blocks, joins Matt Vadas ’14 as the only three-time honorees in program history.

MR. PRESIDENT

Lucy Marsh Haskell ’19 Professor of Human Development Sunil Bhatia has been elected president of the American Psychological Association’s Society for Qualitative Inquiry in Psychology (SQIP) for the 2023-2024 academic year. SQIP aims to develop and disseminate qualitative methods suitable for acquiring knowledge of psychological life, including lived experience, expression, practice and social conduct.

There is hope, there is dignity and there is great pride in what you will do.

— INTERIM PRESIDENT LES WONG TO THE SENIORS WHO PRESENTED AT THE ALL-COLLEGE SYMPOSIUM

781 lbs.

of food collected for the Gemma E. Moran United Way/ Labor Food Center during Campus Safety’s “Stuff-a-Cruiser” drive in December.

“ It’s like watching the worlds of vivid imagination and logic come together.” — BAZEED SHAHZAD ’24 ON THE FUSION OF ART AND TECHNOLOGY AT THE 2023 ALL-COLLEGE SYMPOSIUM
President Joe Biden awarded Shelley Taylor ’68 the National Medal of Science, the country’s highest scientific honor, during a ceremony at the White House on Oct. 24. This was the first time the award had been given since 2016.

The White House cited Taylor’s groundbreaking research on mental health and the power of human connection. “Her work showed that optimism, self-esteem and strong relationships improve the health of people with cancer, diabetes and other diseases, helping establish the fields of social cognition, health psychology and social neuroscience and increasing our nation’s wellbeing,” the announcer said during the event.

After graduating Phi Beta Kappa from Conn, Taylor earned a Ph.D. from Yale in 1972 and accepted her first teaching job at Harvard, where she pushed for a health psychology program. After being passed up for tenure, she moved in 1979 to California to develop the new field of health psychology at UCLA, where she has been a faculty member for 44 years, cementing her legacy in the field as a distinguished research professor.

Taylor’s research has yielded several groundbreaking theories and developments in psychology, including the role of cognitive bias in social situations; the effect of stress on health and the buffering effect of social factors on that stress; the role that women’s thoughts and beliefs play in their adjustment to breast cancer; and the tend-and-befriend behavioral model, which is correlated with the well-known fight-or-flight response and proposes that women under threat often respond by first nurturing their loved ones and then seeking community support.

NCAA President’s Gerald R. Ford Award

Olympic rower and former International Olympic Committee (IOC) Vice President Anita DeFrantz ’74 has won the 2024 NCAA President’s Gerald R. Ford Award, which honors an individual who has provided significant leadership as an advocate for intercollegiate athletics on a continuous basis over the course of their career.

“Anita DeFrantz has been a pioneer for women’s athletics and continues to be an advocate for equal opportunity for all individuals,” NCAA President Charlie Baker said.

Conn’s most decorated athlete, DeFrantz joined the rowing team after a chance encounter with then rowing coach Bart Gulong.

“I knew nothing about rowing, but I loved the opportunity to be out on the water, and the freedom that came with it,” she recalled.

After graduating from Conn, DeFrantz earned a law degree from the University of Pennsylvania. She joined Philadelphia’s Vesper Boat Club and continued training, eventually earning the role of captain on the 1976 U.S. Women’s Olympic Rowing team for its inaugural season. At the Games, she won a bronze medal in the 8+ women’s event.

In 1986, DeFrantz became the first American woman and first African American elected to the IOC. She played a key role in increasing Olympic opportunities for women and is credited with getting women’s softball and soccer accepted to the program. In 1997, she became the first woman elected as IOC vice president. She now plays a role on LA 2028, the committee planning for the Olympic Games’ return to the city in four years.

National Medal of Science

Olympic rower and former International Olympic Committee Vice President Anita DeFrantz ’74, far right, poses with Connecticut College rowers and a shell named in her honor in this archival photo from 1989.
Elite Eight

After completing the 2023 regular season with 10 wins, five draws and not a single loss—registering the first unbeaten season in program history—the Men’s Soccer team made an impressive NCAA tournament run before falling to Washington College 1-0 in the Elite Eight round.

The Camels, who won the 2021 NCAA Championship by defeating Amherst on penalty kicks, again leaned on penalty prowess to advance in both the second round and the Sweet 16 during their most recent campaign. The team went seven rounds with Franklin and Marshall before forward Jake Creus ’24 found the back of the net to give Conn the 7-6 penalty win in the second round. After playing Montclair State to a 2-2 tie in the Sweet 16, midfielder Jack Marvel ’24 converted in the fifth round of PKs, while goalie Peter Silvester ’25 made two saves to secure the win for the Camels.

Four members of the team earned All-NESCAC honors. Leading scorer Matt Scoffone ’24 was named to the All-NESCAC First Team, while defenseman Marco Cerezo ’24, Creus and Silvester landed Second Team accolades. Scoffone was also named to the United Soccer Coaches All-America Third Team and the United Soccer Coaches Scholar All-American Second Team.

New Arboretum Director

Maggie Redfern, who served as associate director of the Arboretum under previous director Miles Sax, was officially named the Charles and Sarah P. Becker ’27 Arboretum Director at Conn in August. She is the first woman to serve in the role.

Originally from California, Redfern earned a bachelor’s degree in architecture from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, and found work in the Boston area. She started maintaining some of Boston’s public green spaces as a volunteer and found a new love of working with plants. She was then hired as the visitor education assistant at Arnold Arboretum and “just completely dove in,” she recalled.

“After having spent most of my life in California, I fell in love with the landscape in New England. I love how much it changes over time, from day to day, month to month, season to season, as well as over the long term,” she said.

Redfern first came to Conn in 2014 to serve as assistant director of Conn’s 750-acre Arboretum campus. Now, as director, she plans to tackle some lofty—and leafy—goals. Arboretum offices are moving to 33 Gallows Lane, next to the native plant collection, to create an opportunity for a visitor center and public space. She also plans to create an accessible entrance on the Williams Street side; document more of the Arboretum’s land history, especially as it relates to indigenous and enslaved people; distribute more native plants around the region; and create more partnerships with campus and community groups and organizations.
In the Box

Students in Professor Salma Siddique’s first-year seminar, “Psychoanalytic Anthropology in Human Development,” went back in time to create shoebox-sized dioramas for a pop-up exhibition at the Lyman Allyn Art Museum, Timeless Ties: The Art of Childhood.

Siddique, who joined the faculty in 2022, taught the seminar with Kathryn O’Connor, director of the Child Development Lab School at Conn. Throughout the semester, they taught students about the anthropological concept of indigenous epistemologies, defined as the knowledge or understanding possessed by people who are native to a place.

Siddique explained, “We feel and think about our place in the world with objects, like a child with a toy or an adolescent with their first shiny new iPhone. The significance of these cultural artifacts in expressing and preserving the richness of lived experiences within indigenous communities is intrinsically linked to ways of seeing and encountering the world. The objects serve as a form of cultural revitalization, fostering a deeper understanding of ourselves in relation to others.”

For the diorama project, Siddique prompted students to reflect deeply on their personal narratives and their own ways of interpreting the world as passed down through their families and as they relate to a sense of place.

“Culture holds a profound meaning within indigenous communities, encapsulating narratives, traditions and collective memories,” Siddique said. “Through the deliberate use and arrangement of cultural objects, the diorama method provides a medium for indigenous communities to articulate their histories, values and worldviews.”

Alina Khan ’27, whose diorama is titled “Apricot Garden” and is decorated with green and red paint, miniature turtles, Legos and sprigs of colorful florals representing trees, said she was “fairly intimidated” by the project at first.

“Almost everyone, it seemed, had decided to make their childhood rooms, which was something I had never had—or perhaps had too many of,” she said. “In the end, I decided to go with the garden for one reason: It had made me realize for the first time that every time I moved, I left something behind. The garden is, in a way, a symbol of all the things I’ve ever had to leave behind.”

Khan added after that after grappling with the impact of her transient childhood, she plans to study psychology at Conn. That’s exactly the type of outcome Siddique was hoping for.

“In its first year, the psychoanalytic anthropology seminar has proven to be a transformative experience for the participating students, who have discovered their personal ways of seeing and experiencing the world and have honed their self-reflection skills through exploring alternative narrative styles,” Siddique said.
With a snip of the ceremonial ribbon on Oct. 28, Connecticut College officially opened the Stark Center for the Moving Image in the Liberal Arts, a 2,500-square-foot vibrant new home for Film Studies funded by a $1.5 million gift from The Fran and Ray Stark Foundation.

“The Stark Center for the Moving Image in the Liberal Arts serves as the first-ever centralized social and academic hub for one of the fastest-growing majors and fields of study at the College,” said Professor of Film Studies and Chair of the Film Studies Department Ross Morin ’05. “It allows Conn to offer, for the first time, our own state-of-the-art editing lab, a versatile production studio and an advanced film studies seminar room to enable our students to pursue their creative and scholarly visions in the Department of Film Studies.”

Located in one of Conn’s longest-standing buildings, Hillyer Hall, the Stark Center seamlessly folds the high-tech into the College’s existing architecture. Established as the campus’s first social space in 1917, Hillyer is also home to the Tansill Black Box Theater, providing ample opportunities to bring film studies and theater faculty and students together in new ways for creative thought and collaboration.

The centrally located facility continues a strong history of support for film studies at Conn by the Stark Foundation. While film studies was first introduced as a minor in 1989, a $300,000 grant from the Stark Foundation in 2002 allowed the College to develop a film studies major integrating film theory, criticism and production and providing students with a sophisticated understanding of mediated imagery as it relates to our increasingly image-saturated culture. Additional grants from the Stark Foundation totaling more than $600,000 have supported the Stark Distinguished Guest Residency in Film Studies, which brings leading scholars and filmmakers to campus for intensive engagement with students.

“As one of the taglines of the program states: Studying film at Conn is like film school, but better, because it is where a critical theoretical lens, interdisciplinary engagement and larger questions of self and society meet first-rate filmmaking opportunities,” Dean of the Faculty Danielle Egan told the audience of students, faculty, staff, trustees and friends of the College gathered at the ribbon cutting and dedication event.

“The new Stark Center for the Moving Image provides our students with something we could not have imagined when the program began 21 years ago. It will change our students’ thinking, analyzing and producing … It will change their understanding of film studies in powerful ways.”

— DANIELLE EGAN, DEAN OF THE FACULTY
A small town finds its already contentious mayoral election turned up to 11 when a masked killer begins taking down targets on both sides of the political divide in *Founders Day*, a satirical political slasher by filmmaker Carson Bloomquist ’18 and his brother, Erik Bloomquist. The film opened in more than 750 theaters in January.

Recently, Bloomquist sat down with CC Magazine’s Tim Stevens ’03 to talk about his biggest project to date.

**Tim Stevens:** How would you describe the film?

**Carson Bloomquist:** I’d say it’s a political satire/murder mystery with both classic and modern influences. There’s a tragedy and then people start pointing fingers. Chaos ensues.

**TS:** Could you speak to some of those influences?

**CB:** Oh, for sure. A lot of modern-day slashers—*Scream* was a big film for my brother and me. It introduced us to a wealth of horror films that we then saw for the first time. *Founders Day*, in many ways, is a love letter to those formative slasher films of our youth.

**TS:** You and your brother co-write, co-produce and co-edit all of your films together. What’s it like to work so closely with him?

**CB:** Erik and I have been doing this for years. We were those prototypical little kids with camcorders making home movies. Then it developed into more professional shorts and other projects. We’re fortunate that we have somewhat of a hive mind with these kinds of things. We complement each other well and trust each other. In pre-production, production, post-production—we’re consistently cultivating this vision we had in different ways.

**TS:** That said, you did attend rival NESCAC schools. Do you ever have to remind him “Camels rule”?

**CB:** [laughs]: Whenever we are on either campus or around fellow Camels or Bantams, we will kind of put on a show of duking it out, but it is all just playful.

**TS:** OK, so here’s where things get weird. Not only did you and I go to the same college, but we also grew up in the same small Connecticut town and both went to Newington High School.

**CB:** Oh wow, funny. Newington was a great place to grow up and we had a strong connection to a lot of our teachers. *Founders Day* was shot in New Milford and the surrounding areas. I like *Founders Day* because I think it’s a very current small-town story. It’s like both a love letter to and satire of small-town politics.

**TS:** By most metrics, *Founders Day* is your biggest movie to date. How was it to ramp up and take on that challenge?

**CB:** What’s interesting is it started as a concept trailer, basically the very first thing we made in a more professional sense. We had this idea for a small-town murder mystery set amid a town festival. We thought, in our naivety, that as soon as we did that someone would come knocking and we’d be able to make it immediately. Then, reality hit.

But we found ourselves using the momentum we had behind the trailer to move into some other projects. Each film grew in scope while we tried to build toward getting to do *Founders Day*. Right after our last film, *She Came From the Woods*, we realized we felt equipped, finally. When we shot in November of 2022, it had been like a 10-year span since the trailer.

**TS:** With *Founders Day* finally put to proverbial rest, do you have ideas on where you’re going next?

**CB:** We have a number of ideas, seeds of ideas, potential steps we want to take. Things we want to do in the horror thriller genre and beyond. We have one other non-horror release we produced that will be coming out shortly. It’s a musical comedy ghost story with a very earnest kind of golden age feeling, but it is still set in the present day. I think it shows another side of what we can do.

We’ll see where it all takes us, but we’re excited and optimistic.
Founders Day... is both a love letter to and satire of small-town politics.

— CARSON BLOOMQUIST ’18
The late Barkley L. Hendricks considered New York’s The Frick Collection—with its iconic portraits by Rembrandt, Bronzino, Van Dyck and others—to be one of his favorite museums.

He would visit frequently, studying the works of the European greats. But he was also keenly aware of the whiteness of it all. In fact, the Frick never displayed a portrait of a Black person in Hendricks’ lifetime.

So it’s not hard to imagine that he’d have been delighted to know that when Black portraits did finally hang alongside the Frick’s most celebrated works, they were his own.

In September, Barkley L. Hendricks: Portraits at the Frick opened in the museum’s temporary space, Frick Madison. Featuring 14 of Hendricks’ large-scale paintings, which revolutionized contemporary portraiture with their vivid depictions of everyday Black Americans, it was the first solo show dedicated to an artist of color in the Frick’s 88-year history.

“Hendricks’ astonishing portraits of predominantly Black figures, not represented in the Frick’s historic paintings yet who, with their self-assured style, appear right at home among them, grant unprecedented opportunities to celebrate and explore the Frick’s collection, Hendricks’ groundbreaking innovations, and the bridges between them,” said Frick curator Aimee Ng, who organized the show along with consulting curator Antwaun Sargent.

Along with the exhibition, Hendricks’ art and its impact were further explored through a richly illustrated exhibition catalog with contributions by artists and creative figures including Derrick Adams, Hilton Als, Nick Cave, Awol Erizku, Rashid Johnson, Fahamu Pecou, Mickalene Thomas and Kehinde Wiley. The Frick also offered a robust roster of educational public programs to complement the show, which considers the complex place of European painting in Hendricks’ art and how his work, in turn, continues to inspire major artists and designers today.

Indeed, Wiley, painter of the famous Barack Obama portrait, begins her catalog essay with a simple declaration: “No figurative artist can approach painting without considering Barkley Hendricks.”

Most of Hendricks’ portraits feature people he knew, including friends, family members and his Connecticut College students and colleagues. One of the paintings in the Frick exhibition, Blood
Six years after his death, Professor Emeritus Barkley L. Hendricks makes history as the first Black artist with a solo show at the storied museum.

(Donald Formey), depicts Hendricks’ former student Donald Formey ’76. Against a rich red background, Formey stands clad in a plaid bomber-style jacket and matching pants. His arms are by his sides, but in his left hand he holds a tambourine, which Formey recalls Hendricks gave him after he noticed Formey tapping his foot to the music playing in the studio while he sat for the portrait in 1975.

Ng told the Associated Press that Formey visited the museum to see the painting when the exhibition opened. In choosing to paint him, Hendricks made Formey “feel no longer invisible,” Ng said. “It was so powerful for him.”

For most of Hendricks’ prolific career, his artwork went largely unheralded. As a professor of studio art at Conn, he worked with generations of students to develop and refine their artistic voices in representational painting, drawing, illustration and photography. He joined the faculty in 1972 and retired in 2010. All that time he was painting.

Around the time of his death in 2017 at the age of 72, the art world was beginning to take notice. In 2016, Barkley L. Hendricks debuted at the Jack Shainman Gallery in Manhattan. Featuring many of his later and more political pieces, it was Hendricks’ second solo show at the gallery. In 2018, the Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University presented Hendricks’ first major career retrospective, Barkley L. Hendricks: Birth of the Cool, which also traveled to the Studio Museum in Harlem, the Santa Monica Museum of Art in California, the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in Philadelphia and the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston.

Private collectors have also started paying attention. In December of 2020, Mr. Johnson (Sammy From Miami), a 1972 portrait, sold at Sotheby’s for $4,013,000. This past November, Yocks, a 1975 double portrait, sold at auction for an impressive $8.4 million, well over the projected $4-6 million.

