

Class of 1967 Letter

Hello Class of 1967,

The 55th anniversary of our graduation approaches; it is hard to believe it's almost five years ago when we celebrated our 50th reunion. When searching the internet for Concordia or class of '67, it is a pleasant reminder to see the 50th Reunion book pop up as one of the options.

Covid appears to be diminishing. Or maybe we are just learning to live with it. Either way, we are all running out of home improvement projects and looking forward to more variety in our daily activities.

The first section of this letter provides an update on Concordia. The remaining sections are classmate updates, obituaries of classmates and professors, an update on class giving, and planning for our 55th reunion.

Concordia College Update

President Craft announced his upcoming retirement at the end of his second presidential term, on June 30, 2023. The Board of Regents has already started seeking Concordia's next president with a search committee and national consulting firm.

New Executive Director for Faith and Learning, Dr. Michael Chan, will direct the Lorentzen and Dovre Centers, guide Concordia's interfaith relationships, and oversee the work of Campus Ministry. He will be welcomed to the college in June.

New Dean of Sanford Heimarck School of Health Professionals, Dr. Gwen Wagstrom Halaas '75 brings more than four decades of research, teaching, program development and administrative experience to Concordia. She grew up in the Fargo-Moorhead area and is a 1975 graduate of Concordia. Dr. Halaas will assume the role on July 1, 2022.

Class of 1967 Member to Receive 2022 Alumni Achievement Award The Concordia National Alumni Board has selected Phyllis (Bryn-Julson) Sutherland as one of the 2022 Alumni Achievement Award Recipients. She is a Concordia alumna who started with us in 1963. She was a member of the Concordia concert choir for two years. While at Concordia, she received a fellowship to study and perform at the Tanglewood summer music festivals 1964-67. It was there she came to the attention of Gunther Schuller, Artistic Director of the Berkshire Music Center at Tanglewood, who was impressed by her ability to sight-read 12-note music.

She transferred to Syracuse University where she completed her bachelor's and master's degrees. Her first professional debuts were at Carnegie Hall in 1964 and the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1966. Her voice is described as having both purity and clarity of timbre; possessed as well of perfect pitch, and a range of three octaves. She



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performed extensively around the world, received two Grammy Award nominations and has over 100 recordings and CDs. She accepted the duties of chair of the Voice Department, Peabody Conservatory, Johns Hopkins University in 1985 and continued to work there until her retirement. In 1988 she became the first American performing artist to present a master class in Russia at the renowned Moscow Conservatory. In 1997, she received an Honorary Doctorate from Concordia College. She ended her 40-year performing career with a farewell concert at the Kennedy Center in 2005.

Learn. Work. Lead. A Concordia College education is rooted in the college's deep commitment to providing a transformational experience for every one of our students through learning, working and leadership. Development has continued on our academic framework through **Three Schools, One College:**

- Sanford Heimarck School of Health Professions
- Offutt School of Business
- School of Arts and Sciences

Concordia will begin renovation in the summer of 2022 on the Sanford Clinic building adjacent to campus to provide expanded laboratory, classroom, and centralized office space for its freshly named Sanford Heimarck School of Health Professions. The project will include a nursing simulation lab and a human performance lab. It will be a remarkable advancement to the program.

COVID Response/Planning Concordia continues to monitor guidance from the Minnesota Department of Health and the CDC to keep the campus as healthy as possible amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Students, faculty, and staff are updated regularly and encouraged to engage in risk-reducing practices to prioritize in-person learning and working through the academic year.

Advancing the Mission: Cobber Ambassador Program A new initiative was officially launched to invigorate the unique network and relationships among alumni, friends, and students of Concordia College. Cobber Ambassadors are people who care about the students and mission, believe in the college, and help spread the word about Concordia's life-changing education. Learn more or become an Ambassador at ConcordiaCollege.edu/alumni/cobber-ambassador-program

Around Campus

- Renovation was completed in Christiansen Recital Hall to provide a higher quality and more modern experience for students and guests.
- A gas firepit was installed on campus near the 8th Street entrance to Knutson Campus Center.
- An Indoor Performance Center for golf was added in Olson Forum using the latest simulator technology to provide year-round training for the men's and women's golf programs.
- Olson Forum's workout balcony will be expanded this summer.

