



Taft
BULLETIN

ONWARD
Adam Nagler '85

FALL 2021



Colorful, crazy fun, and community connections to kick off the school year with Super Sunday!
ROBERT FALCETTI

FALL 2021

INSIDE

40

The Sounds of Silence
During the pandemic shutdown, two musicians on different sides of the world, Djong Victorin Yu '76 and Vanessa Holroyd '90, found innovative and inspiring ways to keep the arts alive
By Christopher Browner '12



50

Onward

1985 alum Adam Nagler's epic 724-mile paddleboard expedition
By Zach Schonbrun '05



OTHER DEPARTMENTS

- 3 On Main Hall
- 6 Community Corner
- 8 Alumni Spotlight
- 24 Around the Pond
- 60 Class Notes
- 78 In Print
- 99 Milestones
- 104 Looking Back

FALL 2021

Volume 91, Number 4

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DEADLINES FOR CLASS NOTES

Winter–November 15
Spring–February 15
Summer–May 15
Fall–August 30

COMMENTS? TELL US!

We'd love to hear what you think about the stories in this *Bulletin*. We may edit your letters for length, clarity, and content, but please write.

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ON THE COVER

A photo by Adam Nagler '85, 560 miles deep into his solo paddleboard expedition; photo taken 3 miles WSW of Sakonnet Point, Little Compton, Rhode Island. ADAM NAGLER '85

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On
MAIN HALL

A WORD FROM HEAD OF SCHOOL WILLY MACMULLEN '78

“[In 2001] we struggled in all the good ways a community of people with so many lived experiences will as it works to create belonging, as it finds ways to function, as it aspires to meet its mission. But it was nonetheless an extraordinary achievement, and for us it can serve as a model.”

Each year the head of school addresses the school community at the opening of school. Here is an excerpt from Convocation 2021.



A Reflection: On Destruction and Creation

If every September has that feeling of renewal and hope, perhaps this year we feel so more than ever. Every one of us in this room, teachers and students—we all need this.

COVID shredded social ties, left us isolated and lonely, and took loved ones; we witnessed social injustice over the fact that not all lives mattered equally; we followed environmental calamities of flood and fire; and we saw this nation's democracy totter. It was a year of disruption, destruction.

But we are here, whole and hopeful.

September is always about looking ahead, but we need to start in the past, almost 20 years ago to the day, when on our first day of classes, those hijacked planes destroyed buildings, lives, and ideas.

Here's why: 9/11 is not just a page in the history books. For Taft, what happened that day and in the year that followed marks us still, and in good and important ways. That day showed us what this school was and could be: a community where every member felt they belonged and were even loved, a campus marked by stubborn resilience and fierce resolve, a school determined to achieve its mission despite the challenges. That's the legacy of that year passed on to us today.

Perhaps, with the passion and commitment of everyone in this school, and following a year that brought similar pain and confusion, we might create something special, so that 20 years from now, in this same room, on another opening day, they will be talking about us and all we have bequeathed them.

9/11 was the very first day of classes—and we will take a moment of silence on Saturday to honor the anniversary—and the day before looked a lot like what you all experienced yesterday. Cars lined up in the circle. Greetings, handshakes, welcomes. Bags and suitcases and boxes piled outside the elevator. Teary goodbyes. Orientation, a cookout, dorm meetings.

On September 11, we all woke for class. When the bell rang ending class, we all filed in, just as you have, and found our seats at 9:20 for our first meeting. We all filed out to find our world had changed.

In the hours that followed, we saw the images, of the towers crumbling, the Pentagon burning, wreckage smoldering in Pennsylvania. We went to classes—what else could you do? Cancel and sit in front of TVs?—but the fear and anxiety rippled and then washed through campus.

We knew we had to come together, and so we did, here in this room, immediately after class. Our chaplain offered a prayer. We sat in silence. We wept. We held hands. Here's part of what I said:

I find it inexpressibly tragic that I spoke only a few hours ago about this sacred place, and the history of The Taft School gathering here to share in joy and pain, and we are here again. But here we must be, for what we all know is that we ease suffering by sharing, and some of use are suffering now.

But we will go on. Nothing is better for all of us than getting back to work, than doing what we are here to do: teach and learn. We will not allow darkness to descend.

Some of you asked if school might be canceled. No. To what end? That's what the people who did this want. What we need is reaffirmation of life, and to that end, school will go on. The lawnmowers will cut the grass, coaches will blow whistles, and your dorm head will tell you to get in your room.

You will have study hall tonight. Be there. You have homework. Do it. You have classes to go to. Go to them. You have a team to try out for. Go out to the field.

We are going on with our lives with the faith that we are a community that will endure. So we will emerge through this as a community, linked and loving, one characterized by great compassion and resilience.

That is the legacy of that day. By the end of the day, we were raised aloft, and that year became one of creation. That was a day that told all of us that the Taft community had a strength and unity that would not be shaken. That day we feel still.

You can see the connection I am making: two years, separated by two decades, each following events of great destruction. The school that emerged in 2001 was, of course, imperfect. We struggled in all the good ways a community of people with so many lived experiences will as it works to create belonging, as it finds ways to function, as it aspires to meet its mission. But it was nonetheless an extraordinary achievement, and for us it can serve as a model.

9/11 offered us stark evidence of what radical extremism can bring, and what followed on our campus was a concerted shared effort to prove that we, a diverse community, with members from around the world, worshipping in different ways and holding disparate political views and speaking in many tongues and with the full palette of skin colors—that we could fashion a respectful and functioning community.

9/11 also showed how resilient we were. We were stronger than we ever knew we were. Setback was not permanent. That we were shaken was clear, but in driving to campus, in walking out of the dorm to class, in completing homework, in starting rehearsal, in trying out for the team—every small act was proof that we could persevere, endure, thrive.

9/11 gave evidence of how connection in community makes everyone more centered, valued, and happy. We were vulnerable, feeling pain and fear, and so every act of connection—a look in the eye or hand on your shoulder, an invitation to sit at a table, an introduction in the Main Hall, an empathic “I am listening”—was deeply impactful. And these acts seemed to pile on each other, affirming and deepening trust and belonging. Every act said, “You belong. I belong. We need each other.”

9/11 reminded us that we are all fractured and wounded, that we need help and support, and that our emotional and mental health cannot be taken for granted: they must be carefully, honestly, and vulnerably nurtured.

The school of 2001 left us a legacy of how a community can emerge out of rubble, how creation might follow destruction. It was a gift.

So here’s my dream.

It’s Bingham, 20 years from now. The school head is addressing the school. She’s looking out on a school of students from around a totally connected globe. They are new and returning, day and boarding, nervous and excited in equal measure. Behind her are the faculty: brilliant and passionate, chosen as if by calling to be here. She asks everyone to think back on Taft in 2021. “It’s almost impossible for us to imagine that fall of 2021,” she says.

“Think of that school, those teachers and students and staff. They had seen a pandemic kill millions. There were students who had not set foot in a classroom in a year. They had quarantined in strange hotel rooms and looked out on empty city streets. They lived behind masks, seeing only screened faces, separated from those they loved. They had witnessed a nation’s reckoning with racism and injustice. They watched images of flood and fire that seemed almost Biblical. They had seen a democracy shaking, leaders screaming at each other. How could they possibly create anything out of such destruction?”

Maybe she pauses, realizing the year is now beginning, this great and imperfect school, the hard labor of meeting aspirations, the continual striving to meet its mission. She looks out at Bingham. Feels a rush of hope.

“But somehow they did. Look at what they created that year. Marvel at their work. Be awed by their optimism. Be grateful for their legacy. *Look what they gave us.*”

William R. MacMullen '78



ADMISSIONS NOW

Director of Admissions Peter Frew '75 and Associate Director of Admissions Suzanne Campbell with Nicole Balbuena '22, now a co-head monitor.

Join us for a yearlong celebration and help us honor the voices of the Women of Taft: students, faculty, and staff whose journeys have made Taft a better school and whose potential will continue to shape it for years to come; alumnae who impact their communities, transform the places where they work, and create a better world.

Both virtual and in-person programs will be offered throughout the year celebrating this defining milestone.

Visit www.taftschool.org/coeducation

50 YEARS

COEDUCATION

Taft



ADMISSIONS THEN

The first coed Admissions interview at Taft in 1971 for Wendy Hoblitzelle '74, with, at left, Director of Admissions Joe Cunningham and, at right, Assistant Director Mrs. Gould.



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Taft

The Road to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

A Q&A with Thomas Allen, Dean of Community, Justice, and Belonging

Thomas Allen joins the Taft community after a tenure in the Watertown, Connecticut, public school system as a school social worker. Prior to that, he had an extensive career in the Hartford, Waterbury, and Philadelphia school systems in various capacities, including program administration, guidance counseling, and school social work. Allen has led courageous conversations on issues of acceptance, equality, and justice. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in rehabilitation counseling from Springfield College, a Master of Social Work also from Springfield College, and a Master of Science in counseling psychology from Rosemont College.

Originally from Philadelphia, Allen and his family relocated to Watertown seven years ago. An avid football fan, he has been coaching high school football for the past 13 years. He is also a certified personal trainer and the cofounder of Triple Threat Training Sports Performance in Waterbury. Joining the Taft community with Thomas is his wife, Kim, and their three children Jaiden, Kai, and Maila.



Thomas Allen, Dean of Community, Justice, and Belonging, getting to know Taft students.

|| Here's an interesting fact about the Office of Community, Belonging, and Justice: It is actually the largest department on campus. In this office there are 601 students and 250-plus employees. As the dean of this office, I am extremely proud of these numbers! ||

Tell us a bit about yourself and why you decided to join the Taft community.

I am really excited about the opportunity to be part of this amazing community. As a Suffield Academy graduate ('96), I understand the challenges that students in the independent school community are struggling with. Historically, students from marginalized communities have a harder time feeling accepted into the independent school culture, regardless of the efforts put forth by the school. Here at Taft, we are working extremely hard to help all students have a sense of belonging and are invested in this community.

How are you getting to know students?

I am meeting students in a variety of ways. We've spent time eating meals together. I have been working in one of the male dorms on campus getting to know the students in that phase of life as well. In addition, I've spent time at the athletic fields speaking with or watching the students engage in some of the various afternoon activities that are provided here on campus. Students also frequent my office, which is located in a great location, right near the dining halls!

ILLUSTRATION BY FRANZI/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

What are your hopes for your office?

The Office of Community, Belonging, and Justice strives to create a safe space for all students, regardless of race, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity (or any other characteristic), while helping to give a voice to those who feel voiceless. The DEI Strategic Plan has given us a great starting point to ensure we are working as a community

toward equity and inclusion for all in all areas of the Taft School experience. We will be using the DEI Strategic Plan (as well as continuous feedback from community members) as a road map in the work that we do.

Here's an interesting fact about the Office of Community, Belonging, and Justice: It is actually the largest department on campus. In this office there are 601 students and 250-plus

employees. As the dean of this office, I am extremely proud of these numbers!

I look forward to being part of this process, and welcome the opportunity to communicate and interact with as many people as possible who hold this community in such high regard.

Taft is a community where everyone should feel like they belong. We can't change our history...but we *can* create the future. ■

|| The Office of Community, Belonging, and Justice strives to create a safe space for all students, regardless of race, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity (or any other characteristic), while helping to give a voice to those who feel voiceless. ||



Dyllan McGee '89, founder and executive producer of McGee Media and MAKERS, and two-time Emmy Award-winning filmmaker.

Well Told

Illuminating stories of ancestry, race, and gender with Dyllan McGee '89

CERTAIN FORMULAS should never be meddled with—especially when they keep viewers tuning in year after year to a top-rated PBS show and famous Americans lining up for the chance to learn about their ancestry.

But what happens when a pandemic threatens to upend that?

For Dyllan McGee '89, to go remote with the “big reveal” on each episode of *Finding Your Roots with Henry Louis Gates Jr.* would have been antithetical to the long-running show’s key to success.

It’s the moment when Gates, the show’s host and a revered African American historian, enlightens celebrities, politicians, and journalists about their lineage.

“That was probably our biggest challenge,” says McGee, the show’s executive producer. “That show is built around the reveal that Henry Louis Gates does. It requires an emotional safe space.”

McGee, a two-time Emmy and duPont-Columbia Journalism Award-winning documentary filmmaker, says that the

show’s producers even looked into a robotic camera setup for the episodes. But that just wouldn’t have replicated what audiences and show participants had come to expect from the program, which will air its eighth season in 2022 and is in production for a ninth.

So, working with a minimal crew and strict health protocols, *Finding Your Roots* went on, albeit with the requisite social distancing between the show’s subjects and Gates, a Harvard University professor who goes by the nickname Skip.

“At the end of the day, we decided we had to be in the room,” she says. “We give such a gift to the person in the chair across from Skip Gates.”

The partnership between McGee and Gates began while the two were working for Oxford University Press. An editor suggested that they would be a match. It proved to be a dynamic pairing, from their collaboration on *Finding Your Roots* to *The Black Church*, a four-hour PBS series that aired earlier this year. During the pandemic, they also produced *Making Black America*, a series showcasing African American people’s ability to collectively prosper and define Blackness in ways that transformed America itself. It will air in the fall of 2022.

When they first teamed up, Gates had been working on *The African American National Biography*.

“He wanted to produce a series chronicling the stories of living African Americans at the time,” McGee says. “He had been the subject of early DNA genealogy

testing. He thought, Is there a way to bring DNA and genealogy into the series?”

After several months of planning, the premise was conceived for what was then known as *African American Lives*, a groundbreaking series that traced the ancestry of the likes of Maya Angelou, Morgan Freeman, and Whoopi Goldberg.

Nothing quite established the show as a force than did landing Oprah Winfrey, whom Quincy Jones connected with Gates.

“Once we got Oprah Winfrey, we knew other people would agree,” McGee says.

Two seasons later, the producers expanded the show’s scope to include prominent Americans from all walks of life: it became *Finding Your Roots*. The format’s popularity, McGee says, has been enduring, especially during times of adversity.

“The pandemic, racial injustice, all just contributed to the reactions and the emotions of our guests,” says McGee, the founder of New York City-based McGee Media.

The show makes viewers realize

something else: “It celebrates our heritage and our differences, but also our commonality,” she says.

From African Americans to women, telling the stories of the underrepresented has been a life calling for McGee, who previously served as an executive producer of *MAKERS: Women Who Make America*. The critically acclaimed PBS series developed such a substantial following that it spawned MAKERS conferences, yet another platform to tell the stories of the accomplishments of women and the barriers that they overcame.

“When I started MAKERS, I remember knocking on doors and people constantly saying, ‘Are people really going to be interested in women’s stories?’” McGee says. “Then the interest and demand for women’s stories really exploded. That felt exciting.”

Then came the pandemic, delaying the release of *Not Done: Women Remaking America*, a PBS series charting the last five years of the women’s movement and its intersectional fight for equality. Pushed back from June 2020 to November 2020, the show was nominated for an Emmy and received a Gracie Award, which recognizes “exemplary programming created by, for and about women.”

“It felt like we were in a new era, like the 1970s activism,” McGee says.

McGee left her role with MAKERS in March to focus on her production company, but she says that doesn’t mean that there aren’t more stories of perseverance and inequity to tell. Only 38 Fortune 500 CEOs, she says, are women.

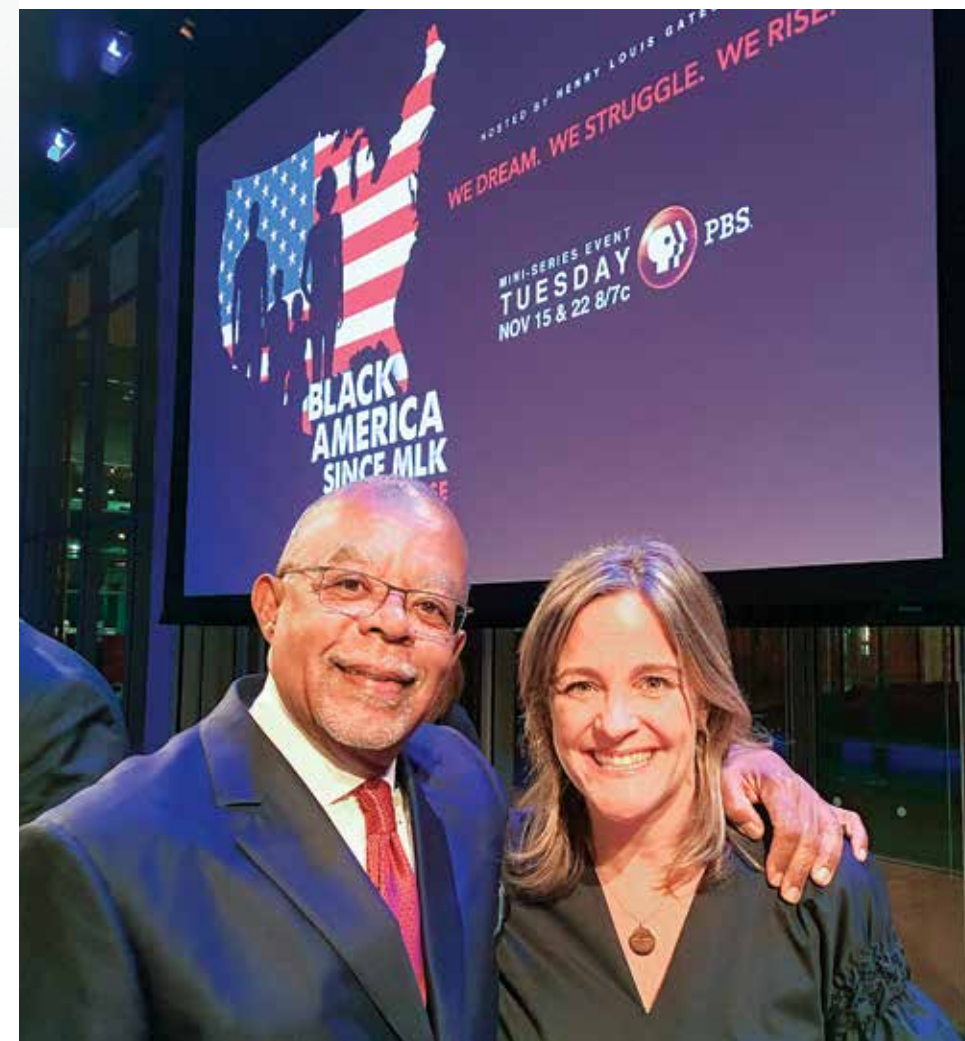
“That’s not a lot,” she says. “The pandemic completely set back a lot of progress for women. It really was hard for women to keep up their jobs.”

McGee says that a commitment to inclusion transcends numbers.

“It’s not enough to just hire a woman or a person of color,” she says. “It’s about creating communities that allow different people and perspectives to be heard.” ■

—Neil Vigdor '95

Left: McGee with her colleague, renowned African American historian and author Henry Louis Gates Jr.



It's About Service

IT'S LIKE BUILDING THE PLANE WHILE you're flying it, says Dr. Tarik Asmerom '01. As an emergency room physician at Texas Children's Hospital in Houston, she says the COVID-19 pandemic has pushed medical personnel to the brink.

"I think there is a good amount of burnout," she says. "We're going on two years of this, and there's only so much pandemic anyone can tolerate. There's significant burnout, but we continue to be present for our patients."

As the science evolves on treating COVID patients, treatments change as well, forcing medical personnel to adapt to changes that seem to happen daily, she notes.

"We know a lot more about COVID than we did back in March," she says. "We're seeing a lot more pediatric patients now" who are suffering from a dual problem: COVID and RSV, a respiratory virus that ordinarily affects infants. The dual whammy means sicker children, she notes. "It's quite intense in the pediatric hospitals, because both are happening at the same time."

She and her colleagues at the hospital have been frustrated by vaccine refusal and the politicization of science and medicine. Those who are unvaccinated are showing up in greater numbers due to the Delta variant.

"The medical community thought this [vaccine] was our way out and that science had saved us," she says. "It's just disheartening, it really is. You're trying to hold on to your zeal for medicine and your love of people, but...you feel like that's being thrown in your face. As far as mandates are concerned, that's a political question not a medical one. Professionally, I recommend the vaccine to essentially everyone who qualifies."

Her choice of practice has always focused on those needing help.

"I work in the emergency room where

we treat all patients: children, elderly, pregnant, all ages and genders. I did my training at a county hospital, which acts as a safety net for underinsured, uninsured, undocumented, county jail patients, and everyone else who is in need of help. I also previously worked at the Indian Health Service in Navajo Nation," she says. "In short, it's about service, about being present for people in their most vulnerable [situations]."

As an assistant professor who works with Baylor College of Medicine, Asmerom teaches at the patient's bedside. "Being a teacher for six years prior to going into medicine made me already acclimated to the triad of parent, child, and provider—educator or doctor—so focusing myself on

"The medical community thought this [vaccine] was our way out and that science had saved us. It's just disheartening, it really is. You're trying to hold on to your zeal for medicine and your love of people, but...you feel like that's being thrown in your face."

pediatric care was a smooth transition," she says. "I have to really commend the residents and medical students I've worked with. I find that...they're still very much dedicated to what they signed up for. They're present for all the changes and working through the challenges on behalf of our patients."

Asmerom also holds an administrative position where she is helping to liaise an endeavor to make Texas Children's Hospital a home institution for patients born with congenital heart disease who are now living decades into adulthood. "We want these adult-aged patients to have [care from] physicians trained in general emergency medicine and adult congenital heart disease to manage their specific needs all in one place," she says.

To release the stresses that build daily, Asmerom has developed a passion for fitness, specifically weightlifting.

"I'm a petite person, so I'm lifting weights. I'm working on building muscle

mass—I even got a trainer," she says. "I need to focus on myself—my trainer brings me so much happiness—that's been a source of happiness for me. I am protecting myself and my light. I also purposely avoid media; I sometimes unplug from what's going on politically and what's going on generally to give myself a break. I surround myself with positive people."

Those people include the doctors with whom she worked during her residency and those she works with daily at Texas Children's Hospital.

"My coworkers understand...the day to day, and that's been paramount," she says. "Just being able to talk to your colleagues about what's going on, feeling like you have

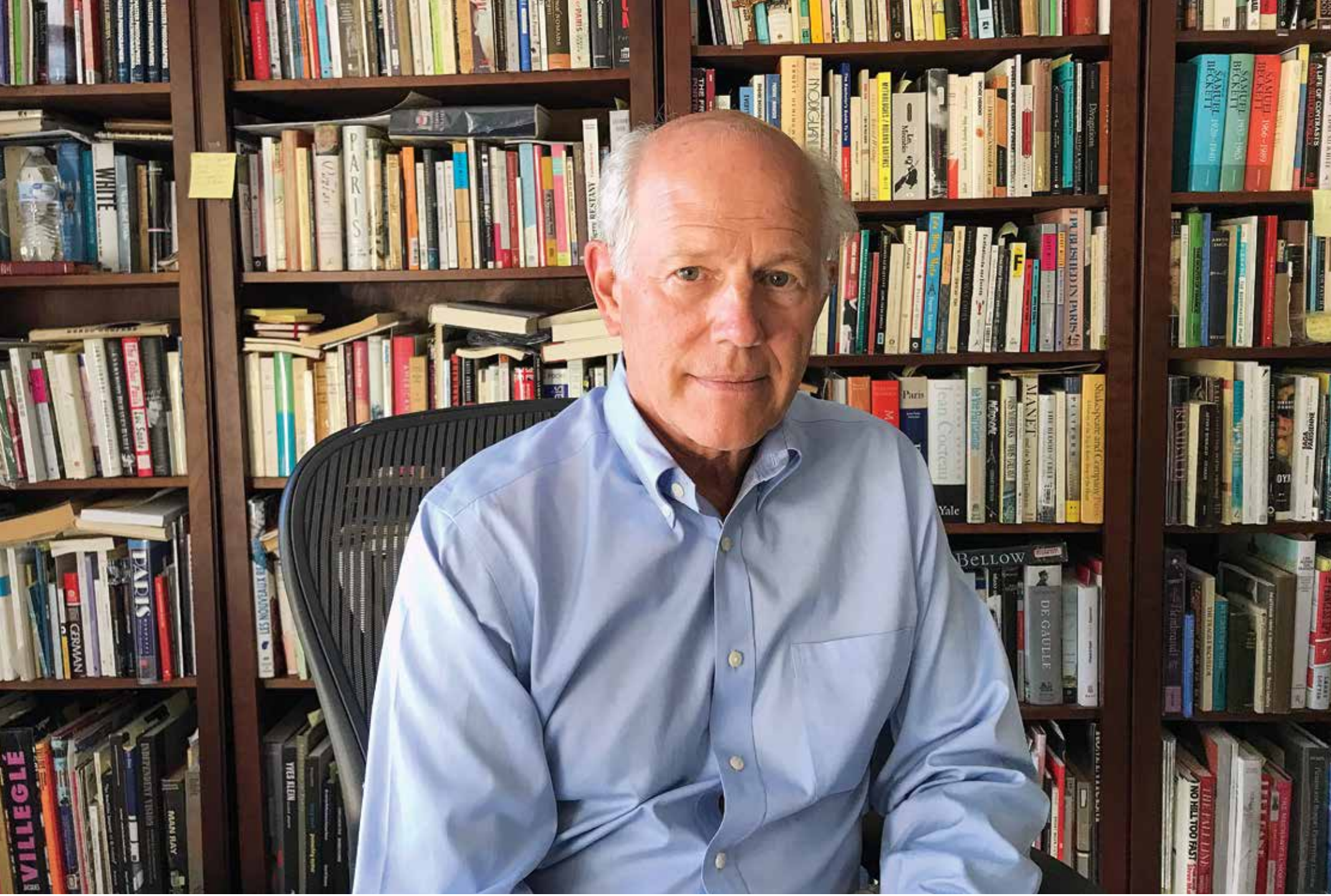
other comrades you can relate to who can take a negative situation and make light humor out of it and let off some steam."

Taft classmates may remember that Asmerom was the first female student of color elected to the head monitor position her senior year at Taft, in 2001. The early lessons of leadership she gained in that position have helped her throughout her career, she says.

"I'm so profoundly grateful for my entire Taft experience," she says. "I appreciate the level of trust we were given at Taft. As a student, your vote counts as much as [the administration's and faculty's]. I was a young African American woman at Taft and trying to find my voice. [I learned to] believe in [myself] as a leader, a changemaker. Someone who has impact. Honestly, I was very shy, and as I look back, I was very grateful for that space and that level of trust I was given." ■

—Bonnie Blackburn-Penhollow '84

Left: Dr. Tarik Asmerom '01, emergency room physician at Texas Children's Hospital in Houston, and assistant professor at Baylor College of Medicine.



he draws inspiration. “I think it’s good to write about what you like,” he says. “People may not get it, but you’ve got to do what’s going to keep you excited if you’re going to do a long book.”

Conrad’s latest long book was birthed particularly slowly. His interest in the Parisian mixed-media artist Jacques Villeglé began forming almost two decades ago. At first, Conrad was just going to write an article—until finally, 256 pages later, he had something weightier on his hands.

“It became the thesis that I never wrote

at Yale,” says Conrad, who considers Villeglé to be “France’s greatest living artist.”

Still remarkably spry and lively at age 95, Villeglé guided Conrad around the streets of Paris, offering a vibrant history lesson with practically each building they passed, and pointing out the spots where he snatched the posters that became his famous “décollage” works.

Some of Villeglé’s pieces today hang in the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art in New York; the Tate Gallery in



Above: Barnaby Conrad III '70, author, editor, and artist.

Right: Jacques Villeglé and Conrad with one of Villeglé’s artworks at the Modernism gallery in San Francisco in 2007.

Tearing Into Art

BARNABY CONRAD III '70 has a penchant for finding iconic subjects that are still worthy of a second look.

He landed on that formula with his first book about the history of absinthe, the forbidden “muse” that inspired and tormented artists and writers including Gauguin, Van Gogh, Baudelaire, and Wilde. He followed that up with a best seller on the history of the martini, as well as

deeply researched and colorfully illustrated books about cigars, blonde actresses, even Pan American Airways, aka Pan Am.

“Maybe it’s just simple ideas for simple minds—my own included,” Conrad jokes. He credits the *New Yorker* writer John McPhee with popularizing the concept. But Conrad—who is also an editor, artist, skilled angler, and world traveler—has his own deep well of unique interests and experience from which

“I think it’s good to write about what you like. People may not get it, but you’ve got to do what’s going to keep you excited if you’re going to do a long book.”

—Barnaby Conrad III '70

“Where there’s work, there’s a fence. And where there’s a fence, there are posters.” —Jacques Villeglé

Below: Art dealer Martin Muller, Brasserie Lipp manager Claude Guittard, artist Jacques Villeglé, and author Barnaby Conrad III in Paris in 2014. FRANÇOIS POIVRET



London; and dozens of museums throughout France and Germany. But compared to other members of the French Nouveau Realisme movement, such as Yves Klein, Jean Tinguely, and Arman, Villeglé felt due for more recognition among American audiences. That made him an interesting subject, Conrad says.

He also came to see Villeglé as an archivist whose work reflected the city’s history and personality as it emerged after the war. “He is one of the last of his generation,” Conrad says. “Villeglé’s art preserves the history and street life of postwar Paris.”

Conrad, like his bullfighter-writer-saloon-owner father, Barnaby Conrad Jr. ’40, is an artist himself and lived in Paris in the 1980s. But he first met Villeglé at a gallery in San Francisco in 2003. “Jacques is a real character,” Conrad says. “Caustic, funny. At his heart, he’s still 19 years old.”

Villeglé later showed him where, in 1949, he and a buddy, Raymond Hains, spotted a dirtying collection of torn movie posters on a fence in the Boulevard du Montparnasse. Thinking the haphazard arrangement actually looked somewhat artistic, they ripped the posters down and brought them back to their apartment. Weeks later, Hains and Villeglé reconstructed the poster fragments and glued them onto an eight-foot canvas. The resulting piece, titled *Ach Alma Manetro*, is in the permanent collection at the Pompidou Centre in Paris.