It’s about time Hendricks receives the recognition he deserves, art critic Yinka Elujoba wrote in his New York Times review of Portraits at the Frick. “Hendricks seems to have maintained the position of an underground virtuoso who is always being discovered in bits and pieces. The show at the Frick seems to be, finally, a break into the atmosphere, introducing him to a new audience and solidifying his position in the canon and lineage of Black American portraiture.”
Because Luke Combs loved the song as a kid, we are all reminded, or learn for the first time, what a beautiful song Fast Car is.

—Professor Kate Rushin
Fast Car

Does Luke Combs’ success undermine the genius of Tracy Chapman?

This opinion piece by Professor Kate Rushin was first published Nov. 28, 2023, in The Denver Post.

Luke Combs won Single of the Year at the 2023 Country Music Awards for Fast Car; and Tracy Chapman won Song of the Year, the first time for an African American in the organization’s 57-year history. Some folks argue that Combs reaching the top of the country charts and winning this award is exploitative, because Chapman wouldn’t have made it onto the country charts in 1988.

I’ve loved Chapman’s music for a long time. I was present that “fateful night” on May 3, 1985, at The Strand Theater in Boston’s Dorchester neighborhood, when, as producer Polly Laurelchild recounts, she opened for Casselberry-Dupree, opening act for headliner Linda Tillery. Chapman, an undergrad who had done some singing around Harvard Square, blew the audience away. The bashful 21-year-old stepped from the curtain, sang two songs, and earned a spontaneous standing O.

In 1988, not long after Chapman graduated from Tufts University, she burst onto the national music scene having made connections to a major record label through a college friend. The world would hear the power of her music through her self-titled debut album. Later that same year, Chapman performed Fast Car for Nelson Mandela’s 70th birthday celebration at London’s Wembley Stadium and went on to win three Grammy Awards, including Best New Artist. Many of us in the overlapping progressive circles of the Greater Boston/Cambridge Women’s, LGBTQ, academic and folk music communities, were, and are, proud of her success.

To those who argue that Luke Combs’ version of Tracy Chapman’s Fast Car winning Single of the Year is, somehow, an affront to African American music makers and Black women in particular, I say that the context of history is important when we talk about appropriation and discrimination in the recording industry.

People, this is 2023, not 1893. We’re not talking about Antonin Dvorak, the director of the National Conservatory of Music in New York and composer of The New World Symphony, being so influenced by the African American Spirituals that he asked Harry T. Burleigh to sing for him.

This is 2023, not 1928.

We’re not talking about Lesley “Esley” Riddle, the young musician who accompanied A.P. Carter around Virginia and Tennessee to gather songs from rural homes and churches and who played a key, largely unsung role in the development of The Carter Family and the genre we now call Country Music.

This is 2023, not the 1950s and ’60s. We’re not talking about Willie Mae “Big Mama” Thornton’s original version of Hound Dog being eclipsed by Elvis Presley; we’re not talking about the fact that Big Mama didn’t own the copyright to Ball and Chain. We’re not talking about Pat Boone watering down Little Richard’s Tutti Frutti to make the song acceptable for a “mainstream” audience and simultaneously charting higher.

People, this is 2023 and we’re talking about Tracy Chapman and Luke Combs. Tracy Chapman is an educated, millionaire businesswoman who doesn’t authorize samples. (Just ask Nicki Minaj, who settled a lawsuit for $450,000 for a leaked “interpolation” of Baby Can I Hold You.)

Reportedly, she is estimated to have received close to a half-million dollars, to date, in royalties from Luke Combs’ rendition of Fast Car. Of course, we still have miles to go, but thanks to the ongoing courage, creativity and persistence of many, 2023 is a new day.

Because Luke Combs loved the song as a kid, we are all reminded, or learn for the first time, what a beautiful song Fast Car is—a heartbreaking reminder of all young people, in general, and young women, in particular, across our country and our world who are not in a position to “live their best (social media) lives,” but who want to find love and “be someone.” We’re reminded of the power of music, the power of art and creative genius.

Are we really going to waste time and energy arguing that the road to success for Tracy Chapman should’ve been different? No. If we want to see more people of color in country music and hear more of their music on the radio, we need to learn about them and support them.

See what Darius Rucker has been doing since his Hootie & the Blowfish days. Buy a couple of tickets to a Mickey Guyton show. Check out the Mississippi trio, Chapel Hart. Donate to Rissi Palmer’s Color Me Country Artist Grant Fund to support Black, Indigenous and people of color in country music.

In the meantime, I think that Ms. Chapman is doing just fine, thank you.

Kate Rushin, professor of English and distinguished poet in residence at Connecticut College, is an award-winning author. Her work includes the iconic The Bridge Poem featured in the 1981 collection This Bridge Called My Back.
The Han-Xiongnu War, 133 BC–89 AD
By Scott Forbes Crawford ’00

The Han-Xiongnu War pitted the Han dynasty of China against a confederation of nomadic steppe peoples, the Xiongnu Empire. In campaigns waged on a huge scale by the standards of contemporary western warfare (perhaps half a million soldiers were fielded at the Battle of Mobei in 119 BC), the two states fought for control of Central Asia, hungry for its rich resources and Western trade links. China’s victory set the stage for millennia of imperial rule and a vast sphere of influence in Asia. Delving into the lively stories of 15 key historical figures, The Han-Xiongnu War captures the breadth of the conflict, its enduring impact on Han society and statecraft in what became a Chinese golden age, and the doomed resistance of the Xiongnu to an ever-strengthening juggernaut.

Modes of the Tragic in Spanish Cinema
By Luis M. González, professor of Hispanic studies

Elements from the classical and modern tragic tradition persist and permeate many of the cultural works created in Spain, especially films. This book delves into the inscrutability and indolence of the gods, the mutability of fortune, the recurrent narratives of fall and redemption, the unavoidable clash between ethical forces, the tension between free will and fate, the violent resolution of both internal and external conflicts, and the overwhelming feelings of guilt that haunt the tragic heroine/hero that traverse Spanish cinema as a response to universal queries about human suffering and death.

There’s No Place Like Hope
By Janet Lawler ’74

“There’s no place like hope, where possible lives, where people are helpful and everyone gives.” Illustrated by Tamisha Anthony, this inspirational picture book offers a joyful message for ushering in new beginnings and facing challenges. Featuring sweet rhymes and whimsical, diverse illustrations, the book is a gentle yet powerful exploration of how hope makes us loving, courageous and connected to one another.

The Human Origins of Beatrice Porter and Other Essential Ghosts
By Soraya Palmer ’07

What happens to us when our stories are erased? Do we disappear? Or do we come back haunting?

Folktales and spirits animate this lively and unforgettable coming-of-age tale of two Jamaican-Trinidadian sisters in Brooklyn grappling with their mother’s illness, their father’s infidelity and the truth of their family’s past.

Zora and Sasha Porter are drifting apart. Bearing witness to their father’s violence and their mother’s worsening health, an unsettled Zora escapes into her journal, dreaming of being a writer, while Sasha discovers sex and chest binding, spending more time with her new girlfriend than at home.

But the sisters, like their parents, must come together to answer to something more ancient and powerful than they know—and reckon with a family secret buried in the past. A tale told from the perspective of a mischievous narrator, featuring the Rolling Calf who haunts butchers, Mama Dglo who lives in the ocean, a vain tiger and an outsmarted snake, The Human Origins of Beatrice Porter and Other Essential Ghosts is set in a world as alive and unpredictable as Helen Oyeyemi’s.

In Other Lifetimes All I’ve Lost Comes Back to Me
By Courtney Sender, visiting assistant professor of English and writer in residence

Populated with lovers who leave and return, with ghosts of the Holocaust and messages from the dead, Sender’s debut collection speaks in a singular new voice about the longings and loneliness of contemporary love. The world of these 14 interlocking stories is fiercely real but suffused with magic and myth, dark wit, and distinct humor. Here, ancient loss works its way deep into the psyche of modern characters, stirring their unrelenting lust for life. In Other Lifetimes All I’ve Lost Comes Back to Me is a wise and sensual collection of old hauntings, new longings and unexpected returns, with a finale that is a rousing call to the strength we each have, together or alone.

Paisley’s Big Birthday
By Heather Pierce Stigall ’91

Paisley’s birthday is today, right? Then why doesn’t she feel any older? She still has trouble reading, still has trouble jumping in the Hopstacle Course and is still in Bunnygarten. When will she finally be big? Illustrated by Natallia Nushuyeva, this sweet children’s story is about having patience as we grow.
TAKING THE LEAP

Errol Apostolopoulos ’27 competes in the 55 meter hurdles at the United States Coast Guard Academy Winter Invitational Jan. 13.
LEE EISENBERG DOES IT AGAIN

The Hollywood writer-producer had his best year yet, with two wildly different hit shows. He has no intention of taking a break.

BY TIM STEVENS '03
It isn’t as though Lee Eisenberg ’99 was unfamiliar with success before 2023. He was already penning episodes of arguably the most influential U.S. sitcom of the past two decades, *The Office*, at 28 years old. Before 2023, he had won a Writers Guild Award and scored six Emmy nominations. He produced and co-wrote, alongside frequent collaborator Gene Stupnitsky, the hit Cameron Diaz film *Bad Teacher*, which made more than 10 times its budget at the box office. In other words, he had already drunk of the cup of success.

Still, it’s impossible not to look at 2023 as a banner year for the writer-producer. His headline-grabbing project, *Jury Duty*, followed everyman Ronald Gladden as he attempted to perform his civic duty as jury foreman of a civil case. Or at least, that’s what he thought was going on. For everyone else—the attorneys, the witnesses, the judge, even the fellow jurors—including actor James Marsden playing an especially self-involved version of himself—the series was an intensive exercise in long-form improv. That’s because there was no true case, no real trial. Gladden thought he was just one person in a documentary about serving on a jury. Everyone else knew they were putting on quite the high-wire comedy act.

While not unprecedented—2003’s *The Joe Schmo* similarly surrounded one unaware man with performers in on the hoax—*Jury Duty* took the structure further with more dexterity and considerably more laughs. Gladden was an immediate standout, a genuinely decent guy who navigated an increasingly bizarre situation with empathy, intelligence and an impressive level of unflappability. The show debuted in April on Amazon’s Freevee streaming platform, to little fanfare at first. But word of mouth—or, perhaps more accurately, word on TikTok—spread quickly, and the show became the surprise hit of the year, racking up considerable critical huzzahs and award nominations. To date, it has converted those noms to wins for Best Supporting Actor in a Streaming Series, Comedy for Marsden from the Hollywood Critics Association; Best Ensemble Cast in a New Scripted Series from the Independent Spirit Awards; and Television Program of the Year from the American Film Institute.

“I think—I think none of us could’ve expected it,” Eisenberg confesses. Despite the series’ reliance on improvisation, *Jury Duty* did not happen overnight. “We—Gene and I—had been kicking around ideas for something like *Jury Duty* for a while,” Eisenberg says. “We really
wanted to do something in the spirit of *The Office*, you know, a big ensemble comedy in a very familiar environment.

“Then Todd Schulman and David Bernad, two executive producers on the show, simultaneously had a similar idea. So, they said, ‘What if we took the hidden camera genre and combined it with an ongoing season-long arc like you would do in it in a single camera half hour?’ I thought it was a great idea.”

Great idea or not, though, the quartet still had to convince a network or streamer to bite on an idea that relied on the star of the show not figuring out he was, in fact, in a show.

“It’s a very tricky thing. We probably didn’t say it in the pitch, but you know that it might fail. Some shows might not work because you might not get to the end of the season, right? It’s a different type of challenge,” Eisenberg says.

“Still, I was convinced that Gene and I doing an *Office* kind of show was attractive for buyers. Dave and Todd worked for Sacha Baron Cohen! It felt like a very good package. And everyone passed. Except for Amazon. But you only need one.”

As stressful as the pitching had been, the filming process did not prove a relief.

“We were scared the entire time,” admits Eisenberg. “You have a kind of plan. It’s like, ‘Okay, we’re gonna go to the scene of the crime or Margaritaville.’ But once you get into it, you don’t know. Will Ronald even stand next to that person?”

Marsden, too, had his doubts. “I started thinking, Oh my God, what have I gotten myself into? Can we even do this? Can we pull this off? I thought this would either be the end of my career or something that maybe a handful of people would see,” he told The New York Times.

So, when the season was finally complete, “I think everyone just let out a giant sigh of relief,” Eisenberg says.

“Every one of those actors exceeded my expectations by a million. I’d be desperate to work with any one of them again. They’re so hilarious, so kind, they’re all incredible.”

Certainly, *Jury Duty* was project enough to make 2023 a memorable year. However, Eisenberg still had more to come with his most serious work to date. He bookended the year with the AppleTV+ adaptation of best-selling 2022 novel *Lessons in Chemistry*, starring Brie Larson and Lewis Pullman.

“I devoured the book,” Eisenberg says. “It was beautifully written by Bonnie Garmus. Funny, touching, surprising. It ticked off everything I hope to accomplish with my own writing, and it felt like a project I could make my own without changing its DNA.

“The book was always there to go back to because it was beloved,” he elaborates. “In the writers’ room, we were constantly referring to it, pulling tons of ideas and lines of dialogue, because we wanted the fan base to really feel the show was honoring the book. We were part of that fanbase. But in translating something from the page to screen, you still make changes. It’s part of the adaptation process. So we tried to elevate or surprise viewers with some creative opportunities we felt were organic.”

The impulse paid off. Critical consensus for the show has been firmly positive, and several voting bodies have enthusiastically responded to *Lessons*. Recently, it was honored as the Best TV Series by the Women’s Film Critics Circle. It has scored 13 additional nominations for everything from Makeup and Costuming to Score to Lead and Supporting Acting.

It feels particularly gratifying to Eisenberg, given how significant a role he played in the entire process.

“The showrunner is the showrunner, so it’s kind of my vision of the series, for better or worse,” he explains. “Every script, no matter who wrote it, I’m doing a final pass on. Every final edit, I’m in the editing room. There’s not a single piece of music that gets approved without my knowledge. That doesn’t mean I’m changing everything. For instance, Brie and our costume designer had such an excellent handle on the wardrobe, I didn’t give a single note on it. Our production designer was astounding, and I thought the sets were so incredible. But, still, the buck stops with the showrunner.”

Regardless of how much energy that demanded of him, how well 2023 played out for him, or how it may echo into 2024 as awards season marches on, Eisenberg has no intention of spending too much time counting his successes.

“I love my career and what I do every day. Just working with plenty of the smartest, most interesting people around and telling stories for a living. I can’t think of anything I’m better suited to do,” he reflects. “Some people are at their best when they work on one thing at a time—I don’t have that. When I do, I get antsy and anxious. So, I’m constantly jumping from one meeting to another and one project to another. I don’t have writer’s block. There are too many things happening. I’m not allowing my mind to be quiet.”

“I started thinking, Oh my God, what have I gotten myself into? Can we even do this? Can we pull this off? — James Marsden, Actor

He cites the (many) specific projects ahead of him. “I’m writing a thriller right now, something I’ve never gotten to do before. I’m working on a musical. I have documentaries that I’m producing. For me, it’s ‘Who can I collaborate with that excites me? If there’s an idea that speaks to me, can I write it? Can I be added as a producer?’”

He trails off for a moment, eyes drifting upward. “Hold on a second,” he whispers, spinning his computer around to show a rainbow arcing over a group of buildings he can see out his office window. “Look at that. That’s perfect.” He goes quiet for a moment. Then, a beat later, “All right, let’s get back into it.” And so he does.

WINTER 2024 | Lee Eisenberg Does It Again

21
A picture is worth a thousand words, as the old adage goes. But that doesn’t mean it won’t leave you wanting thousands more.

Who are the two men posing together in front of a painted backdrop more than a century ago? Or the young women with the matching ringlets, dresses and boots? How are they related? What happened just after the photo was taken? Just before? What became of them?

“The thing with these pictures is that they’re wonderful [just] as pictures,” says photography historian Lucy Sante, an award-winning author and chronicler of early 20th-century America.

“They’re also teasers on the narrative of what is pictured. You wish you had the novel that accompanies it, the memoir, the text of the life that leads up to this moment and away from it again.”

The photos, printed on a postcard paper stock sometime in the 1910s, are part of the vast personal collection of Natalie M. Curley, a prominent social historian and internationally recognized collector and dealer of vintage amateur photography. This fall, Curley and Sante were the inaugural participants in the Krane Art History Guest Residency Program, supported by a gift from Connecticut College Trustee Jonathan A. Krane ’90. As part of the residency, they worked with students in Professor Christopher B. Steiner’s art history class, “Perspectives on Photography,” to study, interpret and curate American vernacular photographs from Curley’s collection.

The result was a student-curated exhibition of 19th- and early 20th-century portraits and associated ephemera from Curley’s collection titled Labors of Love: Work, Family and Play in American Folk Photography. The project was on display in the Charles E. Shain Library lobby Nov. 8 through Dec. 15.

“In the late 19th century, somewhere between the invention of the tintype and the invention of roll film, with the cost of equipment and materials consistently dropping, photography finally became a true popular medium, available to all. What had been a difficult, laborious and expensive process was now quick, cheap and easy, so photography became a worldwide craze and everybody had to get in on it, on one side of the camera or the other,” Sante explains.

“Every face could now be photographed, so every face now had to be. Many opportunities for being photographically depicted arose in the course of daily life, and almost everyone seems to have jumped in.”

