

Hello fellow Cobbers from the Class of 1971!

Hope this finds you well and having a had a wonderful summer! How can it be September already?

As an outgoing member of Concordia's National Alumni Board, I have been privileged to see firsthand the exciting things that are going on at the college. The energy on campus is palpable, as is the love for Concordia that the students feel. If you have the opportunity to return to campus, whether for homecoming, a Christmas concert, a lecture or just to visit, I would encourage you to do so. You will be pleased and encouraged by what you see and experience. (If you haven't been back in a while, you'll find that the F-M area has changed a LOT since we graduated!)

This is a challenging time for institutions of higher learning, especially for small private colleges, but the leadership at Concordia continues to meet those challenges head-on and put the school in a very competitive position among its peers.

Three pillars of the Concordia experience have been identified: integrative learning, inclusive learning, and innovative learning. This past fall, Concordia College launched the RISE campaign, a comprehensive fundraising campaign with a goal of raising \$150,000,000 by December 2019. (Does that sound like an overly ambitious goal? To date, over \$140,000,000 has been raised!) These funds will be used to support those pillars. For more information, head to www.riseforconcordia.com.

Concordia continues to have fundraising success due to generous supporters in each class. In the past few years, Concordia has continued to surpass fundraising goals and can create new opportunities for students, including the completion of the Integrated Science Center and student scholarships.

This past year, **our class** had 25+% participation in fundraising endeavors and gave \$119, 239.44! Since graduation, our class has given \$1,400,091.48!! Stand up and cheer!

Some other updates from the past year at Concordia:

> Concordia has been 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 in 2018 to support PEAK and diversity initiatives across campus. (PEAK stands for Pivotal Experiences in Applied Knowledge. These are Concordia's signature integrative learning opportunities and make me wish I were still a student—well, just a little.)

> The Concordia Language Villages will be building a permanent Korean Language Village on Turtle River Lake, thanks to the largest gift its history (\$5M) from Simone Corporation and its CEO, Kenny Park.

> Concordia musical groups took their talents on tour again this year. In addition, the 2016 Christmas Concert, "Gather Us In, O Child of Peace" received a regional Emmy and Dr. Rene Clausen received the Weston H. Noble Award for Lifetime Achievement at the 2018 ACDA Central and North Central Conference.

> In the field of athletics, several Concordia scholar-athletes, coaches and alums won acclaim this year. To learn more, go the Concordia website and click on "Athletics". (Minnesota Vikings fans will be able to cheer for Cobber Brandon Zylstra who recently made the team.)

> Over spring break, 130 students served out the mission of the college across the country, participating in volunteer opportunities including: Habitat for Humanity trips to LA, FL 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. (Side note: Can you recite the mission of Concordia? Almost all current students can!)

> The National Alumni Board voted on the 2018 Alumni Achievement, Sent Forth and Called to Serve Awards. To learn more about each award, visit Cord.edu/alumniawards.

2018 Alumni Achievement Award Recipients

Charles Beck '48

Dr. Richard Sibley '67

Darnell Carter '75

Claudia Swendseid '78

2018 Sent Forth Recipients

Dr. Tammy Frisby '99

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> And now, the updates you've been waiting for: Thanks to everyone who submitted a personal update. It is great to hear what has been going on in your lives! Here they are in no particular order:

Faye Ruffcorn has been retired almost a year after serving as administrative assistant and Involvement Coordinator for Desert Streams Lutheran Church in Surprise, AZ. She fills her days with volunteering, reading and traveling with her husband, Pastor Keven Ruffcorn, also a CC alum.

Loren Norgaard and his wife, Diane, are both retired. Their summers are spent in Glenwood, MN and their winters in Goodyear, AZ.

John Matthews will retire at the end of 2019 after forty-four years of ELCA ministry. He will continue adjunct teaching at Augsburg University, lecturing with the Islamic Resource Group and serving on the boards of the International Bonhoeffer Society and World Without Genocide. John was recently honored to deliver the "Charles H. Hackley Distinguished Lecture in the Humanities" in his hometown of Muskegon, MI and received the annual "Building Bridges" award from the Islamic Resource Group of Minnesota. He and Patty travel regularly to visit their ten grandchildren. He concludes, "Life is good!"

Tim Johnson and his wife, Susan (Thompson, '76) will be moving to a condominium in Moorhead. Enjoying "semi-retirement", they look forward to the closeness of Concordia, the nearness of family and friends, and "the politics of Minnesota!"

Dave Oehlke and his wife, Vicki, live in Devils Lake, ND, where Dave is an insurance agent with American Insurance Center and, since 2006, a ND state senator. They have two children and four grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Dave keeps busy with search and rescue work with their Newfoundland dogs, serving with Northern Lights Council Board of Directors, designing scavenger hunt activities for the neighborhood youth and touching base with long lost friends.

Linda Olson and her husband, Marc Lee (x'71), live in Olalla, WA, where Linda is retired after working most recently as a counselor and part-time adjunct instructor at Olympic College. (Marc recently retired from his work as a physician, and celebrated by climbing Mt Kilimanjaro!) They own and operate an organic farm in Fairfield, MT and enjoy travel, their three wonderful grandkids and have "discovered the wonders of the NPR app".