Villeglé went on to scavenge more than 4,500 works from Paris’s streets. “When I saw a crane on the skyline, I headed that way,” he told Conrad, “because it meant construction was going on. Where there’s work, there’s a fence. And where there’s a fence, there are posters.”

“He is really one of the grandfathers of street art,” Conrad says.

Like Conrad’s other books, the Villeglé biography is stuffed with colorful images and graphics. Published by the San Francisco gallery Modernism Inc. and Oakland-based Inkshares, *Jacques Villeglé and the Streets of Paris* will roll out this fall.

“He is one of the last of his generation. Villeglé’s art preserves the history and street life of postwar Paris.”

—Barnaby Conrad III ’70



Above: Villeglé ripping posters on the Quai d'Ivry in 1989. FRANÇOIS POIVRET

After five years of unbroken focus on a single French artist, Conrad says he is excited about exploring new directions, including trying his hand at writing fiction. He still keeps the eight rejection letters he received from publishers while pitching around his absinthe book, which went on to sell 70,000 copies.

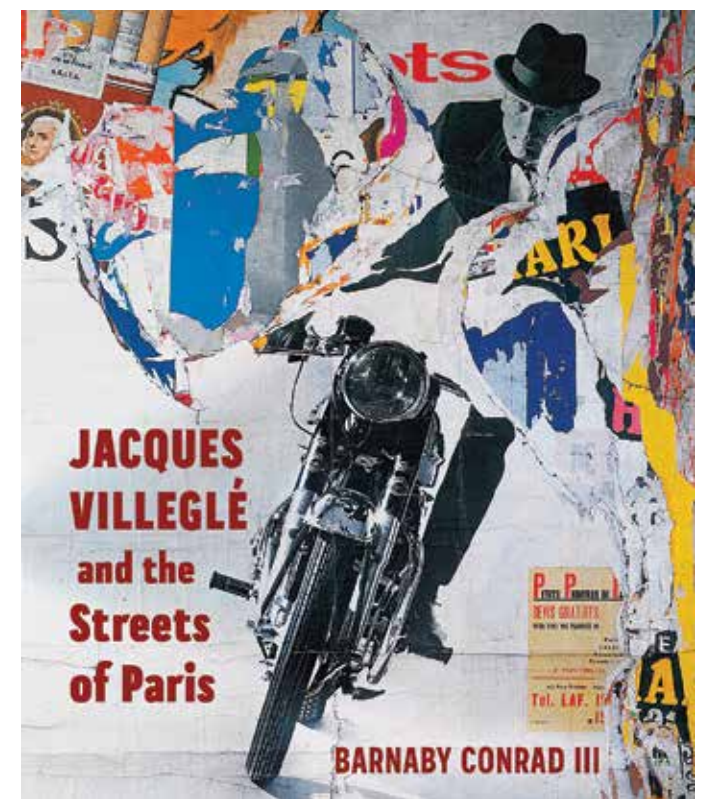
He was a founding editor at *Art World* (in NYC), senior editor of *Horizon*, editor-at-large for *ForbesLife* magazine, and co-founder of Kanbar & Conrad Books in San Francisco. Conrad also edited his father’s books for 30 years.

He’s the author of 10 books of non-fiction, but is now working on a novel. “I’ve always been a very good editor, and I love helping writers,” Conrad says. “I think it’s just taken me this long to learn how to write [for myself].” ■

—Zach Schonbrun ’05

Also see *In Print*, page 78.

Right: The cover of Conrad’s large-format art book and biography, *Jacques Villeglé and the Streets of Paris*.



Immersed in Watersheds

“I feel good about the fact that I am making a positive impact on the world and can feel like I've done some good.”



Chris Malik '76, Southwest Coastal, South Central Coastal, and Connecticut Mainstem watershed manager for the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

CHRIS MALIK '76 has always been interested in water. At the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, where he serves as Southwest Coastal, South Central Coastal, and Connecticut Mainstem watershed manager, he gets to help keep Connecticut's water clean.

“My primary role is to work on developing watershed plans for polluted rivers and manage a grant program to help solve the impairments and pollution sources,” says Malik, who has worked for the state of Connecticut since 1989. A watershed is an area of land that drains, or sheds, water into a receiving body of water, like a lake, river, or Long Island Sound.

According to the DEEP website, “As rain-water or melted snow runs downhill in the watershed, it collects and transports nutrients, pathogens, sediments, and other pollutants and deposits them into the receiving water-body. Watershed management is a term used to describe the process of implementing land use practices and water management practices to protect and improve the quality of the water and other natural resources within a watershed by managing the use of those land and water resources in a comprehensive manner.”

After studying geology and geophysics at the University of Connecticut, which qualified him to work with wetland delineation and permitting, the state's Department of Transportation recruited Malik to work on those issues. After 11 years at the DOT, Malik moved to what was known at the time as the Department of Environment Protection.

Malik mainly focuses his attention on the nonpoint aspects of watershed management—including failing septic systems and illicit discharges—as opposed to permitted point sources like wastewater plants.

While industrial and wastewater discharges were previously the largest source of water pollution in Connecticut, Malik says that now stormwater runoff constitutes a more significant problem with regard to preventing wildlife and people from designated uses like recreation. A few of his recent projects have involved removing dams that have outlived

their life cycles. “Taking down the dam often improves water quality,” Malik says. Some state dams have been retrofitted with hydropower, but many of them are so old that they are not suitable for hydropower use.

Malik has also worked to remove aquatic life impairments and water quality impairments, including trying to restore anadromous fish like river herring and blueback herring, which he says are “very important links in the chain of fish for marine birds and fish in Long Island Sound.”

Another rewarding aspect of Malik's role is working with the public. “I act as a first contact point for people when they have watershed concerns,” he says, “and the vast community of people working on these problems provides me with the motivation to keep helping them with these issues.”

Malik has been involved with legislative inquiries and grant management, often working with volunteers and representatives from NGOs like Save the Sound and Harbor Watch. He says that there are many opportunities for anyone who would like to join up with grassroots organizations and that there is currently a lot of momentum in reducing nutrient impact, like the nitrogen inputs to Long Island Sound.

Ultimately, it's a job that he has found to be especially gratifying. “I feel good about the fact that I am making a positive impact on the world and can feel like I've done some good,” Malik says. ■

—Sam Dangremond '05

Fun fact: The son of a former Taft headmaster was involved with adding an extra “E” to the agency's name. Dan Esty, son of John Cushing Esty, who led Taft from 1963 to 1972, became the agency's commissioner in 2011. It was that year that two state agencies, the Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of Public Utility Control, merged to become the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. Today, DEEP has 950 full-time employees, a budget of more than \$170 million, and a state park and forest system offering 142 locations for recreation around the state.



A Twist on Perspective

READING THE NEWSPAPER, WALKING down the street, going into a store—these are all places where Margeaux Walter '01 finds inspiration for the colorful reflections on society she creates and then photographs.

Walter is far more than a photographer. She creates tableaux to present concepts of humans' relationships with their environments. And she does it all—from conception to props to staging, and even becomes part

of the image herself. She sculpts, designs, paints, creates costumes, and performs. She has created costumes made from pine bark and grass, decorated sets with multiple rolls of toilet paper, and covered subjects with candy sprinkles. Humans (usually Walter herself) are included in most of her images, but they are generic representations of flattened personalities.

"My characters are more stand-ins for generic people," she told the *New York*

Times, where she often is commissioned to create images for the paper. "I'm never replicating them as personalities."

Walter received her MFA from Hunter College in 2014 and her BFA from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts in 2006. Her work has been featured in publications including the *New York Times*, *New York Post*, *Seattle Times*, *Boston Globe*, *Courier International*, and *Blouin Art Info*. In her work, "the people disappear into the scene.



"People just buy things and there's no relationship [in their minds] between what they're buying and the effect on the planet."

Opposite page: Photographer and multimedia artist Margeaux Walter '01

Above: *Checkmate*, digital C print, 2015, Sign Language series

Left: *In Bloom*, digital C print, 2015, Sign Language series

I have always thought of them as a stand-in—a lot of my work is influenced by and trying to replicate advertising. I think of these characters as someone you would cut out of a magazine and [present as an] ideal. My face is a lot less present in my current work so that the characters are less recognizable. I am using my body as a tool."

Excess consumption is a running theme. She has a particularly fraught relationship with IKEA, the Swedish purveyor of home goods.

"I used to go and pick a random room to sit in and do my sketches," she says. "It's a pretty awful experience, but I find it full of inspiration for people watching."

IKEA's contributions to the world's pollution problems were part of the inspiration for her works that are focused on the effects of consumerism on the environment.

"People just buy things and there's no



Below: *Patch of Grass*, digital C print, 2020, All Natural series

Bottom: *Cumulus*, dye-sublimation on aluminum, 2019, Believe Me series



relationship [in their minds] between what they're buying and the effect on the planet," she says. They are "buying things in an effort to shape their identity. This process of buying makes you think you're bettering yourself, yet it often has the opposite effect. Our relationship with consumption is really complicated. I find the mindset behind it really fascinating."

Her most recent series, *Believe Me*, takes its inspirations from the same expression oft-used by a certain former president. In *Believe Me*, Walter used a drone to capture a "God's-eye view" of images she staged featuring herself as a faceless character in various environments. Prior to receiving a drone as a gift, she would shoot in a studio, unable to reach the heights available with a drone. Walter usually takes pictures in sections and tiles the results together to get maximum resolution, she told the *New York Times*.

"I was blown away by this new perspective," she says of the drone. "That series looks at and reimagines our environment from a distance."

That project was thinking about climate change and waste, Walter says. "I substituted consumer goods for natural objects in a tongue-in-cheek way to reveal environmental concerns through humor and perspective play."

The photographs in *Believe Me* resemble "surveillance images that one might find in Google Earth," she says in her artist statement. These "site-specific temporary installations in the environment...challenge our current post-fact world influenced by scripted and hyperbolic reality television, fake news, sensational journalism, and virtual experiences." *Believe Me* took three years to complete, and Walter says she doesn't print

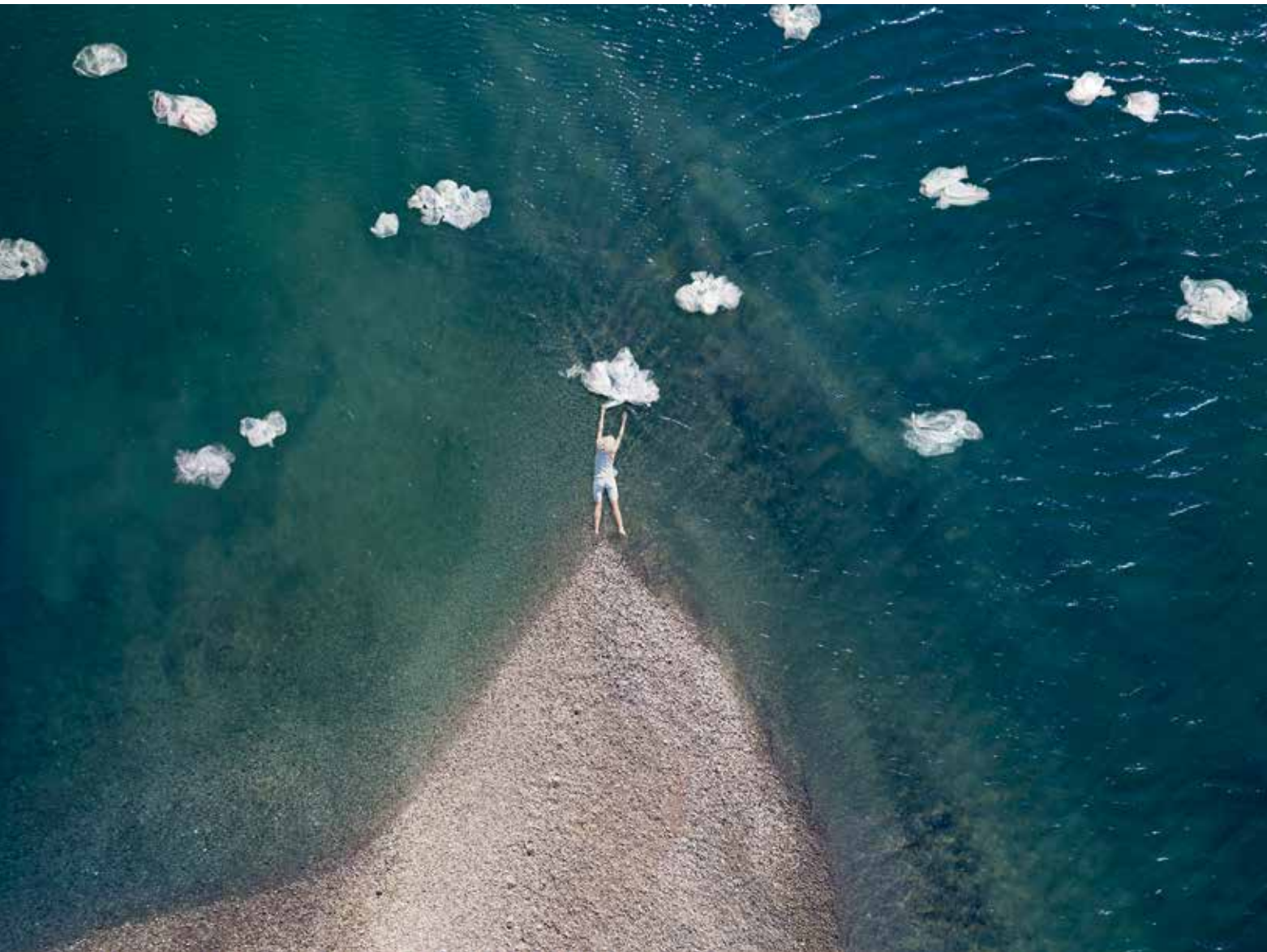


MARGEUX WALTER HAS RECEIVED MULTIPLE HONORS from the Magenta Foundation Flash Forward, HeadOn Photo Festival, Photolucida, Prix de la Photographie Paris, International Photography Awards, the Julia Margaret Cameron Award, and other organizations. She has been awarded artist-in-residence programs at Montalvo Arts Center, MacDowell Colony, Yaddo, Marble House Project, VCCA, Red Gate Gallery in Beijing and BigCi in Bilpin, Australia (Environmental award). In 2020, she was the recipient of the 2020 Sony Alpha Female Award.

She is represented by Winston Wachter Fine Art in New York and Seattle, and Foto Relevance in Houston, and has participated in dozens of exhibitions at institutions including MOCA in Los Angeles; Hunterdon Art Museum in Clinton, New Jersey; the Center for Photography in Woodstock, New York; the Butler Institute of American Art in Youngstown, Ohio; Sonoma County Museum in Santa Rosa, California; Tacoma Art Museum in Tacoma, Washington; and the Griffin Museum of Photography in Winchester, Massachusetts. Visit her website at margeauxwalter.com.

Left: *Snow Day*, digital C print, 2021, All Natural series

Below: *Dip Your Toes*, digital C print, 2020, All Natural series



the images until the entire series is complete.

Throughout the pandemic, Walter has continued to brainstorm new concepts. Her in-progress series, *All Natural*, is an ongoing exploration created in quarantine.

Within the *All Natural* series are images of bare feet inside an aquarium complete with puzzled goldfish. A faceless woman staples flowers to the upholstery of chairs. And a pair of feet in scuba flippers swims past a shoe holder filled with tropical creatures.

"These images reflect a human desire to connect with nature, and the failure of that connection with the influence of commerce, consumerism, lifestyle, and comfort. Due to COVID-19, we have become even more isolated from nature, from each other, and from the world, multiplying some of these emotions," she says. ■

—Bonnie Blackburn-Penhollow '84



“To enjoy the rainbow, first enjoy the rain.”

—Paulo Coelho



Summer Journeys

Making an Impact Across the Globe

DURING THE PAST 18 MONTHS, THE PANDEMIC CHANGED NEARLY EVERY ASPECT OF LIFE AROUND THE WORLD. FOR TAFT STUDENTS, THOSE CHANGES MEANT THAT THE SUMMER OF 2020 WAS NOT FILLED WITH THE SERVICE TRAVEL AND GLOBAL LEARNING THAT HAVE BECOME HALLMARKS OF A TAFT EDUCATION FOR SO MANY. BY THE SUMMER OF 2021, HOWEVER, THE WIDESPREAD AVAILABILITY OF VACCINES MEANT THAT, IN SOME CASES AND PLACES, TRAVEL PROGRAMS COULD RESUME, OR AT LEAST ADAPT. WE'RE GRATEFUL TO THOSE STUDENTS WHO AGREED TO SHARE THEIR STORIES OF GLOBAL IMPACT, SERVICE, AND LEARNING WITH THE *BULLETIN*.

Uniqueness & Beauty

► Macy Cherneff '22

MACY CHERNEFF '22 has always been passionate about environmental issues. In her role as editor-in-chief of Taft's *Global Journal*, Macy works with student authors and editors to bring the awareness, understanding, insights, and vocabulary that members of the Taft community need to engage in meaningful dialogue around current global and environmental issues. Over the summer, Macy took her commitment to that work one step further, engaging in a student service and leadership program in the Galápagos Islands.

"I think that my travels to the Galápagos relate well to the objectives of the *Global Journal*," says Macy. "I immersed myself in a new culture while helping to better the global community."

A province of Ecuador, the Galápagos Islands are a volcanic archipelago. They

are home to a plethora of plant and animal species, many found nowhere else in the world. Charles Darwin visited the Galápagos in 1835; his work there helped inspire his theory of evolution. The Galápagos Islands are also a UNESCO-designated heritage site, making cultural preservation and environmental conservation paramount. That work was the core of Macy's 14-day experience.

"The objective of our service work was to clear out invasive tree species and plant endemic trees in their place to restore the natural habitat," Macy explains. "We began by digging large boulders from the ground using iron spades and transporting them in wheelbarrows to the planting area. Then we used machetes to cut down invasive blackberry, guava, and Cuban cedar trees. We then used the spades to dig large holes

for the endemic *Scalesia* trees. Finally, after planting the *Scalesia* seedlings and watering them, we moved three large boulders on all sides of every tree to ensure that the giant turtles that share the land cannot eat or step on the *Scalesia* seedlings."

The work was difficult, Macy notes—back-breaking, in fact. But the results were substantial and will have a meaningful impact on environment: Macy and her team planted 67 *Scalesia* trees during her time there.

"The most meaningful part of my experience was conversing with the local people of the Galápagos and experiencing a completely different culture from my own," Macy says. "Each person has their own culture, their own backstory, their own opinions, desires, and dreams. Those differences are what makes the world beautiful."



But to Serve

► Julissa Mota '22

JULISSA MOTA'S PASSION FOR GLOBAL studies came into focus during her sophomore year at Taft.

"We were learning about workers' rights, immigration rights, and systems created to suppress them in my AP Human Geography class," Julissa recalls. "It was so interesting to me, and it felt very important."

Now in her senior year, Julissa is a candidate for Taft's prestigious Global Studies and Service (GSS) Diploma, a demanding course of study that requires students not only to complete specific coursework with a broad, global view, but to engage in service work locally and abroad. Determined to meet those requirements at a time when a worldwide pandemic made the latter nearly impossible, Julissa found a way to serve young students in Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, and Colombia last summer as an online English language teaching intern.

"The students I worked with were entering at the very first level of language learning, meaning we worked on simple conversation tools—'Hello, how are you?' 'I'm fine, how are you?'—and things like colors and shapes."

As a member of the Hartford, Connecticut, Capitol Squash program, Julissa, who is bilingual, has worked with young learners in the past, though more as a bridge and translator between players, coaches, and parents than as a teacher.

"Outreach 360, the organization I worked with over the summer, supplied teaching guides, books, and lesson plans," Julissa explains. "There was an orientation period up front where teachers helped us with general teaching skills



and strategies, and well as tips for engaging students in a virtual learning space, which adds a whole different component."

Each day before class, Julissa met virtually with other teachers and program leaders to review the day's material and lesson plans and to practice delivering the content. There were circumstances, however, that were both eye-opening for Julissa and challenging for the young learners.

"During orientation we were told that some students would not have a private or quiet space to learn," Julissa says. "Even knowing that going in, actually seeing students taking care of their siblings during class was unexpected for me. Some were learning in small rooms with other siblings running around, making it very difficult for them to focus. It made me so proud of them—they were so dedicated and so resilient and so committed to learning, even under those challenging circumstances. And learning a whole new language, that's something to praise—that's incredibly hard work. It was really amazing."

To fulfill the local service requirements

for her GSS Diploma, Julissa worked passionately to impact food insecurity in Connecticut. With fellow Taft senior Angel Chukwuma, Julissa hosted fundraising events for the Connecticut Food Bank while working to educate the Taft community about the disparities that exist among racial groups and geographic locations across the state. Through that work and her teaching internship, Julissa was continually reminded of one underlying philosophy.

"Something a teacher said during orientation really stuck with me—it is something we always hear in GSS as well. We were reminded that we aren't helping, we are *serv*ing, and that there is a difference. What we are doing is not charity work, it is taking skills we possess and offering them in service to others," Julissa explains. "I didn't learn English until I was in first grade, but I feel so blessed to be almost a native speaker. I grew up understanding that speaking English is such an important tool. Being able to share that in service to brilliant, strong, determined, resilient, mature young learners was such a rewarding experience."

A Greater Purpose

▼ Lily Spencer '22

WHAT LILY SPENCER '22 LEARNED through a middle school report on Saudi Arabia fascinated her. It also stuck with her.

"I have remained interested in the Arab world—it's culture, language, and traditions—and have fostered that interest through books, movies, restaurants, and the news," Lily says.

Lily spent three weeks in Morocco last summer engaged in service work in the remote mountain village of Zaouia Ahansal. Located in the High Atlas Mountains, Zaouia Ahansal was founded in the 13th century by an Islamic traveler and scholar named Sidi Said Ahansal, whose mentor encouraged him to establish a religious school. Today, the needs of the village are great and many. The projects Lily and her fellow travelers engaged in were selected by community leaders to address their most immediate needs.

"Our service projects included construction work on a local water cleaning station, working in the public gardens, planting trees, cleaning up trash around the village, and working in the summer program at the local school," Lily says.

The team's days started early with breakfast at the home of the village Sheikh, followed by Arabic lessons.

"For about an hour each day we would learn some basic phrases in Arabic that would help us communicate with members of the village who were not familiar with English," says Lily. "After our lesson we would prepare for our morning service project, which would last about three hours. We would return for another three hours of afternoon service work. After dinner our group would meet on the roof of the guesthouse for our nightly meeting. We'd debrief about the service we completed, talk about our highs and lows of the day, and discuss what we were looking forward to. It was a great way to tie our

service work to a greater purpose and better understand our impact on the community."

Lily also came to appreciate the full impact of her service work in Morocco through an independent research project focused on education in the village. She investigated government funding, the local politics surrounding women in education, the effect COVID had on schooling, and the economic benefit of educating community members. As part of her research, Lily interviewed local community leaders. She learned that education in the region is fully funded by the government, but that sending children to school is a decision that is made by each individual family; more conservative families are less likely to send their children to school. And while the overall literacy rate for women is around 65 percent, it remains much lower in the more rural areas, something that NGOs and supplemental education programs are working to change.

"The supplemental teaching program that I worked at costs about 10,000 euros a year and is mainly funded through student travel programs and other nonprofit organizations. That program, which offers local students extra time in the classroom and more learning opportunities, is not very common across Morocco," Lily says.

Her research also uncovered the impact of the pandemic on education in the village. While the government worked to provide online learning for students at every grade level, many did not have access to electricity, let alone the technology. As a result, 70 percent of students lost a year of learning and had to repeat classes. Thus, the supplemental summer program Lily worked with last summer, was more important to the village than ever.

"Teaching students in the local village school impacted me quite profoundly. The

language barrier made communication in the classroom challenging, but not impossible. I used hand motions and hand-drawn pictures to communicate with the students and noticed their eyes glistening when they understood a new word or concept in English," Lily recalls. "There were two boys in my group who were incredibly motivated to learn the words of the water cycle in English. We made a game of who could recite the water cycle the loudest. A few days after our lesson I was walking back from a service project in the gardens, and the two boys were playing on the side of the road. They recognized me as I passed by and began reciting the water cycle at the loudest possible volume they could, including the hand motions of rain falling, water evaporating, and more. It made me so happy to know that the lesson I had prepared and taught was understood by the students, and they were practicing it outside the classroom."





The Road to Discovery

▲ Ayden Cinel '22

FOR AS LONG AS HE CAN REMEMBER, Ayden Cinel '22 has been curious about how the universe works. He is an avid and passionate learner with a strong interest in science.

"I've just recently narrowed my interest down from such a broad scope to the biomedical field, which I hope to turn into a career," Ayden says.

Ayden took a deep academic dive into biomedical building blocks over the summer through a new, virtual and immersive course in modern biology, part of Columbia University's prestigious program for high school students. The course explores the basic elements of molecular biology, genetics, and evolution, and how those sciences affect modern medicine, agriculture, and ecology. Summer study began with a review of the structure, function, and synthesis of DNA, RNA, and proteins. Students

then applied that knowledge to a range of topics, including modern biological research techniques, genetic engineering, immunology, cancer, and virology.

"The most interesting part of the program for me was the unit on cancer because it was all brand-new material to me," says Ayden. "I had never learned about the various treatments used to combat it, the mechanisms through which it emerges in the human body, and the ways it interacts with bodily systems. The unit piqued my interest and sparked a desire within me to maybe join the effort to cure cancer, although I'm not sure yet."

Each day began with a "mini-talk" by the program instructor, which often aligned with the day's subject matter but was sometimes just new or fascinating information in the world of science. Soon after, students were fully immersed in lectures and learning.

"The lab sessions were the most useful part of the program, where you were asked to work alongside your classmates," Ayden says. "It helped to brush up on my scientific method skills—formulating and testing hypotheses and carrying out experiments—and practice problem-solving with others, exactly what I'd be doing in a professional setting."

For a student with Ayden's commitment, curiosity, and passion, the intensive academic nature of the program seemed a good fit. And for a student with a clear vision of the path he will follow in the future, the program marked a meaningful and important step in that direction.

"My biggest takeaway is that there is a lot that goes along with biomedical engineering and molecular biology," says Ayden. "There is so much to know and much, much more to discover."

Education & Opportunity

▼ Angel Chukwuma '22

TAFT IS A SCHOOL FILLED WITH seemingly endless opportunities. Angel Chukwuma '22 does her best to take advantage of as many of those opportunities as she possibly can. She is on track to receive a Global Studies and Service (GSS) Diploma at Commencement next year, and has honed her leadership skills as a Global Leadership Institute (GLI) Scholar. Both the GSS and GLI programs at Taft require exceptional commitment and dedication from participants, with academic obligations both in and out of the classroom, and service work with both local and global reach. Angel is very active in Taft's Community Service program. Locally, she and fellow GSS candidate Julissa Mota launched a Thanksgiving Food Drive for low-income families in the greater Waterbury area.

"During the winter term, I also volunteered for a nonprofit called Distributed Proofreaders, for which I proofread PDFs of a variety of texts to be used for free virtual libraries," Angel explains. "I took some tests to learn about proper formatting, punctuation, and more."

The worldwide pandemic made it more difficult for Angel to engage in the kind of service travel GSS Diploma candidates often do to fulfill all of their global service requirements. Just before the pandemic hit, Angel made plans to travel to the Dominican Republic with a group of Taft teachers and students through a program called Outreach360; that trip was cancelled. Over the summer, Angel turned to Outreach360 once again and signed on as a virtual teaching intern.

"During the internship, I worked with a

set group of students from either Nicaragua or the Dominican Republic. I taught two different class periods, but the classes rotated among the other teachers, so I still did not see the same students every day," Angel explains. "Each class contained about 10 students at most, ranging in age from 6 to 12 years old. It was a bit more difficult to get some of the younger students to pay attention in class, but they were definitely an entertaining group!"

Angel entered the program with some teaching experience. As a Wight Foundation Scholar, she spent a summer working with third graders at the Boys and Girls Club of Newark, New Jersey. That experience was limited, and very different from teaching virtually.

"One of Outreach360's lead teachers guided us through an orientation period," Angel says. "She performed a demonstration of what effective and ineffective teaching looked like by teaching us Hebrew vocabulary. When she showed how not to teach, I felt very lost and confused, and I knew that I did not want my students to feel like that in class. She also taught us to enunciate, speak at a slower pace, encourage quieter students to participate, and to always congratulate students for trying."

There were moments during Angel's internship that surprised her and amazed her—like when pet parrots joined a set of siblings for class, and when students spontaneously shouted, "God bless you," in gratitude at the end of class. There were also moments that made her swell with pride.

"I was teaching students the words for different toys, things like bikes, and

skateboards," Angel recalls. "I asked a student if he had a bike, and I expected him to simply answer with 'Yes, I do,' or 'No, I don't.' He said, yes, but then went on to say, 'But I want a new bike because my bike is old.' I was so surprised, but also really proud because he formed a much more advanced sentence completely on his own. It was amazing to witness how fast the students learn. Education is an important tool that can open doors for many more opportunities in life. It should not be a privilege, but rather everyone should have the right and access to it. I have known this for a long time, but my experience with Outreach360 made it clearer to me."



Conservation & Connection

► Khai Shulman '23

A FEW YEARS AGO, Khai Shulman '23 studied biodiversity in mangrove plants in the context of varying salinity levels at The Island School in the Bahamas. But what really captured his attention was something much greater. “I saw how human-made trash from other parts of the world can end up in remote islands,” says Khai, “which made me more aware of the interconnectedness of our environment.”

It also prompted him to begin working to reduce waste—he created a composting program for residents of his building in New York City—and to seek out new opportunities to make a real impact on the environment. Over the summer, Khai traveled to the Galápagos Islands, where he engaged in hands-on conservation work designed to protect and preserve the famed Galápagos tortoises.