For the past two decades, Curley has aided museums and archives in rewriting a more inclusive American history by consulting and supplying such images, which capture the unique lived experiences of the working poor—including women, immigrants, and Black and Indigenous people—at a time when industrialization and migration were driving rapid change in the United States.


"Because those photographs have been scattered over time ... the stories are difficult to recover and often require speculation and a willingness to dig deeply into American social and cultural history."

— CHRISTOPHER B. STEINER, PROFESSOR OF ART HISTORY
"I aim to document the forgotten millions who stood defiant against the duplicitous American Dream, confident in their own worth," she says. "Many of my images are products of itinerant or traveling photographers, a short-lived class of semi-professionals who either scaled back a studio living or taught themselves the trade with a cheap new camera and an on-the-road lifestyle. Riding by car or by rail, they would carry their equipment from town to town and shoot the whole town’s portraits in a few days by door knocking."

For a few cents, anyone could have their portrait developed on postcard paper stock, which could be sent through the mail to keep in touch with loved ones.

"With the advent of the photo postcard, one could afford to be seen," Curley says.

Yet many of the postcards in Curley’s collection—amassed through flea markets, photo shows, estate sales and resale websites like eBay—were never sent or inscribed, suggesting that even a few cents might have been too much to spare.

Steiner, the Lucy C. McDannel ’22 Professor of Art History and Anthropology and the director of the Museum Studies Certificate Program at Conn, credits Curley with "saving these orphaned images from obscurity and bringing greater inclusivity to the visual record of the past. Photographs of the underprivileged and downtrodden are, of course, not unheard of in the history of photography," Steiner says, citing famous works like Jacob Riis’ *How the Other Half Lives* and collections from Farm Security Administration photographers, including Walker Evans, Dorothea Lange and Arthur Rothstein. But, he explains, none of those photographers were members of the communities they photographed. “As such, their images sometimes assume a kind of voyeuristic gaze—products of unequal encounters captured by outsiders looking into an alien world. By contrast, most of the photographs in [the exhibition] were taken by people not terribly unlike those positioned in front of the camera’s lens.”

Curley adds that museums largely feature donations that come from wealthy families and document the lives of the elite.
Ultimately, this extraordinary exhibition brings to life the experiences of real people and gives voice to their stories.

— CHRISTOPHER B. STEINER, PROFESSOR OF ART HISTORY
“For centuries, that has grossly skewed the public’s narratives of history in general and the history of art and photography in particular,” she says. “I am more interested in bringing to the surface the biography of all those anonymous lives used to stoke their profits.”

That was the challenge Steiner, Curley and Sante posed to the “Perspectives on Photography” students: Resituate Curley’s photographs in their original context to unravel their rich history and tell their diverse stories.

“Because those photographs have been scattered over time ... [those] stories are difficult to recover and often require speculation and a willingness to dig deeply into American social and cultural history from the turn of the last century,” Steiner says.
Curley is saving these orphaned images from obscurity and bringing greater inclusivity to the visual record.

— CHRISTOPHER B. STEINER, PROFESSOR OF ART HISTORY

“The students’ remarkable efforts produced, in a relatively short period of time, a compelling historical narrative that embraces the intimacy of the images, understands their meaning and significance, and envisions the reach of the photographs across time and history.

“Ultimately, this extraordinary exhibition brings to life the experiences of real people and gives voice to their stories—the condition of their lives; their talents and vocations; their dignity and pride; and the hopes and aspirations they may have held as they faced the camera, sometimes for the very first time.”

L-R: Men posing on a studio prop balustrade in front of a painted backdrop of the United States Capitol Building, Washington, D.C. Real photo postcard, 1910s; Civil War veteran (J.C. Morton), Union Army Second Corps, posing in uniform, with cavalry saber and tame rabbit. Gelatin silver print, 1910s; Young women with matching ringlets and dresses made from the same fabric. Real photo postcard, 1910s. Collection of Natalie M. Curley.
Getting Perspective

Bianca Falcone ’25, a psychology and studio art double major from Wellesley, Massachusetts, said she was surprised by the amount of editing, revising and collaborative discussion involved in creating the text panels that accompanied the images in the Labors of Love exhibition.

“I now find myself thinking about for whom a piece of work is intended and how that changes the reading and appreciation for the piece,” she said. “I have learned to appreciate and question the voices and stories shown in pieces capturing and preserving informational material.”

View the Labors of Love catalog:
MIND THE INCOME GAP
ince joining Conn’s faculty in 2015, Associate Professor of Economics Mark Stelzner has taken an interdisciplinary approach to studying inequality and the political underpinnings of the U.S. economic system. Stelzner, who earned a Ph.D. from the University of Massachusetts Amherst, a hub for heterodox economics in the U.S., has conducted research on everything from the evolution of labor laws and antitrust administration to the connection between corporate market power and wage discrimination to the relationships between consumption, growth and happiness.

Recently, he sat down with CC Magazine Editor Amy Martin for a wide-ranging discussion about the history and current state of income disparity in the U.S.—and what, if anything, can be done about it.

CC Magazine: According to the Congressional Budget Office, income inequality between the richest Americans and, well, everyone else is at its greatest since the late 1920s—and growing. But there have been times when income was much more evenly distributed between the highest and lowest earners. What happened?

Mark Stelzner: The historic income inequality we associate with Gilded Age up to the Great Depression began to shrink in the 1930s and reached a low in the ’50s, ’60s and ’70s. A big reason for that is the central labor legislation that was passed in the Depression period. The National Labor Relations Act, which is the central piece for collective bargaining still, was passed in the mid-1930s. And then the Fair Labor Standards Act, which set a minimum wage, was passed just a few years later. Those laws empowered workers to respond to employers if they tried to exercise any type of market power to push down wages, and we see a dramatic increase in unionization and in strikes.

Then there were the tax laws. The top marginal tax rate in the United States in mid-century was around 93%, which essentially acted as a wage ceiling. Basically, any income in that top marginal tax bracket would almost all be taxed away. So if you’re a CEO and you’re making just under that tax bracket, you have no incentive to increase your wage.

CC: So, what changed?

MS: A lot. In the 1980s, we start to see a change in social attitudes around unions. For example, some things were always legal, but they weren’t commonly done, like firing striking workers. But in the 1980s, you have Reagan firing all the striking air traffic controllers, which made the private sector realize, “Oh, hey, we can do this too.”

And then in this same period, we see changes in the interpretation of antitrust laws, which impact the ability of firms to buy up competition. These laws were most intensely enforced in the mid-20th century, from World War II through the early 1970s. But since then, we’ve basically deregulated antitrust law, not through Congress, but through the reinterpretation of the laws already on the books via regulatory bodies. Conversely, we’ve more intensely regulated patent laws and extended the duration of patents, which gives more power to the patent holder and increases the amount of profit they can pull from it.

Essentially, by increasing consolidation and decreasing worker power, employers have more leverage to push wages down.
CC: And then, of course, that top marginal tax rate is now just 37%.

MS: Exactly. That starts to change in the 1960s with Lyndon Johnson, and then more intensely under Reagan in the 1980s. And that created an incentive for top management to increase their wage vis-à-vis other workers.

CC: So, is there any chance of putting the genie back in the bottle?

MS: Well, a lot of the changes that were passed in the Great Depression period and then during World War II had been talked about and pushed for decades. There was definitely agitation for change, but a lot of what was done was superficial. It took the Great Depression and this crisis of capitalism to get people to really rethink things.

CC: Are you suggesting capitalism would basically need to collapse before the U.S. can address income inequality?

MS: I hope not. But to really bring people together to make change, you need a lot of stressors on the system. That’s at least partially because although we have a democracy, there are a lot of undemocratic elements in our political system that make change very hard. So you need an intense level of solidarity to push things through, and I think that only comes about in very extreme moments.

CC: Some would say this is an extreme moment, with America’s richest 1% of households making more than 100 times as much as the bottom 20%, and the top 0.1% bringing in nearly 200 times as much as the bottom 90% of households. Add in skyrocketing housing costs, inflation, flat salaries and wages—there are certainly a lot of financial stressors facing Americans.

MS: There is definitely a lot of frustration. We are seeing more people discussing these issues than, say, 10 years ago. And there has been an uptick in unionizations and union activity.

But a lot of times this economic frustration gets co-opted and projected onto other issues, quite intentionally to break up any potential solidarity. That’s been a central part of U.S. politics even going back to colonial times—using things like race and other-ism to keep working class people from coming together to force meaningful change.

CC: The political rhetoric in America today is certainly divisive.

MS: It is, but like I said, that’s nothing new. When we were the most equal nationally in terms of income inequality, in the 1950s and ’60s, we still had Jim Crow and we were beginning to dismantle it. And as the greater Civil Rights Movement began trying to address economic questions and narrow wealth and income gaps between races, we started to see a political realignment, with Southern Democratic Party constituents moving over to the Republican Party, which was really selling people on this idea of “getting tough on crime.” There are a lot of studies showing a huge overlap between people who didn’t like what was happening with Civil Rights and people who wanted to “get tough on crime,” where the “criminal” they were talking about was really coded language for Black and brown people. And then because the constituents were focused on racial hate, the government was able to make a lot of these economic changes that led us to where we are today.
The underlying assumption in economics is that increased growth leads to increased happiness. But is that true? Are there other changes we can make in society that would make us happier?

CC: Speaking of where we are today, there are still major income gaps between white workers and workers of color, right?

MS: Oh, for sure. Since the 1980s, we’ve had increasing wage income inequality between workers of different racial groups, including between Black and white workers with the same level of education. One important factor for navigating the job market is having a financial cushion for anything that could potentially happen if you change jobs, including moving, missing a paycheck, that sort of thing. And the wealth inequality between households of different racial groups is extreme, even more extreme than income inequality. So if employers recognize that Black and Latino workers are less likely to move between jobs—because of this lack of financial cushion—then they can push down their wages.

And then even though there have been changes in terms of gender relations since mid-20th century in the U.S., it’s still the case that women are more likely to have more responsibilities at home. If employers recognize that women, in general, are more exploitable, the profit-maximizing strategy is to offer women lower wages, too.

CC: Meanwhile, by most traditional economic measures, the economy is doing well. Corporations are posting record profits and the stock markets are healthy. Billionaires are getting richer. Why haven’t the rest of us benefitted at the same rate?

MS: Well, we’ve created a very good system for making profits for companies and the very wealthy, but in a lot of ways, it’s a terrible system for actually serving needs. And to some degree, that is intentional. The more you serve needs, the less demand there might be. To continuously achieve growth, you get situations where companies do things that are beneficial to them, but terrible for everybody else, like raising prices or pushing down the wages of their workers.

CC: So are we looking at the wrong metrics?

MS: I think the metrics we use don’t even come close to giving us the whole picture. We look at growth of the economy and growth of the stock market, but if we’re thinking about economic outcomes, we need to look at things like, “How’s inequality?” and “What does this mean in terms of income growth for lower income groups?” And I think we should also ask ourselves: “What is this all for?”

The underlying assumption in economics is that increased growth leads to increased happiness. But is that true? And do we really need to keep focusing on growth? Are there other changes we can make in society that would make us happier? But we never make decisions based on, “Oh, our happiness index for the country has decreased. Maybe we should do things slightly differently.” Economic metrics are supposed to be connected to happiness, but a lot of times they are not, at least for the majority of Americans.

CC: Do you think there’s any real hope for that level of systematic change in our lifetimes?

MS: We are in a very narrow political moment, so a lot of these changes sound impossible right now. But that was also true in the 1920s, and if you look at the historical arc, you can see how much change has happened in the last 100 years, for better and for worse. I think it’s important to think more broadly and bigger picture about where we can potentially move to improve society on a more fundamental level. History tells us we just might get that chance.
SAVE SOMETHING SMALL

BY MELISSA BABCOCK JOHNSON

Rescuers scour the burn zone in Paradise, California, following the Camp Fire of 2018.
Filmmaker Katharine Parsons ’74 tells the story of the animal rescuers who braved the California wildfire burn zones to reunite beloved pets with their families.
wildfire engulfs your neighborhood in the middle of the night. The flames are moving eight feet a second. The power is out, so you can barely see. There’s no time to grab much, maybe not even your shoes. You call your dog, who dutifully follows you to the car as your family escapes.

But your cat is nowhere to be found. For thousands of residents of Northern California, this nightmare was reality.

As the Tubbs Fire ignited in October 2017, Katharine Parsons ‘74 was far from the flames, at home on her 87-acre horse farm an hour north of Toronto and working on her third screenplay. Parsons, who studied chemistry at Conn, had recently retired from her acupuncture practice. She was looking forward to lots of time to write.

She had completed a novel but had enjoyed dabbling in film in high school, “before they were digital, when you were splicing and pasting things together,” she recalls, and wanted to learn screenwriting to adapt her book. She took an online course and got “absolutely hooked.” In 2017, Parsons earned a master certificate from the acclaimed ScreenwritingU program and created her film company, Ravenshoe Media.

“Screenwriting melded my ability to write with my interest in photography and film,” says Parsons, who had previously done some photojournalism work covering the four-eyed fish of the Galapagos Islands.

But cats, not fish, would drive her most prolific project to date. Parsons was scrolling through Facebook one day when she came across real-time status updates by a fellow filmmaker friend about a wildfire in California. It was the Tubbs Fire, which would ultimately burn nearly 58 square miles and destroy 5,643 structures, half of which were homes in Santa Rosa, a city an hour north of San Francisco. It would become the most destructive wildfire in California’s history—until the Camp Fire a year later, which was four times worse.

Then Tucker the feline appeared on her social media feed. “My friend started posting all these lost animal stories,” Parsons recalls, and the one about a badly burned cat brought into Sonoma County Animal Services by a Pacific Gas and Electric Company worker caught her attention.

In just an hour, Tucker’s photo had been shared hundreds of times and his family was located. More reunions followed. Families whose neighborhoods had been incinerated held out hope, posting photos of their missing pets—mainly cats—as agencies shared photos of pets rescued from the burn zone. Volunteers around the world began to match them up.

“Some weren’t microchipped or, if they were, the phones linked to the numbers associated with the chips had burned with the homes, so they were relying on the public,” Parsons explains. “It became Facebook’s largest lost pet initiative in their history.”
Parsons couldn’t take her eyes off the screen. “I put aside the screenplay I was working on and I just became glued to the stories about these cats.”

And the idea for a documentary was born.

**THE FIRE CATS**

Parsons says Tucker was the catalyst for her 80-minute film, *The Fire Cats: Save Something Small*, which follows volunteer rescuers like Shannon Jay, a police officer for the National Park Service who spent countless hours of his own time in the burn zone rescuing cats or leaving them food and water. Parsons relied on donated recordings from first responders and rescuers to complete the story, as she first went to California seven months after the Tubbs Fire. Even after all that time, cats—ever resilient—were still being rescued.

Lea Stockham was 15 when the Tubbs Fire hit. She was the primary caregiver for Thomas, a cat who’d been with the family since Lea was a toddler. As the Stockhams prepared to flee their Santa Rosa neighborhood, Lea grabbed Thomas, but he squirmed out of her grip and bolted.

Lea’s dad returned to look for Thomas only to find bones and a burned tail where the porch once stood. The family buried the remains and held a funeral a week later. Lea was overcome by guilt for being unable to save her beloved cat—a heavy burden at her young age, Parsons says.

Forty-four days after the fire, Jay trapped a miraculously unscathed cat with a microchip. It was Thomas. He had traveled a quarter mile through underground pipes to find safety.

“Only about 1-2% of cats and about 20% of dogs are microchipped,” Parsons says. “If you have a microchipped pet and you keep your phone number updated, it’s a matter of minutes to get that pet back. And if you don’t, the chances are almost zero.”

She adds, “People always think of cats as being independent and aloof.

But psychological studies show cats bond with their people precisely the way babies do with their mothers. It’s just as important to get the cat back to their family as it is for the family to get the cat back.”

In the film, Lea pets a contented Thomas. Through tears, Lea’s mother, Dani, says, “I remember one of the things Lea said: ‘I can tell that he forgive me.’ And that helped her forgive herself.”

**HELL IN PARADISE**

*The Fire Cats* was originally going to be a short. But when the Camp Fire ignited in November 2018, the Northern California city of Paradise turned into hell. Parsons flew out five months later. “It was very important for me to see that devastation firsthand,” she says. “Paradise was just wiped out.”

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*A cat has nine lives.
For three he plays, for three he strays,
and for the last three he stays.*

— English Proverb

Above left: Shannon Jay with cat trap in Paradise, California, following the Camp Fire of 2018.

Above right: “Mama Cat” in bandages after being rescued from the Camp Fire, 2018.
The volunteer rescuers from the Tubbs Fire had climbed into their cars and driven three hours north to help in Paradise. Their efforts, which had been welcomed in Santa Rosa, were dismissed this time. The local official rescue organization, North Valley Animal Disaster Group, informed them their assistance wasn’t needed—they had their own people.

“The first half of the story is pretty happy,” Parsons says. “Authorities were letting the rescuers in after Tubbs. These were hometown heroes who were well-known; even the police force recognized their importance. But it became a darker story in the second half. Why would you not welcome skilled rescuers who are going to save you money and save you time?”

