

Dear Classmates and Friends of 1979:

Here we are at the beginning of August already. Back to school sales are in full swing, kids are getting antsy about new classrooms and teachers and schools, college students are thinking about the coming year and life beyond graduation. And here we sit, the older (and wiser?) adults, who don't have a care in the world about any of that except for those of us who still teach. It seems like a whole part of life is now in our rear-view mirror, doesn't it? Where did that time go?

I'll tell you where the time went. Back in the 1970's when we were in college, the future seemed so-o-o-o far away. I couldn't envision coming back to reunions with all the "old" people, much less retiring. Then we got busy with our lives. Marriage, careers, volunteer activities, kids and grandkids, aging parents—all of these have filled our days. It's been a pretty great ride so far, and now we wait with more anticipation about what's around the next bend. I don't feel as fearful and nervous as I was in 1979, but rather more excited about the possibilities in this last third of life.

Here's what I know for sure...

News Around Concordia

- Concordia was awarded a \$1,000,000 grant from the Andrew Mellon Foundation in honor of former Mellon Foundation president Earl Lewis, '78. This grant will be used for faculty development, scholarships for diverse students, program support for the Office of Diversity and support for the National Book Awards. This grant is in addition to the \$800,000 grant from the Mellon Foundation the college received earlier this year to support PEAK and diversity initiatives across campus.
- Rachel Schaefer, '18 was named a Fulbright Scholar and will be working at the Universidad Nacional de Colombia next year.
- The Department of Chemistry celebrated 100 years in early March. (OK, in real life, Chemistry has been at Cord 102 years, but the event was postponed until the new Integrated Science Center was completed.) The day-long celebration included talks from chemistry alumni from across the country, a career networking event for students and a banquet in the evening with keynote speaker Robert Homann, Professor Emeritus and Past Dean of the College, a name we can recognize from our past.
- Over spring break, 130 students served out the mission of the college all over the country, participating in 8 volunteer opportunities including: Habitat for Humanity trips to Louisiana, Florida and the Carolinas; a hurricane relief trip to Dallas; Justice Journey Trips to New Orleans and El Paso; and High Impact Leadership Trips to Milwaukee and Pittsburgh. What worthwhile ways to spend Spring Break and still have fun somewhere warm. Where were those ideas when we were young?

- In music, the Concordia Orchestra spent two weeks in May on a cultural immersion trip in Greece. The 2016 Concordia Christmas Concert “Gather Us In, O Child of Peace” earned a regional Emmy award for special event coverage. And, Dr. Rene Clausen was honored with the Weston H. Noble Award for Lifetime Achievement at the 2018 ACDA Central and North Central Conference. Clausen is in his 32nd year at Concordia College as the conductor of The Concordia Choir. (Is it just me, or does it seem like just yesterday we were all singing under Paul Christiansen and Larry Fleming?)
- In athletics, Senior Bailey Hovland broke several throwing records this year, winning the MIAC Championship, breaking the conference meet record in the hammer throw, and qualifying for the Women’s Track and Field Nationals Meet this spring. Brandon Zylstra, ’15 signed a reserve/futures deal with the Minnesota Vikings for the upcoming season, after two successful seasons with the Edmonton Eskimos. Head tennis coach Joseph Murrey was named 2018 MIAC Coach of the Year after leading the team to the conference postseason for the first time since 2011. Becca O’Shurak was hired as the first female head coach of women’s soccer. Chad Johnson was named the Bobby Bell College Impact Player of the Year by the Minnesota Chapter of the National Football Foundation and is only the second athlete from the MIAC to receive the honor.

Annual Fund Giving

As we review what charities and causes we support, I’m grateful to report that Concordia is still on the radar for many of us. For the most recent fiscal year which ended April 30th, 110 of us gave gifts to the college that totaled over \$103,000. Over the course of the years since our graduation, our class gifts have added up to \$1,789,318.27. That’s a lot, friends! Don’t forget: 1) those of you who have employers that match gifts and 2) those of you with Thrivent insurance policies and annual dollars to designate, please list Concordia to get the match or extra funds. These are essentially “free” dollars available by employers and Thrivent for us to direct. Thanks again for keeping our ol’ *alma mater* in your philanthropic giving plans.

News From and About Each Other

There again seems to be a lull in the Excitement Department. In other words, I didn’t hear of very much going on among us. Here’s what I know for sure:

Where would I be without **Laura (Stanley) Hanson**? After last year’s class letter came out, she sent me a couple of updates about classmates that I wouldn’t have known about otherwise. The first is about **Luther Aadland**. There was a fabulous article in the May-June 2017 Minnesota Conservation Volunteer magazine (DNR publication) about the work he has done to improve river quality by removing small dams. Laura’s right; it’s a great article. Here’s a link so that you can read for yourself:

<https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/mcvmagazine/issues/2017/may-jun/dam-removal.html>

Laura then updated me on **Mary Tiegen**'s work with Helping Paws, an organization that trains service dogs. I first wrote about Mary back in 2012, and here in Laura's words, is an update. "She has trained 2 service dogs, and currently has a breeding dog, which has already had one litter." How great that Mary continues to open her Plymouth, MN home and heart for such important work.