“I wanted to visit the place that inspired

Charles Darwin in his game-changing research on evolution,” says Khai. San Cristóbal Island is home to the oldest permanent settlement on the Galápagos Islands. It is also where Charles Darwin first went ashore in 1835. Today, sea lions, red-footed boobies, marine iguanas, and dolphins are among the creatures sharing the island with the giant Galápagos tortoises, whose ancestors arrived there two to three million years ago.

“The nature of our conservation work during the first week was to ensure that the unique ecosystem of the Galápagos Islands—and more importantly, San Cristóbal—can thrive,” Khai explains. “During the first week, we got a special permit to enter the island of San Cristóbal to care for the local tortoises by cleaning their spaces, feeding them special plants, and maintaining their walkways. The laws in the Galápagos do not allow people within 2 meters of the animals

and totally forbid touching them. This made me understand how special our work with the tortoises was. Having access to them is a privilege that is not extended to tourists no matter how much they are willing to pay.”

Khai and other Projects Abroad students also spent time collecting trash around the island and, during the second week of the program, spent a portion of each day at San Cristóbal's Alejandro Alvear School teaching young students English and the rules of soccer. They closed out each day by working on a wall mural close to another local school.

“The most impactful part of my experience was definitely interacting with the young students on the island” says Khai. “I discovered that each of the students, usually under the age of 10, had very strong work ethics, were down to earth, and had a great sense of humor. It was uplifting to see the progress the students made in my limited time with them. They are fast and enthusiastic learners!”

Inspired by both the mission and leadership of Projects Abroad, as well as the totality of his experience in the Galápagos Islands, Khai is hoping to share that inspiration with the Taft community through the creation of an International Film Club on campus this fall, featuring short films from a broad range of countries followed by thoughtful, film-driven conversation.

“The idea behind this program is to appreciate and recognize the different points of views in the world,” Khai says, “because when humans on a fundamental level understand each other, we are more willing to put aside our differences and work toward a common goal.”



Vaccination Education

ELISE TAYLOR '24 takes the concepts of community and service very seriously. Over the summer, she was pounding the pavement in her hometown, going door to door spreading the word about the importance of getting vaccinated against COVID-19. Elise was part of the Grace Baptist Church street team, a group that is using its share of a \$2.7 million grant from the Connecticut Department of Public Health/Vaccine Equity Partnership grant to flip the script in Waterbury, Connecticut, where just under half the population had received at least one dose of the vaccine. Connecticut Public Radio caught up with Elise and her colleagues. You can read their story here: <https://bit.ly/Elise24Taft>.



PHOTO BY TYLER RUSSELL/CONNECTICUT PUBLIC RADIO

From the Amazon to the Andes



FOR NEARLY 10 SUMMERS, TAFT students have engaged in prestigious internships, working side by side with renowned scientists at The New York Botanical Garden. The internships are part of a decade-long partnership between the Garden and Taft School. This summer, Sophia Sheumack '21 worked with Dr. Fabián A. Michelangeli, Abess Curator of Tropical Botany, in the Garden's Institute of Systematic Botany. Her study examined leaf size and shape variations in the *Melastomataceae* plant family across environments, with a particular focus on elevational gradients from the Amazon to the high Andes. ■

Summer Renovations: Making Up for Lost Time

TRADITIONAL SUMMER PROJECTS TOOK A BACK SEAT TO COVID-DRIVEN CAMPUS CONVERSIONS AND ADAPTATIONS IN 2020, REQUIRING TAFT'S FACILITIES TEAM TO HIT THE GROUND RUNNING IN JUNE TO CATCH UP ON A LONG LIST OF PROJECTS. SIMPLE BUT IMPORTANT THINGS LIKE TREE TRIMMING TOOK PLACE ALONGSIDE MAJOR RENOVATIONS, INCLUDING FACULTY HOME AND APARTMENT WORK AND THE RESURFACING OF A NUMBER OF ATHLETICS VENUES. IT WAS, NOTES CFO JAKE ODDEN '86, "BY ALL ACCOUNTS ONE OF THE BUSIEST SUMMER SEASONS OF CAMPUS CONSTRUCTION IN RECENT MEMORY." *Philanthropic donor support helped make the Geoffrey C. Camp '91 Field, Snyder Field, Odden Arena, and McCullough Fieldhouse projects possible.*



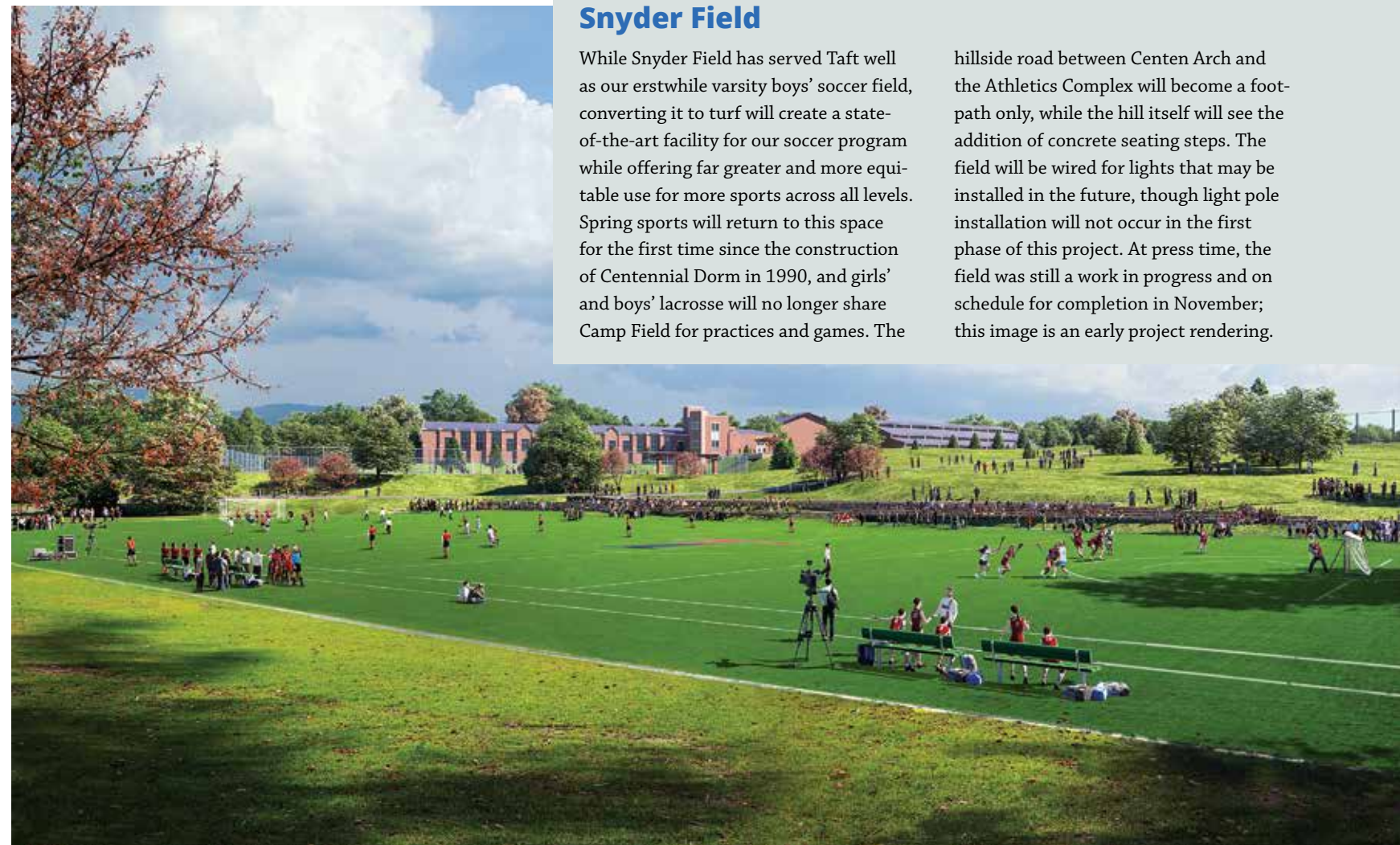
Faculty Housing

Twenty-eight faculty housing units got new occupants this year, each requiring varying degrees of updates and upgrades. While most residences required attention to paint and flooring, a dozen required substantive infrastructure remodeling, from kitchens, bathrooms, and floor-plan changes to landscape drainage, sewer, and water main replacement. Phase III of our ongoing CPT renovation project added work on seven faculty apartments to the mix.



Geoffrey C. Camp '91 Field

Where does the time go? It's hard to believe that 13 years have passed since then state-of-the-art synthetic turf hit Camp Field. The old turf was removed in June and replaced with field padding, a new technology in athletic field turf. A new walkway, fencing, barrier netting, scoreboard with shot clocks, and area grading rounded out the project.



Snyder Field

While Snyder Field has served Taft well as our erstwhile varsity boys' soccer field, converting it to turf will create a state-of-the-art facility for our soccer program while offering far greater and more equitable use for more sports across all levels. Spring sports will return to this space for the first time since the construction of Centennial Dorm in 1990, and girls' and boys' lacrosse will no longer share Camp Field for practices and games. The

hillside road between Centen Arch and the Athletics Complex will become a foot-path only, while the hill itself will see the addition of concrete seating steps. The field will be wired for lights that may be installed in the future, though light pole installation will not occur in the first phase of this project. At press time, the field was still a work in progress and on schedule for completion in November; this image is an early project rendering.



McCullough Fieldhouse

The Donald F. McCullough '42 Athletic Center is a multipurpose, well-utilized space. Perhaps the most used section of McCullough is the fieldhouse, making its 30-year-old "rubber" floor ripe for replacement. The new surface improves both shock absorption and overall texturing, improving its suitability for tennis and the range of other activities taking place there each day.

Bluestone Sidewalks

Badly worn sidewalks near Wu and Jig Patio were replaced with the bluestone walkways currently found across campus. Heated walks use the steam generated from Taft's power plant and protect our buildings and grounds from salt contamination, making them an environmentally sound alternative. They are also the long-term, fiscally responsible option, saving labor costs, liability, and salt damage to our beautiful buildings.



Odden Arena

After 21 years of service, the ice in Odden Arena was ready for a face-lift. The main work involves replacing our Olympic-size playing surface with the slightly narrower NHL size, the standard for secondary and collegiate hockey programs. Along the way, new subfloor and flooring will secure the mechanical infrastructure of the rink for the next 25 to 30 years and beyond, while new dasher boards will employ substantially advanced technology that offers greater safety for our student-athletes. At press (and photo) time, work in Odden remains ongoing, with completion projected for early to mid-November.

General Campus Maintenance

Our commitment to the health and safety of all our community members meant our campus was nearly empty during the summer of 2020, meaning a good deal of routine work was deferred to this year. We added two all-gender restrooms on Main Hall, added the school's first electric car charging stations, installed new gates, and caught up on landscaping, tree work, and window maintenance. ■



Convocation 2021



“

9/11 cannot just be a page in the history books. For Taft, what happened that day and in the year that followed marks us still. And in good and important ways. That day showed us what this school was and could be. A community where every member felt they belonged and even loved. A campus that was marked by a stubborn resilience and a fierce resolve; a school that was determined to achieve its mission despite the challenges. My thought and my challenge is that, perhaps with your passion and commitment and following a year that brought a similar kind of pain and confusion, we might this year create something special so that 20 years from now, in this same room on another opening day they will be talking about us and all that we bequeathed them. Two years separated by two decades, each following years of enormous destruction. Surely we, too, can create something enduring and beautiful following the year we have known, and I'm asking for you to be a part of it.”

—From Head of School Willy MacMullen's 2021 Convocation Address

”



Tafties Earn Theater Awards

WATERBURY'S SEVEN ANGELS THEATRE recognized talented Tafties and Taft's theater program with two Halo Awards and an extraordinary 17 Halo nominations this year. Taft's Award winners, announced over the summer, were Harry Wang '21 and Ivy Zhuang '21. Harry

was recognized in the Best Incidental or Original Music category for his work in *The 39 Steps*, while Ivy won recognition as Best Performance by a Supporting Actress in a Play as Zuzu/Joseph/Mrs. Hatch in *It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play*. Halo Awards honor high school student

achievements in all aspects of theater, from acting and dancing to set design and stage management. Productions mounted by high schools across Connecticut were considered during the nominating process. Congratulations to Harry, Ivy, and all the nominees! ■

Lax Players Honored

FOUR MEMBERS OF TAFT'S CLASS OF 2021 were selected to play in the 16th annual Under Armour All-American Lacrosse Classic in July. Chris Kavanagh, Ryan Levy, Tucker Mullen, and Jeffery Ricciardelli competed with the nation's top players on the turf in a matchup that aired on ESPNU.

“The game featured the best high school players in the game,” says Nic Bell, head coach of Taft's boys' varsity lacrosse team. “It is widely viewed as the greatest individual recognition that a player can earn at this point in their career.”

The top 44 senior boys and girls are selected by *Inside Lacrosse* and a committee made up of the nation's most knowledgeable voices in high school lacrosse. Seniors in good academic standing are considered for participation, and will compete in separate boys' and girls' North vs. South All-Star Games. With four players each in the 2021 Classic, Taft and Malvern Prep (Pennsylvania) have established a new player-selection record, the highest since the event began 16 years ago. ■

JEFFERY RICCIARDELLI



RYAN LEVY



TUCKER MULLEN



CHRIS KAVANAGH



Welcome Back, Tafties!

STUDENTS ARRIVED IN WAVES THIS YEAR, WITH PRESEASON ATHLETES AND MONS MAKING THE FIRST RIPPLES, FOLLOWED BY INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS, A TSUNAMI OF BOARDERS, AND, ON THE FIRST DAY OF CLASSES, OUR DAY STUDENTS. AFTER TWO DAYS OF CLASSES, THE COMMUNITY RECONNECTED ON AND AROUND JIG PATIO FOR A WELCOME BACK BARBECUE. AND, IN A WELCOME AND HIGHLY ANTICIPATED RETURN TO TRADITION, SUPER SUNDAY WAS BACK IN ALL ITS GLORY—A BEAUTIFUL BLEND OF COLORFUL PAINTS, COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS, EGG-TOSSING, THREE-LEGGED RACES, A TUG-OF-WAR, AND OF COURSE, THE CRISCO SLIDE.





The Sounds of Silence

During the COVID-19 pandemic, kitchens, bedrooms, and living rooms around the United States and the world were hastily converted into home offices and makeshift classrooms, but for musicians accustomed to playing to live audiences, sheltering in place meant an end to performance as they knew it. In the midst of this worldwide shutdown, two Taft alums found innovative and inspiring ways to keep the arts alive, even as theaters and concert halls were closing their doors.

by Christopher Browner '12



Djong Victorin Yu '76

After nearly 40 years as a celebrated conductor and composer, how does Djong Victorin Yu '76 evaluate his body of work? "I haven't accomplished many things, not really," he says modestly. "Sure, I did everything I set out to do, and I have no regrets. But my time stopped in 1977, and only now do I feel that my clock is about to move again." Despite a lifetime spent in concert halls all over the world, it would take a global standstill to help him refocus his passion for making music and rekindle one of his earliest musical loves, the cello.

It's impossible for Yu to remember a time when he wasn't interested in music. At 3 years old, he was already listening with rapt attention to the family record player, and by 5, he had his sights set on

becoming a conductor. Pretty soon, he was a skilled cellist, performing throughout his time at Taft and then studying music theory at the University of Pennsylvania under composers George Crumb,



Left: Composer and conductor Djong Victorin Yu '76, of South Korea, in 2021.

Opposite page: Details of Yu's new edition of Chopin's Sonata for Piano and Cello, Op. 65, which he finally was able to realize after pondering for several decades.

"[La dernière feuille d'or, or The Last Golden Leaf] is a piece which reflects my state of mind at that time. In this part of the world, a golden leaf can symbolize the ginkgo leaf. When they all fall and the wind takes them, they form a wave. So I was thinking of the last leaf that falls off and floats on to a different kind of life."





Above: A past performance with Yu playing cello and conducting *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5*, by Heitor Villa-Lobos, a Brazilian composer he became familiar with at Taft, thanks to his French and Russian teacher, Jan English.

Jay Reise, and George Rochberg, three of the foremost musical minds of the mid-20th century.

Everything was on track for a successful career when Yu was drafted into compulsory military service in his native South Korea. “Before completing my first year at Penn, I had to return to Korea, and during my military service, I injured my ulnar nerves and could no longer play the cello,” he says. The injury derailed his hopes of becoming a musician, but Yu did not let it keep from him pursuing his passion. He continued his studies with Maestro Vakhtang Jordania before gaining prominence as a conductor in both his homeland and throughout Europe and the U.S., including recording more than a dozen albums with London’s Philharmonia Orchestra, serving as principal conductor with various orchestras in South Korea, and composing his own music as well as orchestrating and creating new editions of other composers’ works.

But everything came to a halt with the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic. “Every day, they were

reporting how many people were infected and how many had died. It was scary to see the numbers rise, and for a while, I just couldn’t concentrate,” he recalls. “I had to do something to keep my sanity.”

The increasingly worsening situation brought to mind a short story by O. Henry, “The Last Leaf,” which tells of a young artist struck by pneumonia who won’t give herself up to death until the tree outside her window sheds all its leaves. “I wanted to write my story after the last leaf falls off—or does it?” he says. The result was *La dernière feuille d’or*, or *The Last Golden Leaf*, a piece for two violins and piano that Yu describes as his attempt at impressionistic music. He chose the style purposefully because it was a musical language that was very foreign to him—just as the pandemic was such uncharted territory.

“It is a piece which reflects my state of mind at that time. In this part of the world, a golden leaf can symbolize the ginkgo leaf,” he explains. “When they all fall and the wind takes them, they

“No composer has so comfortably portrayed life

as something so vulnerable as we all have witnessed for the past year and a half.

Even at the frailest moment, Chopin shows us the power of expression itself.”

form a wave. So I was thinking of the last leaf that falls off and floats on to a different kind of life.”

He also spent this period rediscovering his love for the cello—and how to play it pain-free. “It’s been almost five decades since my injury, and only this year I discovered that the problem was already there before the military service,” he points out. “I had a cello teacher whose instruction for a passage in Chopin’s *Cello Sonata* actually caused the damage in the first place, and realizing this, I finally could start to undo the knots in my palm and play in a way that doesn’t cause pain.”

In reacquainting himself with his instrument, Yu was inspired to reexamine a piece that had fascinated, and perplexed, him from the very beginning, Chopin’s *Cello Sonata in G Minor*. He worked on the sonata as part of his Independent Studies Project at Taft, and even then, he couldn’t wrap his head around some sections of the score. “Chopin was never happy with the first movement, so he kept revising it. But he was dying and finally decided that he didn’t have enough time left and had it published as it was,” Yu says. “I felt bad for him. Had he lived five more years, he would have fixed those problems, and I wanted to figure out what he would have done if he had had more time.”

Working like an investigator, he pored over Chopin’s notes, trying to piece together the composer’s unfulfilled vision. “I wasn’t trying to improve Chopin’s music—it was to help realize his intentions,” he says. “Chopin understood when the same notes in the same range are doubled by both the cello and the piano, the cello sound gets covered by the piano. He was being considerate, perhaps too considerate of the cello.” For Yu, the solution was simple. “In a few places, I switched the piano and the cello parts. It’s the same notes, and they go by so fast that you don’t hear the change, but it works out more naturally. And it’s completely Chopin!”

He completed his edition of the Chopin *Cello Sonata in G Minor* this past summer and looks forward to one day performing it—and his new composition—before a live audience. “I’ve been tinkering for the last 48 years, but it was all in my head. Finally, I decided to commit these ideas to paper,” he says proudly. And more so, Yu feels that this piece uniquely addresses the current moment. “No composer has so comfortably portrayed life as something so vulnerable as we all have witnessed for the past year and a half. Even at the frailest moment, Chopin shows us the power of expression itself.”

Below left: The cover of Yu’s concert program from his 1975 performance of Chopin’s *Cello Sonata*, a recital that was part of his Taft independent studies work. The cover is a silkscreen which Yu designed and handprinted.

Below right: Yu conducting a concert several years ago.



Vanessa Holroyd '90

Before March 2020, Vanessa Holroyd '90 was juggling two successful careers—as an in-demand classical flutist performing throughout the Northeast, and as the co-owner of the music/entertainment agency Music Management—all on top of being a mom to two kids. But when stay-at-home orders shuttered concert halls and ruled out any in-person events, she had to quickly evolve and adapt to the “new normal.”

Below: Holroyd, at left, performing with her trio, TriChrome, at the Boston Public Library.

For Holroyd, who serves as principal flute of the Orchestra of Emmanuel Music at Boston's historic Emmanuel Church and can often be found in the woodwind sections of the New Bedford and Portland symphony orchestras, the sense of community and collaboration is at the core of her love of making music.

“Although it's [really] fun to play in an orchestra, my happy place is really as part of a chamber group or supporting a vocalist,” she says. “I like working with people and communicating with them, and in a large orchestra, sometimes it's hard to have relationships with everyone around me. But in smaller ensembles or supporting an aria, it's like we're having a conversation, and I love that. I love that one-on-one interaction.”

Unfortunately for musicians, this kind of close collaboration became impossible, and performances were canceled one by one—an experience Holroyd compares to watching a really slow car crash. Like many people during the past year and a half, Holroyd was forced to work from home, though for her, that meant converting her bedroom into a practice room/office, with her husband setting up in the living room and their children learning remotely in the dining room and second bedroom.



“In most cases, we would gather in an empty space

*—10 feet apart, with the string players masked and the winds surrounded by Plexiglass—
and record a piece all the way through and then upload it online.”*



Professional classical flutist
Vanessa Holroyd '90.

JILL PERSON @JILLPERSONPHOTOGRAPHY



JILL PERSON @JILLPERSONPHOTOGRAPHY

“We’re missing a crucial piece

without a live audience because we really do miss the interaction with them.”

One time, Holroyd joined a woodwind quintet for program that was filmed with multiple cameras. Then, after the footage was edited together, the group released the concert like a live event, with live introductions and an interactive chat, so members of the audience could comment and interact with the players while enjoying their performance.

Playing in even these modified setups proved to be a powerful experience for Holroyd after months of isolation. “I was able to play the Christmas Eve service at Emmanuel, and I actually started crying at the first rehearsal. To be able to play with real people, even though there wasn’t a congregation, was very moving.”

But this style of performing also presented artistic challenges. “We’re missing a crucial piece without a live audience because we really do miss the interaction with them,” she says. “When it’s just you and the cameras, you’re hyper aware of them. You feel like your playing is being looked at under a microscope, whereas a live, in-person concert is so much more about the energy of that performance.

“Virtual concerts are so strange. On the one

Below: Holroyd performing J.S. Bach’s *Mass in B Minor* with Emmanuel Music, Boston
SAM BREWER

Thanks to Zoom, Holroyd was still able to lead some private lessons, and by the fall, a number of organizations had devised clever ways to offer virtual concerts for their audiences. “Everyone solved it differently. Sure, it was a bit chaotic, but people were getting super creative and scrappy with livestreams,” she recalls. “In most cases, we would gather in an empty space—10 feet apart, with the string players masked and the winds surrounded by Plexiglass—and record a piece all the way through and then upload it online.”



Above: Filming for a virtual online performance by Holroyd in fall 2020. DAVE JAMROG

hand, it’s not like recording an album in a studio. It can’t be perfect because it’s live, and we usually only do one or two takes,” she continues. “But since it’s going to exist in perpetuity online, you feel like you can’t take the risks you can in live performance. It became a question of bringing the energy, the courage, and the risk taking of a live performance without throwing all caution to the wind.” Between January and the end of the freelance season in May, Holroyd stayed busy with a series of small projects, and by July, she was finally able to play before an audience again, as part of a special concert with the New Bedford Symphony Orchestra

featuring the woodwind and brass sections to thank donors for their support during the pandemic.

But even now, as venues are slowly beginning to reopen, companies are still cautious about planning full in-person seasons. And while she too is uncertain about the year ahead, Holroyd is extremely proud of all that she was able to accomplish over the past 18 months. “Some amazing things have come out of this! It’s been exhausting, and it’s been a ton of hustle, but we’ve been able to make it through. For me, it was so important to stay relevant, to be able to say I’m still an artist, I still have something to give musically, I’m still here.” ■

“For me, it was so important to stay relevant,

to be able to say I’m still an artist, I still have something to give musically, I’m still here.”

ONWARD

Adam Nagler's
epic 724-mile
paddleboard
expedition

BY ZACH SCHONBRUN '05

From Adam Nagler's
paddleboard: a container
ship moving at 25 knots in
6-foot seas, 18 miles ESE,
Sandy Hook, New Jersey.

Right: Just before landing
at Brant Point Light on
Nantucket. DEAN GEDDES

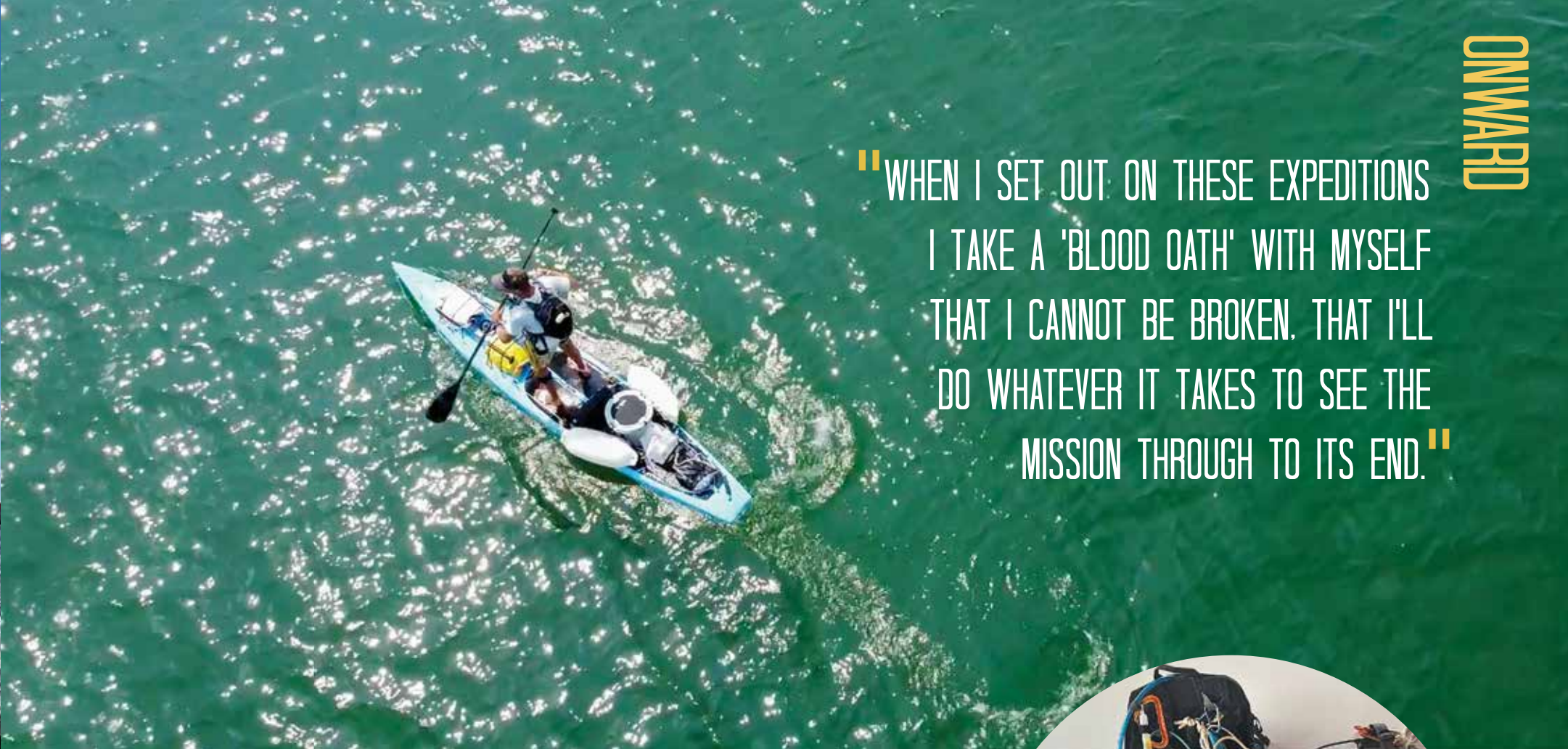


"WHEN I SET OUT ON THESE EXPEDITIONS I TAKE A 'BLOOD OATH' WITH MYSELF THAT I CANNOT BE BROKEN. THAT I'LL DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO SEE THE MISSION THROUGH TO ITS END."



Left: Nagler's launch from Kiptopeke, Virginia, at the mouth of the Chesapeake, with the sled he had to ditch due to an approaching tropical system.

Above: Overhead view of Nagler from drone footage outside Moriches Inlet, Westhampton Dunes, New York. BILLY MACK



Less than two days into the most daring endeavor of his life, Adam Nagler '85 knew he needed to "improvise, adapt, and overcome" like never before. Hurricane Elsa was on his track four days to the south and Nagler was a good three days from the nearest navigable inlet, hauling a 300-pound sled across 160 square miles of shoals.