The answer, Parsons says, lies in how animals are classified. While cruelty against animals is a federal crime, in most states animals are legally on the same level as a car or a refrigerator—property, not family. And after a large-scale disaster, human life takes priority.

“That’s why animal rescuers are barred from the burn zones, which are very dangerous places,” Parsons explains. “There are liability issues. The ground underneath is still actually burning. Officials want people out of there so they can do their work—because they can’t prioritize animals. We simply have to give animals equal standing with other members of the family. It’s an important issue, and one I tried to build into the film.”

In Paradise, the call of the suffering animals was louder than that of the authorities, and rescuers went in anyway.

“That’s why animal rescuers are barred from the burn zones ... The ground underneath is still actually burning.”

— KATHARINE PARSONS ’74

Left: The movie poster for Parsons’ film. Parsons will screen The Fire Cats: Save Something Small during Reunion 2024 in Oliva Hall at 2 p.m. on Saturday, June 1.

Right: Aerial shot of mobile homes in Paradise, California, destroyed by the Camp Fire, 2018.
Jay spent more than an hour jacking up a truck that had burned and collapsed so he could crawl underneath, on broken glass, to rescue Mama Cat. He rescued another, Stoic, five months after the fire. Parsons adopted him. “I brought him back to Canada, which Stoic didn’t really appreciate because he was a California boy,” she jokes.

Dozens of fire cats appear in the film in various states of distress and injury. Some were found in the burn zone months after anyone thought anything could survive. Cats with microchips or ones matched up through Facebook were almost all reunited with their families. Others were adopted by new owners after spending months healing from burns. Some were euthanized by authorities. All are honored in the credits at the end of the film.

A FAMILY AFFAIR
Since its release in 2022, The Fire Cats: Save Something Small has earned 27 film festival awards, including Best Inspirational Film and Best Original Song at Cannes World Film Festival, Semifinalist at Flickers Rhode Island International Film Festival, and Best of Fest for the Animalis Fabula Film Festival. It also boasts an impressive 9.8/10 IMDb rating.

Parsons, who calls the honors “the icing on the cake,” credits two other Conn alums for their work on the film—her children, Mac Stevens ’00 and Lili Strawbridge ’23.

Stevens served as the sound editor, while Strawbridge is credited for her work on the production crew. She provided creative input and voiceover work, conducted interviews, and, along with Stevens and his two children, recreated scenes of residents fleeing from their homes. She also spent about a week in the Paradise burn zone, accompanying Jay on nighttime stakeouts.

“Shannon had traps set up and night vision cameras linked to his phone that were tripped by sensors. Sometimes we would be sitting in the car for hours just waiting, hoping the cat would come out,” says Strawbridge, who Parsons calls an amazing cinematographer and “cat wrangler.”

For his part, Stevens made good use of the audio-visual skills he honed at Conn. “I think he probably lived over in Palmer Auditorium, so he knew a lot more about sound than I did,” Parsons says. “And sound is at least 50% of a film.”

Stevens says he’s proud of what his family accomplished with Fire Cats.

“It doesn’t just tell the story of a couple of cats; it tells a broader story around humanity and how we interact with disaster.”

“"We simply have to give animals equal standing with other members of the family."”

— Katharine Parsons ’74
The movie doesn’t just tell the story of a couple of cats; it tells a broader story around humanity and how we interact with disaster.

— MAC STEVENS ’00

Rescuer Shannon Jay in the Camp Fire burn zone in Paradise, California, in 2018.
MR. STEVENS GOES TO HOLLYWOOD
The 29th Critics’ Choice Awards began at 4 p.m. Pacific Time on Jan. 14. This was my first awards show, and I had intended to make the best of it. My plan was to arrive around 2:30 or 3 and dive into the pre-show cocktails and mingling. Instead, I walked through the door about 75 minutes late. I was “just” a member of the Critics’ Choice Association, the body that nominates and votes for the awards, and I was pulling some diva stuff that even Joan Crawford in her prime wouldn’t have tried. But it wasn’t my plan, I promise.

It all started weeks earlier with a green and white insulated bag emblazoned with AppleTV+’s Lessons in Chemistry logo. Filled with various objects that conjured memories of the show—a jar of pasta sauce, cracked green rocks glasses, a notebook with graphing paper—it was the first For Your Consideration (FYC) package I received since joining the Critics’ Choice Association in February of 2023.

FYC packages commonly precede Awards season, sent to a home address as a way of reminding critics of a TV series or film they may have loved months earlier but forgotten about in the nonstop deluge of the new. It’s the showbiz equivalent of the “just circling back on this” email you gently send your beleaguered colleagues when a due date is looming and you haven’t spoken to them about it in weeks. It was a fun novelty, something that made my kids repeatedly ask, “But why do they care about you, Dad?” and left my wife, ever the Budget Analyst, shaking her head at how much the shipping must have cost.

It wasn’t the first thing I’d ever received from a show. Only weeks earlier, in fact, I’d gotten a package from Ted Lasso. It was something of a thank you for covering them from the first episode of Season 1 through the last episode of Season 3 for The Spool, where I now work as the TV editor. Yes, I was one of those people urging everyone to watch the series as another wave of COVID swept across the United States late in the summer of 2020. You’re welcome.

However, the occasional small token of thanks I’d received could not prepare me for the tidal wave of FYC packages. At one point in November, I’d received multiple boxes a day filled with candied apples, blankets or movie poster puzzles. My son, well-versed in brand identification thanks to YouTube and my failings as a parent, would occasionally highlight a particular box. “Dad, I saw those cookies on MrBeast. They’re supposed to be good. But SUPER expensive.” Friends, he was right. The cookies were delicious, and when I looked them up online, they did indeed boast quite the price tag.

We began to enact a ritual whenever we had visitors. After the usual “hellos” and “how are yous,” the kids would guide our guests to the corner of our living room to show off the ever-increasing pile of FYC swag. By Christmas, it felt like the mound was bullying our comparatively small circle of presents around the tree.

Even more exciting, though, was that the season also gave me an opportunity to interview Phil Dunster, the actor who plays superstar footballer Jamie Tartt on Ted Lasso. Yes, working for CC Magazine has given me great opportunities to interview some amazing people. I got to talk to H. Jon Benjamin ’88, for goodness sake! (And Lee Eisenberg ’99, which I strongly encourage you to read more about on page 18.) But this was a celebrity interview that I didn’t need the College to facilitate. And, believe it or not, I made the guy laugh.

Of course, it didn’t really all start with that green and white swag bag.

No, it all started the way I imagine all the other TV and film critics began their careers—by majoring in psychology, then working in mental health, then going to grad school and working for more than a decade as a therapist only to ditch...
for me to realize it. First, Professor Janis Solomon of the then barely nascent Film Department took me aside and said of one of my papers, “You are good at this. You should do more of it.” Then, The College Voice brought me on and let me write movie reviews, even as I became first the assistant news editor, then news editor and, finally, editor-in-chief. The likes of Rob Knake ’01, Luke McClure Johnson ’02 and Coley Ward ’03 disagreed with nearly every review I wrote, but they encouraged me to keep going.

Later, I’d write and direct a play in my senior year. Immediately after seeing it, my stepdad, Roy, found me and said, “So, you should be a writer.” Months later, my dad would more or less echo the sentiment, telling me I had his and my stepmom Diane’s support if I wanted to try. I largely ignored them, although now I claim I just took about 18 years to consider their opinions.

All those starts led to me accepting the invitation to join my fellow CCA members and a raft of show business types at the Barker Hangar in Santa Monica, California. The plan was simple. I’d arrive in Los Angeles before noon, head to my hotel and be in my tux on my way to the hangar well before the show’s start. Even if it took me two hours to get dressed, I’d still have plenty of time.

Ah, but the best laid plans of mice and men.

First, my flight left a little late. Then, after we landed in Atlanta, where I was to grab my connecting flight to LAX, we were delayed waiting for a gate. When we got a gate, it took every bit of 20 minutes to deplane. Then came the dagger.

Our new gate was in Terminal F. My next flight was in Terminal A. It was to depart in 15 minutes, and I was as far away from it as I could be while still in the Atlanta airport. I didn’t make it.

Initially, the airline put me on a later flight that would land in LAX just late enough to ensure I’d miss every minute of the show. However, through my incredible powers of negotiation—mostly saying please and conveying how broken I felt with some nomination-worthy facial expressions—they agreed to put me on standby for an earlier flight. Somehow, despite that flight being full and not even being the first on the standby list, I got a seat. I could breathe easy again. I’d miss most of the cocktail time but still arrive before the show began.

Man makes plans; God, well, she laughs.

Luggage and airport shuttles combined to ensure I didn’t even arrive at my hotel before 4 p.m. Too annoyed and delirious to feel shame—I’d now been up for 19 hours after three hours of sleep—I decided to press on. Ultimately, I walked into the backstage area at about 5:15. I immediately hit the bar, followed by the sundae bar. It’s incredible what a beverage and ice cream can do for frazzled nerves.

After that, it was great. The food was tasty, the venue cool, the intermingling of critics, publicists, actors, directors and writers surprisingly low-key and not at all panic-inducing. Despite all the nonsense, it was worth arriving fashionably late to the Critics’ Choice Awards.

I’d love to tell you that when I saw Phil Dunster backstage, he immediately recognized me and embraced me while declaring I was his favorite interviewer. Alas, I cannot. I saw him, but he was on the phone and then hustled onstage to present. So, I guess the possibility that I’m his favorite interviewer hasn’t been disproven, at least.

Instead, I’ll give you this tidbit. As the evening wound down, a publicist approached me. “Hey, I’m Vladimir,” he cheerfully declared, slapping me on the back.

“Tim,” I replied, smiling.

“Tim, you look good. The purple vest works for you. I had to come over and say you look like a man who knows what he’s doing.”

For a moment, I was seized by the wild desire to tell him exactly how little I knew what I was doing and how close I came to missing the whole show. Or telling him I’d honed the “I know what I’m doing here” look wandering around entirely too many TNEs in Cro. Instead, I complimented his pocket square and we compared notes on the evening.

Mr. Stevens had arrived (eventually) in Hollywood. Next time, he’ll book an earlier flight.

—TIM STEVENS ’03

IF I’M HONEST, MY WRITING CAREER HAD ACTUALLY ALREADY BEGUN DURING MY TIME AT CONN, EVEN IF IT TOOK A COUPLE OF DECADES FOR ME TO REALIZE IT.

Mr. Stevens Goes to Hollywood
Class Notes

Sam Silton ’13, Tim Jarrett ’13 and Daniel Smoot ’13 pose with a Tyrannosaurus during a Dec. 6 Alumni Holiday Party at the Museum of Science in Boston. See more photos at show.pics.io/2023-boston-holiday-party
MacGregor, who continues to claim that she and Bob are “wicked old,” and from Barbara Wie- gand Pillote, who, although vision constrained, has worked out an arrangement with a neighbor who reads aloud while Barb listens and knits. It started when they read My Father’s House togeth- er. Mona spent her annual Thanksgiving week at Cove Point on the shores of Lake Superior, en- joying son Doug’s cooking and her daily Manhat- tan as she watched him prepare dinner. He sees to it that Mona takes her daily walks, slow and a bit pained, but still upright. Back at home she’ll finish up writing On My Way Out: How Psycholo- gy Greets or Me and continue searching for a pub- lisher. She’s also scheduled a Viking cruise down the Great Lakes in August with Doug. I think it would be lovely for us to go on record in CC’s next annual giving round if we could pull off close to 100% participation. An old-lady inspiration for those who follow us? Unfortunately, it’s not clear who is currently in our class. I have a list from the College and I know one son on the list are no longer with us. Perhaps it sounds ghoul- ish, but in my spare time I’m checking obituaries. Please send me even a little information so we know who our class is now. I’m happy to receive your news by email, mail or phone. It doesn’t have to be sensational—just something so we know and appreciate who you are. I hope to hear from you!

Monique Maisonnier Wood happy- ly lives in a Del Webb community in Lincoln, Calif., involved in hiking and biking clubs. She has been in a classic book group for 18 years. Monique has five grandchildren and one great-grandchild who lives in Switzer- land, with her mother, who works for the Interna- tional Olympic Committee. Monique’s son lives in Paris, where he works in brain research.

Mariana Parcells Wagoner died Sept. 29, 2023, age 101, making her one of the oldest members of the Class of ‘44. She was a loyal member of the College, serving on various committees, donating regu- larly and attending as many reunions as possible from her home in West Hartford, Conn. The younger sister of Elizabeth Parcells Arms ’39 P’67, Mariana inspired many relatives to enroll at Conn: Carolyn Arms Young ’67, Abigail Shields ’25, and, most recently and currently, Mariana’s great-granddaughter, Ainsley Bogel ’27. Her daughter and son-in-law, Lynda and Frederic (Rick) Bogel, taught in CC’s English department for about 12 years, until they left to teach at Cor- nell University in 1982. Mariana was well until the very end of her days, always loving to recall classmates and teachers, such as Rosamund Tuve and Rosemary Parks. A celebration of her life will take place in August at her family’s summer home, on her 102nd birthday.

Patricia Feldman Whitney ’74 P’80 celebrated her 100th birthday on Dec. 14, 2023. Patricia has served CC as a class gift officer, club leader, class correspon- dent, class president, class vice president and re- union committee member. She is extremely proud that two of her four children attended Conn: Jef- frey Whitney ’73 and Jim Whitney ’78. ’80. Patricia lives in North Branford, Conn. On behalf of Connecticut College, we wish you Happy 100th Birthday, Patricia.

Nancy Bohman Rance sends “greetings from climate-challenged Florida! Living on the intercoastal waterway as a ground-floor tenant with tides invading our condo BBQ area, life is never dull. I still rely on morning aer- obics in the pool to keep me and my walker go- ing! And I am thankful for my family’s constant involvement to keep me busy!” Amy Pierce Buxton typically enjoys her daily walks in Oak- land, Calif., but recently, her walker was struck by a moving vehicle, knocking her over back- ward. At writing she was recuperating in a local hospital. Her daughter also lives in Oakland, and her son and family live across the San Francisco Bay in Mill Valley. She feels fortunate to live so close to her family. Connecticut College wishes Amy a speedy recovery. Mona Gustafson Af- finito still hears regularly from Harriet Bassett

Correspondent: Mona Gustafson Affinito, forgivenessoptions@earthlink.net, 723 Water Street, Apt. 1001, Excelsior, MN, 55331, 612-760-5007

Correspondent: Joanne Williams Hartley, jodihartley69@icloud.com, 69 Chesterton Road, Wellesley MA 02481, 617-620-9385 Louise Kline Trump Tanner is the first to say she is going to our 70th reunion! Her daughter will drive her from her beautiful home on Lake Champlain. Louise had a 90th birthday party last summer, attended by 90 guests. She no longer drives but is doing well, and her kids visit regularly and help with the home. Ann Heagney Weimer is in rehab after a hospital stay; she has had several falls, with a cumulative effect on her mobility. Her kids are very devoted; we hope she can regain her strength soon. Janet Rowe Dugan is as lively as ever, traveling from Florida to her home in New Hampshire each summer. Sally Ashkins Churchill is fine, active and still in her home and continues to visit for class. Norma Hamady Richards lives in a coopera- tive facility in D.C. and is doing well. Her hus- band passed away 20 years ago; she’s since found a wonderful partner, who has been with her for several years. Norma has a daughter in San Fran- cisco with three grown kids, and her son, who is a doctor, raised a daughter who now works on Wall Street and a son who is a lawyer. Norma stays in touch with Jan King Evans-Houser P’80 GP’18 and Ann Heagney Weimer. Catherine Pappas McNamara has had a tough year. Finding they needed more care, Cathy and husband Bill moved within their retirement community to an assist- ed-living unit. Sadly, Bill passed away on the day of the move. Cathy has mobility issues and is in a wheelchair, but she hopes with therapy to get back to walking. She is grateful for her daughter’s help; though she lives in Connecticut she is very supportive. Cathy is still Cathy though, positive and doing her best; she is active in her communi- ty and loves having dinner with others—without cooking! Jane Daly Crowley is still in her home and enjoying it, but she is contemplating going to a retirement community in her neighborhood. We all know it is difficult to manage when it is hard- er or no longer practical to drive. Jane’s two very supportive daughters are in Connecticut. Elaine Goldstein Lechtreck married and lived in Alas- bama for many years. Her husband died in 2010, and she moved back to a home she had in North Stanford, Conn., where she lives in a remote area, enjoys church and her garden, and has some friends. She has a son in NYC and a daughter in Milford, Conn. and another son in California, who visits twice a year. Over the years, Elaine desired and eventually got her PhD in religious history. After 26 years of research, writing, rewriting and editing, and with her husband’s help, she published her book, Southern White Ministers and the Civil Rights Movement. She has spoken at many churches and colleges, including Conn, since the book was published. Congratulations, Elaine! Bar- bara Guerin Colon, husband Cecil and their dog enjoy their cottage in a retirement community in lovely Asheville, N.C. Ann Marcuse Raymond enjoys living in a continuing-care retirement com- munity in Reading, Conn., where she once had a second home. Her daughters live in Delaware and Florida; she has three adorable great-grandsons, ages three and under. She often takes a two-hour train trip to stay with NY friends and visit her favorite museums; she feels grateful that she lived there for so many years. Ann Reagan Weeks is in good health; she lives in a 55+ community in the Princeton, N.J. area, only a short drive from her chil- dren. She still drives locally, but her kids drive her to her summer beach home in Delaware. I would love to hear from more of you. Being around the same age, we are dealing with similar situations— it is interesting! Our class list is still sizable, and I would love to reach more of you by phone. Please email me your phone number and your favorite note would be appreciated as well. Our classmates love to hear about one another, and I would like to include more of you!
Unlikely friends graduated 62 years apart

Matthew Greene Marshall ’08 and Lorraine Lincoln Lieberman ’46 are an unlikely pair of best friends. “We are polar opposites, but you know what they say—opposites attract,” Matt says. “I am very outgoing and very whimsical. Lorraine is much more reserved and very traditional. I like to think that we complement each other.”