I heard from **Bruce McNeil** last fall, too. He is a partner with the Wagner Law Group of Boston. He had the distinction of leading a meeting with the U.S. Government Accountability Office ("GAO") on non-qualified deferred compensation plans. Bruce is known as one of the nation's experts in the subject. He also said that he's been asked to join the Board of Directors of the Plan Sponsor Council of America. Keep looking out for us, Bruce; we need all the compensation help we can get!

I volunteered during the Super Bowl as one of the 10,000 members of "Crew 52" and was posted downtown as a greeter during the week before the big game. It was right around that time where I ran into **Karla Menzel** in the skyways of downtown Minneapolis. She is still working at U.S. Bank and plans to continue for a few more years, she says.

Sadly, I received news of a death. **Gloria (Gredvig) Mitchell** passed away this past January in Highlands Ranch, CO. I'm not 100% sure that she was in our class, but she and her husband Ronald met and married while at Cord. In addition to Ron, she leaves behind two sons and three grandchildren.

Before You Know It...

...it'll be time for our 40th reunion. I'm hoping for great attendance. You know what makes that happen? You. You and all your friends who plan early to get together in Moorhead. The only glitch is that there are still some classmates that Cord has had difficulty locating. If you have any contact information for these classmates, please forward to the Alumni Office. Since this letter is online, it's even possible that you are reading this letter and recognize yourself as a lost alum. Not good! The way to get addresses, names and other life changes to the Alumni Office is really easy. Just fill out the form at this website:

<https://www.concordiacollege.edu/alumni-donors/stay-in-touch/update-my-info-2/>

If you are trying to give contact information for another lost alum, your best bet is to email the information to alumni@cord.edu.

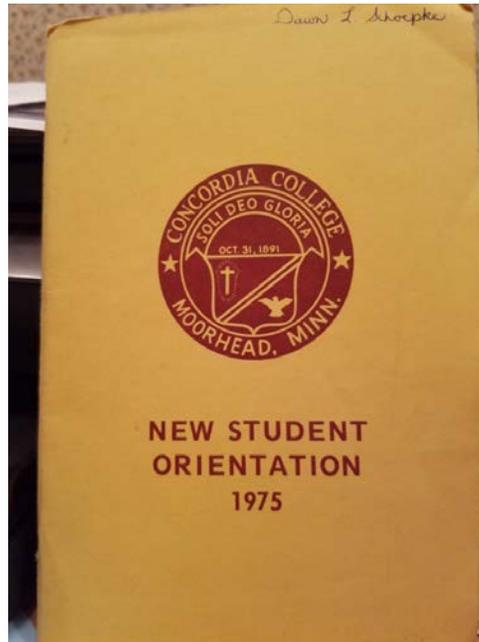
Ackerson, Brenda J.	Fierke, Karin M.	Kines, Brian V.	Olson, Lee E.	Torgerson, Judy
Ilisop, Shellee J.	Hamilton, Mary E.	Kline, Mark J.	Olson, Robert B.	Unruh, Patricia A. (Knight)

Atikpa, Vienna T. (Inebiri)	Haugen, Sonya M.	Kopp, Debra	Mundinger, Carol S.	Swenson, Susan M. (Bragge)
Beck, Randy D.	Heitzig, Mary J. (Morris)	Larson, Paul T.	Okosun, Ike S.	Thelen, Susan J. (Abelson)
Bernier, Dawn M. (Malquist)	Jako, Katherine	Ludtke, Paul J.	O'Leary, Nancy K.	Thompson, Mark W.
Bronson, Mary S. (Palazzari)	Johnson, Brett A.	Marsh, Mary P.	Porter, Rueben M.	Vanlaningham, Marcia
Connell, Roxanne M.	Jones, Mark A.	McElevy, Jane E.	Reeves, Richard R.	Vantine, Diane M. (Kreyer)
Delger, Jake	Kaldor, Kathryn D.	Miller, Curt F.	Salami, Charles G.	Zawaira, Lazarus M.
			Smith, David L.	
		Starks, Julie A. (Bergstrom)		

And of course, as you retire, don't forget to change your email address from your work email to your personal one at the website above. (I'm looking at you, Denise Pesola!)

One Last Thing

I have been going through old files and boxes lately. Look what I stumbled upon: our 1975 New Student Orientation booklet. I don't know about you, but I was nervous about everything those first days on campus, and read this booklet cover to cover.



May our futures be just as bright and hopeful as we were back then, but without all the fear of the unknown.

Your class agent,
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