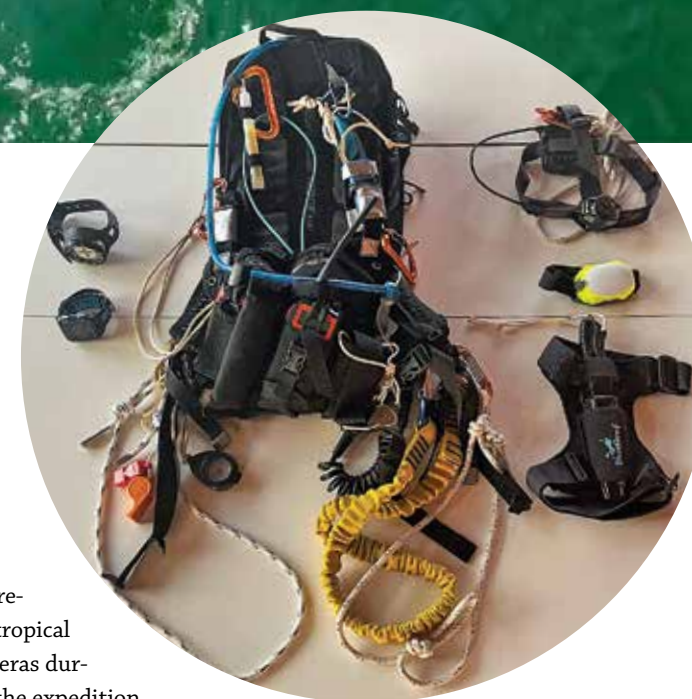
He had provisioned 28 gallons of water, 50 pounds of endurance "fuel," 20 pounds of medical supplies, and almost as much safety and backup equipment as a Coast Guard patrol boat. Now, with Elsa coming, he was going to have to ditch the sled. Nagler gave himself one hour to triage a year's planning.

Already things had gotten off to a rocky start. His expedition, named "Deep Fog Direct," was originally charted to go from Cape Hatteras, North Carolina, to Nantucket, Massachusetts, following a line to the west of the canyons of the continental shelf—two weeks out of sight of land, across hundreds of miles of open ocean. Alone and standing.

On a paddleboard.

But a series of unpredictable early-season tropical systems off Cape Hatteras during the first weeks of the expedition "weather window" made such a route implausible. A fool's errand, Nagler thought. Better to launch from the mouth of the Chesapeake and stick nearer the coast.

A safer trip, but hardly easier. Two pitch black, moonless nights in, he set the sea anchor so he could get some rest. An hour later, hundreds of yards outside the breaker line, a rogue 8-footer tossed him like a piece of flotsam. All his gear was tied down, so



Above: Nagler's safety, communication, medical, and hydration pack, which weighed approximately 30 pounds fully loaded.

“ORIGINALITY IS IMPORTANT TO ME. I'M NOT INTERESTED IN THE FKT—FASTEST KNOWN TIME—ON A WELL-WORN COURSE. I'M ABOUT THE OKT—ONLY KNOWN TIME—ON A COURSE THAT MAKES NO SENSE AT ALL.”

he didn't lose anything; but underwater, in the dark, wearing a 25-pound pack, Nagler had to disconnect and jettison the anchor. A parachute with 40 feet of line wrapped around the upside-down 150-pound board and Nagler himself, in breaking waves, in a blacked-out sea, may not have been survivable. Two hours later, having navigated 3 miles of shoals to a barrier island, he came ashore, hard, on an oyster bed, slicing both his feet. The infection set in almost immediately. Within a day his feet and legs below the knee blew up to the size of small honey-baked hams. It would take three more days of paddling plus a day before he received treatment beyond his rather useless topical salve.

He took refuge with a “godsend” who brought him to a hospital in Lewes, Delaware, where he received intravenous antibiotics for cellulitis, while the storm raged outside. By the time he was released late the following

afternoon, all that was left of Elsa was an angry sky. At sunrise the next morning, he set out from Cape Henlopen. It was 21 miles across the mouth of Delaware Bay. “Deep Fog” was about to live up to its name.



There are many ways to get to the island of Nantucket. Arriving by standup paddleboard, a “stock” 14-footer fully laden, is arguably the hardest conceivable.

For Nagler, 54, it's another notch in a Herculean quest to remake his life—physically and mentally—that began on New Year's Day in 2014. He had gone as hard as he could in the ocean and mountains through his late 20s, until the “desk” took over for too many years. Then, a rare heart infection at 42 led to open heart surgery. As his past life receded, he became resigned to his reality and eventually embittered.

“I'd gotten fat and angry and mean,” Nagler says. “I looked at myself in the mirror and said, ‘If I don't do something about this, I'm going to die young.’”

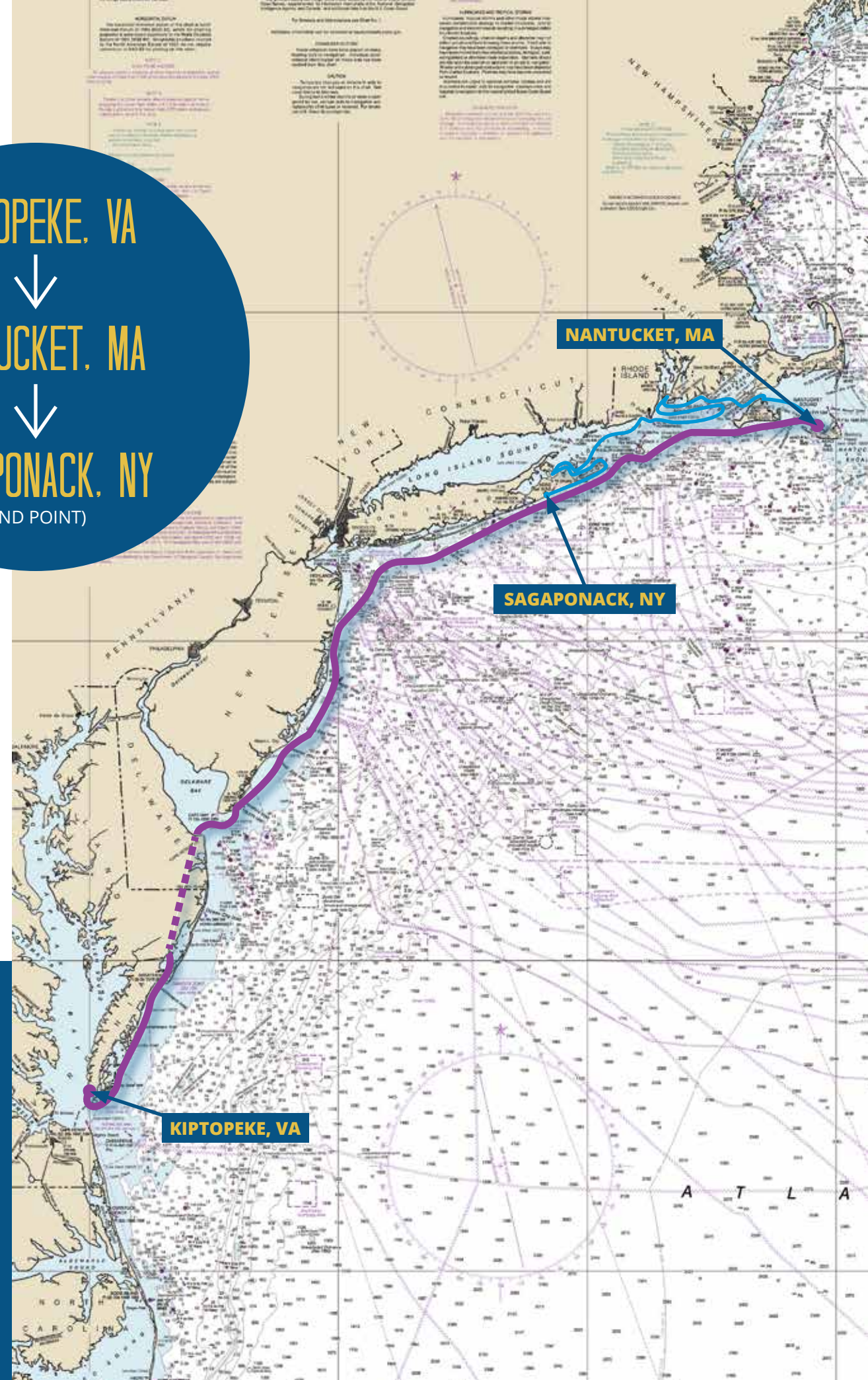
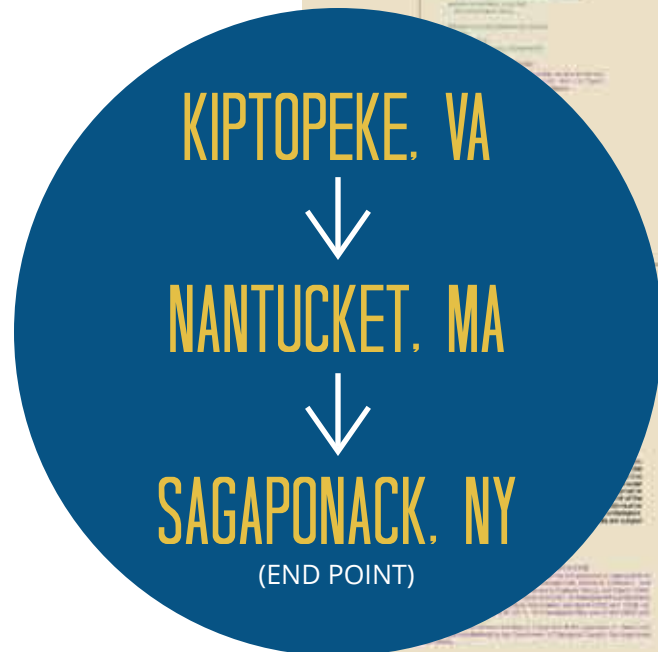
He dreamed up the “This is 50 Sufferfest Tour”—a unique series of solo and self-supported, self-inflicted, brutally challenging “epics”—to prove to himself that he could far outdo anything he had accomplished in his “prime”...to take care of “unfinished business.” Some might call it a midlife crisis. But the efforts evolved into an ethos, with 15 principles for “building your path,” as he calls it.

“I need to maximize my potential,” Nagler says. “When I set out on these expeditions I take a ‘blood oath’ with myself that I cannot be broken, that I'll do whatever it takes to see the mission through to its end.”

Along the way to becoming a world-class ultra-endurance athlete, he never set his sights on any organized event. Nagler instead focused on pushing his limits in ways rarely tested.

“Originality is important to me,” Nagler says. “I'm not interested in the FKT—Fastest Known Time—on a well-worn course. I'm about the OKT—Only Known Time—on a course that makes no sense at all.”

In July 2017, he set out to quantify his fitness and mindset with two “test pieces.” The first, a 140-mile standup paddle



Right: A bird's eye view of Nagler's long paddling route from starting point Kiptopeke, Virginia, to turnaround point at Brant Point on Nantucket, Massachusetts; he completed the overall expedition at end point Sagaponack, New York.

PROVIDED BY NOAA
OFFICE OF COAST SURVEY,
NAUTICALCHARTS.NOAA.GOV

FACTS & STATS

EXPEDITION NAME: “Deep Fog Re-Direct”*	DURATION (time on the water): 353:47:00	OVERNIGHT PASSAGES: 16
STARTING POINT: Kiptopeke, VA	AVERAGE SPEED: 2.05 mph	CALORIES OUT: 217,931 (616 per paddling hour)
TURNAROUND: Nantucket, MA	LEGS: 29	NOTE ON CALORIES OUT: Equivalent to eating 1,557 x 1.5 pound Maine lobsters
END POINT: Sagaponack, NY	PADDLING DAYS: 34	
DISTANCE: 724.1 Miles		

*In advance of and during the expedition, Nagler was impacted, at some level, by eight tropical systems.



Above: Nagler after he reached Nantucket.

KIT NOBLE PHOTOGRAPHY

Right: Morning scene at Shagwong Point, Montauk, New York.

Opposite page: Outside Shinnecock Inlet, Southampton, New York.

NORM STUMP



from the Brooklyn Bridge to Montauk Point, at the tip of Long Island, which he completed in 74 hours (a time he has since improved to under 55 hours).

Three months later, he in-line skated 122 miles of the Pacific Coast Highway from the Pier in his hometown of Santa Barbara, California, to Malibu and back—in 18 hours and 45 minutes—on one of the hottest, windiest days of the year. The 5,300 feet of combined elevation gain and loss—on skates—was positively frightening. Nagler was only getting started.

He lost 14 pounds and three toenails during the first epic in April 2018, while beach and trail running, mountain biking, in-line skating, and standup paddling 1,000 miles around Santa Barbara for 10 days straight.

Six short weeks later, after running 128 miles from Manhattan to Montauk and then cycling three times that distance, both direct, he reached Nantucket via standup paddleboard for the first time

during the second epic—having set off from Manhattan, a distance of 247 miles. After a few days of rest, he paddled 178 miles back to the east end of Long Island.

The expedition he was embarking on now—a natural evolution of years of committing—would be complex for reasons Nagler had anticipated and some he could not foresee.



Twenty-five miles northeast of Manasquan Inlet, New Jersey, Nagler met a lone boat chumming and fishing for sharks.

But it wasn't the chum slick that concerned Nagler. It was the 15 to 18 knots of wind and 4- to 6-foot seas driving him off his line to Long Island. It would take him 25 hours to complete this leg of the journey: the open expanse east of the tip of New Jersey's elbow forming the main shipping lanes into New York Harbor. The length was equivalent to three laps of the English Channel. He was

one lap in, and his right hip began to throb.

Part of what Nagler relishes about the challenge of paddleboarding for long stretches is that it is so often deeply uncomfortable, the constant balancing of board and body with every ocean variable. Simply remaining upright can be an arduous task. Remaining on course when the wind and swell are not with you for hundreds of hours requires uncommon grit and determination.

Out there, in the thick of it, Nagler's body finally said what his mind refused: "Enough." The piriformis muscle on his right side—a muscle deep beneath the glute—"just exploded," Nagler says. "I collapsed. I'm in shock, about to pass out. I'm lying in the water screaming."

On the satellite GPS unit he uses to communicate by text with his on-land safety manager, Kyle Collins, there is a toggle that will deliver an SOS signal to Garmin's International Emergency Response Coordination Center; triggering a search and rescue operation. For the first time, after 10,000 hours and 55,000 miles of training and expeditions, Nagler says, he almost pushed it. "It was close, really close." But as he likes to tell Collins (who winces at the thought), "I've gotta be pretty much dead to push that thing: bleeding out, direct lightning strike, run over by a ship...that kind of stuff."

"I knew first I had to get a wetsuit and hood on," Nagler says. "It was cold enough I was going to be hypothermic in a couple hours regardless, because physically I couldn't get into anything other than a 'shorty.'"

Though barely able to bend his leg, Nagler gritted through the morphine-worthy pain, and found a little bit of support in that area, the compression, helped after the suit was on.

Somewhat. Enough.

"I'm going to make it," Nagler told himself.

NAGLER OFTEN SAYS WHAT DRIVES HIM TO PURSUE HIS ULTRA-ENDURANCE ENDEAVORS ARE THE PROSPECTS OF "BRUTALITY AND BEAUTY RIGHT NEXT TO EACH OTHER."

He paddled for 17 more hours until he reached the beach a couple miles east of Fire Island Inlet at first light. Even in a delirious state and barely able to stand, he went through his checklist, as he always did, ferrying equipment in stages to a spot well above both the high water line but below the dunes, and sent Collins their procedural safety check. He got into his silver-lined bivy bag, shaking from hypothermia, and fell fast asleep. Eight hours later, he woke up, and tested the right hip. Horrendous. He said to himself, Here we go, Nags—we're headed to OT.



How does he do it? How? Stroke after stroke, hour after hour, day after day. Alone. Carbohydrate powder for food, rationed water to drink. Between a relentless sky and an unforgiving sea. Physically drained but mentally stoked, constantly running down a navigation checklist of wind switches and swell movements. Lots and lots of math. And still there is “enough time out there to think about probably every thought I’ve ever had,” Nagler says.

Nagler often says what drives him to pursue his ultra-endurance endeavors are the prospects of “brutality and beauty right next to each other.”

The moments when the sunrise bathes the whole sky in pink and orange and there is nothing else visible except the water stretching toward the horizon as calmly as a carpet. Such rare visions reward the many hours of torturous effort, through the darkness and the cold. “Diametrically opposed forces are right next to each other pretty much the whole time,” Nagler says.

Nagler’s epics also always have a “mission,” in this case raising funds to support those islanders who cannot afford to pay for services at a Nantucket nonprofit called Fairwinds, a community-based mental health clinic and addiction treatment center. The choice was obvious—Nagler doesn’t hesitate to discuss his own struggle with depression and psychological challenges, and remains committed to removing the

stigma around therapy and mental health.

“I believe therapy has value for every person,” Nagler says. “Don’t shut it out just because it hasn’t been in your life before or you feel it’s voodoo. If you shut it out, you will have limitations on your personal growth for the rest of your life.”

He ultimately raised \$74,600 for Fairwinds, more than twice his goal.

The stretch between Menemsha, Martha’s Vineyard, and Nantucket harbor is 41 miles, took 19 hours to paddle, and like many other legs, it was hairy. Hundreds of seals danced around his board as he passed Muskeget Island and then crossed the Madaket flats, which put him on high alert for “Whitey Bulger,” says Nagler. He never did see a fin, but you can be sure “the fins” saw him.

Around 6 p.m. on July 27, Nagler could finally see it—the Brant Point Lighthouse framing the inner harbor. A boat came out to greet him and families cheered from shore. He had grown a thick beard and lost 37 pounds on the 24-day journey, but he cracked a wide smile when his friend, Jim Mondani, doused his head with Champagne. “I couldn’t really collapse in a heap, because I had this group around me shaking my hand, and I still had to go through the checklist.”

Four hundred and sixty-five miles were behind him. And yet Nantucket was only the turnaround point, a place to recuperate for four days before he cast off to suffer again. He finally stopped in Sagaponack, New York, another 260-mile push.

But Adam Nagler is nowhere close to finished. ■

Zach Schonbrun '05 is a senior editor at *The Week* magazine.

Photos provided by Adam Nagler except where noted.

Right: Nagler gets doused with Champagne by a friend after arriving at Nantucket’s Brant Point. KIT NOBLE PHOTOGRAPHY

Below: Nagler’s arrival at Brant Point Light with a welcoming crowd after his long journey to raise funds in support of Nantucket counseling center Fairwinds. FAIRWINDS-NANTUCKET’S COUNSELING CENTER



NAGLER'S EPICS ALSO ALWAYS HAVE A "MISSION," IN THIS CASE RAISING FUNDS TO SUPPORT THOSE ISLANDERS WHO CANNOT AFFORD TO PAY FOR SERVICES AT A NANTUCKET NONPROFIT CALLED FAIRWINDS, A COMMUNITY-BASED MENTAL HEALTH CLINIC AND ADDICTION TREATMENT CENTER.

Class NOTES



*Don't try this at home!
Students doing a blanket
toss at the 1982 Spring Fair.*

LESLIE D. MANNING ARCHIVES



43

Head Class Agent: Ted Pratt, 171 Newtown Tpke., Westport, CT 06880-1019

45

Class Secretary: Art Hilsinger, 8 Jackson Pond, Dedham, MA 02026-5524, hilsingera@aol.com

COVID, I am sure, has touched all of our lives in a variety of ways. Barbara and I have stayed very close to our home on Jackson Pond in Dedham, Massachusetts, for the first 18 months. Then in the middle of July, we loaded our car and drove on to the Nantucket ferry, where we spent a month at the Cliffside Beach Club gazing at the natural beauty and dipping into Nantucket Sound. Taft and Nantucket have an interesting connection for us. Three years ago, Taft hosted a well-attended and delightful get-together at the Nantucket Yacht Club. This year, classmate **Curtis Jones** appeared one day at Cliffside while Barbara and I were having lunch. He had walked about 8 miles from his son's beautiful home on the water. We had a great visit, which was followed by two more lunch visits. He has lived a very interesting life, as a sailor, a real estate developer, and an entrepreneur. After one early troubling business experience, he determined that he would never again work for anyone else, and he never did. He travels a great deal and also rides his bike 14 miles almost every day.



Curtis Jones '45, left, and Art Hilsinger '45, right, at the Cliffside Beach Club, Nantucket.

47 TAFT 75TH REUNION

Class Secretary: Bob Gries, 1801 E 9th St Ste. 1600, Cleveland, OH 44114-3100, rdg@gries.com;
Reunion Chair: Bob Gries

48

Class Secretary: Larry Leonard, 104 Moorings Park Dr., Apt D305, Naples, FL 34105-2160, lbleonard733@gmail.com; **Head Class Agent:** Dave Fenton, 5405 Carlton St. Apt 304, Oakland, CA 94618-1760, dwfgolf@sbcglobal.net

The Class of '48 is traveling in the center lane, going with the flow, circumspect of the twists and turns ahead. **Dave Fenton** has been at Lake Tahoe most of the summer, wonderful place but suffering a bit from smoke from the fires in California. Headed soon to Shelter Island for some family fun. **Stan Cairns** confesses that there isn't much excitement in Pointe Vedra, Florida; lots of rain and not much golf. So far, his circle of friends has stayed healthy, but the biggest question seems whether or not to wear a mask in crowded areas. Stan's travel plans include a trip to Wisconsin for a family reunion and then to Boone, North Carolina, in September to escape the heat and hurricanes. Pat and **Bill Hatch** are doing well at their retirement community in Chagrin Falls, Ohio. Some walking, input from a physical trainer, and workouts at the community pool keep them both physically fit. Their son and daughter-in-law have rented a friend's house in Chatham, Massachusetts, in September. And then, their granddaughter and her one-year-old daughter will visit which should be fun as well as busy! He says it's hard to believe but their oldest son is soon to be 65! For **Larry Leonard**, your scribe, I have to admit that life has been rather quiet with a little golf,

46

Class Secretary: Kingsley Smith, 8339 Carrbridge Circle, Baltimore, MD 21204-1814, pksmi@comcast.net

Since we old boys have passed the 75th Reunion mark, we are definitely eligible to take off our new boy red ties now. **Tony Allerton** and I were the only ones who answered up "here, sir" when the Zoom reunion roll was called. Back in our era, we once calculated that our presence was checked 16 times a day—more if we had study hall or penalty screw—I mean crew. We mourn the loss of **David Wallace**, the third of the three Wallaces in our class. He was our last link with **Henry P. Stearns**, sage of American history; they shared lifelong enthusiasm for railroading. It's good to know that Taft is interested in us, as much as we are in each other, as Elder Keepers of the Lore which we had acquired when we were growing up together (though the only fire we ever gathered around was at the "butt house").



At a celebration of 90th birthdays, Ro sits with her husband, Bill Hoblitzelle '49, and his cousin Sue Addiss, Westover '47, stands between. In back are the friendly steel-pan band, who added great musical fun to the party.

walking most every day, dinner occasionally at local restaurants with our few friends still living nearby. I've gotten roped into working on my 70th college reunion. A wife of one of our classmates has suggested a theme of "Looking Forward to the Future," which reeks of positivity, which we all can buy into. On the other side of the coin, it is a bit disheartening to see the backup of COVID-19 around the planet. I am sorry to report the passing of **John Philips**. Our sympathy to his family.

49

Class Secretary: Bill Hoblitzelle, 201 Granite Road, Apt 326, Guilford, CT 06437, rohob@aol.com;
Head Class Agent: Buz Lydon, 31 Hillcrest Ave., Summit, NJ 07901-2011, clydon@mac.com

In my quarterly email request for news for this fall issue of the *Bulletin*, I mentioned that this year of living with COVID-19 had made changes in life for Ro and me. Of course, I also asked for comments from all. Only two of my favorite correspondents responded, **Hal Leeds** and **Harlow Unger**. Hal was first with this: "When one reaches 90, the effects of COVID-19, masking, and social distancing are not a big issue. It did create a lot of delays and empty shelves in the supermarkets for an extended period, which was a nuisance. And for those of us who use the telephone to vent our spleen at some of the internet vendors and purported 'service' companies, it was a downright disaster. But none of these compared with the loss of my wife, Carol, on June 15. We shared 52 years together. It is not easy adjusting to the single life as I am sure some of my classmates can attest." Off the top of my head, I remember that **Ned Boody** and **Bob King** have also lost their wives, and we all send condolences to Hal. **Harlow** comes



Ro looks on while husband Bill Hoblitzelle '49 addresses the 40 guests at a great double 90th birthday party organized by son Bill Rowen and wife Jessica.

out with good news regarding his work, and here it is: "A few editors won't let me retire. *American Heritage* (magazine) published two feature articles I wrote in 2021—one about my book, *Lafayette*, the other my book on James Monroe (*The Last Founding Father*). A handful of radio stations then called to interview me and two 'webinars'—whatever they are—asked me to appear on Zoom shows. It was all very flattering. I've also returned to my early years as a journalist and written about the explosive student-loan scandal. As state colleges and universities have ended admissions tests and opened enrollment to all, they've lured millions of academically unqualified students into enrolling and taking out student loans from usurious lenders—knowing that 30 percent—some two million kids—will drop out in their first year. They leave deep in debt, without education or jobs—many of them talented kids who should have gone to vocational schools or into apprenticeships." Your secretary's report is that I have no potentially fatal health problems, but my right side is in pain from shoulder to hip to knee to ankle. Mobility is a problem, but I have two canes, a walker called a rollator, and a battery-powered scooter. In September, I finished the first month in a physical therapy program, mostly focused on building basic body strength. I was satisfied that there was progress, but I am dedicated to making more. I don't expect I'll ever walk again unaided, but we have a lot of books available in the library of our residence, and Guilford has a totally free public library, which we learned had been closed for COVID-19 rules. We joined quickly soon after they opened when rules allowed. We have our Prius in a locked garage near the front door of our residence building. A remote-controlled overhead door opener is included, making the garage very handy in the months when a rime of ice forms in the mornings. We are totally out of practice with scraping windows.

50

Class Secretary: Archie Fletcher, 323 Park Ln., wLake Bluff, IL 60044-2320, archie5547@gmail.com

With the three deaths reported this month (**Bennett, Carlisle, and Nerrow**), our class survivorship is still at a respectable rate for guys 89 and 90 years of age. According to my records, we have 23 classmates alive from the 99 who graduated in 1950. Simply, that's a 24 percent damn good survivorship rate. **Jay Greer** had a big 89th birthday party on August 18 on Cape Cod. It was a gala event with his eldest daughter coming from California with her friend, as well as his youngest attending from Brooklyn with her husband. Jay's wife, Ellie, had her son, his wife, and their two little girls attend the event. Ellie's declining physical condition, due to progressive supranuclear palsy, had limited her participation in Jay's party as well as her own a few months earlier. She is unable to speak and has to be fed, but seemed to enjoy the birthday cake and ice cream that highlighted the menu. Due to Jay's balance and other medical issues, he was forced to sell his little (12½-foot waterline length) sailboat (a Cape Cod Bullseye), since Jay and his usual crew no longer felt safe in her. In addition, Jay is saddened that he also had to sell his 1913 Westley Richard's double barrel 20-gauge shotgun. Bad balance meant that Jay was no longer safe carrying a loaded firearm. He's doing physical therapy three times a week to improve his balance. Jay's cardiologist did tell him some good news in that his pacemaker was working fine. Finally, Jay expressed his sadness to hear his lower-middle and middle classes roommate, **Miles Carlisle**, had died. The next year, upper middle, Jay roomed with **Tony Carpenter** in the tower. Our regular class news reporter, **John Franciscus**, only provided that he was in Harbor Springs, Michigan, where they played his brother's (**James Franciscus '53**) movie, *Youngblood Hawk*, for his 90th birthday. Your class scribe, **Archie Fletcher**, can only report he has commenced having some home care to relive Kathy's fine care this past year due to his health issues. The only thing wrong with Archie is that he can't walk without his rollator in the house and another carried in the Honda van as well as his Compass Sport power wheelchair in the van equipped with a power lift (in the third seat position) for walking requirements more than 25 yards. He, too, has balance issues along with heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, breathing trouble, and gout. Otherwise, Archie is fine. Finally, **Chick Treadway** has responded to my news gathering request with a note that sums up his and probably all '50 classmates when he stated he wished he could report something exciting,

but, unfortunately, those days are behind him! Now that Chick is in his 10th decade, he states that he doesn't wander far from home base. I'm sure all of our 1950 class feels the same way.