Lorraine attended Connecticut College when it was a women’s school, while Matt graduated nearly 40 years after the College went co-ed. In fact, when asked what differences she notices between now and when she was a student, Lorraine remarks, “They’ve got boys!”

Matt and Lorraine met in 2001 while working at the Florence Griswold Museum in Old Lyme. Matt, who was finishing an associate’s degree in graphic design at Mitchell, would supervise and give tours in the Griswold House on the weekends. And as the museum’s newest docent, Lorraine was assigned the Sunday afternoon shift, which no one wanted. But it worked out better than she could have imagined.

“On slow days, we would sit in the front hall of the Griswold House together and talk and get to know each other,” Matt recalls. “Months later, when I decided I really liked working at the museum, I considered Conn as one of my options to continue my education, because Lorraine inspired me with how great of a time she’d had at Conn with its community and prestige. Here was someone who had graduated more than 60 years ago at the time and she was talking fondly about it, so it seemed like a special place.”

World War II ended right around the time Lorraine began her senior year at Conn. Back in the 1940s, Lorraine’s father worked in the automobile industry selling Packards, so Lorraine was one of the few women on campus who had a car. She lived in Windham House her senior year, and her room was often filled with women dancing—she had a Victrola record player, which was a novelty at the time. Under her senior photo in Conn’s yearbook, Koiné, she was dubbed “owner of the Vic.” She was also noted for having “the most original laugh.”

Lorraine graduated with a degree in government, but her life didn’t go the way she’d initially planned. She says, “As a government major, you thought you were going to go out and save the world. Well, the world didn’t want me. But at church, they were looking for Sunday school teachers.”

She enjoyed teaching so much, she decided to enroll at the Teacher’s College of Connecticut, now known as CCSU. She earned her degree and taught second grade in Old Lyme for many years. After retirement, she volunteered at the Florence Griswold Museum, the Goodspeed Opera House in East Haddam, and the Killingworth Library.

“I think I was one of the few in my class who got a job,” she notes. “In 1946, the servicemen had come home, so most of the women were starting families, and I got a job as a teacher. I remember telling the principal, ‘I’d come if you didn’t pay me.’ I was happy working.”

Matt earned an art history degree and Museum Studies certificate from Conn in 2008. He worked at the Florence Griswold Museum for 19 years and left last May for the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art in Hartford. He also consults for multiple museums around the country.

When Matt got married in 2019 in Harkness Chapel, he had no living grandparents—but he knew his surrogate grandmother had to be there. He recalls, “At the time, Lorraine still drove herself everywhere. I knew she had to be at my wedding but wasn’t sure how I should facilitate her getting there and home so I knew she’d be safe. So I gave her a plus-one thinking she could have her daughter come with her.”

He continues, “As the wedding day drew near, her daughter asked Lorraine what time she should pick her up. Lorraine’s response was, ‘He invited me, not you.’ Her daughter responded, ‘Mother, I can drop you off and pick you up if you don’t want me to stay.’ In her typical dry wit, Lorraine replied, ‘Deborah, I have been driving myself to and from Connecticut College since World War II—I think I will be fine.’ So, in typical Lorraine fashion, a few weeks shy of her 95th birthday, she drove herself to and from Connecticut College without any help.”

Lorraine has been a constant in Matt’s life for more than 20 years. “I can’t imagine my life without her,” he says. “I am so grateful that our paths crossed and that we have had so many great years together. She is and always will be a special person who helped shape the person I am today.” —Melissa Babcock Johnson
Marilyn Mason Ramsay, Barbara Jenkinson, Beth Ruderman Levine and Sue Schwartz Gorham. They moved as a group to Windham House and Katharine Blunt House, and now share news of living alone in real “senior housing.” They meet on Zoom monthly and catch up on children and grands. No great-grands from this crew yet. Suzanne relocated from her beloved Baltimore to the D.C. suburbs, closer to her daughter and her family, and switched her allegiance to Washington, “a beautiful, lively city with unlimited opportunities for learning, touring, great dining and entertainment.” Retirement keeps her busy: bridge, book club, tennis, lots of walking and volunteering in her community. She and her new high-rise in D.C. are following the beautiful expansion of the CC waterfront.

Joyce Bagley Rheingold and husband Paul (90) are both doing well. Son David is getting married in April. He and bride Myrna haven’t stopped smiling since their engagement—Joyce is so happy for them! She visited the Italian Lakes and Milan last spring and visited Key West with kids, grands, whatever, for New Year’s. She is in Naples, Fla., on and off throughout the winter. She and Paul will celebrate their 65th anniversary in April. She wishes her classmates a happy and healthy New Year. “Keep plugged along, ladies; would love to hear from anyone in Naples or Sunape.” She keeps in touch with longtime roommate Prudy Parris Martin. Nancy Teese Mouget P’81 ’82 enjoys life in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario, Canada—a small town with wonderful theater and 40 wineries within an hour’s drive. What’s not to like? Her good health permits her to stay active.

She went to Turks and Caicos in December and plans six weeks escaping the Canadian winter in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico. Her three daughters are all in the States and it’s a long haul to get there, but they’re willing to make the drive. Life has been lonely since her partner Alfred’s death on Sept. 1, 2022, but she has very supportive family and friends and many fond memories of CC! Marie Waterman Harris writes that all is well with the Harris family. They planned to get together in the Dominican Republic for Christmas; she looked forward to spending time with daughter Ellen and husband Matthia, from Boston; Ellen’s son Chris and wife Brenna, from the U.K.; and granddaughter Caroline, husband Michael, and two great-grandsons, Liam (4) and Weston (2), from Colorado. Marie’s son, Ken, and his family will be in Australia visiting Julianna’s family. Perhaps a full family reunion next year!

Correspondent: Elaine Diamond Berman, 100 Riverside Blvd., Apt. 20C, New York, NY 10069, elainedberman@comcast.net. Ann Henry Crow P’83 and her husband, Hartt, live in New Hampshire, where Hartt is a retired radiologist who set up an ultrasound department at Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center. They live in a retirement community and enjoy all the outdoor opportunities in the area. Ann is particularly interested in land preservation. She enjoys seeing Sarah Greene Burger, who spends summers there. Enid Siewert Bradley took a monthlong cruise to London from Fort Lauderdale, Fla. Enid lives in Albuquerque, N.M., and has a large rose garden. She plays the cello in the Albuquerque Symphony Orchestra and frequently joins local musicians to play chamber music.

Nancy Pollak Beres, who lives in NYC, teaches English to adult students once a week through English in Action. She meets friends out and enjoys her monthly book club. Nancy enjoys seeing her five grandchildren. Nancy, Joan Schwartz Buehler P’85 and Elaine Diamond Berman met for lunch one sunny November day on Manhattan’s Upper West Side. They enjoyed reminiscing about their wonderful education and happy times at Conn and talked about all the positive changes at the school. Nancy Stevens Purdy and Dick are “up and about and now living in an OPH (old people’s home) in Medway, Mass., care- and snow-shoveling-free.” Jeri Fluegelman Josephson P’86 lost her husband, Buddy, after a long fight with Parkinson’s disease. Jeri moved from Florida to North Carolina to be near her son and his wife, who are both physicians. Jeri lives in a senior residence in Cornelius, N.C. Her daughter and family have lived in London for many years, and Jeri has a grandson who lives and works in Hong Kong.

Olga lives. Olga is well, although COVID cases sometimes preclude visits from her brother and his family, who live in D.C. Gail then went to Morocco. She met a native beekeeper selling honey by the road. In Fre she shared a meal where the hostess had her try on a native dress. She learned how to make Moroccan bread, and she got a henna tattoo. She plans to attend Reunion. Suzanne Rie Day GP’99 is coping with some physical declines (aren’t we all?). She has her “wits” and a supportive family. She volunteers on some governing boards and in her retirement community.

Correspondent: Carolyn Keefe Oakes, carolynoakes07@gmail.com, 3333 Warrensville Center Road, Apt. 412, Shaker Heights, OH 44122, 216-752-5384; Marcia Fortin Sherman, marciasherman@bellsouth.net, 205 Reed Valley Drive, Easton, SC 29042, 864-654-1957; Sally Kellogg Goodrich says all is well with her husband. Her children have left the nest, and her grandchildren are getting married. Sara Gail Glidden Goodell visited with Olga Lehovich in Maryland, where
living in Vinal and made lifelong friends (Marian Whitney Melhuish and Lenore Fiskio, in particular). Lenore is the Wordle champ of the class. Susan Biddle Dzyacky also comments on Vinal: “Small made big adjustments to a new life a bit less daunting. We were just 16.” Sally Glanville Train became a close lifelong friend and relative by marriage. The father of Susan’s girls was Sally’s first cousin. So sad to have lost Sally during the pandemic! “We did a lot of walking—Thames for meals, Holmes for music, down the hill. All else was up the hill.” Susan does not recall any drama. Oh well, don’t laugh: Susan believes she wore a suit when she arrived as a freshman, maybe even a hat. She shudders at the thought of gloves. It was a different time. Susan continues to live in Warwick, R.I.: 56 years and counting! She is alone but for her feline friends, Charlie and Teddy. She is an active member of Garden Club, and as a lifelong knitter, she has a small weekly knitting group, and a book club as well. She went to Bologna, Italy, to visit her youngest grandchild, who did a fall semester from Vassar. In October, Jean Curtiss Britt went on a Country Walkers hiking trip in Normandy and Brittany, France, with her eldest daughter. They started with a few days in Paris and then joined the hiking group for a weeklong hike. Highlights were the beaches of Normandy, the American Cemetery and Mont Saint-Michel. In the summer Jean’s daughter Sarah Britt ’87 visited; Sarah is married to a Greek man and has lived in Athens since their marriage in 1994. Sarah’s two kids (22 and 24) saw their favorite sights in Chicago (an architectural boat tour, the Art Institute, Walker Bros. Pancake House) and then spent a few days in Boston. Jean lives in a senior-living campus and is grateful for health, family (mostly close by) and her vibrant community. Contact the CC alumni office for Jean’s address.

Tamsen Evans George received an award for her recent book on U.S. history, Allegiance: The Life and Times of William Eustis.

Correspondent: Bonnie Campbell Billings-Wauters, big22@aol.com, 1348 Winding Oaks Circle W, Vero Beach, FL 32963, 802-724-1876 What a wonderful response to my plea for notes! Ten classmates responded within a day—may this happen again, with new respondents, in four months! I loved hearing from Jeanette Cannon Ruffle; we got together a year ago. “We have been in our condo in the woods for two years and are happy with it. So nice to walk out the door and decide whether to walk into the woods or down to Lake Champlain, or both. Our seven grandchildren are growing up, from a first grader to two high school seniors. Fun to share these years with them. Lots to do in Burlington, Vt.: bocce by the lake in the summer, and tai chi and yoga all year. We haven’t traveled recently, except to Montreal, but I help a friend from the Dominican Republic with her English weekly and am learning about that wonderful country from her—not actually traveling, but so rewarding. We heard Judy Collins (now 84) sing at our local theater. I flashed back to a day, maybe sophomore year (?), when she came to Connecticut and we sat on the floor somewhere listening to her. I remember loving her voice then and have followed her through the years. She still has a beautiful, clear voice. I am in touch with Wally Coates Poprocki, Gail Martin Reed and Diana Sherman Peacock.” Lanny Brown Anderson wrote: “Bill and I celebrated our 55th (not bad for my second marriage) at a chateau in the Loire Valley. Three of our kids have summer houses within a five-minute drive or walk from our year-round house in Deer Isle, Maine—wonderful, especially since our youngest grandchild lives in Bangkok. We still play duplicate bridge.” My husband, Joe, and I spent some fun days visiting—dining, golfing, playing bridge—with Lanny and Bill in September. Marian (Bing) Bingham wrote: “You are great to track me down. Although I was in freshman class with you, I actually graduated magna cum laude in ’91. So I’m touched that I still qualify for ’63.” Bing lived for years in Connecticut before returning to Marin County, Calif., her birth state, two years ago, where she lives with husband Ken McAdams in Larkspur, Calif., and has a studio in the ICB Building in Sausalito. She’s in the ICB Artists Association and was part of open studios in December. Her master’s degree from Wesleyan was an MALS in art/poetry—short story; she continues writing and had a poem accepted in The Marin Poetry Center Anthology. “Thanks for reaching out.” Another “first responder,” Vicky Baron Prince, hopes other “first-timers” might step up. Vicky has been married and living in Louisville, Ky., for 60 years, years filled with community volunteering and boards, travel, book groups, and serious gardening. When arthritis
prohibited tennis and golf, she turned to bridge for mental stimulation and socialization. Her husband, June (Wesleyan ‘61), has been diagnosed with dementia, so they are on an unknown path. Their son and his family moved back to Louisville 15 years ago. Their daughter and family live in Atlanta. Their five grandchildren are all in college or graduate school. Life has been generous, and they are thankful! Jeanne Crispe Paese doubts many will remember her (just two years as a commuting student), but she’s “happy to report I’m still alive and kicking in SoCal.” She went to Dublin for its Theatre Festival with her sister and the Chester (Mass.) Theatre Company. “Great fun—five plays during the week, enlightening and entertaining talkbacks by Chester Theatre directors, and time to explore Dublin. To my delight, Anne Brown Dunn visited me in Massachusetts. Old friends are the treasure of our lives, especially as we grow older. Best wishes to all.” Sally Sweet Ward was sorry to have missed everyone else for information. They only had one travel excursion this year; she spent much time doing a book about her 2022 travels. They enjoyed a week with son Jonathan and his family at their summer place in Maine, on a small island in a small lake that has been in the family for almost 100 years. (An aside: One of our classmates is married to a man who, as a boy, went to Camp Ettowah, which is on the same lake as the Ward’s retreat.) They spent a few days in Virginia, visiting with Sally’s husband’s family, and they had breakfast with Carol Zinkus McKim and husband Dan, who seem to be enjoying life, as is Sally. Her only other planned trip (and by train!) was to Portland, Ore., for Theatrith’s production of “Sweeney Todd” in which she helped start. Her youngest child, Madeline Igon ‘09, will present Sally’s fifth grandchild soon.

**Susan Peck Hinkel**, 1064 N. Main St, Danby, VT 05739, rerob@mac.com; Pat Antell Andrews, 2800 S. University Blvd., Unit 4, Denver, CO 80210, pandre0615@gmail.com Should colleges focus on technical and marketable skills? Are the liberal arts curricula dead? Ronda (Ronnie) Peck Johnson recalled that our great scholars (Tuve, Mulvey, Dilly, Goodwin, Jordan, Evans) all demanded that we look at original sources and historical context. The traditional disciplines were not ends in themselves but ways to teach analytical thought. On the other hand, she worried, the College’s current definition of liberal arts seems to focus on social activism without the foundation of original research and objectivity. “The values included in liberal arts educations are vital to our humanity. Advances in technology are important to serve these goals, not to amass great wealth and power.”

**Pam White Person** gives thanks for being able to use current ecological gardening practices: “Climate change is evident in my part of Maine, especially in the winter. I became a widow in 2019 and now do most of my energy, environmental and electric volunteering via Zoom. I am grateful to live near beautiful Acadia National Park with my two cats.” Pam is in touch with Linda Mellen Zickler, Barb Johnston Adams, Sonya Paranko Fry and Carol Keys Hignite. Although claiming to have slowed down, Sarah (Sally) Ryan Black is still trying to produce a movie that her husband wrote. Progress was hurt by the two recent strikes in Hollywood. Sally is involved with two organizations for the homeless in Los Angeles, one of which she helped start. Her youngest child, Madeline Igon ‘09, will present Sally’s fifth grandchild soon.