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Concordia Recognized for Women in Coaching The University of Minnesota's Tucker Center for Research on Girls & Women in Sport gave Concordia an "A" grade on its 2020-21 report card. The college was highlighted for having female head coaches for 70% of its women's sports. Concordia was the only MIAC school to receive an "A" grade in the report. Compliments to Athletic Director Rachel Bergeson for her leadership in athletics.

Homecoming 100 Years of Homecoming was celebrated on campus in October 2021. The college was happy to successfully welcome back over 700 alumni and friends to celebrate this strong Cobber tradition.

We look forward to celebrating with you **October 7-9, 2022!**

Watch for updates at ConcordiaCollege.edu/homecoming

Corn Feed Season is around the corner! We will continue with the tradition of hosting corn feeds in the summer and hope to see you! Updates can be found at ConcordiaCollege.edu/cornfeeds

55th Reunion Plans for Class of 1967

Currently, we are planning a Friday evening social event and Saturday morning breakfast specifically for the Class of 1967 in addition to the other homecoming weekend festivities.

To help us with planning for our 55th reunion in October, please let us know if you plan to attend by responding to the following question. Please send your response to Mark Budd at jmarkbudd@gmail.com.

Do you plan to attend our 55th reunion?

1. Yes, plan to attend
2. Undecided at this point
3. No, will not attend

Class Updates

Ken and Roxanne (Roddy) Dean At the time of our 50th class reunion Ken was still working with Bethel University as a supervisor of student teachers who were getting their teaching degree in science. Thank goodness I retired from that a year before Covid-19 hit. We have done little in the way of traveling since the spring of 2020 with the exception of visiting our daughter's family in Virginia. We are lucky to have our other children's families close by and did visit them regularly. Since 2018, four of our grandchildren have graduated from college, two being commissioned in the United States Army, one graduating from high school, one entering middle school, one in elementary school and two entering kindergarten. We scaled down other get-togethers with friends from our community and church. Zooming and other types of social media helped to keep contact. By the grace of God we have not experienced any loved ones who suffered greatly having symptoms of Covid.

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Harry Brown My time over the past year has probably been similar to most . . . spending most of my time in isolation due to Covid-19. Getting the vaccine shots were probably red-letter days. Gave me a sense of security, even though I know it isn't a total guarantee. I winter in my Arizona home and spent last summer in my summer home in Plymouth, Minnesota, returning to Arizona in October. Made the trip to Arizona a ten-day trip, stopped at Concordia to visit friends, spent a couple days visiting my sister in Bismarck, and spent time in Frisco, Colorado, visiting Lee Skavanger, a classmate from first grade through our years at Concordia. Colorado in the fall is beautiful. I was there for the peak fall colors. Also visited Monument Valley before arriving back home. Am looking forward to a visit from Cobber friends at the end of February. They will be catching some warm weather and hitting the golf links for a few days. We also plan to see an NHL hockey game, and visit the Music Museum at Scottsdale. This is our third "annual" gathering in the past four years. Last year was cancelled due to Covid-19. Paul Anderson, Class of '68, lives here as well.

Mark Budd Gita and I have lived in Washington DC for 15th years - neither of us have ever lived in the same home or place this long. I continue to stay very active as a member of our condo board, doing volunteer work with the Foggy Bottom West End Village, golf, long walks and reading, but admit to getting very bored with the impact of Covid restrictions on our normal events and activities. After not flying on any airplanes for over a year, Gita and I flew to California for a nephew's wedding and to Minneapolis for an 85th birthday party. We look forward to a more active year that includes a two-week trip to Ireland, biking, theater, and completing bucket list items. On a sad note, my youngest brother, Erik, an artist and '72 Cobber graduate, died unexpectedly in February 2021.

Mark Chekola had a month-long visit in 2018 and 2019 at Erasmus University in Rotterdam, The Netherlands, where I have been a research associate at the World Database of Happiness since 2004. Since the pandemic started, I have not been able to make visits there, nor do any significant traveling. I have managed to not contract Covid.

