



Happy Holidays

Happy holidays, track and field and cross country alumni!

Over the past year, we've been grateful for the visits, messages, and conversations we've shared with so many of you. The unexpected phone calls, texts, and emails have truly brightened our days. It's always rewarding to hear what's happening in your lives and to stay connected.

A heartfelt thank-you to the many alumni and friends who donated this fall. Hundreds of you came together to support our programs, helping us provide an even better experience for our student-athletes. Your generosity continues to make an incredible difference.

It has been quite a while since Concordia last hosted an alumni track and field meet — but that changes this year! On Jan. 24, we're excited to welcome alumni back for a small meet on campus including Valley City State University, Minnesota State University Moorhead, and possibly a few athletes from North Dakota State University.

Alumni are invited to jump into any event and compete alongside current athletes. We'll also offer a couple of alumni-only race sections for those who prefer to stick with runners from their own era.

More details will be available soon on GoCobbers.com — we'd love to see you there!



VAN BEEK FAMILY UPDATE

Happy holidays from the Van Beeks! This year brought some great adventures. Last March, Daryl and I traveled to Utah to visit "The Mighty Five" National Parks — Zion, Bryce Canyon, Capitol Reef, Arches, and Canyonlands. Daryl's favorite stop was Bryce Canyon, while mine was a 7-mile hike we did in Capitol Reef.

This summer we also made our first trip to Yellowstone and Grand Tetons National Parks in Wyoming. We hiked 60 miles that week and even managed to see elk, moose, and bears — all on the same hike!

Another memorable moment was running the Maah Daah Hey Trail Half Marathon near Medora, North Dakota (in 90-degree heat!), and afterwards, taking my mom on a camping weekend to Theodore Roosevelt National Park.

Daryl also had a standout road racing year. He ran the Garry Bjorklund Half Marathon in Duluth in June, and although he thought that race went perfectly, later in September, he still smashed his half marathon personal record by five minutes at Dick Beardsley!

I had sprained my ankle at Concordia's cross country preseason camp just a few weeks earlier but recovered enough to pace Daryl — racing together was one of our favorite moments of the fall.

At home, our cats Penny and Harley are still terrorizing the countertops, and our doggos Winn and Willow have loved coming to practice to get loved on by the cross country team. All is well at the McBeek Zoo!

We're grateful to be in year five at Concordia surrounded by wonderful people and supporters. Merry Christmas, and roll Cobbs!



ROESKE FAMILY UPDATE

Lisa and I celebrated our 30-year wedding anniversary in November. Our gift to each other is a trip to Alaska next summer — neither of us has ever been, and it's the No. 1 place on my travel list. We're excited to witness the majesty of Mt. Denali, the wilderness and wildlife, including glaciers, whales, and everything Alaska has to offer.

Lisa has now worked more than 30 years for Fargo Public Schools. She is a reading and writing specialist on the Elementary Curriculum Team and truly loves what she does. She also serves in state and national leadership roles with an independent professional development program. On top of that, she stays busy with many ministries at church.

Quinn lives in downtown Fargo with her two cats, Oliver and Vera. She loves children and works with them daily at Abundant Lessons, where she has her own room of preschoolers. Her other joys continue to be books, friends, and family.

Leah is in her second year of a three-year program at the Royal Winnipeg Ballet School in Canada. Her program is an intense, immersive program to become a classical ballet teacher. When she completes her training, she will have elite credentials to pursue her dreams — including, she hopes, returning to the North Dakota Academy of Dance in Fargo, a place that has been part of her life since she was very young.

This fall I enjoyed my second season as the cross country coach at Central Cass High School in Casselton, North Dakota. I love the sport, being outdoors in the fall, and getting to work with high-school athletes again — something that brings me back to my early coaching days in Tolna, North Dakota.

This year also marks my 31st season as the head women's track and field coach for the Cobbers. Our team had a wonderful and wildly successful year, and we look forward to even greater achievements in 2026. Most importantly, we are grateful for the relationships, experiences, and memories we build together as a team.



LARSON FAMILY UPDATE

Mary, my wife, had a year full of learning, travel, and professional growth. To start the year in March, Mary ventured on a ski trip to Colorado with our daughter, Greta, and her niece, Katina, who lives in the Denver area. In May into June, Mary also co-led an NDSU global seminar in London, afterwards spending time traveling with friends through Austria and Switzerland, followed back-to-back with an enjoyable Gustie girlfriends' weekend in Colorado — complete with a James Taylor concert at

Red Rocks. In November, she attended the American Public Health Association conference in Washington, D.C., and later explored Cuba to study their public health system in hopes of leading another global seminar to the country in 2027. She continues to enjoy her work as an associate professor at NDSU and will begin her 14th year in January.

Garrick's mom, Martha, joined us again this year to celebrate the Concordia Christmas Concert.

Greta made a big career transition, moving from cardiac nursing to pediatrics and OB at Essentia Hospital in Fargo. In January she'll begin a Master of Nursing Education program, with hopes of someday training and inspiring future nurses. She and her boyfriend, Tyson, have also begun exploring the world of home buying — well, home educating — touring many houses to learn what they like and don't like. Tyson passed his next level of certification and is now an electrician journeyman. Together they welcomed a second cat, Hickory, into the family.



A major highlight: Our son, Mathias, and partner Penny got engaged in Europe in July 2024! They've since chosen a wedding date — June 27, 2026 — and will be married outdoors at my mom's homestead in southeast Minnesota. Planning is already well underway, from the wedding dress to food. Mathias continues to work at Atomic Coffee and loves his weekly baking day along with

his barista shifts. Penny is a multilingual learner/English teacher at the middle school in the Moorhead School District.



The kids and their significant others get along well and come home for a family dinner near weekly. Over the summer, Tyson teamed up with Penny for a Tough Mudder extreme obstacle race, which even included an electric shock tunnel.

For Garrick, track season ran from January through mid-June and included trips to NCAA Indoor Championships in Rochester, New York, and NCAA Outdoor Championships in the Cleveland area — where he managed to get himself into a little hot water with the TSA. He did not realize a starting pistol was in his carryon. TSA and local law enforcement were not nearly as amused as Garrick. The year also featured some unavoidable signs of the wear and tear of aging: a hernia surgery and a hip replacement. Thankfully, all has healed well, and he's feeling great with the pain relieved.

We love hearing from you! Please reach out and let us know what you're doing:

mvanbeek@cord.edu • 218.371.1477
 roeske@cord.edu • 701.799.7510
 gzl Larson@cord.edu • 218.790.2306