**Correspondents:** Carol Chapkin and Bridget Donahue Healy; ccnotes66@gmail.com During a visit to her family village in Italy in April 2023, Joan Bucciarelli P’92 stood before the house where her grandfather was born and declared, “I am a Bucci-
prompted commission for a portrait of husband Drew Days my signature came easily.” A Yale Law School Bucciarelli in July. “Feels good, and returning to Jan what travel with your CC classmates will inspire? ly only on Grand Cayman Island. Who knows one in New Haven, Conn., and one for fami- 80th birthday celebrations planned in February: in Portland, September while visiting her brother and sister- in-law, and with friends and family in Portland, Maine, and El Paso, Tex., in August. Ann has two 80th birthday celebrations planned in February: one in New Haven, Conn., and one for fam- ily only on Grand Cayman Island. Who knows what travel with your CC classmates will inspire? While on a series of seven-day trips with Jan Davison Peake, Kate Curtis Donahue, Bridget Donahue Healy, Lee Johnson Stockwell, Caroline Davis Murray, Jane Brown LaPrino, Jill Neilsen, Susan Mabrey Gaud ’68 and Terry McNab Rixse, Debby Nichols Losse visited Québec, Montréal, South Carolina, and St. Au- gustine, Fla., and realized that a book examining French interaction with the Indigenous peoples in the Americas from Spanish, English and Dutch efforts might coincide with her interest in 16th-century French narrative. Unfortunately the group did not visit Brazil, also included in Deb- by’s study (Seeing and Knowing the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas: Exchange and Alliance Between France and the New World During the French Wars of Religion, 2023), but perhaps in future years. Debby is grateful for the friendship and sense of adventure these dear college friends contributed to her work. In June 2023, Betsey Staples Harding and husband Sam took a National Geographic Arctic cruise around Svalbard, the archipelago above northern Norway, watch- ing seabirds, walruses, reindeer, wolves and polar bears. “From the naturalists’ fascinating scientific explanations, to important climate change issues, to stories about the entire area, we gained a great- er awareness of humans’ impact on the Arctic, which we also noted in Siberian and Alaskan Arctic regions we’ve visited.” After receiving a new knee, Liane Sterns Gow an is grateful for her family’s support, from husband Dick; children Liz, Jim and Dick; and her seven grandchildren. Dick and Liane enjoyed many summer conc- erts, as well as local senior-center programs and strength training at the YMCA. Being social and active are their paramount goals. Liane is also an enthusiastic quilter. Please continue sending your news and photos.

67 Correspondents: Deborah Greenstein, debbgg837@verizon.net; Marcia Hunter Matthews, marciamattheas3g@gmail.com We send condolences to Bahira Betty Sugarman on the death of her husband. “I’m navigating the Widow’s Path, the time of grief for my beloved Rabbi Dr. Shaya Isenberg. He left his bones behind June 14 on a clap of thunder as I accompanied his soul’s release after two nights at Hospice House. Truly an awesome ex- perience. We moved together to Gainesville, Fla., in August 1973 and married in April 1986. It’s been a fabulous journey.” Faith Jackson Parker and husband split time between Vero Beach, Fla., and summers plus Christmas in Stowe, Vt. They spent a week in Bermuda with friends, including Lori-Ann Lyons Eckert, with whom Faith was in ConnChords. Wendy Sarkissian received her MA from Conn in 1967; she has a new book out, a climate emergency memoir: Creeksong: One Wom- an Sings the Climate Blues (creeksongbook.com). In Sarasota, Fla., Jackie King Donnelly and Pat- rick celebrated their 50th anniversary. Daughter Martha lives with her family in Lake Barrington, Ill., and son Patrick lives in Portland, Ore., so they are frequent flyers. All of Debby Greenstein’s travel plans described in the last Class Notes column went off beautifully. “It was exhausting but wonderful.” She is especially proud that she and her travel friend planned the whole Scandinavian trip, conquering the public transit systems in Copenhagen, Oslo and Stockholm. Last sum- mer Debby was walking in D.C. wearing a Conn College T-shirt when two young women stopped her: Abigail Philip ’10 and Ashton Rohmer ’10. They now often run into each other and are sometimes joined by Abi’s twin sister, Zoe Philip ’10. Wendy Thompson Noyes took partner Alex Bouton to Conn last summer and was over- whelmed by its beauty. “Especially smashing is the waterfront and all the opportunities it offers. Gone are the days when only a dedicated bota- nist like Betsy Veitch Dodge would spend her Saturdays wallowing around the bogs looking for special plants.” Wendy has met Clare Pey- ton ’21 several times in Baltimore, and they have become friends. In October, Elayne Zweifler Gardstein had a wonderful trip to London and Paris to celebrate her husband’s birthday. “London was all about theater, high tea, the Regent’s Canal, the Victoria and Albert Museum’s Coco Chanel retrospective and a visit to my antiquarian bookshop friends. We took the Eurostar train to Paris. There, the Rothko exhibition in the Bois de Boulogne was a museum highlight. Walks along the Seine and the Canal Saint-Martin whetted our appetite for French cuisine.” Marcia Hunt- er Matthews was grateful to get all three sons and their families together in Kennebunkport, Maine, to celebrate Bill’s 80th birthday and the high school graduation of three grandsons. She thanks Nancy Blumberg Austin for organizing a monthly Zoom gathering of classmates Judi Ros- man Hahn, Rae Downes Koschet, Susie Endel Kerner, Sue Leahy Eldert and Dana Freedman Liebman join Marcia and Nancy for wonderful conversations about politics, family, Conn mem- ories and Susie’s documentary, Eva’s Promise. The film documents the journey of Holocaust survivor Eva Geiringer Schloss, posthumous stepsister of Anne Frank, to find and share the paintings her brother hid in his WWII attic hid- ding place. The film played at museums in Europe and the U.S., including the Anne Frank House, in Amsterdam, and the Ronald Reagan Presiden- tial Library, in California. Susie looks forward to the film’s debut on public television in 2024.

68 Correspondent: Mary Clarkeson Phil- lips, 36 The Crossway, Delmar, NY 12054, mphill2@nyacap.rr.com Doug and I celebrated our 55th anniversary while Re- union was happening. We stay active with volun-

Nancy Benjamin Nolan ’70, Steve Reiserzewig, Pamela Schofield ’69 and Susan Nagles Rosenzweig ’69 enjoyed lunch together in Watertown, Mass., before Thanksgiving.

Nancy Benjamin Nolan ’70, Steve Reiserzewig, Pamela Schofield ’69 and Susan Nagles Rosenzweig ’69 enjoyed lunch together in Watertown, Mass., before Thanksgiving.

“W e are slowly making some new friends and living with our daughter. Our two grandsons are in college. Gail Weintraub Stern traveled to Egypt and Jordan in October. One day after arriving in Cairo, the Gaza conflict erupted. Gail felt safe during her two week and a half weeks in the Middle East and enjoyed meeting her travel mate, Kate Gridley, who has strong CC connections.

In the fall of 2022, we took a two-week Baltic cruise, preceded by two weeks in Sweden, where we visited some of my ancestral villages. During the cruise, we had personal guides, including a friend in Copenhagen and a German cousin in Berlin. In 2023, we took three camping trips, visiting friends, ancestral sites and family in Arizona, Wyoming, Oregon and Utah. We toured southwest England for a few weeks. I drove in England for the first time—at our age! Then we visited my brother in Houston. At home, I am president of my church’s women’s group—never a dull moment! We are thankful for good health, despite a few creaky joints.” In September 2023, Ginger Henry Keunzel, Nancy Lauter and Carol Brennan visited a distillery on the Isle of Lewis and Harris in the Outer Hebrides of Scotland. “On the day we arrived, the distillery had just released its first batch of The Hearach single-malt whiskey.” The three friends are joined by Priscilla Chrishman Newbury for regular Zoom chats. Ginger splits time between northern Lake George, N.Y., and southwest Florida; Nancy is moving from New York City to the Boston area; Carol lives in Oxford, England; and Priscilla lives in Boulder, Colo. Ginger shared some personal history: She met her husband, who’s from Munich, hitchhiking through Europe in 1973. They have two sons, one who was born in a VW bus during the 1979 Oktoberfest. “Way to really be a Münchner, as they call Munich residents!” Before moving back to the U.S. in 1995, Ginger worked as a journalist and translator in Munich. A few years ago, Ginger’s book Duwestoom, Hilarious Tales from a Fictional Adriodack Town was published. Son Stefan owns Excursions Marina, in Fort Myers Beach, Fla. In September 2023, Hurricane Ian destroyed nearly everything on that beach. Stefan said, “If you want to know how bad it is here, Lester Holt has been broadcasting from my parking lot.” Want to rent a kayak or stand-up paddleboard or cruise on his brand-new tiki pub? Check out tikipub.com/fortmyersbeach.

Emily

“Winter 2024 | Class Notes

70 Correspondent: Myrna Chandler Goldstein, myrmacgoldstein@gmail.com “Realizing that the time window is gradually closing,” Karen Blickwede Knowlton and husband Kim have accelerated their travel.
Harvey Mahon retired from Lucent (formerly Bell Labs/Western Electric) in 1998 as marketing and strategic planning VP for Caribbean and Latin America, with HQ Coral Gables, Fla. She sold her house and bought a condo in Lakeland, Fla., and one in Little Falls, N.J. Now she is finally splitting her time as planned. She and her husband ended up with PhDs and second careers in academia. Her husband is fully retired, and Emily does some statistics and methods advising at the graduate level—by Zoom these days. They enjoy themselves and their three kids and their families (five grandkids and one great-grand). Emily got her kids through acquisitions and mergers, but all the resulting progeny are hers from the get-go. “Life is good.” Jane Branigan Occhio-grosso P’06, Molly Hall Prokop, Hethar Clash Macfarlane, Karen Kuskin-Smith, Lee Marks, Debbie Foster Ebeling and “always with us” Susan Lee spent their annual mini reunion at the Olde Mill Inn in Basking Ridge, N.J. This year the friends shared letters they’d written to each other after graduation. “What we found striking and comforting was that the deep bond we forged at Conn was equally apparent in those old letters as it is still today. We feel so blessed to have each other.” Now that we’re all in our 70s, I want to share a personal experience. For no apparent reason, last summer I began to fall regularly. After one landed me in the emergency department with eight broken ribs, a blood test showed a dangerously low level of serum sodium (hyponatremia), likely causing the falls. I received intravenous fluids re-sodium in the ICU for a few days. Mark and I subsequently moved to one landed me in the ICU for a few days. Mark and I subsequently moved to

971 Correspondents: Lisa McDonnell, madon-
nell@denison.edu, 79 Audubon Avenue, Binghamton, NY 13903, and Lois Olcott Price, loprice@yahoo.com, 934A Alto Street, Santa Fe, NM 87501 In February 2023 Beverly Sager was diagnosed with breast cancer, 20 years after her prior diagnosis. She lives in daughter Kim’s in-law apartment; her family (including three grandchildren) and partner Ron provided daily social support. Her church, doctors and friends were all there for her. After chemotherapy and daily radiation, she is cancer-free! Feeling she has been to hell and back, it’s miraculous to be this healthy again. With renewed appreciation for life, she hopes to participate in class activities (book studies, meetups) and travel with Ron. She has been in touch with Susan Scott Kelley, Christine Howells Reed, Stephanie Young Blanchette and Helen Kendrick ’72, as well as our class officers. “Thank you all!” Lucy Eastman Tuck wrote that after reconnecting at our 50th, Clara Montero Mednick, Daryl Davies, Rosemary Bonser Johnson, Susan Bear and Lois Olcott Price have gathered regularly. The friends spent a week in Santa Fe and Taos, N.M., visiting local sites and museums, and many wonderful shops, galleries and restaurants. Jane Dilley loved participating in the book group. She read books she would not have read and appreciated her classmates’ thoughts—a wise, funny, thoughtful group. She saw classmates on Zoom she hadn’t seen in decades and met up with Ronna Reynolds and Anne Maxwell Livingston in Keene, N.H., as they returned from a fall writing visit to Vermont. Retired life in Webster, N.H., is quiet. After decades as “unde-clared,” Jane joined the town Democratic committee and serves on a local land trust’s development committee. Jane takes piano lessons, hikes with friends and strength-trains at a local center. Her dog tore her ACL and partner Craig injured his collarbone, so Jane remains a caretaker! In September, Jane’s 109-year-old mother died. She didn’t suffer, and the service celebrating her life was extraordinary, with her fabulous singing group, the Swinging Singers, Seniors, proving it’s never too late, nor are you ever too old to sing! Gretchen Liddle Abernathy recommends Blue Skies, by T.C. Boyle. A few years ago, Ellen Parry heard the disturbing phrase “food insecurity.” She couldn’t solve global problems, but she could tackle one close to home. She likes to cook so volunteered at a soup kitchen. The volunteers are interesting, accomplished individuals: a professional counselor who organized and runs the kitchen, a surgical nurse, a venture capitalist, a stewardess, a ballroom dancer, an aromatherapist, a dog groomer, a chef, a medical ethicist and a food writer. A year ago, Ellen’s husband, an audio consultant, came for the day to help. He stayed and now devotes his time to caring for onions, makes hot chocolate and serves coffee. An-Ming Sze Truxes is reminded by historian husband Tom that war and violence have existed across cultures since before recorded history, part of the human condition; they cope by avoiding television, so they don’t become desensitized to the violence and inhumanity portrayed in bite-size media bits. An-Ming keeps up with the news via phone or laptop. She volunteers on three community boards, where she can learn, grow and work with people. She is thankful and privileged to make a difference in her town, and grateful for the blessings of loving family, friends, social connections and her ’71 classmates. They ALL help keep her sane! Barbara Kahn Stewart retired in April after teaching English as a Second Language for 18 years (the last three online). She and husband Burr love having more time for social ballroom dancing (especially Lindy Hop), and she’s happily started new activities like tai chi and qigong. Lamarian Hayes-Wallace is elated about their first grandson, KaMaria Inez Wallace, born on Aug. 31, 2023. The 50th reunion book club discussions launched new relationships with classmates. She was impressed with the continued interest in advocating for social justice and environmental issues. She walks regularly with the Nature Gurz, retired ladies who walk in a community nature preserve. Seeing nature’s beauty and enjoying fellowship helps her decompress from the challenges facing the nation and world. For Jane Terry Giardino, the year has been disturbing from a world view, but she is grateful for precious time with grandchildren, a summer largely free of smoky skies, fabulous trips to Utah and Arizona, and a month in Tunisia. The class Zoom book discussions were a highlight. “Thanks to all who organized, presented, read and shared.” Susan Chadwick Fockress lives in the same An-dover, Mass., house they’ve had for 35 years. Kids and grands live nearby. The oldest granddaughter teaches in Boulder, Colo., and grandson Nate is a second-class cadet at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. He is thriving academically and captain of the crew team. Grandfather Bob, a USCGA grad, loves sharing Nate’s experience. Bob’s posse, three high school–age grandchildren, have busy social lives. They are heading toward their second empty nest. They resumed their COVID-interrupt ed travels, including a 50th anniversary trip to Scandinavia. The ferry trip around the North Cape to Kirkenes, Norway, to within 490 meters of the Russian border was the highlight of the trip; they stopped in small towns to deliver mail and supplies and crossed the Arctic Circle, complete with freezing-water baptism in 35-degree weather. In early March, they joined Bob and Kathy Swift Gravino for a weeklong getaway to Madeira, Portugal—beautiful churches, dramatic landscape, cultural activities and of course, lovely Madeira wine. In April they fulfilled a 14th-birthday (COVID-delayed) family tradition and took the three youngest granddaughters to London for a week. Delightful travelers, they were interested in everything: the V&A museum, lots of theater, Kensington Palace and Windsor Castle.
Correspondents: Barbara White Morse, barbarawmorse@gmail.com, and Ann Tousignant, anntoutignant@gmail.com

Elizabeth (Grindy) Leahy Stormer, Roxane Landers Althouse, Nancy Lane Carey and Reggie Andersen O’Brien enjoyed a “romp” in Victoria, Canada. They took the ferry from the Kitsap Peninsula, Wash., where Reggie lives, and had a grand four days touring together. Highlights were: the Butchart Gardens, tea at the Empress hotel, the Royal British Columbia Museum, shopping and eating out. Crindy says they love their romps and can’t wait for the next one. Margo Reynolds Steiner keeps busy with her freelance editing and writing business and offers obituary-writing workshops online, in person and at councils on aging. Participants appreciate the opportunity to write about who they are and what they find meaningful about their lives. One person even wrote an obituary for his beloved dog! Margo’s father is turning 100, and she and her sisters are planning a celebration. Margo, Sherry Page Bode and Barb Witter Enman enjoy a monthly Zoom chat, along with a glass or two of wine. Last fall Margo was thrilled to take second place in the Topsfield Fair’s pickling competition for her watermelon rinds. It was her first time entering, so: “Next year ... it’s first place or bust!” Deborah Hansen Hollenberg has had an amazing life since Conn, including a career as an artist, a theatrical costume designer and a medical artist; working in international art theater projects; as a student of fashion design; and as an actress in The Witches of Eastwick, where she met Michelle Pfeiffer. During her 35-year marriage to her late husband, Dr. Norman Hollenberg, a renowned leader in cardiovascular and renal medicine and hypertension, they traveled widely for his work. Deborah’s favorite places were Italy, Japan, Hawaii, London and, of course, New York. In early 2020 Deborah experienced the triple loss of her husband, twin brother and mother. She is grateful for Temple Israel’s clergy and community, which embraced her and lifted her during her grieving. She is beginning to reengage in creative endeavors and fondly remembers the faculty of the Fine Arts Department, who recognized and nurtured her artistic talents. Nancy (Nano) McNamara continues to teach Pilates. Her studio is the training center for Romana’s Pilates Internationale in NYC. In addition to regular clients, she is a “teacher of teachers,” which she finds fun; since it requires a different skill set, there is always more to learn! Most of her apprentices are from South Korea, where Pilates is very popular. Since his retirement from the NYU film school, husband Ted is renovating/restoring their house in Chester, Vt. Still a movie buff, Nancy sees as many movies as possible and saw Oppenheimer five times. She enjoys cooking and baking. She hopes to travel soon, perhaps a road trip through Liguria and Emilia-Romagna, Italy, or a river cruise in France. Carol Blake Boyd “loved seeing everyone at Reunion.” 2023 brought her family both sadness and happiness: Carol lost her mother, 95, in March, but she and husband Peter were delighted with their baby, a boy! The holidays brought both sons’ families, with grandkids aged 6, 4 and 2, to Naples, Fla. “Wishing my classmates the best for 2024.” Kristin Alexander Eschauzier and her husband have three grandkids in college, one ninth grader and a fourth grader! Last summer they all gathered at their beloved Heron Island, Australia, for a week. Phil Kercher and wife Jet, who live in Washington state, planned a trip to British Columbia last fall. When forest fires literally burned up their planned campgrounds, they pivoted to plan B and set up camp at a local site to celebrate their 52 years together. Over the summer, Phil went to the East Coast for his 55th high school reunion and to visit with Ann Tousignant and David Gute ’73 in Boston. He reflected on the magic of long-term friendships and sharing the room with people all the same age! Bicycling brings Phil joy, and he treasures midday trips with other pedaling zealots. “Whenever possible, go with someone you love.”