51

Class Secretary: Len Platt, 7133 SE Golfhouse Dr., Hobe Sound, FL 33455-8005, lensplatt@gmail.com; **Head Class Agent:** Bob Govin, 16159 SW 54 Court, Miramar, FL 33027-5600, govvr23@aol.com

52 TAFT 70TH REUNION

Class Secretary: Vic Altshul, 100 York St., Apt. 14C, New Haven, CT 06511-5609, victoraltshul5@gmail.com; **Head Class Agent:** John Wallace, 10420 Whitebridge Lane, The Cottage, Saint Louis, MO 63141-8416, mongogran@aol.com; **Reunion Chair:** Vic Altshul

The Alumni Office and **John Vogelstein** reported the sad news of **Bob Richards'** passing; I have no further information at this time. **Herb Willetts, Joe Spalding, and Tobey Shiverick** have also passed away (see In Memoriam). From **Hans Ruppel** comes this difficult but most welcome contribution: "Breaking with a long tradition of silence, here are a few words about my current state of play. I am still alive, albeit fading. I have battled chronic lymphocytic leukemia for 23 years, and, thanks to modern advances in blood cancers, I continue to hold my own. My heart is less cooperative, and I am having mixed success with beating my atrium into submission, but I persist in working the problem. I suppose I will lose that battle in the end, but at least I 'do not go gentle into that good night.' My wife, Ann, died about three years ago after a good run with me for 62 years. In the last year, I have been writing some poems as a way to process my grief. It helps. I continue to live alone, which has been made possible by my living near my middle daughter here in Seattle and her magnificent support. I certainly 'rage' against the possibility of not being able to live independently." For many of us, this is not an unfamiliar situation, and we send Hans our best wishes. **John Vogelstein** writes, "We are sitting happily in Jackson Hole, which may be one of the few cool spots in America—it was 35 degrees when we woke up this morning. Still working and worrying about financial markets." On August 31, Irene Shiverick wrote me with the sad news that **Tobey** had passed away the preceding day. Responding to the announcement, **Bro Kinloch** wrote, "Thanks, Victor, for this news, unwelcome as it is. Tobey was among the best of my friends at Taft. Also, for your loyalty to the class, keeping the remaining shards of '52 in some degree of touch. Always interesting to learn of the Reverend's (**Frank Bergen's**) activities (read on

page 63). If I were he, I think I might prefer Iraq to Arizona (even though my rabid red Republican sister is a city-mate of his. Or, maybe because of this). Maybe he was looking for an even bigger challenge. Please give my regards to **Sam Sherer**. He was my roommate during our upper-mid and lower-mid years. I pretty much lost track of him after that, but remember that time fondly. I'm encouraged that half the class is still standing, but perhaps there are one or two more (e.g., Bradford?) who didn't make it to the end. **Vuillet** is lost, as far as I can tell, and has been for two years. Several cell phone calls to him were picked up but never returned. Tobey and Irene hadn't heard anything either. Nor had **Joe Manson**. Better send out an all points alert? I note 26 souls on your address list, which is pretty close to a quarter of our class...Maybe there are others like Vuillet who never got on? Not much personal news here. We (i.e., mainly Nancy) are doing a lot more grandparenting lately to provide some relief to her daughter-in-law, who is undergoing chemo for BRCA. Fire and disease rage all around, and water is getting very short. What a couple of years! But for now at least we are well and living in a very pleasant bubble." I think my class list is up to date, Bro, but thanks for the reminder. I'll look into it. Meanwhile, I received a detailed note from **John Connelly**, one of our class's most reliable correspondents and, I should add, the class's only former general officer (the two bars on my army uniform's shoulder snap to attention in the presence of the two stars on John's—John being, to quote W.S. Gilbert, the very model of a modern major general). He reports that his recent head surgery has almost completely healed. He tells us that his genius grandchild is working on a PhD in math, but disavows the possibility that the young man's genes come from him. He vividly remembers some of our experiences, particularly those we shared while living, along with Tobey, as middleers on the kitchen corridor under the benign and whimsical guidance of the recently married **Joe Cunningham**. John wrote movingly of his family's friendship with **Gerry LaGrange** and positively of his postgraduate year at Lawrenceville, which provided him with a very different experience from what he had had earlier with us. He cites **Sam Sherer** and **Pick Calhoun** as two good guys who stand out in his memory. **Kip Cheney** writes apologetically that he has nothing to contribute, as travel plans got canceled because of COVID-19. "You lose a couple of years at this age, and it's a big percentage of what you've got left." How true. **Frank Bergen**, one of our most reliable correspondents, writes, "Seventy years ago this month I was getting fitted for the neck brace I was to wear through most of our senior year. Fifty years ago, I was on my way to Gonzaga, long before it became a men's basketball powerhouse, to serve

as campus chaplain. It turned out to be one of the most difficult and decisive years of my life, as I worked and prayed toward the painful decision to leave the Jesuits and get married. Twenty years ago, Pat and I were here in Tucson in between my out-of-state calls to serve as interim pastor first in Hilo and then in Las Vegas. This year, we're approaching our second pandemic Labor Day weekend (and 32nd wedding anniversary), still trying to keep church and state afloat, with the state of the state of Arizona being steered by the ice cream man, Governor Doozy, with our senate president fanning the flames of distrust in our rather well-functioning election system. And everything we do is done at an ever slower pace. What more can I say?" And in what he modestly calls "mundane news," **Don Wolins** provides this comprehensive account: "After serving in the army in Belgium (DeGaulle had just thrown us out of France), I had obtained my medical degree in France, and this was just like coming back home for three more years—I was only a few kilometers from Lille, and I had many close French friends. This was at the end of the early '70s—I was a major and for the first time was able to enjoy a life way beyond the hand-to-mouth existence I was previously experiencing (making 17K and then returning to Laconia, New Hampshire, for 24K and experiencing a sudden and very palpable decrease in my quality of living). I always wanted to have my kids grow up in Vermont (where I had spent a year during my training), and so, at the first opportunity (after one year in Laconia) settled in Rutland, Vermont. I was there for 18-plus years in a solo OB/GYN practice. Then, quite quickly, the children (two of whom attended Taft) had grown up and left the nest, so Mira and I were ready to head to the Big Apple to dip our toes into some first-rate culture. And boy, did we. Different restaurants, the Met, and Wednesday afternoon matinee theater were there for the taking. My salary was just so-so, but my job was a dream, where I covered very bright residents at Roosevelt/St. Luke's. We had a home in Westchester County and a drop-dead all glassed-in top-floor apartment on the West Side. I finally got to 65, and HIP eased me out of it; I went quietly into retirement in Wilmington, North Carolina. These final last years have not been kind or gentle. I no longer play bridge or tennis, nor do I travel, mainly because of my deteriorating health and now the COVID virus. I do manage to cut the lawn on my John Deere mower—but I mainly pass my time on my storied past, on my relationship with my three sons, and my marriage to Sophie, a Southern girl without whom I would be long gone." **Sam Sherer** writes, "Elise and I just came off three wonderful weeks. We started in Massachusetts for the National Father-Daughter over-80 grass court tennis tournament at Longwood Cricket Club. Then we had a 21-issue family reunion in an old-time resort in Michigan, where we also



1953 classmates Bob Smith, Paul Duevel, Mike Brenner, and Jim Goldsmith sporting their Taft hats.

celebrated our 66th wedding anniversary. And then, finished the trip at the Wooden Boat Show in Mystic, Connecticut, before being chased out of there by Henri. We try to stay away from our home in Florida as much as possible during August and September, but have not found anything interesting for September yet." Laura and I are spending the waning days of summer in our home in Weston, Vermont, before returning to New Haven. I've embarked on two projects for the fall. I was accepted into Italian 780, a Yale undergraduate course in the Italian novel, conducted entirely in Italian (reading and speaking Italian has been a daily pursuit of mine for the last 35 years). Secondly, I auditioned for and was accepted by the New Haven Chorale, a splendid organization I sang with in the 1950s and '60s. Laura, who suddenly became ill with disseminated ovarian cancer a year ago, has responded well to her platinum-based therapy regimen; most of the time she feels well and is able to pursue her numerous activities with astonishing vigor. I cannot begin to express my amazement and gratitude for all that she does and is.

53

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As I sit here compiling my notes for the next issue of the *Bulletin* and awaiting the arrival of Hurricane Ida, I conclude that there aren't many anti-vaxxers among the Class of '53, as I heard from a good many of you in particular those whose last names start with the letters A-M. Those going from N-Z, not so much. History buff **Jim Ayer** writes from Marblehead, Massachusetts, where he is still keeping the British at bay, mostly about his grandson, Toby,

who is attending the University of Denver. Could there be romance in the wind as **Paul Duevel's** granddaughter just graduated from the same university, and I think he has another granddaughter who is either there now or will attend soon? Paul wrote that he loves the University of Denver as it's a very friendly, outgoing place with lovely people. He also wrote that he had been elected 100th president of the Connecticut Seniors Golf Association, which is an honor indeed. Congratulations, Paul, from all of us. We hope there is a commensurately large salary stipend to go with the title and job. **Dave Burrows**, noted lover and restorer and racer of MG motor cars, recently attended an MG convention in Petersburg, Virginia, and along with best friend Nancy visited historic Williamsburg, where they soaked up the lore and culture and plan a return trip when Williamsburg is decked out in its Christmas finery. Sounds exciting, and while I went to Williamsburg many years ago, I haven't forgotten what a lovely place it is. **Steve Jackson** and bride Cynthia are planning on another biking adventure in Mallorca, Spain, where years ago Steve and sailing cohorts wintered aboard his boat, *Suzu Wong*, as they completed their round-the-world cruise following discharge from military service in the Philippines. **Anton Fredrik Andresen** sent me a text about publishing his memoirs (in Norwegian with free copies to those of you who read the language), but he really wanted to tell me that he and Annette and family had vacationed in their remote mountain hideaway, and while his ailing back doesn't allow for a full range of activities, he still manages some slow hiking with the assist of walking sticks (dry land ski poles). Another classmate on the international scene is **Mike Cipollaro**, who recently spent a month enjoying the snows of Davos, Switzerland, and hiking with Swiss friends from his days of working there. Mike related that the trip was both business and pleasure as he is active in business still. He has recently relocated to a compound adjacent to a golf course and next to one of his children and near several others in the Houston area. He mentioned that there was sufficient room for all seven kids if push comes to shove. My old standby correspondents, **Brenner** and **Goldsmith**, write of surviving Tropical Storm Fred's torrential rains, which delayed their return to the links. Meanwhile, **Mike** was off to Maine to vacation with family members. Still on the international scene, I got some notes from **Frank Niering**, who lives in England and has family nearby. Frank's hobby or passion is creating furniture with old hand tools. I'd love it if he'd take some pictures of his projects and share them with us. Aside from being yard boy and chef du jour, your scribe keeps busy being part-time caregiver to wife of 60 years, Joan, and enjoying visits from daughter

Donna, who lives about 12 miles away and comes to cook the geezers dinner and attend to other chores. Dr. Chapman Greer is president of the faculty senate at the University of Alabama, where she is a professor in the business school and is in the process of rewriting the entire core curriculum for the university. We get periodic visits from daughter Denise, as well as her husband, who move back and forth from Naples, Florida, to Charlestown, Rhode Island.

54

Class Secretary: Bill Sprague, 12 Aylesbury Circle, Madison, CT 06443-3434, bill-sprague@comcast.net; **Head Class Agent:** Bob Gast, 485 Myrtlewood Parklet, Reno, NV 89511-3766, old.gasser@yahoo.com

As the saying goes, "When the going gets tough, the tough get going." The benefits of the COVID vaccines have been significant. However, new variations of the virus, forest fires, hurricanes, economic uncertainties, and sociological polarizations continue to negatively affect our lives. Yet the Class of '54 seems to be holding its own. **Gray Akers** and Marty didn't allow these conditions to spoil their summer. They had a very good one. Living in the Garden State (New Jersey), they enjoyed the exercise of working together in Marty's flower garden and grooming their privet hedges and salt spray roses, which I learned to be the variety of hardy wild roses that grow well in dunes along ocean beaches. In July, they vacationed on Cape Cod enjoying the pleasures of hiking, swimming, and dining out with their daughter and her boyfriend. While on the Cape, they visited the Anne Packard Art Gallery in Provincetown. Anne is well known for her seascape paintings and has been a favorite of Marty's since she taught her son in kindergarten. You might have heard about her son, Michael Packard, who was reported to have survived after having been swallowed by a whale earlier this summer while fishing for lobsters. Gray and Marty also spent lots of time swimming and hanging out at the saltwater pool of The Willows, a club in Lawrenceville Township, New Jersey, where Gray taught for many years. Sounds like a very active and rewarding summer to me! The hot weather and smoke from numerous forest fires in California made for a tough summer for **Bob Gast** in Reno, Nevada. Nonetheless, he and Sheila got together quite often with family members and good neighbors to enjoy one another's company and catch up on the ever-changing mandates. I imagine the conversations might have gone something like this. Bob: "Are we supposed to wear masks today?" Neighbor: "No, that was yesterday." Bob: "Tomorrow?" Neighbor: "Yes." Bob: "Indoors and outside?" Neighbor: "They'll decide next morning." Bob: "Oh #%&%" Sheila:

"Go home, Bob." **Tom Griggs** reported that he had to cancel a couple of his plans for the summer but expressed his frustration with more civility than my imagination credited to Bob. **Steve Blakeslee** stayed pretty close to home as well. He did follow through with his plan to create a small vegetable garden. The results were less than expected. Time permitting, he plans to relocate it to a sunnier spot next year. Perhaps Gray and Marty can lend a hand. Steve continues to be productive helping his many clients with tax work and has even expanded his workload by taking on the responsibilities of serving as executor for the estate of a client who died last year. Nonetheless, he finds time to for a little golf, seeing his kids and grandkids, and household chores. **Ned Hale** and Sharon have returned to Madison, Wisconsin, after living Evanston, Illinois, for the past five years. Both of their sons and their families are now living in Madison. **Bill Stamm**, his wife Donna, Sally, and I attended the memorial service for **Reese Harris's** wife, Nancy. The church was filled to capacity with family and friends. It was a very special time honoring the life of a very special person. Reese is doing OK and living in New Canaan, Connecticut, with one of their sons, **Douglas '97**, and his family. Friends, family, and loved ones are especially needed in tough times.

55

Class Secretary: Lee Smith, 1867 Mintwood Pl. NW, Apt. 4, Washington, D.C. 20009-1946, Lhswrite@yahoo.com; **Head Class Agent:** John Ogilvie, 4144 Great Oak Rd., Rockville, MD 20853-1854, jogilvie356@gmail.com

You were asked to describe the worst place you ever lived in over your long lifetime. Some of you scratched your heads; not everyone could come up with an answer. Some of you had lived such charmed lives that you never found yourselves in miserable surroundings. Still, the question proved a useful device because it led you to talk about times in your lives you had not shared with us before. And many of you had at least a few bad nights. When **EJ Johnson** started grad school at the NYU Institute of Fine Arts in 1960, he and a college chum rented a ground-floor apartment in a rundown building on Manhattan's otherwise grand Riverside Drive. The apartment's two windows looked out not on the mighty Hudson River, but on a cross street, where, in winter, the sidewalk iced up, and the brutal gale that often blew off the river was so strong that they would see little old ladies sailing on ice as they zipped by, out of control, with arms flailing. One night, they heard a crash in the building's airshaft, followed by a woman's voice crying, "My baby!" They never found out what had happened. The kitchen was a closet on

one side of a dark, short hall. "When we lit the oven, cockroaches raced out," recalls EJ. "We swatted them, but their numbers never lessened. The next year, I moved to a walk-up closer to Central Park. That apartment was roach-free and had a real kitchen. It was broken into and robbed." In 1970, **Art Layton** decided he would take the first reasonable job offer from a newspaper along the Northeast coast. Maine's *Bangor Daily News* obliged and hired him to edit stories that came off the wires of the Associated Press and other news services. Art stayed briefly in a rooming house, Spartan but tolerable, and then moved to a cottage on the lower Penobscot River, which he liked for the four or five years he rented it. The place took some getting used to. "In the winter," says Art, "icebreakers on the Penobscot would wake you up as they came in with the tide, took running jumps and crashed into the ice." **Dennis Arrouet** touched bottom for a few days in the mid-1960s when his employer, American Metal Climax, dispatched him as part of a mining development team to look over the site of a strip coalmine in Gillette, Wyoming. Gillette is far away from the beautiful, awe-inspiring Yellowstone and Grand Tetons part of Wyoming, beloved of tourists. "There were no trees, flat like a moonscape," Dennis remembers Gillette. There was only one motel in town, which couldn't accommodate the entire mining team in individual beds so the visiting engineers had to sleep in shifts. "They did change the sheets between shifts," Dennis adds appreciatively. **Tom Chadwick's** first job was with a metal casting company in Naugatuck, Connecticut, where the factory-floor executive training program taught him how to make sand molds and pour molten 1,200-degree aluminum into them. His employer also sent him out to travel the company circuit from division to division through the Eastern U.S. No one had prepared him for Syracuse, where he was booked for several nights into a motel that looked respectable enough from the outside. "The place turned out to be a 'hot pillow' joint with paper-thin walls," says Tom. "It was very noisy, and the sex education I got every night was truly amazing." **John Rodgers** has visited Kazakhstan often over the years to advise the dairy farmers of the former Soviet republic on improving their herds. He remembers being housed on one occasion in a room shared with two other visitors in a wooden building that was both hotel and hospital. For three nights as they tried to sleep, they could hear on the other side of their room wall the commotion and conversations of hospital patients and staff. Their room was cold, and with no indoor plumbing, they had to make their way to the outhouse in the dark. **Charlie Richards'** roughest accommodations were in a tent 15,000-plus feet up the slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro 20 years ago. "I had all my outside

clothes on and was in an Arctic sleeping bag," says Charlie. He was part of a climbing group of eight that made it to the top of the 19,500-foot mountain, one the world's great challenges for amateur climbers. "Temperatures were in the teens, and the winds blew in our faces at more than 25 knots," Charlie continues. "Great fun." **Tom Goodale's** nerve-racking test was being sent by Philip Morris to Buenos Aires in 1961 as a management trainee. He had to learn Spanish, adapt to the Argentine work culture, gain acceptance despite being viewed as a young wise guy inflicted on the local office by headquarters, and make comfortable a wife and newborn daughter. "But in the end, I was really happy for the two years I was in Buenos Aires," says Tom. "I fell in love with international countries, learned to meet challenges, and got the travel bug." (He hasn't shaken it yet. He and companion Lesley are planning a 139-day ocean cruise in 2023.) On many late nights at Taft, **Dyke Benjamin** slipped clandestinely from his room and snuck into a desolate basement classroom where in peace and quiet if not comfort he cracked the books; the night watchman sometimes brought him cider. One night, as he was scratching out an algebraic formula on the blackboard, the door suddenly opened and **Paul Cruikshank** appeared. Dyke, illegally out of his room and covered with chalk dust, briefly feared his Taft career was at an end. Instead the headmaster simply said, "That a boy, Dyke. Keep it up," withdrew, and shut the door. **Marty Rosol** is one of those who has never lived in or visited a place that distressed him. He'd like to continue traveling, especially to St. Martin. He can't for now, partly because the Caribbean island has a very low COVID-19 vaccination rate. **John Jenkins** recalls only a few discomforts over the decades, such as the year after Taft at a school in England, where the water in the outdoor toilets froze in winter. In 1988, NYU hired **Dave Scribner** as founding academic director of a master's degree program in real estate, a position that came with faculty housing: one bedroom, in the basement. "The

On many late nights at Taft, **Dyke Benjamin** slipped clandestinely from his room and snuck into a desolate basement classroom where in peace and quiet if not comfort he cracked the books; the night watchman sometimes brought him cider. One night, as he was scratching out an algebraic formula on the blackboard, the door suddenly opened and Paul Cruikshank appeared. Dyke, illegally out of his room and covered with chalk dust, briefly feared his Taft career was at an end. Instead the headmaster simply said, "That a boy, Dyke. Keep it up," withdrew, and shut the door.

55

windows were so low down that as I looked out on the busy street I saw mostly legs and footwear," recalls Dave. "The room smelled musty. I had to pull the bed away from the wall to keep the air conditioning duct from dripping on the pillow. Then, in 1990, I got engaged to Cheryl. As a couple, we qualified for an apartment with a balcony on the ninth floor." The joys of marriage. **Al Wells** was still an undergraduate at Yale when he married Mimi, and as a dizzy youth in love, Al was a little flaky. He didn't secure housing for himself and his bride until the wedding when he grabbed the hand of a friend's father in the reception line. The father was in real estate. Did he have an apartment for rent? Yes. Al and Mimi cobbled together a household of folding chairs, card table, and such from a yard sale. A radiator in the living room doubled as an extra chair. Al and Mimi are still together six decades later, living much more stylishly. In retirement, your scribe, **Lee Smith**, went to Yerevan, Armenia, to advise the local English-language newspaper. I liked the young Armenians, who were eager to learn how a market economy works, having been brought up in a country that was part of the Soviet Union. But no one in the office building of several tenants took responsibility for the common space, a neglect encountered often in post-Soviet Armenia. The men's room had no light, and the floor was slippery, putting visitors in danger of sliding into the open pit that was the toilet. The apartment I shared with my wife, Marsha, a Peace Corps volunteer, was clean, but hot water was intermittent, the phone rarely worked, and there was very little heat. Sweaters helped, but your hands were never warm until at night you warmed them under the bedcovers for half an hour, your head resting on a pillow the size, weight and texture of a bag of grain. In other news: **Don Spencer**, formidable long-distance bicyclist, suffered a serious injury in April. He and his daughter were biking on a trail converted from a railway bed when another cyclist pulled in front of him. "I hit the cyclist's rear wheel with my front wheel and reportedly



Family of Bill Youngs '58 at breakfast in Tanzania (and yes, the wilderness lodges did have WiFi!).



Serengeti elephant—Bill Youngs '58 was amazed at how close their guides' Toyota 4Runners could get to the game.



Serengeti sunset taken by Bill Youngs '58.



Kim Mann '58 and his wife, Mary Ellen, enjoyed their trip to Maui.



Steve Buckley '59 with the catch of the day.



Cheever Hardwick '59 with two other generations of Charles Cheever Hardwicks (IV and V) in London.

swerved off the trail into a steel post," says Don. "I do not remember the accident or anything else of what happened for the next 20-odd days. I remained in hospitals for 40 days due to a head injury, which even a modern bike helmet could not prevent. I am grateful to be making progress and hope to become fully functional this fall." We report sadly that **John Bendler** has died. John had a fine career in molecular biology that included a contribution to DNA sequencing. John told me some months ago that he was suffering from long COVID, feeling weak and running low fevers continuously. I am not aware of other classmates having contracted the disease. Be well.

56

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57 TAFT 65TH REUNION

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58

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The Class of '58 scored an impressive "victory" this summer by leading all Taft classes in percentage giving—83 percent of us, far ahead of any other class percentage with the exception of a class with only two surviving members, who

gave 100 percent. Congratulations to us! **Frank Helm** reports that he recently sold the Dodge Ridge Ski Resort, near Pinecrest, California. The resort was founded in 1950 and has been owned and operated by the Helm family since 1976. The transition was eased by the fact that the new owner is a near neighbor and close friend of the Helmses. **Charlie Yonkers** is keeping a hand in education by teaching an adult education class this fall on "The Power of Place." He is on the Talbot County (Maryland) library board and reports that the "culture wars" are taking place in a local debate over an "equity statement" endorsed by the library along with an associated list of recommended books. **Andy Parkes** wrote **Halsey Beemer** and **Charlie Yonkers** with a memory and a question about stage drama at Taft: "I had a nostalgic half-hour on Sunday listening to a production of *Sorry, Wrong Number* on Irish radio. I had not realized that it was written for radio originally. How did **Peter Candler** stage it for Commencement eve on June 5, 1958? I remember sitting in the bed—but did everyone else appear or speak from backstage, through a microphone? Charlie, you had the key lines as the Western Union man. Halsey, you were (as ever) production stage manager for the *Masque and Dagger*." (Personally, I was never in a play at Taft, but I have lots of good memories of the excellent plays put on by our fellow students.) **Bill Youngs** and family spent much of this past August in Tanzania on a safari in Serengeti National Park. I teach and write on the subject of national parks history, and so for me this was something of a "busman's holiday." Lots of good images and information to share with my students. I'd never been to Africa before, and I was greatly impressed with the skill of our driver-guides, the charm of the lodges, and the excellent food, to say nothing of the stars of the event—the wonderful animals themselves in glorious profusion. Additionally, I was gratified to learn that at age 80, one can still do something entirely new. **Kim Mann** had this to share: "What a great summer for my wife,

Mary Ellen, and me despite the reemergence of COVID. We were able to round up all six grandchildren (without their parents!) in mid-June for a fantastic 10-day vacation in Maui. We were there to celebrate their 2021 graduations—from dental school, college, high school, and junior high. What a treat for us and, I hope, for them! So much fun, as this Maui photo shows (page 67). Next, in mid-September, Olivia and **John Milholland** were kind enough to invite us to stop by their beautiful home in Raleigh for a quick visit on our way to explore Wilmington, North Carolina, as a possible landing spot once I officially retire from the practice of law. So great to renew old friendships. We got to meet their lovely, super-talented, and smart daughter, Allegra (a North Carolina state appellate court judge), and their rambunctious dog, Corn Flake. We followed up cocktails on their cozy backyard patio with a quiet dinner at a local restaurant. It did not take us long to dive into discussion of national politics and lament the prospects of the Dems retaining a majority in Congress in the upcoming midterms. We exchanged tales of woe over the inevitable physical ailments each of us has managed to endure in recent years, and ended with promises to get together again soon. I sure hope so. Our 65th Taft Reunion (in 2023) seems so far away. Our scouting trip to Wilmington did not pan out. It offered lots of golf opportunity—my current passion—and a warm, welcoming climate, but not much else that appealed to both of us. We find our existing neighborhood in northern Virginia where we have lived for the past 30-plus years very comfortable, but we feel compelled to downsize. The 'where next' part is still troubling and unresolved." **Charlie Landis** wrote a letter of appreciation for our class notes on **David Duncombe**, our chaplain and religious studies teacher as follows: "I was one of a group of four or five of us who regularly met in his apartment on Sunday afternoons to listen to classical music or opera on his hi-fi, or to listen to him learning to play flamenco guitar, and to talk about interesting topics like Western

civilization or religion. He got engaged in 1958, and we all threw in to buy them a nice silver tea service. "I kept in touch for a while after Taft. In the summer following my freshman year at Stanford, I had a job in Wyoming. David and Sally were spending the summer in a fire lookout tower outside of Libby, Montana, so I drove to spend a couple of days with them. Then life did what it does, and we lost touch. Now I so wish I hadn't. Sometime in the 2010s it occurred to me that Google could find him, so I did an online search. Sure enough, he had lived and died (in 2011) just 65 miles from here, in White Salmon, Washington. I missed so many great opportunities to hang out with him and Sally. What a remarkable life David led after Taft." **David Duncombe** was an activist in the fullest sense of the word. At Taft, I remember his pointing out in a Vespers talk that X dollars given in charity could save one life and that since a Cadillac cost 30X dollars, we should think of one Cadillac as costing 30 lives. That assertion likely startled some of our parents, including my own, but it was consistent with David Duncombe's entire life as a person who "walked the extra mile" for causes in which he believed. Charlie cited an article announcing Duncombe as winner of the prestigious Mother Joseph Award of the Sisters of Providence, conferred in 2010 shortly before his death. Here are some of the highlights: 1. Before coming to Taft, Duncombe served in a "mountain infantry division" during the Korean War. 2. He was with us at Taft for five years then went on to Yale Divinity School, where he received a PhD and served as a professor and chaplain. 3. He was with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on the Selma March; he stood on railroad tracks in Concord, California, as part of a protest against arms shipments to Central America; he undertook many hunger strikes on behalf of a variety of causes including homelessness and international debt relief; he was arrested scores of times for his activism. 4. When David received the Mother Joseph Award, he was 82 and was still "an active member on 22 boards

and advisory groups for nonprofit organizations serving the poor and vulnerable and has been a founding member of most of them." You can see the full article at bit.ly/2XjRcgi. Thanks to you, Charlie, for bringing this story to our attention. It is a reminder that just as we alumni have accumulated a multitude of experiences since leaving Taft; so have those who taught us.

59

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Many in the Class of '59 are approaching or entering their 80s, an age when activity and cognitive skills are supposed to slow. Judge for yourself if that is the case among the '59ers here. **Wesley Williams** lost his wife, Karen, in July after years of devoted companionship. "I write with a 'broken heart,' having just lost to Alzheimer's my beloved wife of 53 years following a two-year whirlwind courtship. Karen meant all the world to me, and all who knew her in our half century-plus report that the devotion and delight was mutual. *The New York Times* and *Washington Post* news reports and editorial pieces explain just how great Karen was (and how lucky I was to be able to call her mine). Not surprisingly, my prospective publishers tell me that Karen should figure large in the memoirs I am now laboring over. Most of Karen's service at St. John's Church, Lafayette Square, can be seen on YouTube, listed under the name of the church, and 'Celebration of the Life of Karen Hastie Williams.'" After spending the 2020-21 pandemic year at their place in San Francisco, **John Jordan** and wife Jane moved recently to their other home in Santa Cruz. Retired from teaching at UC Santa Cruz, John continues as director of the research consortium on Dickens that he helped to start back in 1981—the

Dickens Project. "I'm still active in research and writing, but at a slower pace and working remotely, like most of us. My wife, Jane, is a psychoanalyst with a private practice that she has converted to the various virtual formats with which we are all familiar by now. Zooming and FaceTiming have compensated to some extent for the impossibility of travel. We are in reasonably good health. A new hip helps keep me active as I approach 80. We mourn the loss of good friends and family members and worry about the fate of the nation and the planet, but remain thankful for the efforts of Stacey Abrams and others like her who helped turn the country in a better direction." **Dick Erlanger** is still working in private equity. "The brave new world of tech has opened up a plethora of nontraditional deals, particularly in AI and virtual reality software," he writes. "Like many others, I was really saddened by the death of **Mike Giobbe**. I spent some time with him in NYC when he was leading the research group at his investment bank, and I was at McKinsey & Co. Just a first-class guy personally and professionally." **Bob Taft**: "I continue to enjoy teaching about the Congress and education policy and overseeing a state government internship program at the University of Dayton. Of greater interest, I am finally back at our summer place in La Malbaie, Quebec, now that the Canadian border has reopened. I am fourth-generation up here; my great-grandfather, William Howard Taft, first came up in 1892 after attending the wedding of his brother, **Horace**, the founder of the Taft School, at Niagara Falls." Lifelong Yankees fan and sports devotee **Mac Mellor**: "The arts season for 2020-21 ended just when everyone assumed the pandemic was past, so the summer's start was especially quiet. Fortunately, we had the Olympics, Wimbledon, etc., to occupy our viewing time. And the New York Yankees have provided first-rate games since the All-Star Break, so the end of the summer has been exciting indeed, especially for this fan since 1950." "Thinking there was freedom after vaccination, Sue and I enjoyed



Bix, granddaughter of John Merrow '59, shows off her black sea bass.

seeing friends and family again this summer," writes **Steve Buckley**. "I even got away to Colorado for some fly-fishing on the South Platte River. With the onslaught of the Delta variant, we're hunkered down again, masked and wary. Fortunately, **Cheever Hardwick** keeps me entertained with frequent emails." Seattle-based **Murray Sargent** is hard at work on software projects for Microsoft and blogging on *Math in Office*. "Tomorrow I'll attempt to summit Mount Stuart in the East Cascades, weather permitting. It towers above I-90 and is just west of the Enchantments. Most days, I telecommute to work, which is way easier than it was even a few years ago. I Zoom into MathML and Unicode Technical Committee meetings, as well as participate in Microsoft Teams meetings with my (young!) colleagues. Except for time changes, it's like being in the same room. This summer we had quite a few houseguests (all vaccinated, of course). The kids love to Sea-Doo and paddleboard on Lake Washington, where we live in the summer." **Stallworth Larson** checks in from Alabama, where he and Juliette and their seven grandchildren are spending the high season (August in Alabama!) at his south Alabama farm, which was his grandfather's "gentleman's farm" over 100 years ago. The farm is down to three old horses, no more barn cats, and only seven chickens left, including two still-handsome roosters. Egg production, as you might imagine, has fallen off badly. Time to reorder from Murray McMurray! The farm still boasts around 100 head of cattle. Stallworth advises classmates thinking of getting into the cattle business that he has the best kind of cows you can get. They are not his, and he doesn't have to take care of, or particularly worry about them! They belong to a neighbor who lets them graze the timberland and keep it looking good. Pine trees are the farm's main crop. For classmates worried about saving the planet, Stallworth assures us that we are not running out of trees. America, he writes, has as much forest as 100 years ago, but grows five



Peter Buttenheim '60 and his granddaughter, Claire, took in Lincoln Lobby when Peter and Claire visited Taft over Labor Day Weekend.

times the volume of trees, more than is used. As to horses, Stallworth says he hung up his spurs a few years ago after the last time he fell off a horse. In place of horses, he says he now uses mules to enjoy his properties, Kawasaki Mules that is! **Cheever Hardwick** became the "oldest new grandfather" in England on the 17th of August with the birth of Charles Cheever Hardwick V. Cheever writes that son Charles IV "is heavily involved in high-tech investment with Vitruvian Partners in London, and his wife, Alex, is a sports lawyer in London and keeps fit running marathons and playing netball. Susie and I are still spending most of our time in the Algarve in Portugal, which is magical. Perfect weather nearly year-round, ideal for those liking outdoor sports of any kind. Susie and I still manage to walk 18 holes two or three times a week and keep mobile with a combination of gym work and Pilates. I have completed another book, this one a rather chilling tale set in the English countryside, which will hopefully soon be published and available via my website, www.cheeverhardwick.com." **John Merrow** reports that he and Joan "continue to shelter on Martha's Vineyard, with occasional visitors, including our youngest grandchild of six. Bix turned 10 during her visit and she caught a few fish, including this black sea bass." (See photo above.) **Bruce Powell** retired at 78 and is still trying figure out his next act. "At the moment, Marlene and I spend most of our time with church-related activities. I have taken up singing in a really good Congregational church choir in Simsbury, Connecticut, and wishing that I had spent time at Taft learning choral music under **George Morgan** rather than tooting my saxophone in the bands. The balance of our time is devoted to dodging Mister COVID." **Marcel Arrouet**, retired Wall Streeter, sells real estate in Palm Beach and recently addressed a financial markets club for seniors, founded by late Wall Street executive **Don Stott '56**. A Penn grad, he watched a daughter and son graduate from Penn. Next spring, a grandson graduates. From yours truly, **John Gillespie**: After 62 years,



Dick Walsh '60 at Mory's in New Haven, Connecticut.