Carolyn Heuer Tonneson Carolyn, in her retirement, went to Kenya in 2019 to volunteer at a Women's Center and a primary school in Mombasa. She has since founded a nonprofit, Peter's Hope, to partner with those programs to help educate children and empower women. She returned to Kenya in 2021, and has plans to do so this year again. You can read about her new ventures at www.petershope.org.



Paul Harrington During the past year he wrote a book, co-authored with two other retired Lutheran pastors. *Behind the Pulpit* traces the development of two congregations (Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church in Apple Valley, MN and St. Andrew's Lutheran Church in Mahtomedi, MN). Both congregations grew from very humble beginnings into mega churches over a number of years. The

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book is a very practical guide as to how to grow vital, healthy, Christ-centered congregations in a secular world. The book is now in its second printing. The publisher is Kirk House publishing of Burnsville, MN. It is available through the publisher, Amazon or Barnes and Noble. Margaret and I also have 11 beautiful grandchildren, ranging in age from 2 to 18.

Joanne (Flaa) Larson has relocated to Colorado Springs, CO, after 42 years of living in Southern California. The desire to be closer to family overcame my enjoyment of California's balmy weather. I am once again getting acquainted with snow – the flakes and the shovels. The mountains, seasonal changes, and lighter traffic have their own special charms.

Linda (Rolfsrud) and Ron Letnes We are very proud of our son, Steve '00, who received a Concordia Sent Forth Award last year. We have no idea how he does what he does. He has very slight vision from the corners of his eyes, central vision is mainly mush. Thankfully, music is not sight dependent for Steve, it comes from his heart and soul. He has a phenomenal memory, great mind, but it is still beyond us. Steve has always strived to look like the rest of us, refuses such a thing as a cane, ever. Steve has a website for his work...just go to stephenletnes.com click on "about", tells his story.

Since Covid we have limited our travel to the 48 states. First venturing out for a few days to surrounding states, then after vaccinating, we drove to Colorado, then the East Coast, just returned from a month in Florida and other warm states. We are hoping to expand to international sites soon. When home, Ron works on gun violence prevention mostly online; after her Covid shots, Linda returned to the classroom to volunteer with immigrants and refugees. Our Minneapolis family has been free of Covid, our granddaughters are even more conscientious than we are about Covid protections.

Camille (Meyer) Wainwright and her husband (Louis) David Wainwright ('66) finally moved permanently to Florida which is a wonderful location for retirement — warm, sunny, and every medical specialist within a mile! During the winter we're able to visit with our snowbird Cobber friends — Jerry McClure ('66), Mark ('65) and Annette Aanerud ('67) Holtan, and Cliff ('66) and JoAnn ('67) Gesellchen.

Fredrick Thompson While Jean (Engbloom) was from Moorhead and we used to return there often to visit her mom, she's gone now and we don't get up that way much (last time was the 50th). But we continue to be very interested in CC and value greatly what it provided for us. We do visit a nephew and family in West St. Paul as often as possible. The pandemic has curtailed much of our socializing and traveling, but like everyone else we're hoping for better days ahead now. Like you,



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we've managed to avoid COVID so far. We do get up to Port Angeles, WA every 2-3 months to see our son who works in boat/ship repair.

We regularly get together with Paul and Chris Fauske who also live in Portland. And last year we made connections on several occasions with Jim and Carolyn Nestingen who have a home about an hour away. The six of us sure have fun dredging up memories over good food and drink.

Contact Lost with Classmates

We were unable to find the following 15 class of 1967 alumni during the planning for our 50th anniversary and they remain unfound. If you have contact information or know of somebody who may know them, please let us know.

Robert H. Albright	Nancy K. (Highum) Boe
Charles R. Anderson	Suzanne E. (Madison) Ehrlichmann
Susan E. (Dimmitt) McGuire	Donna L. (Myhr) Denzin
Richard L. Eggen	M Prudence (Parsons) Jones
Roberta W. (Groth) Mackay	Gloria F. (Philipp) Blazina
Sandra L. (Halloran) Tegethoff	Leslie A. (Robinson) Hartley
Thomas W. Hanson	Zona M. (Torgrude) Poppenhagen

Recent Class of 1967 Obituaries

The following is a list of classmate deaths reported since our 50th Reunion Book and the 2020 class letter.