Correspondent: Hester Kinnicut Jacobs, djacobs@midrivers.com

After a great summer in Crete and Spain, Bonnie Clark Kalter and husband Craig returned to New York in time to greet their first grandchild, Ari Joaquin Kalter, born Aug. 23. Joelle Deslouvere Scho’n P’03 is still in Nairobi half the time working as a video editor for husband Jeff Schon’s company, Akili Kids!, Kenya’s number one children’s educational TV station. The highlight of 2023 was when daughter Chloë Geary ‘03 and her family, including husband Jordan Geary ‘04 (up for two Emmys for his work on Sesame Street) visited them and they went on safari together in the Maasai Mara. Granddaughter Athena, 10 (the pickiest eater, only mac and cheese) tried crocodile meat! And Tatum, 6, danced with the Maasai during dinner. It’s been three years since Michael Farrar and Claudia Pikula Farrar “forsook the comforts of Lower 48 urban life and centered our universe to Fritz Creek, Alaska. We continue to adapt to the unrelenting challenges we confront in the backcountry of the Kenai Peninsula. The glacier-clad Kenai Mountains embrace us. The moose and bears graciously tolerate our existence. We give them a wide berth. After all, we are the Interlopers.” Thank you to Carol Proctor McCurdy and Brian Robie for sending in pictures of Reunion. Since Reunion, your correspondent has traveled to Homewood, Calif., for a sibling reunion including Valerie Kinnicut Powell ’70. Spent extra time driving out and back to see more of this beautiful country. I am pleased that back surgery is not in my future. Physical therapy and weight loss have alleviated the problem for now.

Correspondent: Barbara Herbst Tatum, Barbara.tatum52@gmail.com

In June 2023, Chris Dunkel Schetter retired after 40 years in the faculty in psychology at UCLA. She still works, but much less. She continues to have affiliations at University of Michigan, University of California, Irvine, and UCLA.

Correspondent: Kathy Powell ’74 P’05

In this issue we introduced you to Jennifer Hollyer, who runs her wedding-planning business in Toronto. Jennifer has a great perspective for any wedding planner: She has, in fact, planned her own weddings three times. Jennifer got married young and had her first child in the mid-1970s; her second child was born in 1981. She then had a successful career as a writer. For the past ten years she has focused on her wedding planning company, 28th Street Celebrations. She has a four-person staff, and she also works with several local florists, photographers and caterers.

Correspondent: Joelle Deslouvere Scho’n P’03 and family on safari

Joelle Deslouvere Scho’n P’03 and family on safari
She hopes to attend Reunion to reconnect with classmates with whom she started as a freshman. Thoughts of our 50th prompted Doug Milne to search for photos. He found one of the bus he and some friends drove to and from Alaska in the summer of 1972: “wonderful memories.” The adventurers included Winston White, Jimmy Wolf and Kathy Jacobs ’72. Life has changed dramatically for Pam Strawbridge Maske. After moving from Chicago to Leland, Mich., Pam and her husband gutted their home, and then made the difficult decision to settle Rich into a nearby assisted-living facility. Pam plays piano there weekly and helps market the facility to the broader Traverse City area. She also teaches water aerobics, sings in the local chorus (Village Voices), walks for exercise and cooks. Pam has traveled east several times to see her daughter in Vermont and Albany (who works for the New York Independent System Operator as communications liaison). Since moving to Leland, Pam has enjoyed sharing the wonders of Northern Michigan with visiting friends and family. She regrets she will miss Reunion; she has a trip to Portugal in May.

Mark Samuels Lasner was co-curator, with Margaret D. Stetz, of the exhibition “Max Beerbohm: The Price of Celebrity,” on view at the New York Public Library from Oct. 20 through Jan. 28, 2024. Drawn from the library’s own collections and with other loans, this was the first major display devoted to the work of the English writer and caricaturist in more than half a century. The exhibition included books, manuscripts, original drawings, periodicals, photographs and personalia, much from Mark’s own collection, donated to the University of Delaware library in 2016. Concurrently, “The Rossettis,” at the Delaware Art Museum—a version of the exhibition first mounted at the Tate Britain in London—included loans from Mark’s collection. Mark largely caught the collecting bug from Professor Charles Price, who encouraged his interest in late-Victorian literature and art. Warren Erickson enjoyed three mini reunions as classmatates visited and shared plans for attending our big 50th in May: In late August, Barbara Herbst Tatum and husband John met Warren for lunch in Camden, Maine, on their return from Nova Scotia. On Labor Day, Kathy Powell visited Warren and shared her ideas for the Reunion Spirit Committee. Earlier in the summer, Kathy also visited Debbie Celia and her sister at their home in Delray Beach, Fla. Kathy lives in Berlin, Vt., close to Montpelier. “The Winooski River flooding in July was HORRIFIC! Homes, businesses, restaurants and government offices were washed out, and some may never reopen.” Fortunately, Kathy’s son, Peter, and his family, in Montpelier, and Kathy herself in Berlin, experienced no flooding. Warren’s third mini reunion, in September, was with Janice Curran and Stacy Valis. Janice continues her private psychotherapy practice in Wilton, Conn., with no plans for retirement. But after this year’s major birthday milestone, she instead plans more-frequent and longer vacations, beginning with a trip to Belize in February. In June, Janice joined her cousin’s church choir for a 16-day tour down the coast of Croatia and Slovenia, performing in cathedrals, a Roman amphitheater and piazzas along the way. Her daughter and extended family traveled with her. And with her daughter, Janice traveled to Bozeman, Mont., and Yellowstone, staying with Janice’s stepdaughter and family. But the year’s travel highlight was, without a doubt, visiting Warren Erickson with Stacy Valis, in his beautiful coastal home in Rockport, Maine.

Jeff Oshen ’76 and Dana Friedman Kiesel ’81 celebrated their October birthdays with Michael Tulin ’77 and wife Cheryl, Paul Kiesel ’82, and Paul Escoll ’81. Kevin Durkin finished season four of his show, Restoration Road, on Discovery/HBO and is working on a juried small mammals, mostly eastern cottontail rabbits, eastern gray squirrels and chipmunks. Patty is vice president of the Wildlife Rehabilitators Association of Massachusetts—busy but excited to be working with animals again. She renovated her shed into a small wildlife hospital, so during baby animal season it was at full capacity! Miriam Josephson Whitehouse enjoys retirement immensely but evidently couldn’t leave well enough alone, as she ran for her town select board last year. She is in the second year of a three-year term and loves it. Living in a relatively small town means that changes are possible, and it’s been satisfying to address problems and make a difference. Beth Trueblood spent a fun-filled extended Labor Day weekend in Camden and Vinalhaven, Maine, with Randy Whitemy ’76, Rob Hernandez ’74, and Tom Chamberlin ’76 and his wife, Patience Merck Chamberlin ’78. They missed Beth Fisher High ’74; she was tending to her mother just before her mother passed away. “It felt like not a day had passed since we were together at Conni!”

Penny Howell-Heller P’08 was nominated to chair the Conservation of Natural Resources Commission in East Lyme, Conn., where she lives. She shepherded the commission through the many steps needed to achieve the Sustainable CT Bronze certification for the town’s high level of sustainable practices. This statewide program complements projects she worked on before retiring from the state’s Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. She stays in touch with Diane Pike, another alum of Emily Abby House.

WINTER 2024 | Class Notes

Correspondents: Estella Johnson, estjohnson1@aol.com, and Miriam Josephson Whitehouse, mirzihithehouse@gmail.com In Maine, Marty Peak Helman has moved into a newly renovated condo with views of Boothbay Harbor from her front. Frank, her beloved husband of 32 years, died last year after a long decline; Marty is grateful that Frank remained sharp to the end and she could keep him at home, where he died in his arms. Marty’s work with Rotary has culminated in her election to the board of the international Rotary Foundation; she travels the world giving speeches on Rotary’s humanitarian work and is involved in opening a Rotary Peace Center in the Middle East. Marty’s mother, Jane Wood Peak ’42 P’75, is alive and well at 103; one of Jane’s friends left Marty several hundred camels, which she’ll bring to our 50th reunion for all to enjoy.

Correspondents: Kenneth Abel, 334 West 19th St., Apt. 2-B, New York, NY 10011, kken616@aol.com, and Susan Hazelhurst Milbrath, P.O. Box 3962, Greenwood Village, CO 80111-3962, shmilbrath@gmail.com Dana Sochacki, wife Kate and dog Buster escaped the Florida heat in August with a month-long road trip to Canada and back. On the way they visited Dave Alden and wife Anne at their new home in Villanova, Pa. They also stopped in Ridgefield, Conn., to visit Todd Cody and wife Kristi Vaughan-Cody ’75. They all had a good time, with lots of catching up, great dinners and drinks! They planned to get together again this winter in Sarasota, Fla., along with Ted Romanow. An annual tradition, Jeff Oshen and Dana Kiesel ’81 celebrated their October birthdays with Michael Tulin ’77 and wife Cheryl, Paul Kiesel ’82, and Paul Escoll ’81.
Correspondent: Stuart Sadick, stuart.sadick@gmail.com  
Jim McGoldrick and wife Nikoo had surprising news. Their Nik James novel *Bullets and Silver* (the second in their Caleb Marlowe series) won the 2023 Will Rogers Bronze Medallion for Western Traditional Fiction. They were asked to write the westerns by publisher Sourcebooks, clearly because they know so much about horses and six-shooters. Happily, they love research, and readers haven’t objected to a western that isn’t racist or misogynistic. They’re working on a new May McGoldrick time-travel novel, a sequel to their popular *Jane Austen Cannot Marry.*

Annie Rumage Fritschner moved to Wareham, Mass., last fall, after 28 years in the Blue Ridge Mountains. “It is so good to be back by the New England coast.” Her stepdaughter and niece are in NYC and stepson and daughter-in-law are on the Amtrak line in D.C., “so public transportation is a gift!” Annie is a member of the Association of Fundraising Professionals U.S. Foundation board, working for Southcoast Health assisting patients, and is still documents workers’ life in the former steel town of Bethlehem, Pa., working out of his new garage headquarters in Brooklyn. They painted a mural of some scary clowns on its doors. “I hope you are all HTNB, too.”

Jill Eisner caught up with Libby Friedman at Libby’s office in CC’s Class Dean’s division. Jill received a personal tour of the building and a preview of the ambitious Connections program. Jill enjoyed her bucket-list trip to the Amalfi Coast and Puglia, Italy. “The town of Matera was both incredible and sad.” She still runs the Zoom gatherings that started during COVID with Holly Burnet Mikula, Dawn Tatsapaugh Herdman, Julia Wilson Foulk, Suzi Bester McCarthy, Martha Brest, Marsha Williams ’81 and Linda Garant ’82. Jonathan Etkin sends a shout-out from NYC. Daughter Bella is a junior at Lehigh studying English. In the fall, she studied abroad in Berlin, London and Costa Rica, and Jon and Amy planned a five-week adventure. After visiting Bella in Berlin, they traveled to Prague, Vienna, Austria and Budapest: “a spectacular vacation of tours, thermal baths, phenomenal cuisine, music and culture. As long as we are able, we will travel wherever and whenever we can.” In August, Jon and Mike Litchman had dinner and saw the Yankees play the Red Sox. The Sox won the weekend series, to Mike’s delight and Jon’s chagrin. Still, they had a great time catching up. Marcia Spiller Fowler enjoys semiretirement, volunteering at her local land trust and a local animal shelter, hiking, and walking her dogs. She hopes all is well with classmates. Karen Frankian Aroian and husband Mihran (University of Texas at Austin business prof and tech-transfer entrepreneur) spent a spectacular year as digital nomads based in Yerevan, Armenia. They traveled throughout Armenia and to Prague, Budapest, Vienna and Salzburg. After being desk-bound at some major publishing companies, Karen is a 12-year independent book and business content editor, and “happier than nobody’s business; hoping you are all HTNB, too.”

Bill Kavanagh still documents workers’ life in the former steel town of Bethlehem, Pa., working out of his new garage headquarters in Brooklyn. They painted a mural of some scary clowns on its doors. “I hope my classmates find some joy in being in the world and making connections with others. I think of the joyful moments we had at the Abbey.
co-op and editing our short-lived newsletter out of the Chapel boiler room.” Michael Litchman practices law in Boston and NYC with the firm of Goodwin Procter. He and Elisa live in Needham, Mass.; son Josh is in venture capital and moved from San Francisco to NYC, and son Zach (among other employment) is in Brooklyn drumming in bands in musically fertile Bushwick. Patty O’Leary Helsingius says hi from North Hero, Vt. (next stop, Canada). She and her husband retired there; they both volunteer at AESMTs on a local rural rescue service—rewarding work in a socioeconomically diverse community. Their kids are in their twenties and doing their own things in New England. Patty is in touch with Holly Burnet Mikula and Pam Gray and others.

“Drop a line if you are in the Champlain Islands; let’s reconnect!” Rick Shrier can’t believe that soon it will be 45 years since he graduated from CC with an Economics degree. He keeps in touch with Jon Golden and Josh Lyons and follows the Class of ’80 Facebook group. A 20-year motorcyclist, he sold his touring bike after discovering pickleball, which “has changed my life,” putting him in peak physical condition. He won gold in a tournament in Massachusetts. Unfortunately, he has also lived for 15+ years with IgA nephropathy, a slow and progressive chronic kidney disease. With new treatments on the horizon, he hopes to maintain kidney function until better solutions are available. In 2015, he purchased a condo in Ashe- ville, N.C., and he and wife Yonok Oak split time between Clifton and Asheville, Mass. They plan to relocate full-time to Asheville to avoid New England winters. Rick discovered he has a son born in 1983 to a woman he dated for a few months. This has been a positive experience, and he now has three grandchildren. Oldest daughter Carly lives in North Adams, Mass., and youngest daughter Jodie, in Suffield, Conn., celebrated her second anniversary. Since his dad passed away in 2013, Rick’s relationship with his mom, 93, has grown, with Sunday dinners and Rum- mikub. Shrier Associates, Rick’s investment ad- visory firm, turned 35 in 2023; technology allows him flexible hours and a plan for the next 8–10 years. Denise Wheel- er is a die-hard New Yorker living in Brooklyn. She catches up with Conn alums during her campus visits for her fifth year on the CC Board of Directors. She represents the Class of 1980 well, using her Government major as the chair of the Government and Nominat- ing Committee. Since COVID, she has worked from home (legal operations manager) and enjoys weekly meetings with the Tuesday Night Divas, which includes Lois Mendez Catlin. When Lois visits from Florida they frequent many New York restaurants (all get a Yelp review from Lois). Lois thanks all for the updates and encourages others to send them. Join our Facebook Page at Con- necticut College Class of ’80.

85

Correspondent: Sue Brandes Hilger; sub- mit info to tinyurl.com/4xwa95aff

The Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center, in Stonington, Conn., presented the inaugural Maggie Jones Environmental Hero Award on Sept. 22, 2023, to Maggie Jones, director emeritus. Maggie was director of DPNC for 27 years, during a time of significant growth and maturation of the organization. Kathy Paxton-Williams is “on strike!” She’s been teaching in Portland (Ore.) Public Schools for 25 years in the same district she at- tended for grades K–12. Her union went on strike on Nov. 1, and this is the first time in PPS history that its teachers have gone on strike. The reasons: safe schools, workload relief, more planning time and a cost-of-living adjustment. “It turns out being on strike is exhausting but also weirdly invigorating. One day longer, one day stronger!” Two years ago, Lucy Marshall retired, and she and her husband have eight children between them, with grandchildren on the way. After 28 years, Lucy retired from education; she was an eighth-grade teacher and assistant principal. She and her husband look forward to traveling and spending more time with family. “Love keeping in touch with higher-education leaders and leadership. Eric Sohmer is a die-hard New Yorker, lives in Evanston, Ill. “Delighted Sue B. is herding us to communicate, the great marketer she is.” Sharon’s son graduated from the University of Minneso- ta in May with an industrial engineering degree and works in energy consulting, with an interest in lean management and moving out ASAP. Sharon’s daughter plays goalie at Kenyon Col- lege, some 40 years after Sharon started playing at Conn (she missed the celebration in October, watching her daughter’s game instead). Husband David is in architecture, improving quality at a 1,200-person firm. Sharon continues in the finan- cial strategy world, shifting between full-time gigs and her own consulting, most recently as CFO of a venture capital shop. She’s delighted to chat about her work and how she can help in the strategic CFO/COO space. Sharon will be in Plymouth, Mass., over the summer and welcomes Camels in the ‘hood for a beer or two. Wendy Hermann Steele’s move to Florida means living near Lisa Sohmer, whom she happily sees regularly. Things are busy at work as Impact100 continues to grow.