I am reacquainting with you all as your class secretary following the excellent stewardship of **John Merrow**. After careers in journalism, fundraising, and a brief stint in politics with the late Arlen Specter during his final 'Democratic' period, I now co-edit a community newspaper in East Falls, Philadelphia, serve on some nonprofit boards, and stay connected as a committeeman in Philadelphia's 38th ward.

60

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In early June, **Bob Hilliard, Don Challis, Jim Barton, Dick Walsh, Jim Goulard, Harry Hogueland**, and I (**Sam**) met for what has become an annual lunch at Mory's in New Haven, Connecticut. Check out the mask **Dick Walsh** is wearing (above). No COVID-19 germs are getting through that one! As we were talking about one thing or another, Bob and Gouls recalled the good time they had visiting fellow Taft basketball teammate **Jim Wilson** at his home in Syracuse, New York, where they met former NBA basketball legend Dolph Schayes. Speaking of Jim Wilson, he and his wife, Lee, celebrated their 58th wedding anniversary this fall. Said Jim, "We have been blessed with good health and hit the gym together six days a week." Congratulations, Jim and Lee! **Dan Senecal** wrote, "This spring I looked in the mirror...saw the wrinkles and decided that as I approach 80, the 950-pound Harley RoadKing had to go. Reaction time and strength ain't what it used to be...and after falling off my rented BMW...sliding on black ice...in Kyrgyzstan...two years ago and ripping the left rotator cuff and rupturing the bicep, I figured retiring (selling) the Harley might be a smart move. To compensate, we [Dan and wife Stephanie] bought a nice place on Deer Isle, Maine, with shorefront for the water toys. Kids and grandkids love it and I'm happy to

pass on a nice asset to them as everyone in this family loves the Maine coast." In late August, Dan and Stephanie were scheduled to travel to Corfu, a Greek island in the Ionian Sea off the northwest coast of Greece. At the request of the Harvard Travellers Club, Dan was planning to present a program at the Boston Harvard Club on his trip to the remote South Atlantic island of St. Helena, which is most famous as the place where Napoleon died as a "prisoner of state." In August, **Wink McKinnon** and his wife, Barbara, went on "a two-week, 2,000-plus mile 'odyssey' in their airplane." Beginning in White Plains, New York, their wanderings took them to Latrobe, Pennsylvania; Lexington, Kentucky; Louisville, Kentucky; French Lick, Indiana; Detroit, Michigan; Traverse City, Michigan; and Harbour Springs, Michigan. They played golf at some really nice courses, visited with family members and old friends, and attended the wedding of their daughter Sarah's stepson, Dylan, and his bride, Kate, before heading back to their home in New Rochelle, New York, where they arrived just ahead of Tropical Storm Henri! While watching the national news one evening in August, I (Sam) saw a humorous side story about a big duck that was seen floating in the harbor off Belfast, Maine. It looked like a life-sized version of the "rubber ducky." Since Peter and his wife, Marcy, are now living in Belfast, I contacted him to see what was up with the duck! Peter replied, "No one knows who did it or why—just the whimsy vibe here in Belfast. We do like this place. Small and quaint, but a lot going on—quietly for the most part. Lots of thoughtful people, but all kinds of others as well—living together without too much acrimony. The efforts to bring in a land-based fish farm has caused a few naysayers to slow it down with lawsuits and so on, but in general it's a pretty happy town with an artistic vibe. The feeling here is the duck celebrated the summer and the tourists. It disappeared in the middle of the night—as quickly as it appeared!" Over Labor Day weekend, **Peter Buttenheim** and his wife, Frances, picked their granddaughter, Claire Saint-Amour, up at Yale where she is a senior and then traveled to Taft for a short visit and campus tour. Peter said, "Claire is a classics major, and she has heard me talk a lot about my taking Latin at Taft with **Bob Wolsey**. She wanted to see the small classroom where Bob taught Latin and Greek. It is now a history classroom with some high-tech equipment, and the desks are not bolted to the floor!" Their self-guided tour also included the old dining room where every Taft graduate's name from 1891 to 1990 is carved on class panels on the dining room's walls. Claire enjoyed seeing the many names of Buttenheims and Swains to whom she is related displayed on those panels. Before heading back to New Haven "for a late lunch at a wonderful Italian restaurant," they

concluded their tour with a walk around the pond, the sports fields, and the "new" dorm, "new" library, and "new" science center. Thus ended a wonderful visit for Peter, Frances, and Claire, who might want to teach classics after graduation from Yale this December and, therefore, had an opportunity to see firsthand what a medium-sized boarding school looked like. By the time you read these notes, winter will be just around the corner and a new year will be fast approaching! How quickly time flies!

61

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62

62 TAFT 60TH REUNION
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Reunion Chairs: David Forster; Paul Ehrlich, DrPaulEhrlich@aol.com

Our theme that I've asked my classmates to consider for these class notes is On the Road—tales of cars we've known and the adventures we've had with them. Here's how we responded. **Cronan Minton** writes, "In the spring of our freshman year at Stanford, Hap Freiberg and I splurged on a dilapidated Hillman Minx. Whatever we paid for it was too much. We soon learned that the convertible top was in shreds. Driving to San Gregorio Beach through hilly La Honda where Ken Kesey lived required gallons of water to keep the engine from burning up. It wasn't worth putting the top up when it rained because we got soaked anyway. I remember once stubbing a cigarette out in the ashtray. Everyone in the car burst out laughing. Why be so gentle when the car was such a heap? Why not crush the cigarette out on the floor, where it would drop through to the road because the floor was rusted out. Hap may or may not agree that this investment was pure folly. We must have been nuts! It was almost harder getting rid of the car than buying it. The next year, I finally convinced a garbage man to haul it away. This was just the first of many clunkers I owned when we were very young and very poor. Hap: It would be fun if you weighed in on this story." **Albert Simms** writes, "In the mid-'50s, my uncle John was up for reelection as governor (Democrat). He was running against my boyhood friend's father, E.L. Mechem (Republican). One night shortly before election day I pasted a Simms for Governor sticker on the back of Mechem's '55 Chevy. Thankfully, Mechem thought it was funny. No one else but

me did. We became good friends and regular pen pals over his ensuing 40 years in various offices. He was a Taft Republican. Opposed to wars overseas, especially the never-ending ones ultimately resulting in sudden defeat and hasty retreat with little or nothing learned from it on our side of the ocean." Asked by Cronan to relate his Mustang story, **John Clippinger** writes, "My first car story goes way back before the Mustang and really is the reason I ended up at Taft. At age 12, friends and I got into 'borrowing' cars and extensive joyriding. I mean 20 to 30 cars rolled out of people's garages while they watched television, evading the police by driving down one way streets, dropping the clutches, and rolling them back. We were discovered and we all were sent away—me to Taft and all four of my neighbors to Choate. Parents gave up. My second story involves a Porsche Carrera. My father was mad about fast cars and got one of the first racing Porsche Carreras in the country. It came with its own German mechanic! When it came back one day from repair/tune-up, I collected three of my friends (including **JD Dwight** of Taft) and took it for high-speed adventure. Upwards of 120 mph and then into a very curvy section of roads—unsafe over 15 mph, switchbacks at 80 mph. Off the road, down a gully and up a riding trail we went. No one was hurt, but the car was never again in great shape. Very unhappy father. The one Mustang story I have is a real embarrassment. I was with my roommate from Yale, and we went whitewater canoeing one year in the Miller River in early spring. We had no way of getting the car from our drop-off point to the exit point of the river. Brilliant idea: pick up a hitchhiker and give him the keys, and he will leave them at our drop-off point. After going over a waterfall and completely bending the canoe around a rock, we exited the river wet, cold, and shaken to find no keys. I called the police and tried to explain to him the circumstances of the theft, and he hung up. He thought it must have been a joke—no one is that dumb. But we did eventually find the keys and hitchhiked with a Polish polka band (that's another story) to Springfield, Massachusetts, and retrieved the Mustang." **Marty Keller** writes, "The best car I ever had was a 289 horsepower, 1964 Mustang convertible (grey exterior, red interior, black top, four on the floor), which I took with me when I was stationed at Fort Davis, Canal Zone near Colon, Panama, the Atlantic side of the canal. When I departed, to get home a fellow officer named Terry Ketter and I drove north up the Inter-American Highway to the land known by those of us in the service as the Big PX. It was about 10 percent completed in Costa Rica, so it took us some 20 hours from the Panama border to San Jose (200 miles). We stayed in every capital city in Central America including British

Honduras, now Belize. Very memorable trip. Drove straight from Mexico City to Fort Sam Houston in Austin, which took another 20 hours. I exited the service and drove to New Orleans so my buddy could pick up his car. Then I drove straight to Middlebury, Vermont, to start graduate school. Total trip time—19 days! Untold quantities of beer! And tons of memories and laughs. PS: My buddy went on to Vietnam and died in Cambodia. A tragic end and another story. RIP Captain Ketter. The joke in the service was when you crossed the LL's in my name (Keller) you got Terry's name Ketter.”

Peter Lowber writes, “I know the question is about your first car, but I am going to talk about my first vehicle—a motorcycle—because the story is much more interesting. In the summer of 1966, my trip in Europe started when I went to the Ducati factory in Bologna, Italy, to pick up my Ducati 300 on which I toured Europe that summer. When I got to the factory, I was told to come back after siesta (4 p.m.). Then I was told I needed a registration plate which I could get by sending \$25 to a judge in Alabama. The plate would arrive in 10 days. I went to Florence and returned in 10 days. My plate with a silver ALA on it was there! Was ALA Alabama, Alaska, or Albania? I arrived at the Czech border with an American girl riding with me. They must have thought we were Albanian! This was Czechoslovakia in 1966 under Soviet hegemony. I got through the border and continued to Brno—where my dad, who had escaped Hitler in 1938, was from. In Brno, we found a group of young Czechs (or they found us). They invited us to their campfire where they sang ‘We Shall Overcome’ in Czech! We were indeed witnessing the Czech Freedom Movement, which culminated in 1968 when the Russian tanks moved into to squash the movement. I wrote a letter to my Czech friend from the campfire and told her about the police assault on the protestors at the Chicago Convention. And what is happening in your part of the world? I never heard back.”

Bruce Edmands writes, “My first car was a dark green Volvo 122 station wagon, which I purchased in Columbus, Georgia, after completing Officer Candidate School. Suzy, my first wife, did not have a driver's license, but learned to drive in it and acquired her license a year later, after I graduated from the U.S. State Department Foreign Service Institute and departed for what turned out to be the first of three years in Thailand. When Suzy and daughter Whatleigh joined me in Bangkok a year later, we sold the Volvo to Suzy's sister, Bonnie, who named it ‘Grace.’ Grace remained in the family for many years and was the first of many Volvos we owned until, in 2003, I switched to Audis, which have a symmetrical all-wheel drive system far superior to Volvos (and most other AWD vehicles), as I expect **Joe Freeman** would readily confirm (as our resident

automobile expert). Hope everyone is safe and healthy, weathering the pandemic as best as possible.”

Bryan Remer writes, “Dave, partial list—First car: 1957 Hillman Minx—two-door convertible, could outrun VW Beetle from the light. Most fun car: 1960 Triumph TR-4 convertible, great for chicks. Favorite car(s): 1959 and 1962 MBZ 190SL convertible with two tops—classic beauty. Most rugged car: Jeep Grand Cherokee, four-wheel drive. Current car, for older people: 2009 Lexus RX350. Yawn, but comfortable. Incredible miracle moments: smashing and totaling the Triumph and Mercedes without serious injury to me. I had to roll the ‘59 Mercedes down a hill to avoid a head-on collision with a drunk driver going wrong way against traffic. Landed upside down in a trench, car on fire, dragged myself and wife from under the car and pulled her up the hill. Highway Patrol thought we were dead. What a night! I'd like to add this to my auto show: I totaled my Triumph when I drove home one night after a Navy pilot party in which I had been encouraged to taste different types of Scotch. When I reached the overpass at the freeway, I missed the turn and found myself flying in the air—like pilot training, I thought. The car and I nosed down and smashed in the flat below. My head hit the windshield, and eventually I stepped out of the car and stumbled toward the freeway. Then I walked back to the car because the radio was still playing, and I thought I should turn it off to save the battery.”

The summer we all graduated from Taft, yours truly, **David Forster** and Duane Clapp, a good friend from home, drove his red and black ‘53 Mercury from Darien, Connecticut, to this place about 40 miles south of Tucson, Arizona, where my dad had arranged for us to work on a ranch. It turned out there wasn't really much for us to do on this ranch, so when another friend from back home showed up a couple of weeks later and said his grandparents had a place right on Malibu Beach and that they were away for the summer, we hightailed it out of there, drove all night through the desert, and couldn't believe our good fortune. With the Beach Boys singing songs at the time like “California Girls,” we felt like we'd landed in the center of the universe. Nothing lasts forever, not even paradise, and after about a month of living the life we got kicked out of there. I called our good friend, **Albert Simms**, in Albuquerque, and he invited us to follow him and his family up to Colorado, where they had a ranch near Fort Garland. We did just that, and Duane and I found a job on a nearby farm, where we earned enough gas money for the long trip back home to Connecticut. (I should add that my dad was not about to shell out any money to help us after we had bailed on his plans for us to work the whole summer on a ranch, like he'd once done as a young lad.) Thank God we lived to tell

the tale. There are certain things you only want to do as a teenager, and driving 48 hours nonstop from Boulder to Darien in a ‘53 Merc purchased for \$300 with a hole in the floorboard and no air conditioning is one of them.”

Cliff Hemphill writes, “The main car story I have to share has to be about a Chevy station wagon which took me, my brother, and two of his friends out West and back in the summer of 1965. A most memorable trip! Started out going the northern route—through the Badlands and Mount Rushmore; then to Cody, Wyoming, for some rodeos; then to the Grand Tetons, through Yellowstone (where a donkey sneezed on my brother through the window); then up through Glacier National Park in Montana; into Alberta—Banff, Lake Louise, and then onto Calgary (for the Calgary Stampede). At the Calgary Stampede, we were unaware of some of the flimflamming that goes on in those carnivals, and we were somewhat fleeced by the barkers. Big lesson learned. I'd like to think I figured out what was going on, because I caught one of these barkers, when the numbers he added up were added incorrectly. As soon as I pointed that out, he shut down the game and said to get out of there. By that time, we had lost too much money and had to beg my dad to wire us some. The car—a silent witness to our foolhardiness—carried us down through Washington State to the Weyerhaeuser plant. Then, down through the Oregon and California coastlines and California's Muir woods. Then into San Francisco, where we stayed three to four days. (Now, as I reflect, this was the year that the Grateful Dead formed and the Kool-Aid Acid Tests took place. But I knew nothing of that back then. I was grooving to the Rolling Stones' ‘Satisfaction.’) Our trusty wagon took us toward LA. On the way, we stopped at William Randolph Hearst's castle. We were amazed at that site. Then to LA, where our uncles lived. Good times there. Heading back East, we saw the Hoover Dam, the Grand Canyon, the Petrified Forest, the Painted Desert, etc.—and back home via the famous Route 66. I remember telling someone that I took a lot of photos of the Grand Canyon, but that the photos could not capture anywhere near what the human eye could see. Unbelievable sight! Why so long and so wordy? I guess I got carried away. It was one of the most impactful and fun trips I ever took. And I have my father and that car to thank—along with my brother and traveling companions. By the way, by the time we got back to New Jersey, we had no brakes. So we barely made it home, and I think that was the demise of that station wagon. Wow! To be on the road again. 1965 was it! So these road trips played a bigger role in my life than I first thought. Thank you, Dave, for this topic. It brought back a lot of memories. And

again, to all my classmates, I hope all is well with you and your families. Take care, and stay safe. All the best, Cliff/Hemps.”

Last, but not least, is a car story from **Peter Simpson ‘60** about his late brother **John Simpson**. Peter writes, “Slim, as he was popularly known to us all, had just graduated from Taft, but returned to Watertown to rescue his beloved easy chair that he'd left when he cleaned out his room. He had no trouble packing the chair into the front seat of his Merc. But when he returned home in Greenwich, try as hard as he could pushing and pulling, he was unable to remove it. After a mighty last heave he shattered the front windshield with one of the arms of the chair. He then was so incensed he went and got a saw and sawed off a leg that then allowed him to get the chair out of the passenger seat on to the asphalt driveway. He then walked around the car surveying the scene for about 30 seconds and then went into the garage and got a sledgehammer and proceeded to beat the offending chair into a massive pile of debris and stuffing and broken frame pieces! He then turned around and marched into the house with a smile and a sense of retribution for all the pain he suffered at the hands of the chair. The entire scene was observed by my father, who happened to be looking out the kitchen window—along with me on the driveway. He had a pained expression on his face. This was his son who was just accepted into Princeton.”

63

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The theme of the quarter seems to be physical health. We will start off with **Ray Langham's** odyssey in reclaiming his golden years: “For 27 years at my annual physical, my doctor has told me to lose weight. Then, three years ago, my A1C went to 6.4, and he told me that he was going to put me on insulin. I begged him for another chance, and got serious about losing weight. Slowly by portion control, walking, and swimming laps, I have lost 55 pounds since then, and my A1C is 5.6. But what I wanted to tell everyone about was that I finally listened to Robyn and joined Silver Sneakers. I had mistakenly thought it was like a Zumba class, but Silver Sneakers is meant for people our age. I am probably the worst athlete to letter at Taft, and I had let myself get even worse. When I first started, I could not stand up from a chair with my back erect and arms overhead—I had to push off my knees; I was having to turn my whole body to see behind me when backing my car up; I could not raise my foot high enough to place it on the seat of a chair; when

doing the exercises in the chair, I had to lean against the back; and I had trouble standing on one foot and balancing for a minute. After about 15 classes, I could do all of those things, although not as well as now three years later. The exercises are somewhat strength building and cardio, but the emphasis is on flexibility, coordination, and balance. Basically, you move every muscle and joint in your body. The mantra is ‘motion is lotion.’ We go three times a week to a gym and our insurance covers it. If you do not want to go to a gym, you can buy the equipment on Amazon and watch YouTube videos. I did that at home during COVID-19 lockdowns. I am determined to make the 60th Reunion and want to make the 65th and 70th without being in a wheelchair. Hope to see you all there.”

Our comment to the class email list about having deposited our younger daughter at Indiana University in Bloomington brought the following from **MacLeod**: “I wish I were the one being dropped off for sophomore year, but no, it's off to the doctor's office again.”

And then, from **Steve Reed**: “Life is good. I just had shoulder replacement surgery. I cried like a baby because I can't drive for a month. Then I think of my friend and roommate, John, who had many ailments but was positive right up to the end. Gratitude is the answer. Yeah, I can't play football, but I can watch it on TV. Actually, I would rather spend time with my grandson. I love you all—Rud.”

To all of this, we will add that while subject to all the usual infirmities resulting from the passage of time, having a good Pilates instructor has been a huge help in counter-acting the poor physical habits acquired in a lifetime of careless motion. **John Brewer** shared the following in his usual efficient and informal style: “Just dodging COVID-19 down here in Florida; trip to New Zealand postponed indefinitely. We do have trip to Wyoming in October, reunion with some good friends we met in Tajikistan in 2018. Want some pics?”

John also reported that our one-time classmate, **Brandon Shreve**, passed on recently. **Sandy Wyman** is also getting rid of children. “Just dropped my youngest daughter off for her final year at Yale Law School. What a relief. Next year, she is scheduled to clerk for K. Brown Jackson (KBJ) in D.C. My other three and six grandkids are doing just fine with no known cases of COVID-19. Time flies the older we get! Stay well. PS: Was sorry to hear about Brandon. I read about him in the UNC Alumni News.”

We also had a very pleasant lunch in Tampa, “What a dump,” said the St. Petersburg resident with **Harry Chittenden**, who I suspect looks better than any of the rest of us. We did, however, commiserate about the difficulty of sleeping through the night these days. Finally, our younger son and his family returned from Amman, Jordan, for a vacation this summer. It was great to see them after two years and to get their perspective on living in



Penelope, daughter of Emily Lord '99 and granddaughter of John Lord '63.

the Middle East. Jordan is a country with about 10 million people, 89th largest, and its principal exports are fertilizer (i.e. low margins). It is 94th in total exports, but 113th in per-capita GDP. The country is further burdened by refugees, a million Palestinians and, recently, a million Syrians. Life there for people who have jobs is not unpleasant, but we did note that the first thing our daughter-in-law did on arrival was to go to Old Navy to buy clothing for our 4-year-old granddaughter, as goods of any quality are just not available through normal retail channels. The situation can be summed up in a comment often heard, we are told, among young people that “Jordan is where jobs go to die.”

We said goodbye to them in early August with much regret, but also considerable gratitude for living in a country where the rule of law prevails, and where information, whether it be about the prices of goods or the follies of politicians, is freely available, allowing us to make effective decisions about how to use our abundant resources. Speaking of which, or perhaps not, emails to the following bounced back this time around: **Bob Lear**, **Doug Cochrane**, **Ted Carey**, **Tim Hubbard**. If any of you gentlemen wish to join our quarterly conversation, and we very much hope you will, please email me at markfromm1@gmail.com with your correct address.

64

Class Secretary: Chris “Kit” Brown, cwb322@gmail.com; **Head Class Agent:** Carl Wies, carlwies@outlook.com

Retirement; lost class ring (great story); life begins at 75, in the Berkshires and in Thailand; *un abuelo por primera vez*, but not other news that is lost somewhere in cyberspace, its omission attributable to your secretary's combination of disorganization and orthopedic tribulations. Mistakes were made. Apologies are made. First, “retirement” from Energizer bunny **Joe Knowlton**: “One day in January I

realized that it was time to retire. After 23 years at Greenwich Academy, with 2021 being one of the more memorable, I decided to throw in the towel. Part of that decision was that I needed to see more of my children and their families, so I opted to move south to Tallahassee, where my oldest son Pete lives. Miraculously, I was able to buy a house on the same street, in a great little community off the beaten path, and a three-minute walk to his house and newly constructed pool! I closed on July 22, and have been moving in and putting my stamp on my new turf. My other son, Jeff, lives in Austin, and I am hopping in the car on Sunday for the 13-hour drive to visit with him and his family. I am hoping to leave ahead of the arrival of Tropical Storm Fred, and hoping my house is still standing when I return. It's a little daunting starting out on a new life, but it's really great being closer to my children and their children. The house is bigger than I was looking for, so there is room for visitors! Next, lost ring/happy ending from **Tim McDonald**, probably our only classmate who wears his Taft ring as a wedding ring: "I have a wonderful story to share, *mirabile dictu*. As some of you may recall from our 50th Reunion, I have always worn my Taft class ring in lieu of a wedding ring, mainly because my wife, Janet (of 50 years on Juneteenth), and I both liked it. Unfortunately, it was lost last month while I was on vacation with the family, and I assumed it irreplaceable. Enter **Kit**, who, when learning of my distress, sent out an email plea on my behalf to those classmates he had addresses for to see if anyone who could still locate his would be willing to sell it. I received a prompt reply from **Evan Welch** offering me his, gratis, even throwing in the shipping charges. The only compensation he asked was that I make a donation to the troops, which I gladly did to Wounded Warrior. The wonderfully surprising fact is that Evan and I weren't all that close at Taft; we were in different activities and shared no classes I can recall. In spite of that, I count his generosity and our subsequent email conversation among the best of my 'fond meetings with old friends.' To my former classmate, new friend and hero, Evan: many, many thanks. *Non ut sibi*, indeed." From **Bing Bingham**, another Energizer bunny: "I'm still at Marvelwood, still the college counselor and teaching three English classes this year instead of two, plus an elective (songwriting or screenwriting). Long story, which I won't bore you with. When I do leave, my only real legacy will be the Music on the Mountain open mic series I started nine years ago. We're going to have our 50th show this December, hopefully in person (the dining hall has a stage, stage lights, and a professional sound system I had installed after the first year). I guess you can say it's become an institution. Joe's performed with me on many occasions. Kids from Kent



George Boggs '65 and Ward Mailliard '65.

and Hotchkiss schools and other outside performers have sat in from time to time. We do five shows a year and I have to say it's been amazing—even the virtual shows last year were great. Go to the Marvelwood website under 'The Arts' then 'Music on the Mountain,' and you'll see pictures from past events. So here we go, my 21st year. Not sure how many more. I'm still writing and recording songs and hope a new J&B CD is in the works. The last CD, *Destiny*, and a single, "Hemingway's Ghost," were marketed by CD Baby Pro and are readily available on most download sites. Also working on a screenplay based on a treatment of mine that was originally optioned by Tom Cruise and Paramount many years ago, but never got off the ground. The success of the *Faith of My Fathers* script in the early 2000s still gives me some leverage but there's never any guarantees. You just keep pluggin' away. There'll be no retirement in any traditional sense. Life begins at 75! And 75 is the new 30 in Thailand, where **Phil Corbin** is living in a little pocket of paradise, dating women one-third his age and writing his memoirs, which should be interesting indeed and which your secretary has the honor to edit. Speaking of your secretary, I just became a grandfather for the first time, *un abuelo*, to my only daughter's first child, Harrison John Godinez, who will be raised bilingual, so I'm working on my Spanish. We just sold our house in Connecticut and are moving permanently to our house in Naples, Florida. As I'm sure most of you know, downsizing is a bitch, but we're looking forward to sunny winters at last. Again, with apologies for any omissions, I wish you all health and happiness as we cruise into our fourth quarter-century. Please keep in touch.

65

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Lance Hamilton '65, his wife, Mary, and daughter Catherine.