Marianne (Anderson) Nelson passed away November 7, 2020. She was diagnosed with a rare blood disorder related to the autoimmune disease she had lived with and managed well for decades only days before her death. She and Dean Wesley Nelson were married on August 19, 1967. Marianne taught in public schools in St. Paul, Minnesota, Kenwood, California, and Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She earned her Master's degree from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee while teaching fulltime. She taught fourth grade at First Lutheran School in Torrance, California, from 1996 - 2014. In her 32 years of teaching, she touched the lives of over a thousand students and their families. She was an avid reader and life-long learner. Marianne was an active member of First Lutheran Church in Torrance, where she served as a lector, and participated in the book club, women's Bible study, and bell choir. She was a woman of faith, an advocate for justice, and a gracious human being. She loved to laugh, dance, travel, visit art museums, listen to jazz, watch Hallmark movies, walk in the surf at the beach, and enjoy her daily scoop of vanilla ice cream.

Barbara Myrom passed away November 25, 2020, in Santa Rosa, CA. She left the world a more beautiful place – sprinkled with her passion, intelligence, sincerity, creativity, humor, music and artwork. Barbara was preceded in death by her loving life partner, Ben Stanley. She completed graduate work at the University of Minnesota in

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special education for the culturally disadvantaged, beginning a lifelong concern with integrating the arts and self-expression. Barbara taught Studio Arts and Business at Princeton Senior High School, Princeton MN. Her business career began at Lockheed Martin in San Francisco, eventually becoming a manager. She later founded her own company, Tech Connections, Computer Applications and Training, in Menlo Park. Seeking a more balanced, compassionate lifestyle, she became a Certified Swedish Therapeutic Massage Practitioner and co-founded Wellness Enterprises, Inc., in Menlo Park. She entered a graduate program at San Francisco State University focused on helping students with disabilities to read, write, and express themselves artistically. Later, Barbara served as Adjunct Professor of Studio Arts at Santa Rosa Junior College. She was also a fine pianist, guitarist, singer and composer. Throughout her lifetime, Barbara was a productive artist in various media.

Sharon (Nelson) Papic passed away November 26, 2020. Sharon taught second and third grade at Eden Prairie public schools for 35 years before retiring and continuing to substitute teach and tutor. Her skill and affection in the classroom touched the lives of thousands of students, earning her Teacher of the Year in 1996. Music was important throughout Sharon's life, from her first public performance singing at age 5, continuing in college with the Concordia Choir, and through adulthood in church choirs and various solo performances. Growing up on a farm, Sharon was active outdoors throughout her life. Gardening, swimming, relaxing by the pool, and her routine evening walks during the coldest winter days, she embraced the Minnesota seasons. Her talent and love for cooking could be appreciated at every meal. Alzheimer's disease shaped the final years of Sharon's life but did not deter her unshakable compassion and generosity.

Jon Oleson passed away peacefully with his three loving children by his side on January 25, 2022. Funeral services will be held on Saturday, May 21, 2022 at 11:00 AM at Christ the King Lutheran Church, 8600 Fremont Ave S, Bloomington, MN. Jon's affection for his children and grandchildren was paramount. He wrote a book titled *What Legacy Are We Giving Our Kids?* The book was dedicated to his own kids and grandkids - plus those of everyone else. We suggest going to: www.legacytokids.com to read more about Jon's passion. Jon welcomed conversation about politics and cultural trends. Visits with him were abundant in honesty and kindness. You could count on him to be totally present in a conversation and his personal side alive to sharing and listening. He was saddened by the volatile state of our national discourse. In short, his faith and ethics sought to unite all. John started his career as a youth director for three churches in Duluth MN, followed by 33 years as a teacher and secondary principal plus entrepreneurial efforts and volunteer work.

Barb (Smaby) Massie passed away October 12, 2021. Barb suffered from Alzheimer's disease for about five years and died in her sleep. She was a smart, talented, capable, energetic, and very fun-loving person. Her professional life revolved around Bloomingdales in NYC where she worked for 30 years as Vice President of Executive Placement and Recruitment. She is survived by her husband, Robert Massie, who

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would appreciate any memories you might have to share. His contact information is Robert Massie, 214 Chorale Way, Port St. Lucie, Florida 34986.