“I’m speaking more than ever and gave a TEDx Talk in Denver. My book, Devotion to Impact, made it to bestseller status on Amazon, precipitating many fun visits, book signings and conversations. We gracefully see our five kids, spread across the country, as often as possible.” As for me, Sue Brandes Hilger, my husband and I traveled to Germany in October, visiting my mom, sister and relatives. Looking forward to having my two kids home for the holidays. As for career, I waffle between marketing and growth strategy consulting and getting a full-time job; pros and cons to both. It’s a small world—I do Pilates at the local Y with a terrific instructor, Susan Cotter ’94. And I agree with Fran, the years are flying by! Thank you for contributing to this column! I appreciate the updates and photos; it’s wonderful to stay in contact. Please continue to contribute!

86

Dina Johnson Church volunteers with a choir friend and her church’s music library filing choral music. Everything she learned from Donna Fournier and Phil Youngblood at the Green Music Library has come in handy!
While Joe St. Cyr ’89 hasn’t ridden a horse yet in his new Montana home, he did ride a camel!

Alex Davis Cummin ’89, left, and Bethry Rider-Williams ’88 are two of the four Camels who competed at Hovey Cup, the U.S. National Women’s Squash Championship, this past November.

Carol Shanks Price ’87, who purchased a Louisiana iris business last year, with two fellow Houston gardening friends.

Stephen Stigall and Heather Pierce Stigall are doing well. They still live in eastern Pennsylvania with their one furry child and some of their five human children. Stephen is a partner for Ballard Spahr in Philadelphia and is always training for his next triathlon. He competed in Ironman 70.3 World Championships in Finland in August 2023 and has already qualified for the 2024 World Championships in New Zealand in December. When Heather’s not mom-ing or cheering Steve on, she’s writing. She published her first children’s picture book, Paisley’s Big Birthday, in August 2023. “Give us a shout if you’re ever in the Philly area!”

Ruben Acoca visited New York City where he stopped by the Barkley L. Hendricks exhibit at the Frick Madison. “It was a fantastic and exhilarating exhibit and experience. What a rare and special opportunity to experience his works all together!”

WINTER 2024 | Class Notes
Although Abby Carlen never expected to return to live in Connecticut, she has moved to New Haven and joined Newman Architects as an associate principal and director of marketing and communication. She looks forward to running into more Conn alums!

Claudia Bachmann-Bouchard was selected as one of the 12 participants in a nationwide search for teacher leaders to help build a growing network of teachers who are pioneering ways to help students see the science of climate change in its human context.

Blain Namm got engaged to Kyra Taurman in Maine in July, right after attending his 20th reunion at CC, where they had a blast! Blain guest-appeared on percussion with the alumni band Rhythm Method, while Kyra danced the night away. They live in NYC and support the CC Peggotty Investment Club, started in honor of his Aunt Peggotty Namm Doran ’58. Blain and Kyra look forward to many future reunions as husband and wife!

Correspondent: Nora Mirick Guerrera, noramguerrera@gmail.com

Since graduation, Mariko Wilcox has dedicated her time, her talents and her treasures to benefit Connecticut College. Every year, Mariko makes a gift to the annual fund, an incredibly important area of giving for the College. Today, Mariko is a member of the Alumni Board and volunteers with students in programs such as Fast Forward, a week-long career prep program at the College. As a certified financial planner, Mariko knows the best way to make charitable contributions and, during the Defy Boundaries campaign, she generously named Connecticut College as the beneficiary of two whole life insurance policies. Mariko says, “It’s a great philanthropy tool as life unfolds and one decides on a legacy goal. I’m very honored to be in the Rosemary Park Society, but I hope that I look a little bit different than perhaps a typical member as I don’t have heirs. I hope that some other people see themselves in me. And so that’s why I’ve chosen philanthropy as my legacy, and it’s very, very important to me.”

Laura Becker, Director of Gift Planning, to discuss what your legacy will be. (860) 439-2416
giftplanning@conncoll.edu

CHOOSING PHILANTHROPY AS A LEGACY
Weddings

Trebor Lawton ’17 and Sarah Nappo Lawton ’18 married on Sept. 16, 2023, in Jefferson, N.H. They celebrated with fellow Camels, many of whom were former swimming teammates. L-R: Abby Merritt Bullis ’20, Grant Bullis ’18, Jake Easton ’20, Anuschka Sambel ’20, Carson Owlett ’17, Niko Bronshman ’17, Thomas Edwards ’18, Jake Pescatore ’18, Juliette Lee ’18, Dulcie Everitt ’20, Charlotte Nixon ’18, Sarah Nappo Lawton ’18, Trebor Lawton ’17, Valerie Urban ’17, Victoria Weinstock ’18 and Madeleine Fenderson ’18.

Lana Richards ’17 married Joshua Marcus in their hometown of Carmel, Calif., on May 27, 2023. Fellow Camels (L-R) Annika Tucksmith ’17, Katie Alderman ’17, Lana Richards ’17, Elissa Webb ’17 and Sam Butler ’17 were in attendance.

Skye Marigold ’17 and Patrick Boyle were married at St. Luke’s Episcopal Church in East Hampton, N.Y., on Dec. 11, 2021. Skye’s mother, Lys Marigold ’62, walked her down the aisle.

Courtney Smith ’10 married Chad Giacchetto in St. Thomas on Oct. 14, 2023, surrounded by friends and family.

Phoebe Bakanas ’10 married Daniel Gutierrez ’14 in New York City on Oct. 7, 2023. They were joined by fellow Camels Grace Astrove ’10, Jenny Bush ’10, Samantha McCracking ’10 and Erin Okabe-Jawdat ’10.

Marianna Poutasse ’89, Kim Lane ’87, Heidi Holst-Knudsen ’87, Alix Davis Cummin ’89, Paige Margules Tobin ’89 (bride), Deb Dorman Hay ’89, Elizabeth Kraft Jones ’89 and Chesca Sheldon Mayser ’89 at Tobin’s wedding at her sister’s farm in Lyme, Conn.

Craig Rowin and Rory Panagotopulos, have exciting news: They are opening a flagship store in 2024. Located in Boulder, Colo., the newly “minted” spot will be the nation’s first and only retail location where you can buy, trade and spend sentimental coins. For those uninitiated, Sentimental Coins uses 3D scanning and printing technology to allow users to put their face on collectible coins. After a successful round of seed funding from an angel investor within the Colorado coffee sector, the “Coin College Boys” pounced on the unbelievable physical space. The store, which is just a swift 11-hour round trip from Glenwood Hot Springs, Colo., is scheduled to open for Christmas 2024, when it will premiere Santa-Mental Coins, a holiday novelty coin (for legal reasons, we’re obligated to note that Santa-Mental Coins is a wholly different product from Santa-Metal Coins, whose parent company is extremely litigious).

Correspondent: Whitney Longworth, whitney.longworth@gmail.com
Reunited (virtually) by the pandemic, Tes Cohen ’07, Amy Meyer ’07, Melanie Roberts ’07, Jess Domnitz ’07, Beth Pearson Owens ’07 and Kate Michaud ’07 now meet over Zoom monthly to reminisce about old times, catch up on new happenings and marvel about the wonders of adulthood. Lucy Adele Duren was born July 28, 2023, to Megan McCarthy and Larry Duren in Washington, D.C.

Aerin Ori Cowitt was born July 8, 2023, to Jessica Schwartz Cowitt ’06 and Jeffery Cowitt, joining 4.5-year-old Charlotte, who loves being a big sister. They live in New York City.

Correspondent: Grace Astrove, gca1223@gmail.com
Anna Simonds Glennon ’10, husband Michael and daughter Ellie welcomed Lily DeWitt Glennon to their family on Dec. 21, 2022. Phoebe Bakanas married Daniel Gutierrez ’14 in NYC on Oct. 7, 2023. They were joined by Grace Astrove, Jenny Bush, Samantha McCrackling and Erin Okabe-Jawdat. Erin Brady-Wiggins and Jonathan Wiggins welcomed their second daughter, Amelie Celeste, on Aug. 3, 2023, in New Orleans. Gaia Merriman, wife Devin, and their son, Beauden, visited Devon Butler at her home in New London last fall. They brought Beau to visit CC, and he experienced the magic of the Arboretum! Courtney Smith married Chad Giacchetto in St. Thomas on Oct. 14, 2023, surrounded by friends and family. Birce Sultan Karabey married Maximilian Wilhelm Schutz near Lake Windermere, England, on July 1, 2023. Guests from around the world, including Zeynep Gozde Erdeniz ’08 and Basar Gulcu ’08, trekked to the Lake District, where the ceremony featured a double rainbow. After CC, Birce worked at the Boston Consulting Group before earning an MBA at Columbia University, and later worked in the investment banking

Correspondent: Whitney Longworth, whitney.longworth@gmail.com
Reunited (virtually) by the pandemic, Tes Cohen ’07, Amy Meyer ’07, Melanie Roberts ’07, Jess Domnitz ’07, Beth Pearson Owens ’07 and Kate Michaud ’07 now meet over Zoom every month to reminisce about old times, catch up on new happenings and marvel about the wonders of adulthood.
division of Credit Suisse. Birce spent two years in London and Frankfurt, where she met husband Max, before returning to NYC in 2018. In 2020, she founded her own company, meh, which provides online wellness and executive coaching services to corporate teams. Birce now splits her time between Germany, England and Turkey. Samantha Herndon married Bryce Patrick Erlandson in a small ceremony in Negril, Jamaica. She lives in Seattle and works for the University of Washington.

Samantha Herndon married Bryce Patrick Erlandson in a small ceremony in Negril, Jamaica. She lives in Seattle and works for the University of Washington.

17 Trebor Lawton and Sarah Nappo Lawton married on Sept. 16, 2023, in Jefferson, N.H. They celebrated with fellow Camels, including former swim teammates. Lana Richards married Joshua Marcus in their hometown of Carmel, Calif., on May 27, 2023. Annika Tucksmith, Katie Alderman, Elissa Webb and Samantha Butler were in attendance. Skye Marigold and Patrick Boyle were married at St. Luke’s Episcopal Church in East Hampton, N.Y., on Dec. 11, 2021. Skye’s mother, Lys Marigold ’62 P’17, walked her down the aisle.

19 In October 2022, Caroline Longacre received an internal promotion, moving from the New York to the London office of Goldman Sachs. In October 2023, she became the first American female to complete the SuperHalfs half-marathon race series. The series comprised five races in five cities to be completed within 24 months. She completed all five in seven months.

21 Morgan Maccione was named to the Montana Standard “20 Under 40” list for 2023.

Gabrielle N. Antoniadis ’89, a senior writer and supervisor at the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) and wife of Head Women’s Soccer Coach Norm Riker, died on Oct. 31, 2023, at the age of 56.

Born in Denver, Colorado, to Roxandra and Spiros Antoniadis, she spent her childhood in Oxford, Ohio, with her brother, Theo. Antoniadis moved to New York City when she was 12 and graduated from St. Hilda’s and St. Hugh’s High School in 1985. At Conn, Antoniadis studied French. Antoniadis met Riker on Block Island, Rhode Island. They married there in 1997. Together, they raised two daughters, Isabelle and Sofia, in New York and Ohio before settling in Niantic, Connecticut, in 2011, when Riker took the job as coach of the Camels. Antoniadis loved music, dance, yoga and the great outdoors. Professionally, she forged a career as a freelance writer, partnering with The Nature Conservancy, World Wildlife Fund, Social Capital and Wittenberg University, before finishing her career at EDF. She will be remembered as a wonderful mother, sister, wife, daughter and friend. In addition to Riker, Isabelle and Sofia, Antoniadis is survived by her parents, her brother, and many cousins, nieces and nephews. A memorial service was held at Harkness Chapel on Nov. 11. Donations can be made to the Breast Cancer Research Foundation in her name.
1940s
Beulah Hoagland Appleton ’40 P’64 died February 24, 2021
Catherine Wilson Houghton ’40 died April 24, 2023
Clarabelle Osborn Paradise ’40 died September 24, 2023
Marjorie Kurtzon Cohn ’42 P’67 died October 4, 2023
Margaret Latzer Scudder ’42 died September 18, 2022
Mariana Parcells Wagoner ’44 GP ’27 died September 29, 2023
Marjorie McClellan Feeney ’45 died September 16, 2023
Betsy Bissell Walsh ’45 died July 3, 2023
Sally Osman Moltzen ’49 died February 5, 2020
Barbara Jones Wagner ’49 died October 18, 2023

1950s
Frances Keller Mills ’50 died October 20, 2023
Janice Schaumann Bell ’51 died November 17, 2023
Rachael Kilbourne Gould ’52 died August 7, 2023
Janet Kellock ’52 died July 4, 2020
Susan Rausch Misner ’53 died November 4, 2023
Stephanie Glicksberg Neuman ’53 died April 15, 2020
Joan Milner Procopio ’53 died August 25, 2023
Ellen Lee Richardson ’53 died December 20, 2018
Polly Maddux Harlow ’54 died May 2, 2022
Mildred Catledge Sampson ’54 died November 2, 2023
Jane Roesler Corcoran ’56 died October 7, 2023
Deborah Gutman Cornelius ’56 died September 13, 2023
Heidi Schweizer Ely ’56 died December 24, 2022
Marian Lenci Tapia ’56 P’93 died March 29, 2023
Helen Cary Whitney ’56 died August 25, 2023
Marguerite Wallace Glass ’57 died August 10, 2023
Nancy Keith LeFevre ’57 died June 24, 2023
Elizabeth Horigan Montgomery ’57 died May 12, 2023
Suzanne Meek Pelzel ’57 died June 6, 2023
Suzanne Kent Evans ’58 died June 30, 2022

1960s
Jane Kempner King ’60 died August 14, 2023
Mary Deming Ledyard ’62 died January 3, 2023
Carolyn Grube Rucker ’62 died October 5, 2023
Nancy MacLeod ’63 died September 11, 2023
Cynthia Morse ’65 died August 25, 2023
Barbara Metzger ’66 died June 21, 2023
Virginia Nehring Miller-Jones ’67 died August 30, 2020
Mary Clarkekes Miller-Jones ’68 died September 10, 2023
Shelley Smith ’69 died August 8, 2023

1970s
Susan Rubenstein ’74 died September 21, 2019
Debra Duerr ’75 died April 28, 2021
Stephen Drosdeck ’78 died June 17, 2023

1980s
Heather Cusack ’83 died October 17, 2023
Nelson Longley ’83 died August 22, 2023
Peter Nionakis ’85 died August 21, 2023
Tracy M. Hassan ’87 died November 16, 2023
Richard Olson ’87 died October 18, 2023
Gabrielle Antoniadis ’89 died October 31, 2023

1990s
Shannon Gregory Carbon ’91 died October 10, 2023

2010s
Jocelyn Reaves ’15 died September 3, 2023

Deaths as reported to CC between 8/8/2023 and 12/1/2023
A Close Call

Fifty-six students living in the Manwaring Building, Conn’s downtown New London residence hall, were briefly evacuated after the towering center spire of the 170-year-old First Congregational Church next door suddenly collapsed on Thursday, Jan. 25. No one was injured in the collapse, which sent large granite stones and other debris crashing through the roof of the historic church and onto its front lawn at approximately 1:30 p.m.

College and city officials worked quickly to ensure the safety of all students, who were provided hotel rooms at the New London Holiday Inn for the weekend while officials assessed the safety of the Manwaring Building and worked to demolish the remainder of the First Congregational Church building.

Students moved back into their rooms on Tuesday, Jan. 30, after the majority of the demolition was complete and tests conducted by state officials showed the air quality was safe. Several Manwaring windows damaged in the collapse were temporarily repaired and were in the process of being replaced at press time.

Dean of Students Victor Arcelus said the collapse and subsequent demolition is a “tremendous loss for the whole city, given that this church has for so long been a part of our community and a fixture of the New London skyline,” but praised the city officials who worked diligently with the College to address the needs of those impacted.

“We are grateful for the tremendous relationships we have with the mayor and his staff, the New London Police Department and the New London Fire Department,” Arcelus said. “What this incident has shown us is how our campus and the broader New London community can quickly come together to provide support and care when needed.”
Connecticut College

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REUNION 2024

MAY 02
31 - JUN

FOR CLASS YEARS ENDING IN 4 AND 9.

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REGISTRATION TO OPEN APRIL 2024.
Connecticut College wrapped up its seven-year Defy Boundaries campaign, bringing in a record $317.5 million which contributed to important campus revitalizations, like Kohn Waterfront, pictured above. Story page 18.

Women's hockey defender Galen Kilfeather '26 collects her teammates' sticks following the team's 2-2 tie with Wesleyan Jan. 2 at Dayton Arena.