"There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you." Perhaps classmates who have never shared stories with us will take this quote from Maya Angelou to heart, and relate a narrative before it becomes time for your scribe to retire. Thank you to those faithful few who have related many interesting tales over the years. "Retiring from the popular noise, I seek this unfrequented place to find some ease, Ease to the body some, none to the mind." Our theme for these summer notes: retirement. For several classmates, the time to enjoy "some ease" has arrived. Two '65 docs are about to serve their patients for the last time. **Dr. Cherry** recently related news of his imminent retirement: "Retiring in two weeks—hopefully by the time you get this, after 39 years. Suspect I'm something of a latecomer to this 'after-party,' but we have downsized, kids all through school, five grandchildren, number six on the way, our younger daughter getting married (last wedding in the Cherry family) in Denver mid-September. Quoting Kenny Rogers: 'Lucille,...Lynn and I are '...ready for laughter, and whatever comes after.' 'Ob-la-di, ob-la-da,' etc. We can't let you have all the profound literary references, Carl, after all." Congratulations, Tom, you and Lynn will be busy having fun with your six grandchildren, so enjoy them whilst they are young. **Dr. Walden** relates: "Regrettably retiring also. I figure 40 years is enough. Too much red tape. It was becoming a job rather than fun. Leave urology to the younger ones. Whew, I'm glad I'm not in their position!" Tom, after 40 years of dealing with the functions, and disorders, of urinary systems, you deserve to kick back and relax. Besides, if you run 40 to 45 miles a week with your knees still holding up, you have miles to log before you sleep; "long may you run," Tom. You should have absolutely no regrets. Blank 'Rome wasn't built in a day.' Heck no, it wasn't, with several hundred of America's top lawyers employed there, including our illustrious head honcho, **George T. Boggs**. George, what an impressive profile in your Blank Rome website;

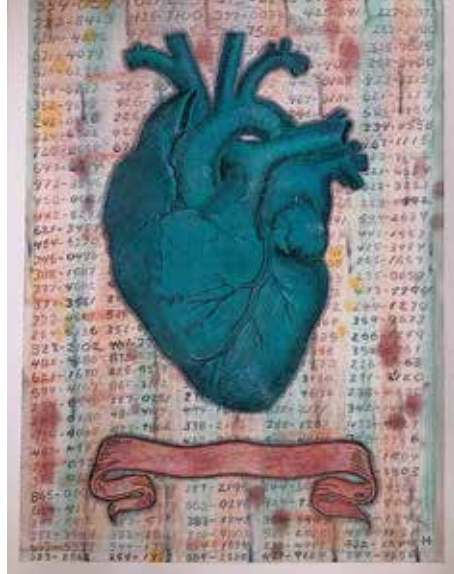
was blown away by the diversity, and complexities of the areas of law you assist your clients with. George shared a photo of **Ward Mailliard** and him taken in July 2021 at their annual golf match in Washington, D.C., with some mutual friends. "We always follow the golf game with a lovely discussion of current political events and policy issues. While we may not always agree on the substance of the issues, we respect each other's views and can still depart as friends until the next time. We both lament the loss of such civil political discourse in so much of the country today." George elaborates: "Ward is adjusting to retirement from official duties at the Mount Madonna Center and school he developed in California while remaining busy with other related activities. I have managed to postpone retirement from the legal profession for another year but have no present plans to retire in the near future. For me, it will depend in part on how much I still enjoy going to work and whether my general good health holds up, and in part on whether my firm thinks I should consider retirement a bit sooner." From the sounds of all you do as a partner at Blank Rome in the international trade field, your law firm will never let their superstar legal maven retire. **Ward's** rebuttal to barrister Boggs: "I am passing on my duties at Mount Madonna as executive director as I told them when I was asked to assume the role at this late stage I would only serve two years. As it is, there are so many things to occupy my time here, I am not sure I would call it retirement. I am trying to reduce meetings and do the things that either interest me or I feel called to do. This is an interesting and challenging phase of passing on one's life work to the next generation. It is never easy, but succession is a sure thing. I hope to spend more time doing the things that I did not have time for the past 47 years of my time with this organization. As always, I have no idea where I am going but I am making excellent time." Ward and George are truly two of our most amazing classmates. Cary and **Clint Black** are busy planning the September 10 wedding of their beautiful daughter, Emily, to Felix. Clint relates that Felix is "really a good guy, who owns two homes, one in Baltimore, and the other in Austin, Texas." Clint is determined to shed a few of his pandemic pizza-induced weight gain to be light on his feet for the upcoming daddy/daughter dance with Emily. Clint celebrated his 75th birthday in late October, and reminisced about the birthday soiree we hosted at Morton's when the Blacks stayed with us in Hawaii a few Octobers ago. Qi and **Mike Bruce** joined us for Clint's fun celebration as well. This summer has been busy for **Carl Bozzuto**, who "just finished as editor and coauthor of another book: *Boiler Operator's Handbook*, third edition, published by River Publishers. The book was announced at the Council of Industrial Boiler

Owners summer conference, which was done virtually. I actually used some of that stuff we learned in 'Froggy's' English class at Taft." Carl's mention of Froggy fills me with "ayenbite of inwyt." My sincere thanks to **John Rush** for not throwing me under the bus in lower mid year regarding a dastardly deed I perpetrated on Froggy during a major study hall uprising. John was falsely accused of, and incessantly interrogated, regarding the crime this class hacker committed. In one of my swan song class notes, my complete confession will be revealed, after consulting my legal advisors, Boggs & Black, that the statute of limitations has expired. While many are retiring, **Lance Hamilton**, like Ol' Man River, still "totes that barge and lifts that bale." Paul's latest: "There is a lot going on. Next month, I will be teaching a two-day workshop on unmanned aircraft to the Edison Electric Institute, whose member companies provide electricity to about two-thirds of the country. I may also be representing the FAA in a panel discussion on a related topic. On the other hand, there is a total pause recently. I flew my family to Sandy Island on New Hampshire's Lake Winnepesaukee for a week. The final steep descent to land at a short mountain airstrip always makes me feel like a Stuka pilot. After a subsequent boat ride, there's nothing but reading, swimming, kayaking, and a cabin on the rocky shore, beneath brilliant stars and filled with the sound of waves. I returned refreshed and ready to seek trouble and adventure anew." Whatever you do Lance, don't dive bomb with Mary and Catherine aboard. A fond farewell to my favorite class scribe, **Peter Corrigan '66**, who recently announced he inspired us with his eloquent class notes quill pen for the last time. Peter, I always enjoyed reading your well-written quarterly notes, and know your fellow '66 classmates will miss reading them almost as much as I will. Thank you for your inspirational, insightful writing, and our fellow scribe friendship nurtured over the years. I plan on staying in touch, and will continue to consult you on how to relate "what oft" was thought, but ne'er so well expressed, that special storytelling gift you possess. "We look before and after, / And pine for what is not: / Our sincerest laughter / With some pain is fraught; / Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought."—Percy Bysshe Shelley. In closing, a prayer to my favorite drummer, may you rock on in heaven, **Charlie Watts**. Thank you and your bandmates for the joy your songs brought this avid rock 'n' roll fan; over all the decades you kept your steady beat. Enjoyed one of the Rolling Stones first concerts with several friends from Rochester, awestruck in our front row sets, at the Buffalo Memorial Auditorium in 1966. "Oh no, it's only rock 'n' roll, but I like it, like it, yes I do!" Adios, Happy Trails, your scribe, Carlos.

66

Class Secretaries: Jamie Hedges, hedgesjs@outlook.com

Once again, **Peter** and **McKim** thank you for your long-tenured leadership and friendship in holding together the "far-flung" Class of '66 for so long. Peter received many calls and notes of thanks from a number of you. It must be the time difference, but our lone Englishman **Robin Smith**, who was extremely helpful to me as well, was first to thank Peter. Besides Robin, other mates who sent tidings were **Eduardo Mestre**, **Alex Chu**, **Bob Whitcomb**, **Mike Cutler**, **Richard Ginman**, **Richard Blossom**, **Trip Devens**, **Nick Walsh**, and **Warren Dean**. Peter also received a lovely handwritten note from **Ellis Wasson** and a heartfelt phone call from **Carl Hennrich '65** in California (his fellow class secretary and guide through the etiquette of Taft *Bulletin* submissions). Peter was extremely grateful to receive all of these. Before I start with other recent news, it stuck me that we might learn something about "commitment to community" from one of our deceased classmates who was with us for only two years, **Elmer "Buzz" Whitepipe**. His Lakota name meant "Holy Hawk." Buzz and his wife, Judith, raised five children and two grandchildren in their Gregory County, South Dakota, home. I understand that at first, he was traveling around his Lakota communities attempting to gather and save stories and traditions from the oldest members of the Lakota Sioux (also known as Teton Sioux). In those travels, he realized that many of his people could not find "affordable" housing or any housing at all. With that knowledge, his life took on a new focus. He worked for the Community Action Program in Lake Andes, the United Sioux Tribes, and the Rosebud Housing Authority prior to joining the South Dakota Housing Authority where he served for 29 years. With a cohort, he started the SDHA's rental management company and each carried a load of 70 housing developments. Each week he made the 200-mile round trip from Dallas, South Dakota (where he lived), to the capital, Pierre, for work. After his death in 2006, SDHDA honored him, its longtime staffer and former board member, by creating the annual Elmer Whitepipe Award of Excellence. This award recognizes individuals or companies instrumental in providing affordable rental housing in the asset management or compliance industry in South Dakota. His associate gave this tribute: "He was a good friend of mine. He was a true contemporary. Through your life you only have a handful of people you can say that about, and he was one of them." Please forgive any repetitions with older '66 notes: **Rich Blossom** and his wife,



A painting by Michael Harris '67.



Ken Rush '67 at his summer studio at 3 Pears Gallery in Dorset, Vermont.

Hope Frye, write: "After not going anywhere for a year and a half, we have just returned from a week in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, where we have just bought a house, which might become our home next year. We are also heading to Denver this coming week for a week to see my daughter, Annie, and grandson Josh—with another one on the way in March. And then in late September, we will be heading to NYC—originally for the Fancy Food Show, which has now been canceled—but to see family there anyway, and then we will be heading to Ithaca to see my sister's grandson row for Cornell, and then up to Scotia, New York, to see my cousin." **Allan Vaughan** seems to be spending a lot of time on the water with his wife, Gail. They also recently attended the U.S. Open. **Nick Walsh** and Margot Knight seem to be on a trip around the world and were last seen in Italy. They have included incredible pictures in their Facebook posts. Speaking of Nick Walsh, Eduardo cannot figure how Nick can take that much time off. However, he writes to us that after four days on the shores of Lake Como they were off to Edinburgh, Scotland, and Belfast for a bit of golf and visits with his wife's family, all in 13 days with four COVID tests along the way. Otherwise, his family is well and his work continues to be a challenge. **Trip Devens** notes, "Be advised that Canada, specifically Ontario, is finally open to tourists, and Liz and I are off this week for an extended three-week Muskoka Lakes fix. Only hitch is the needed COVID test, which we'll chase down in Dobson, North Carolina, on the second day of our four-day drive. Hopefully, by limiting our daily driving, the neuropathy in my legs won't be an issue. Let's just hope our test results show up on day four in a timely fashion, or we'll be vacationing in Buffalo, New York." **Langdon Quin** continues to produce beautiful art where he lives with his artist wife in Eagle Mills, New York. His grown kids live near them. **Wick Chambers** is actively involved in numerous Connecticut community nonprofits. **Phil Howard**, through Common Good, leads a remarkably thoughtful effort to use the tension in our politics today to make

the necessary evolution of our government processes to get ahead of our problems rather than reacting to them. I continue to receive emails from **Bob Adams**, who comments on the political situations around the world. He and his wife, Jen, enjoy life in Australia. We are still hoping that we see him one of these years. **Ian McColgin** continues to hike with his family, last seen in beautiful parts of Colorado. **Alec Gerster** and family, including his son, Brennan, enjoy their love of sailing, weather permitting. While these notes will get to you long after our current 20th remembrances of the shock, pain, deaths, and loss of the 9/11 attack, I just want to remind you that we have too much in common not to give thanks for each other and the beauty of our differences. Last questions in need of your response: Which of your classmates led and participated in the senior prank at night that the school woke up to find a vehicle in the middle of the small courtyard surrounded by and visible to all attending breakfast in the Armstrong Dining room we knew? Whose vehicle was it and what was the make of the vehicle? Best wishes to you and your loved ones, Jamie.

67 TAFT 55TH REUNION

Class Secretary: Bruce Johnson, bjaja@charter.net;
Head Class Agent: Bill McCarter, gwcmmc@gmail.com;
Reunion Chair: Jim Taylor, jbtaylor@jbtaylor.com

Our class was caught in the summer doldrums, but I did get a few pieces of news. Never at a loss for words **Chuck Whitney** writes, "Hello, gang, still working and enjoying seeing patients. Glad to have a hiatus in the political terrorist virus, at least so far out here in God's country. That translates to renewed car shows to take my old girls out to and share tall tales with other car people. Terri got her deck redone this summer—the new material spent over a year in my storage building, and the undo and redo took the better part of six weeks this summer. My '78 Porsche 924 is all together but still

needs its A/C figured out, the '67 VW is almost all painted, but lots of boxes in the building waiting for the old dude to spend some love on it, and the '84 Saab Turbo still hasn't run since it came home on a trailer from a choral practice late in 2019. See what I mean about needing a few 36-hour days to get through? At least the '95 Chevy pickup is almost done and can now haul stuff! **Ken** does his art shows in New York, while Chuck is still looking for more vehicles to bring back to life! What say the rest of you?! On another note, we had two additions to the grandkid list, a boy to our youngest son in December 2020 and another boy to our daughter this past February. Busy times at the OK Corral, especially around visiting time. We are looking forward to visiting with both families in about two weeks when the Washington son travels east and the South Dakota daughter comes north to Bowman. Hope all of you are well. Live life, don't be afraid. Best to all." **John Weld** had this to share: "We have been working on Cape Cod all summer; Irina is a massage therapist at The Cove at Yarmouth Resort, and I am still selling homes, if I can find a listing! I work for Kinlin Grover Compass in Yarmouth. We are off to Aruba in September for two weeks to relax and hit the beach 24/7." **Ken Rush** sent in this photo (above) of his summer studio opening at 3 Pears Gallery in Dorset Vermont.

68

Class Secretary: Mac Whiteman, nummer99@yahoo.com; **Head Class Agent:** Jim Sterling, cheehaak@gmail.com

We begin by reporting the travels of **Randy Abood** to Salt Lake City and Montana, and finally back to Boston, where a drive back to his home in Westerly, Rhode Island, revealed no substantial damage from Hurricane Henri. Randy loves his work, but is wondering why he has not retired at our current age of 71. A nice relay from **Hunt Collins**, one of our elders: "Just watching my plant grow up. Went to Colorado



Fred Jennes '68 rockin' on the bass guitar!



Jim Sterling '68's beef cattle.



Chuck Fischer '69 and his wife, Valerie.

in May to visit daughter, took the train, too. Then, went back to Louisville to visit family in June. Can't wait to see Joe Bonamassa later this month outdoors. I've learned to still carry a mask, too. I resisted having meals or groceries delivered to force me to get out. I've eaten outside more the past 16 months than the past five years. I don't do Facebook or Twitter, and the concept of streaming to me is something I try to do standing up, not something my TV does. Hulu, isn't that a Hawaiian dance? Thank goodness I've got a 38-ish neighbor who can get me back online so I can print out a hard copy. They're becoming harder and harder to get. Still not sure what it looks like or where my server is either. Other than that can't complain." I still have to ask Hunt how his reunion with "Joe" went. And, the all-encompassing news from Dandy **Jim Unland**: "When the pandemic hit in the winter of 2020, I had already been teaching online for 10 years at Loyola law school in Chicago. I was asked to teach some professors what are effective things to do to keep students' attention. I said that after a while people are going to get sick of Zoom. I had the best success giving my students readings and then giving them an audio MP3 file, breaking lectures up into 15- or 20-minute sections. I also tried to focus on present-day controversies and events. You can't always do that in a law school. Some case law goes way back in time. The other thing I did was to have occasional guest experts. However, they had to be able to sound interesting and not like they were awakened from the dead." If any of you are still leaning toward law school as a means of beginning a new career, perhaps you would want to attend Loyola and enlist in some of Jim's entertaining classes! I myself attended another law school in the fall of 1974, and because it was not entertaining at all, I left after one week of torment. First-time contributor **Geoffrey Miller** continues his law school teaching at NYU, except this year he was drawn away to Florida to do his classes virtually with the added benefit of a swim between classes. He will return to his Greenwich Village office this

fall and plans to take on the chessmen in the southwest corner of Washington Square Park. I presume Geoff is doing a great job educating future attorneys in the same neighborhood I lived in during my Taft years. **William Jennings Bunker Snyder**, our classmate with the longest (known) name, reports that he has gone west for a good reason: Bunker Snyder reports that he has departed the East Coast for Colorado Springs, Colorado, to be closer to his kids and grandkids. Bunker has had a busy life, working for Rolls Royce and others, and as resided in the UAE and Australia and other faraway places. In the Land Down Under, he said he had occasion to pass through the town of Alice Springs (in the center of the continent) and that the village had "a lot of flies." That has to be a most unique observation. Fearless leader **Jim Sterling** continues with the quiet life in Maine: "I am in the cattle business. Four belted Galloways, a Scottish beef cow. Anybody need meat?" Jim also has some great maple syrup, and he sent me a jug plus a large number of Taft postcards, which I may use to contact some of you. **Carl Geupel** reported on another classmate: "**Lee Burbank** is living in Mystic, Connecticut, in unknown places until he secures his doublewide. Lee still holds the record for the longest hair in our class, having last visited a barber around 1982. During the recent Hurricane Henri, he secured a roof over his head in the home of his younger brother, keeping his silver mane good and dry." **Bill Grickis** has a thriving real estate law practice in the Litchfield, Connecticut, area and has many clients who attended Taft. He summers in Little Compton, Rhode Island, and seems to be enjoying his life a great deal, no longer seeking the perpetrators who stuffed his room with newspaper. Finally, our present musician **Fred Jennes** reports: "Picture of me playing at our first post-COVID gig, which is while I am smiling. Colorado venues are finally starting to open up and book bands again, which is a real boost for the music industry." Fred enjoys performing with his great country band, the Fox Creek Ramblers. Check them

out on YouTube, where Fred and the boys have many entertaining shows. I am delighted with the number of items I received for our yearly notes. I hope you all had a stellar year of 2021, and we will see how we progress in our 72nd year of 2022. Talk to you later.

69

Class Secretary: Dennis Vitrella, dvitrella@gmail.com;
Head Class Agent: Bob Leary, bleary14@yahoo.com

Written in Italia, with gratitude for your friendship and expressions of support as well as my family and friends on both sides of the pond, the Atlantic and Taft's, I gather your submissions and recent conversations. **George Potts** sings and strums live again in Connecticut and around New England, his geographical and spiritual home. Listen to his song, "I'll Never Leave New England." George reports all is well with him and Elissa after surviving COVID both physically and financially at their Fife 'n Drum Restaurant in Kent. His kindness called to wish me a "Buon viaggio" the day of departure. Good tidings from **Tom Donaldson**: "One of the great things about working these days as a teaching assistant is that I get my summers off! I know a lot of us are retired, but not yours truly. I'd drive myself (and others) crazy without something to do. In July, my wife, Tess, and I visited our daughter, Jade, in Little Compton, Rhode Island, where she is finding time at last to work on her art. At an artist's open house, she sold several paintings and sketches and brought in some commissions for future work. Very exciting for all of us! Our younger daughter, Abaigeal, spent the summer working as a paid intern at Boston Medical Center. She is a rising junior at Colgate studying neuroscience. She'll have an opportunity to apply to work for a semester at the NIH in Washington, D.C., for her fall semester next year...fingers crossed! In August we made our annual pilgrimage to Huletts Landing, New York (Lake George), where the weather was brutally hot one day and pouring



Ann and Bub Fischer '69's family and grandchildren at a blessed family gathering.



Mary Ann and Tom McDonald '69 with their four grandkids (from left, Nora, Ellen, Ned, and Jack) at a Fourth of July gathering of the McDonald clan.



"Portland Fog" from Brian Steppacher '69.



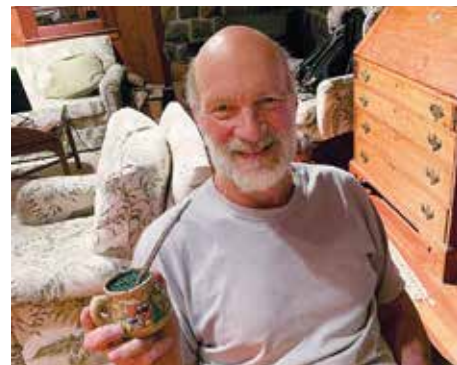
Lek and Cord Keller '69, and Glenn Tucker '69 and Natasha having lunch in Santa Rosa, California.



Tom Donaldson '69 with his older daughter, Jade.



A selfie of Tom Donaldson '69 and his family on Lake George, New York; from left, Abaigeal, Tom, Tess, and Jade.



Parker Mills '69 at home with a mat.



Two Colts: Colter Rule '69 and his son, Colter III.

rain the next, for two weeks(!), sometimes simultaneously! Still, we managed to spend a lot of time on the water and had both girls there with us for most of that time. Good times with my favorite people!" **Glenn Tucker** and **Cord Keller** in one again or four with double love. Glenn had this to share: "Cord and Lek still have their house in Chiang Mai, Thailand, but have come to stay in California for a while and are living in the cottage behind our house. It is great having them here, and interesting to get a look at our current U.S. culture through the eyes of someone who has lived outside of it for a long time now. Natasha and I are mostly laying low here in California during fire season, but will be off to Greece in September to see what fire season looks like there." Grandpa **Tommy McDonald** with expanding family shares a photo of his wife, Mary Ann, and four grandkids during a Fourth of July gathering. **Parker Mills** writes from Northern California: "Two subjects here, COVID and wildfires. We are trying hard to stay ahead of both of them. Dragging dead wood out of the forest, experimenting with sprinklers, learning about proscribed burns. For reasons I fail to grasp, there are plenty of unvaccinated folks living in the two rural counties I work in, and as of September 1, COVID rates are shooting up. We are looking at flights to Peru,

Argentina, and Chile, where we volunteer, perhaps later this year. No one really knows what the future holds." **Bub Fischer** called, and we shared many laughs as is always the case in conversation with Bub. He followed up with a golf story: "Our son, Brooks, has worked on his golf game and now plays to a 2 handicap, much to his godfather's chagrin (**Henry Bertram**). He was fortunate enough to qualify for the Connecticut State Amateur Championship this year. One hundred people play 18 holes for the first two days with the same group, a threesome in his case. Toward the end of the second day, one member of his threesome mentioned that he had played hockey at Brown. After a short discussion, Brooks realized that he had played with **Dick Stevens** for the past two days. Brooks was amazed at Dick's shot-making ability and really enjoyed playing with him for two days. As an aside, the third member of the threesome was on our son Tripp's softball team. Small world!" **Mike Macy** reports, "So far, so good, knock on wood. Record heat on the Green and Colorado rivers in June. Record heat at home upon our return. Serious smoke on occasion (AQI 500 once), but so far Bend has been spared fire. Send rain." **Jay Geary** lists: "First, I am very thankful that neither my significant other nor I or any of my family or close friends got COVID.

All of us now have the 'shots,' and none of us grew three heads, turned green, or started believing or spouting the Big Lie. Second, I'm back in the gym four days a week and not five days because....Third, I'm still employed full time and 18 months away from the Big Exit (and you can take 'the Big Exit' any way you want to). Fourth, I'm still in reasonably good health, even though my life is boring as all get-out/I never go anywhere/I'm still living like a hermit. The future is as muddy and questionable as ever so for excitement, I have been pricing pre-need cremation. Gotta have a backup! (See 'The Big Exit' above.)" **Fred Forsman** briefs us: "I retired in May last year, due in no part to the pandemic. (I gave notice of my retirement plans six months earlier.) The major change in my status is that now I am an empty nester, not for the first time, but this time I'm retired, and there's the pandemic going on, so, more than ever before, I am left to my own devices. Perhaps there's such a thing as too much freedom." **Colter Rule** shares his heart and a few lines: "Hey everybody. Life's not uninteresting. And will never be the same after COVID (whenever 'after' is). The only thing that got us this far is our very humanity. The courageous hospital workers and first responders, all the folk who were/are on the frontlines. Hallelujah. We have a new

administration. I mean what the heck just happened for the last four years. Katy and me? Lots of tennis and work around the property keeps us in shape. A trip to idyllic Blue Hill, Maine, visiting my sister and her husband. Popped in on **Tom Gross** and Suzanne on the way back, toured Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Tom played some amazingly beautiful piano on a Steinway he had restored. Way fun and too brief. Rule family reunion in Northern Michigan. Sage **John Purinton** has been best bro for his sister, Anne, all summer, 15 minutes away from us, minding her lovingly in her weakened state. 'Lil' Colt, '21, in NYC, has left his teenage fury behind, happily involved in a ticketing app/start-up he has a piece of. In a nutshell. Good tidings to you all. Peace on. Love, CR." **Jim Reed Denzer's** in August—great as always. We never run out of things to discuss, plus the usual nonstop quips. September brings a two-week trip to France with my daughter. We'll fly to Marseille and then drive along the coast visiting towns along the way. After spending a day and night in Carcassonne, we'll stay at a chateau before heading back to Marseille to take the train to Paris. Five days and nights in Paris will follow before returning home." **Peter Underwood** called with some hilarious

memories. He and his family are all well, and his son flies his own wings following his dad's tailwinds. **Chuck Fischer** had this to share: "My son, Cole, is tying the knot on December 4 in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, to his wonderful partner, Ania Tomczyk, and plan to continue their lives in Chicago where they reside. Valerie and I spent the second half of the summer in Maine, where we've been going to the past 15 years. Love the ocean, hiking, and wonderful food there. My daughter, Morgan, and her husband are nearby, and we love it! All my best to everyone! See photo (page 75) of Val and me in Aruba last winter (post-vaccines). Next update will have pics of my daughter and husband. Ciao for now, Chuck." Our Maine photographer **Brian Steppacher** submitted his Portland-in-the-fog image along with a verse: "I failed / I was lost / The universe took me in / I discovered its World. / Shalom." In August, **Jeff Johnson** and I had an uplifting dinner in Minnesota. Jeff looks and feels in shape as he works on a St. Paul golf course performing daily vigorous exercise. Miraculously, Jeff remains asymptomatic despite his serious condition while he says, "Most of the things I worry about never come to pass." He continues to amaze the doctors at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, with his healthy appearance and attitude. Jeff plays with his grandkids and sees his whole family often. In mid-October, Jeff will have two surgeries at the same time, one to remove a tumor and part of his pancreas (he reminds us that it is lymphatic cancer, not pancreatic) and his spleen; the second surgery will be to remove another tumor surrounding an artery. Jeff wants to avoid medication with side effects and thus agreed to these surgeries. He will recover in six weeks in time to shovel snow. As for me, **Dennis Vitrella**, my summer has been one of the best in memory. I spent all of August in Minneapolis and Minnesota. Three weeks with my "sprizzante" daughter, her husband, and two very lively, intelligent, athletic grandkids. Six-year-old Finn challenges me to chess and word games and running around the park

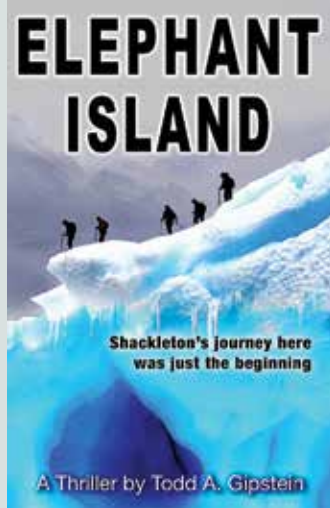
playgrounds. Eight-year-old Maya beats me at every physical and mental exercise in addition to solving any issue that comes up. Their parents spoil me, not their children. With two Lafayette College friends, and another canoe buddy, a guide for the first time, and other four trippers, we had a one-week challenging canoeing adventure in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area. From Minneapolis, I flew to Italy for six weeks. The first week as of this writing was blissful with my older daughter who lives in Verona. Long bike rides in the Veneto region with a guide fulfilled a dream. Second week in Tuscany with two cycling dates scheduled. Then a beach in Tuscany, Pisa, and Roma. *La vita è veramente bella!*

70

Class Secretary: Tom Strumolo, tstrum@yahoo.com; **Head Class Agent:** Barnaby Conrad, barnaby@aol.com;

In 2019, Taft's Class of '70 began celebrating 50 years since our release. For 25 months, we have shared our stories with each other, in thrilling email narratives and regular video conferences and so in these many ways we have outgrown class notes. But now having missed a few *Bulletins* in a row, we understand just how much the greater Taft community has been made to suffer because of our selfish new patterns of insular self-communication. So here are some highlights of news we have shared among ourselves, but really should have been broadcast across the entire spectrum of Taft printed and digital media and probably Reuters: **Trennie Walker** got a ride-on lawnmower that cuts 36 inches in a swath, a little less if he overdoes the overlap. The **Jons, Erb, and Dann** now host a Sunday evening political/dressmaking podcast irreverently called "Mitching and Boning," obviously the former a political reference, the latter covering fish processing and structural sewing. Regular

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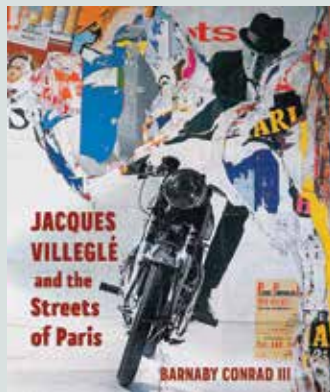


Elephant Island Todd Gipstein '70

Gipstein's fourth novel begins on Antarctica's Elephant Island in 1916, when Ernest Shackleton's men are stranded and try to survive. The story winds forward to 2019 and a meteorite hunter for the Museum of Natural History who is seeking answers to a mystery that started when Shackleton's men were there involving a rare type of iridium. Like Shackleton, she must endure and survive as her expedition faces unexpected challenges.

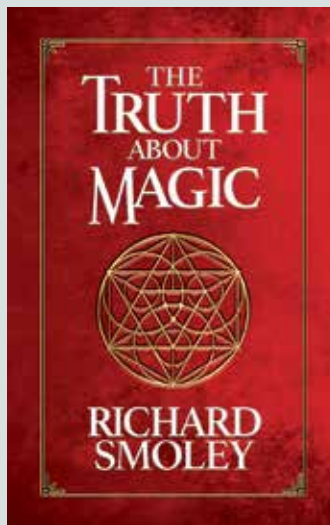
Jacques Villeglé and the Streets of Paris MODERNISM INC. AND INKSHARES Barnaby Conrad III '70

In 1949, abstract painter Jacques Villeglé ripped torn advertising posters off a Paris billboard, mounted them on a stretched canvas, and proclaimed it art. Over the next six decades, he snatched more than 4,000 works from Paris's streets. By 1960, he had formed a movement known as Nouveaux Réalisme. In this first biography of Villeglé in English, Conrad portrays this father of street art as France's greatest living artist. (Read more on page 12 of this issue.)