Linda (Thorkelson) Wong passed away in Chicago on February 26, 2017.

Carol (Weight) Nordquist passed away March 14, 2019. Carol grew up on a farm in Litchville, ND. After Concordia, she was employed with Pontoppidan Lutheran, Fargo, ND, where she met her husband. They married in 1968 and moved to South Carolina where she earned a Master's degree from the University of South Carolina. Carol taught computers at Easley High School and continuing education at Midlands Tech for 40 years. She was a member of Zion Lutheran Church in Lexington, SC, and was very involved in her church. One of her interests was worship and music; she served on that committee for many years. She loved singing and was a member of the choir where she sang tenor.

Michael Wolf passed away November 25, 2018, from complications following a surgery. Mike worked as an ironworker to put himself through Concordia. After college, he worked in Cass County, ND, and Clay County, MN, as a probation and parole officer and pursued graduate studies at NDSU. In 1976 he went to work for the A. H. Wilder Foundation of MN where he helped to set up and direct the St Croix Camp for adolescent boys in Sandstone, MN. In 1981 he started and directed the St Croix Camp for girls east of Hinckley, MN, and worked there until he retired. His life revolved around helping children needing guidance, riding horses and adventures in the outdoors with family and friends.

Recent Faculty Obituaries

Dr. Gerald (Jerry) Heuer died unexpectedly on September 14, 2021, at the age of 91. Jerry taught at Concordia from 1956 -1995. He was the first recipient of the Sigurd and Pauline Prestegaard Mundhjeld Chair of Mathematics. After his retirement, he became Professor Emeritus and Mathematician in Residence from 1995 until his death. He could be found in his office at the library nearly every day. He was always pleased to advise and consult with students and colleagues. His [four-page obituary](#) is a must read, full of amazing talents and accomplishments. He was the archetype of the Greatest Generation: hardworking, strong, uncomplaining, and capable, yet kind, humble, and gentle. Always full of droll good humor, he had a quiet, clever sense of fun. If you paid attention, he would invariably make you chuckle.

Giving Update

During our 50th reunion giving campaign in 2017, classmates signed up to contribute to a \$5,000 Class of 1967 Legacy Scholarship which has continued each subsequent year. This year, the Class of 1967 Legacy Scholarship recipient is Jake Gothberg, a junior finance major, from Fargo, North Dakota.



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We can pay forward the generous scholarships we received as students by supporting this new generation of Cobbers. Together, we help ensure that a Concordia education is possible for every student. More than 5,000 people came together to raise \$2.6 million for The Cobber Fund. Thank you to the members of our class who made a gift in 2021!

Alumni Awards

To read more about these recipients or to nominate a deserving alumni go to ConcordiaCollege.edu/alumni/awards-and-recognition

2021 Alumni Achievement Award

Fay Ferguson '73

Co-CEO Burrell
Communications
Group



Dr. Gwen (Wagstrom) Halaas '75

Vice chancellor for Academic Affairs
and professor Washington State
University Health Sciences



Harold D. Pope '77

Senior counsel at
Dykema Gossett, PLLC



Dr. Corey Teigen '86

Chief Scientific Officer
Penumbra, Inc.
Vascular and interventional
radiologist, researcher and
developer



2021 Sent Forth Award

Judge Jade Rosenfeldt '05

Clay County Courthouse
Seventh Judicial District



Stephen Letnes '00

Founder, Executive Director
Able Artist Foundation



News & Notes

Stay up to date on news throughout the year and subscribe to Concordia's weekly newsletter: ConcordiaCollege.edu/news/news-and-notes

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Travel the World with Concordia

Each year, the Alumni Relations Office offers opportunities for alumni and the Concordia family to partake in global travel experiences led by our in-house experts. From wine tastings in the French countryside, participating in Northern Spain's rich culture from the seat of your bicycle, or traveling as a companion to our top vocal and instrumental ensembles as they share their music with the world, there's an excursion catered to every interest.

Explore the trips at ConcordiaCollege.edu/alumni/global-travel

In Conclusion

Finally, the nature of a collective letter such as this is that some light editing is required for clarity and consistency. Wherever edits occurred, we worked diligently to retain the spirit of the expression.