Daniel Estrem and his spouse, Barbara Routier, live in the St. Paul suburb of North Oaks, where Dan is retired from dentistry and continues to pursue his passion for music. He has recorded forty albums, which are available online and has posted over 200 videos on YouTube. He plays a variety of classical and popular guitar, as well as ukulele and Renaissance and baroque lutes. To find the music online (and

listen for free), enter his name into the search box; the videos have a number of arrangements of '60's hits, which should be familiar to most of us!

Gayle Overgaard Netolicky retired after teaching English for 38 years in Westby, MT, and now enjoys traveling to visit her son and three grandchildren.

Linda Huber Axness retired from teaching in 2014 and lives in Moorhead, where her husband, Charlie, does interim work for the Eastern ND Synod of the ELCA.

Emory Johnson retired in 2005 as Discipline Head of Chaplaincy Services for the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation to care for his mother, who passed away in May at the age of 102. He serves presently as the pastor of New Hope Lutheran Church in Grantsburg, WI. Their services can be viewed on the internet at: www.NewHopeLutheranChurch.org.

Ralph Taeger and his wife have lived in Germany, Massachusetts, North Carolina, and Iowa; his career was spent in the US Army and in the financial and healthcare industries. Upon retirement, they moved to St. George, UT to be closer to their children and eight grandchildren. Ralph enjoys trout fishing, traveling and researching family history and started painting again after a hiatus of 42 years. His work can be viewed at www.ralph-taeger.pixels.com.

John Nilsen and his wife, Cheryl, live in Minot, ND, where John has been retired from parish ministry since 2013. He enjoys retirement, filling in at area churches, visiting zoos and his two grandsons in Casselton, ND. He has two more grandsons in Lake Stevens, WA, sons of Cobber grad Jared Nilsen (2001).

Pat Torgeson and his wife, Cindy Sillers ('70), are retired and live in south Fargo. Prior to his return to Fargo-Moorhead, Pat taught in Farmington, NM at an alternative high school for chemically dependent and pregnant teenagers, was an assistant professor at San Juan College and the administrator for the business/management program for New Mexico Highlands University on the San Juan College campus. Upon his return to the F_M area, he worked for the University of May in various positions.

Cindy (Reed) Vantine retired in January from the University of Missouri-St. Louis after 34 years as director of university events. She is currently the organist and children's choir director at Lutheran Church of the Atonement in Florissant, MO and this fall will be performing for three-and-a-half weeks in the eastern US with **Bruce Vantine's** Cornerstone Chorale and Brass on their nineteenth tour. www.cornerstonechorale.org

Susan Werner received her MA in English and spent twenty years in the US Army, then worked as a contractor supporting the army. Now fully retired, she is involved with the American Association of University Women, enjoys book discussion groups, takes tai chi and hopes to get back to traveling after hip replacement surgery. She lives in the Washington DC area, where she takes advantage of the Smithsonian; symphony, ballet and theater events at the Kennedy Center; as well as other theater and culinary opportunities in the area.

Gary Anderson lives on Toby Keith's golf course in Norman, OK, where he teaches at the university. Summers are spent in Montana in a house on the side of Blacktail Mountain.

Trudy (Anderson) Conard and her husband, Joe are enjoying retirement on the central coast of California at Nipomo, CA, together with their English cocker spaniel, Wyatt. They enjoy European cruises and regular commuting trips to San Diego to visit family, especially grandsons, ages two and five.

Mary Carlson Myhrer is retired and living in Rapid City, SD, where she has a daughter and two grandchildren.

Larry Teske is officially retired and living in Honolulu and tries to spend more summer and fall time at their lake home on West Battle Lake.

Judith (Christensen) Schlecht is retired and living in Spiritwood Lake, ND. She enjoys her five wonderful grandchildren, traveling with her husband of 47 years, book club, Bible Study Fellowship and visiting with family and friends.

Laurene (Flooding) Lamping retired from teaching Spanish at Milwaukee Lutheran High School in 2012. Since then she has been working part-time as a paraprofessional in special ed and as a substitute teacher in the middle and high schools of Kewaskum, WI.

Deb (Root) Buchholz is retiring from substituting teaching this fall (maybe—it's hard to leave the classroom!) She and Steve ('69) live in Plymouth, MN and enjoy traveling, especially with Concordia Alumni tours (!), and spending time with their year-old grandson.

On a sad note, we received word that classmate **Wes Van de Riet** had passed away in 2016. Other classmates who have passed away since our last reunion in 2016 include **Roger Farsdale, Paul Fredrikson, Charles Kindem, Terrance Mahnke, Diane Peterson**, and **Daniel Reber**. Our condolences go out to all of their families. Please contact the Alumni Office if you know of any other classmates who have passed away and are not listed here.

In summary, I offer a quote from classmate Linda Olson: We lived through a very important, yet difficult time in our country's history. I feel extremely fortunate that during that time I was surrounded by professors who helped us keep perspective, experienced the best peer group I ever knew, and had the dear Pastor Carl Lee to remind us that the love of God was with us at all times.

With all good wishes for a healthy and happy year!

Soli Deo Gloria,

Deb Buchholz