The Truth About Magic GILDAN MEDIA Richard Smoley '74

In his most recent book, Smoley, an expert on the occult, delves into the world of mind power, magic, suggestion, and the realms of the unseen. He speaks simply and clearly, in common-sense terms, about these mysterious forces, how they can work for readers, and what one needs to avoid. ■



contributors include **David Farwell, Charlie Flynn, Rich Epstein, and Strumolo**. Recently, **Dan Taylor** joined the discussion, and after considering heavier topics the group landed on coeducation at Taft, still an incomprehensible notion to any from the class who did not have sister or daughters attend alma mater, in the many intervening years. (See In Print at left about **Todd Gipstein's** latest novel, *Elephant Island*. Todd credits his years at Taft with kindling his love of writing and credits English teachers **Lovelace** and **Sullivan**, in particular, with fostering his early writing efforts. And on page 12 read about **Barnaby Conrad's** new book, *Jacques Villeglé and the Streets of Paris*, and see In Print at left.) Reunion discussions and plans continue to dominate all interpersonal chatter, always invoking **Steve Erlanger** bestride the river of Western print media like a colossus, former Headmaster (and much missed) **John Esty**, venerable class agent and artist laureate **Barney Conrad**, and relentless and magnificently generous reunion chair **Win Bennett**. Taft '70's innovative class gift, the Class of 1970 Live Our Motto Fund, continues to grow due to the incredible generosity of **David Edwards, David Farwell, Jamie Smythe, Steve Erlanger, Bill Utke, Jerry Boak, Jon Dann, Ed Cavazuti, Rex Swain, Charlie Flynn, Bruce McKittrick, Fred Small, Dan Taylor, Gordon Hard, Jeff Boak, Jonathan Erb, J. Carlisle Peet**, and the aforementioned **Win Bennett** when I wrote these notes. I apologize if I missed anyone. This unique gift funds projects conceived of and entirely managed by upper mids, highlighting lives lived in service through speakers, workshops, media, or other projects touching the whole school body—and reported to everyone in the worldwide Taft community.

71

Class Secretary/Head Class Agent: Tom Gronauer, Thomas.Gronauer@LummusTech.com

Andrew Isaac is retired and with his wife, Denise, are spending their summers in New Hampshire and winters in Beaufort, South Carolina. They are rehabbing a 900-square-foot cabin built by five brothers in the 1890s on a small lake in New Hampshire. The cabin had been owned by the families of the original brothers since it was built. The neighbors expected the cabin to be torn down and replaced by a McMansion. Andrew reports that is not going to happen. **Charlie Stolper** is enjoying being retired and is looking forward to becoming a grandfather in November. **David Barrow** and his wife, Mary Wayne Watson, spent two weeks in Germany doing a little sightseeing and attending the Ettlingen Castle Festival. Mary's daughter, Rachel,

performed in a musical review of Rodgers and Hammerstein's great musical *A Great Night for Singing*. The performance was in the castle courtyard. David and Mary took a side trip to nearby Strasbourg, France, and David got to use some of the French he learned from **Messrs. Simon, LeTendre, Noyes, and Snow** at Taft.

72 TAFT 50TH REUNION

Class Secretary/Head Class Agent: Pete Miller, pmiller@aimmedia.com; **Reunion Committee:** Steve Pond (Chair), swpond@hotmail.com; Chess Barbatelli, cbarb@wi.rr.com; Bruce Harvey, BHarvey5226@yahoo.com

Prior news of your retired classmates, in these class notes, seems to have resonated. Recently, I've had a small surge of incoming news from other retirees, including a few old friends I thought were MIA. I was particularly delighted to hear from **James Christopher "Jimmy" Liakos Jr.**, who has been retired for 17 years. You'll remember Jim as a three-sport senior letterman in soccer, basketball, and baseball where "he played first base like a vacuum cleaner and hit .377." He was with us only one year but made a big impact. It's no wonder he went on to have a short but successful career in the liquor distribution business. Jim writes, "As sales manager for the southern division at Seagram's, I logged a million miles with both Delta and American Airlines traveling half of the U.S. including Alaska and Hawaii. We lived in Atlanta, Tampa, Miami, New Jersey, Nashville, and Dallas during my career." I reminded Jimmy that he came by his career honestly, having been my Seagram's distributor senior year at Taft. Jim lives now in St. Augustine, Florida, with his wife of 39 years, Janine. But they plan a move to Ponte Vedra to be closer to their daughter and to help take care of their two granddaughters, ages 2 and 4. "At age 50, I realized there was more to life than money and career," Jim confessed, "so I quit early to smell the roses. I'm happy as hell living like a hermit on the beach, and I'm super proud to have meditated for 162 straight days (last count), my personal best." Out of nowhere, I heard from **Alexander "Sandy" Dominick** who I'd seen on Facebook but not had contact before now. He too has retired, which gave him the bandwidth to write a book about his dad, former U.S. Senator Pete Dominick (R-Colorado). The book is based on the contents of his dad's diary, which the elder Dominick kept while serving in the U.S. Army Air Corps during WWII. He was stationed in India where he flew supplies to the Chinese forces fighting the Japanese. Sandy explains, "My dad had to fly these supplies over the Himalayas, aka 'the Hump,' also referred to as 'The Aluminum Trail' due to the number of



Jim Liakos '72 family photo; from left, son-in-law George, Jim's wife, Janine, granddaughter Emma, 4, granddaughter Natalie, 2, Jim, and his daughter, Alina.



Reese Owens '73, Peter McKelvy '73, Peter White '73, and Ted Judson '73 on a fishing trip on Andros Island in the Bahamas.

planes which crashed there. It was terrifying! But my dad always downplayed it. We didn't discover this diary until our family home sold in 2014." The book, titled *Flying the Hump: The War Diary of Peter H. Dominick*, is available on Amazon. Sandy found his soulmate in 2012 and got married in 2014. His journey since Taft has included living 10 years in Paris and getting his law degree from George Washington University in Washington, D.C. He met his wife in Arizona, but together they have beat the heat by moving to Longmont, Colorado. **Mark "Taco" Robinson** was excited to tell me about his recent retirement, which precipitated his move, over halfway across the country. "My position at CME Group was terminated on September 30, 2020—good timing because after 17 years I was ready to throw in the towel. My wife, Cynthia, and I sold our Oak Park, Illinois, house of 29 years. That same day we were driving west...to see our son, Sam, in Longmont, Colorado, just in time for the birth of our first grandchild, a profound joy! After a month, we headed further west to Portland, Oregon, where our daughter Martha lives." I told Taco to look up Sandy the next time he's visiting his son and grandchild in Longmont. Taco and Cynthia's journey continued: "In February 2021, we bought a house in Vancouver, Washington. Since then, we've been exploring the Pacific Northwest. The Columbia Gorge is beautiful and reveals more of her beauty every time we go. We're so happy to be here." Friends! Whether your journey has taken you to Portland, Paris, or Ponte Vedra, mark this date to travel to Watertown: May 13–14, 2022. You'll hear more interesting stories like these. We've had 50 years to accumulate a weekend's worth of stories.

73

Class Secretary: Monte Bruce Thompson, montethompsonfi@gmail.com; **Head Class Agent:** Marti Stine Boyd, marti.boyd55@gmail.com

I have always admired and been a little jealous of the friendship of who I call Beezer's Boys: **Ted Judson, Reese Owens, Peter White, Rick Schnier**, and others. I first knew them when they lived in Paradise Corridor under the watch of **Leslie Manning**, "The Beezer." They were a gang of the friendliest competitors that you can imagine—always challenging each other, always cutting on each other, and always, always rooting for each other. That friendship has remained strong through the years, and a few of the group generally show up at the Taft reunions where some sort of fierce competition on the sports field is played out. First in alumni games, later on the Taft golf or tennis courts. They always compete to the last painful death, and they always, always love and support each other afterward. A beautiful friendship. A long friendship. Recently, Reese Owens has taken up sportfishing and naturally asked his oldest and best friends along for the fun and companionship. **Peter McKelvy** has been fishing with Reese and the others, and reports on the experience: "This past spring, as vaccinations opened the possibilities of a return to bone fishing, Reese Owens, Ted Judson, Peter White, and I burst upon Andros Island—like dogs cooped up in the kennel for far too long. Reese had organized the trip, including private air transportation, the lodge (Mangrove Cay), and thrown together a group of fishing madmen including the aforementioned classmates. Bonefishing, for the uninitiated, is done with fly rods on small flat-bottomed boats floating at the edge of the ocean where the sun meets the sea in a maze of endless sand flats, mangrove lagoons, and shallow reefs. It is, for the most part, unspoiled nature where a pair of anglers and a guide spend countless hours looking for the grey ghost, bonefish. On a good day you may be able to land between five or eight fish in eight sunbaked hours, and once returned to the dock the anglers inevitably congregate to swap stories over the first drinks of an even longer evening ahead. I've been on number



Marian Reiff Cheevers '74 with her BFF Pam Ryder Fox '74.

of these trips with Reese in the past, but the addition of Ted and Peter lowered the usually abysmal standards of restraint, wherein the awful polarity of our nightlife and daytime striving on the flats placed us within easy reach of professional custodians. We had a whale of a time with enough laughter, good conversation, and magical fishing to help put the past year behind us and to reflect on the youth we shared." *Credit to Thomas McGuane, *The Longest Silence*, Copyright 2019. Thanks, Peter, and thanks to Beezer's Boys, who show how the friendships made in the study halls and playing fields of Taft School continue to be long and profound friendships. Every time that I have written to the '73 classmates, I have received a quick and supportive response from the lovely **Sherrard Upham Cote**. You remember that she and **Dan Cote '74** have recently retired in Andover. She writes: "Hard to believe that summer is already winding down. Dan and I made the long drive to northern Michigan two weeks ago, made even longer as we could not go through Canada. We are making the return drive in a few days. We have enjoyed two weeks of family, friends, and lots of golf! Being here, in our little house, looking at the lake, always reminds me of how little I need in the way of possessions and 'things.' We are an hour away from the conveniences we are used to at home. I find that if I have forgotten to bring something with me, I don't actually need it! Northern Michigan is the Midwestern 'Riviera' or the Hamptons of Corn Country. People from Cincinnati, Dayton, Toledo, Indianapolis, all the way to Chicago often took the long boring drive to Michigan in the hottest days of summer. Camps and cottages in the cool north pine woods gave us relief from the heat and dirt of Midwestern industrial cities. By today's standards, the cabins were relatively modest, cramped, often damp and primitive, but, oh, the joy to have the biting cold lake out the back and neighbors with a pack of kids and a motor boat. Bacon, lettuce, and tomato sandwiches on white toast, Mike sells potato



Phil Sneve '74 and new granddaughter Charlotte.

chips from a big tin can, and icy Stroh's beer in a wooden crate. Motown was the soundtrack, as you wore your white Levi's and surfer shirt into the ice cream stand after supper." I'm glad that Sherrard and Dan are still living that beautiful life. 2022 will mark the anniversary of women entering the Taft School, and I hope that next year we hear more from the girls who so shook up our cloistered existence for the better. 2023 will be the 50th year since our graduation, I, **Monte Bruce Thompson**, plan on coming with open ears to sit and talk and hear your stories, and tell you mine.

74

Class Secretary: Bob O'Connor, roberto@okpi.com;
Head Class Agent: Brian Lincoln,
brian.lincoln@yahoo.com

"Lord I was born a Ramblin' Man"...We can still hear the Allman Brothers blasting from **Lexi's** window toward the pond. We asked '74 (the biggest and the best) what song reminds you of your days at Taft? And what memories are associated with it? **Melissa McCarthy Meager:** "Allman Brothers' 'Sweet Melissa,' of course! And I would blast Todd Rundgren and dance out my nervous energy before lacrosse games. I finished my Yale program in June and start classes as part the Stanford LEAD program beginning in September. I hope this work will transform my knowledge of climate change and my experience in energy project financing and institutional investing, so I can connect capital with clean energy investments and sequestration projects." **Ross Gnesin:** "David Bowie's 'Changes.' On WHCN. I started commuting back to my office in June. I am a project engineer for Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority in Philly, mostly with railcars and a little bit with the buses." **Phil Sneve:** "Allman Brothers, 'One Way Out.' I am pleased to report that my son, Peter, and his wife, Haochen, have brought a wonderful new girl into the family:

Charlotte Muyao Sneve." **Marian Reiff Cheevers:** "So many songs! Joni Mitchell's *Blue* album, and **Pammy** moping about some boy-related issue!" **Jill Stearns:** "B.B. King, 'The Thrill Is Gone.' On **Mr. Small's** excellent stereo. Memories include sneaking up the stairway and into his apartment with some of his cross-country crew. **Kiwi** was one I remember." **Holly Ross:** "Mac House: Loggins and Messina, Beach Boys. Loving my job at hospice. Just not thrilled to have COVID numbers going up again." **Bob O'Connor:** I just returned from three weeks in the Carpathian Mountains with my Romanian-born wife. More temperate than Memphis, Tennessee, in August. **Fred Murolo:** "Mid year in Congdon, **Joe Giuliano** and I had Bob Dylan on the turntable. I still know all the words to his early albums. **Mark Thomas** had a single next door to us. He was the first person I knew who got *Who's Next* by the Who. **Mr. Patrick** would sometimes race upstairs to shut it down. Whenever I hear 'Baba O'Riley,' I think of those days, almost 50 years ago. And 'Teenage Wasteland.' Despite being careful, I contracted COVID in February and developed pneumonia. I was in the hospital for 33 days, nine in the ICU, after a lifetime of no hospital admissions or visits. I'm still recovering. The result was a loss of my 39-year daily running streak. I'm back to very slow running, just glad to be alive and able to move. The experience made me realize for the first time that life is finite, and all we have is time. (That may seem a little heavy, but you get the idea. We should each strive to live our best life.) On that note, my wife and I took a driving trip around the Southwest in July—Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, and Utah. The scenery and the experience were amazing." **Harriet Staub Huston:** "'Statesboro Blues' comes to mind immediately. Of course, the memories which follow remain unprintable—can I still get demerits and a stayover after all these years? I think I'll play it safe, but those memories make me smile. Life is good in New York City. I would love to gather our class together for a pre-50th Reunion cocktail party at my apartment when the COVID situation is more contained...maybe in 2022? Stay tuned!" **Jim Mooney:** "Hot Tuna, 'The Water Song.' My daughter, Brooke, was the number four stroke (the engine room) in the U.S. Eight at the Tokyo Olympics. Now she has to decide whether to continue the sport at the elite level—the training is comprehensive. Hiked and fly-fished with **Al '72** and **Paul Klingenstein** and **Mac Brighton** in Wyoming. I see **Toby Baker** sailing on Buzzard's Bay from time to time." **Rick Leonhardt:** "I remember **Sisson** and **Adams** playing Van Morrison's 'Moondance' on the stage sound system and going, 'Whoa, who is that? That is very tasty.' I was musically illiterate prior to discovering Sisson's extensive album collection. Thus began my interest in being an album collector in



A Local Day Student Pays It Forward From 1956 to 2021 and beyond

Nicolai "Nic" Timenes '56 wrote in his 50th Reunion Book note that his career was mostly a series of accidents. Taft taught him "to be interested in, even excited by, a great variety of subjects," thanks to the teachers who had a powerful impact on him.

That inspiration of curiosity given to a Waterbury, Connecticut, day student was Taft's enduring influence throughout his lifetime. He wanted to extend the "gift" afforded to him to other young people and established a bequest in his will for a scholarship.

The Class of '56 voted Nic one of its brightest and busiest. A long career in government service was not what Nic anticipated and yet he thrived there. He passed away in February 2020, and in his will, the Timenes bequest endows a full-boarding scholarship. He viewed his legacy intention as a way to provide students the incomparable Taft experience. The Timenes Scholarship ensures recipients access and opportunity to gain the curiosity about Taft's multifaceted offerings, which Nic deemed so essential.

For more information about including Taft in your will, please contact Stephen Starnes '76 in Taft's Planned Giving Office at (860) 945-7747 or plannedgiving@taftschool.org. Sample bequest language, as well as other planned gift ideas, may be found on our website. www.taftschool.giftplans.org



Amy Estabrook '75 and Dewey Yeager '75 raised a glass in celebration of Peter Moore '75's life.



Lisa Herrick '75 with her grandson Jules.



Lisa Herrick '75 with grandson Milo.



Jeff Gartzman '75, Pete Liebeskind '75, Sam Watts '75, Jean Strumolo Piacenza '75, Lisa Frantzis '75, and Todd Luckey '75 got together to celebrate their 50th eighth-grade reunion from Memorial Middle School at Quassy Amusement Park, both in Middlebury, Connecticut.



Steve McDonald '77 and wife Katalin.



Steve McDonald '77 with his granddaughter.

earnest. Still have my Jensen 3s and Sherwood receiver. Funny how this old stereo equipment and vinyl are making a comeback. I am retired in southeast Colorado, getting my RV ready for a little 'mooch-docking' at a friend's house near Taos next month. Once it cools off, I have family in Dallas I'd like to see. Still getting used to the new retirement pace. Seeing the Grand Canyon during the winter is on my list. This former geologist has never visited the Grand Canyon!" **Mike Stone:** "Santana, 'Oye Como Va,' Part of great memories from our spring baseball trips to Rollins College. **Cindi** and I are back in Florida after spending a couple of months in Maine this summer. Looking forward to playing golf regularly. I haven't been able to beat our son, Hunter, in golf for 15-plus years. He golfed at Rollins and continues to play at a high level." **Leigh Brown:** "Stevie Winwood, 'Can't Find My Way Home' blaring from the Wade House. Ah, where are the snows of yesteryear? I'm still teaching, perhaps 'til I drop. Theater and English. Now they're letting me imbue middle schoolers with a love for the stage. Touch and go sometimes, but I love it! The last 16 months have been a bear, as it has for all. Virtual theater class is like kissing through a screen door. Can't wait to be back in the classroom this fall!" **Susan Daly:** "Derek and the Dominos 'Layla.' Sailing in the Newport area. Baltics cruise next May." **Bill Kelly:** "'Soul Sacrifice' by Santana was everywhere lower mid year. Mid year, **Gil Walker** played lots of 'Half Moon' by Janis Joplin. In the spring of upper mid year 'Still Alive and Well' by Johnny Winter was blasting from **Mark Thomas's** speakers. In deep musical thought with **John Fenner** our senior year. We recalled Joni, James, and his brother while the turntable spun 'Get Out of Bed' by Livingston Taylor. Randy and I have been in New England since Memorial Day. In July, we ventured out to Connecticut for a Peter Asher, Kate Taylor, Leland Sklar concert. My outlook improved hearing live music! As the summer goes along my brother, **John '76**, and his wife, Martha, both anthropologists, will turn up at their cottage

nearby. Earlier this year I joined the Glen Canyon Institute, a research and public policy organization for the Colorado River watershed. As a hobby I walked our family tree from the early 1600s up to now. This coming winter, Randy and I plan to travel the Southwest (fingers crossed)." **Roger Gofton:** "Still Alive and Well." **Mark Thomas** and I went to see Johnny Winter two nights in a row. Friday in Waterbury, the next night in a suite at MSG. I just got back from Oregon visiting girlfriend's son and his boys. Near the coast. Maybe the most beautiful place I have ever been." **Mike Markovits:** "I really liked Simon and Garfunkel...the whole *Sounds of Silence* album. The other thing that sticks out in my mind is that I came to Taft without a stereo. It seemed like everyone else had one. I'm pleasantly surprised to be busy with work as an independent consultant. Doing it all virtually." **Betsy Rudel Mayersohn:** "'Gonna Take a Miracle' by Laura Nyro with LaBelle. It brings back memories of early romance in the fall 1972 trimester that seemed to be in the lives for so many of my new friends and myself. Lots of catchy tunes. I still play the CD. In late spring, during our respite from COVID, I danced and sang along at concerts and a music festival in Pennsylvania. Fun, and I stayed healthy despite the crowds and some pretty carefree weekends! I know I was lucky and am happy to stay at home for a while." **Geoff Braine:** "I have a strong memory of hearing Neil Young's 'Heart of Gold' on the radio mid year while reading *Heart of Darkness*. They are forever associated in my mind, in spite of their thematic differences. That and listening to 'Countdown to Ecstasy' (Steely Dan) on Brian Hasbrouck's reel-to-reel tape deck, an album that continues to be one of my favorites to this day. As I write, I'm sitting on the beach in Cape May with my wife, Sandy, and my son, Antonio, enjoying the sun and surf!" **Brian Lincoln:** "There are so many vignettes of associating songs with good Taft memories, various classmates, etc. If I had to pick one, it would be 'Aqualung,' since I still instantly pick out the

chord that was a skip on my LP, and since Jethro Tull was the first of many concerts attended from Taft. Our daughter got married (or I should say had the full celebration) in August, followed by a gradual unwinding with friends extending stays due to the stormy weather. Otherwise, a very busy summer as we gradually ease back to a more normal pace." **Richard Smoley:** "I remember liking The Band's 'The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down.' My newest book is *The Truth About Magic*. It's also available as an audio and video lecture series on Vimeo; my website is innerchristianity.com." (See page 78 for In Print.) News about **Joyce Poole**—(from your class agent)—From *The New York Times*, June 7, 2021: "Joyce Poole, a foremost expert in elephant behavior, and her husband, Petter Granli, have spent tens of thousands of hours in the field observing wild elephants, compiling a vast, publicly available database called the Elephant Ethogram...that fellow animal biologists describe as 'an amazing achievement' and 'an immense treasure case'... Dr. Poole is a leading authority on the African savanna elephant, the largest land animal on the planet and one of the most cognitively and behaviorally complex."

75

Class Secretary: Linda Tilghman Murphy, murphy.linda@sbcglobal.net; **Head Class Agent:** Rob Barber, barber.robertc@gmail.com

These fall *Bulletin* notes are sprinkled with the sadness of losing another classmate and the joys of life shared while gathering with friends and family. Upon hearing the news of **Peter Moore's** passing in August, many classmates replied how "sad, sorry, and heartbroken" they were and commented he was "so/too young, a fun, funny, and great guy." **Dewey Yeager** and **Amy Estabrook** attended his memorial service. Amy writes, "Peter's service was well attended by the Westerly/Stonington



The late Peter Moore '75 with Peter Lindholm '75 and Bruce Harvey '72.

community, which he and his family had been a part of his entire life. Also in attendance from the Taft community was **Sally Larkin '78**. Over lunch, Dewey and I raised a glass in celebration of Peter's life, his music, his love of the natural world, and his family." **Alden Mauck** writes, "So sad to hear about Peter. He was a lot of fun at Taft and when our paths crossed. He was a young man of fun, music, and good cheer, and like many from the Class of '75, he lived a life well-lived after Taft. I had heard about Pete's passing from my brother and **Larkin Glazebrook '76**; Peter had friends beyond our class." Additionally, **Alden** writes, "Getting ready for the start of another school year at Nobles. I started this career 40 years ago this fall, 25 of those years at Nobles. Hard to believe. I still enjoy a day spent with kids talking about Fitzgerald, Hawthorne, and other authors that I read at Taft, and adding Toni Morrison, James Baldwin, Julie Otsuka, and other essential writers to the mix. No regrets, the best way to spend a working life." **Peter Lindholm** shares a reminiscence, "Very sad to hear of Peter Moore's passing. Peter was pretty much the only Taftie I stayed in touch with over the years, and our friendship was based on our mutual love of music, specifically the blues. We started out playing guitars in the shower room—great acoustics in there!—then the first iteration of the Low Budget Orchestra in Watch Hill,

Rhode Island, and later on we occasionally sat in on each other's gigs or attended open mics together. The outpouring of love and gratitude from his giant musical community in Rhode Island and southeastern Connecticut speaks to his gracious and inclusive musical character. As for me, I split my time between Boston and the Connecticut shore where I enjoy playing bluegrass, sailing, and time with my young kids, ages 5 and 7!" All of us concur with **Pete Liebeskind's** sentiment, "Hope his family gets lots of comfort from many wonderful memories of their times together during his lifetime." On a personal note, Pete adds, "We are doing well—our daughter (our youngest of our four kids) just finished grad school (got her doctoral degree in physical therapy from Columbia), and she just got a job; started September 13 at Memorial Sloan Kettering. We are thrilled because it is exactly the job she wanted, plus it keeps her in NYC!" **Lisa Herrick** shares, "My main news is two wonderful grandsons—Milo is 2 and Jules is 9 months! Surviving the pandemic and hoping for the best." **Gerry Neuberg** shares, "This past March, **Dave Day** treated me to a backcountry ski-touring adventure in Utah (they say 'sidecountry' when it's near the resort, as we were). We skinned up 3,000 vertical feet for most of the day just for one run. It was awesome, but afterwards I said, 'That's the same vertical the resort tram does in 8 minutes, so I'm sticking with the tram.' When in Utah I always ski with **Chris Roon**, who loves the mountain life in Park City." In August, a group of Middlebury, Connecticut, Tafties, **Jeff Gartzman**, **Pete Liebeskind**, **Sam Watts**, **Jean Strumolo Piacenza**, **Lisa Frantzis**, and **Todd Luckey** celebrated their 50th reunion from eighth grade (Memorial School). They got together at Quassy Amusement Park courtesy of the **Frantzis** family and had a fantastic evening. It is so encouraging to hear the stories of effort made to remember/honor our classmates who have passed, and to learn about the family and friends who gather together to celebrate life! Enjoy, **Linda Tilghman Murphy**.

76

Class Secretary: Donna Eldridge, onnaeldridge@mac.com; **Head Class Agent:** Stephen Starnes, stephen.starnes@gmail.com

Tom Nammack reflects and echoes many sentiments that have come with many, many others in sympathy for the death and respect for the life of **Stewart Neff** (see Summer 2021 issue's *In Memoriam*). Tom and Stewart were grammar school friends before Taft, and "he was a force; hilarious, bold, and afraid of nothing. Any memory of Stewart is nothing short of vivid." Tom and Zandi now live in Easton, Maryland, retired at this time, and he's waiting see what comes next. He sends every good wish to the Class of '76. **John Welch** retired in February and moved back to Plainfield, Illinois, in June. All is well, and he will probably get another job eventually. **Peggy Rambach** has turned her talents to visual arts (including botanic illustration) and her watercolor *Essex Marsh* will be included in the Guild of Natural Science Illustrators—New England chapter's *Rivers to the Sea* exhibition at the Rhode Island State Council for the Arts in Providence. She is also showing a large framed print of her *Onnia tomentosa* mushrooms watercolor that will be for sale, along with the work of other Jamaica Plain Art Association members at the J.P. Licks on Central Street in Jamaica Plain, Boston, Massachusetts. Read about the work **Chris Malik** is doing as a watershed manager with Connecticut's Department of Energy and Environmental Protection on page 16. And also see the article on page 40 about the work of conductor and composer **Djong Victorin Yu**.

77 TAFT 45TH REUNION

Class Secretary: Wendy Wurtzburger Schmid, wendyschmid1026@gmail.com; **Head Class Agents:** Margot Huber Heckler, mhuberheckler@gmail.com; Wendy Wurtzburger Schmid; **Reunion Chairs:** Wendy Wurtzburger Schmid; Margot Huber Heckler



Class of '79 mini-reunion at the home of Nancy and Jamie Better '79 in New Preston, Connecticut. A small gathering of 11 loyal '79ers enjoyed a weekend of boating, cookouts, pool, and golf hosted generously by the Betters at their lake house on Lake Waramaug. Needless to say, everyone enjoyed catching up to compare notes and share laughter as they all enter the big 60 plateau. Those in attendance were as follows: back, from left, Paul Stancs, Bill McKelvy, Anthony Horn, Gregg Douglas, Kit Boyatt, Rob Archibald, and Toby Fleming; front, from left, Charlie Demmon, Steve Rosenbaum, Jamie Better, Nate Hagelin, and dog Riley.



Father-son Taft team Randy Abood '68 and George Abood '07 were paired in the Hemingway Bowl at Misquamicut Golf Course against a team that included Paul Stancs '79. A classic Taft duel won by the Aboods' sharp play.

And oh yeah, he has a novel coming out in the next year. And still more from our class's cadre of educators, **John Kerney's** leadership work with the Winchendon School continues to astound, extending its reach further with a new urban satellite campus near Herald Square in Manhattan. "It's much easier for more students and faculty to get to, and hopefully easier for you and other '78ers to stop by," John wrote. Sounds like an open invitation to me.

79

Class Secretary: Paul Stancs, paulstancs@gmail.com; **Head Class Agents:** Patty Buttenheim, pmbuttenheim@hotmail.com; Pamela Cole, colewolins@yahoo.com

In enlisting feedback from classmates this summer, I report many stories of how folks spent their year and a half of COVID "in a cave" of creativity just trying to make it through safe and sound. Echoed throughout were stories of family getting the chance to reconnect, old school pastimes like engaging more in the joy of cooking and reading books that lay still for too long on the bed table. One theme that stood out, however, was the move to get outdoors and enjoy sport. I can report everyone's weight and handicaps are lower as a result. Thankfully, no one from the class reported any long-lasting ill effects from the health crisis. Everyone does seem eager to enjoy the pursuit of travel again. All seem optimistic to better days ahead.

80

Class Secretary: Jeff Thompson, fatkick@yahoo.com; **Head Class Agent:** Rob Peterson, robpeterson@snet.net



Adam Duritz '82 in concert in Jacksonville.

81

Class Secretary: Richard Scully, scullyrich@gmail.com; **Head Class Agent:** Peppie Wagner, peppiew@comcast.net

Wendy Whitman writes, "The Wall Street Journal 'the list' ranked me 44th in the nation for real estate sales 2020. But I'm more proud that if you take away the national firms, I'm 14th as an independent firm. But I'm most proud of my daughter who is entering ninth grade in Aspen and hits a great tennis ball and is flying down the slopes with ease. I am a lucky gal!" **Patricia Pedraza** writes, "I just finished a 10-week artist residency at the Ridgefield Guild of Artists in Ridgefield, Connecticut. My work is currently on view in their gallery. Fun spending time in Connecticut, which I have not done much of since Taft days! I left CNN and my long career in TV news to deep dive into my creative passion—hoping to establish myself as a digital photo artist. All my work to date was done on a smartphone." And finally, as many of you know, our classmate **Pennel Bird** passed away tragically on August 23, 2021. Pennel, the Renaissance man, possessed a wonderful mastery of the English language and was always willing to share a favorite book, artist, or song. He was wildly funny, took naps on his face to avoid disturbing his magnificent hair, and would affably chat with anybody, anywhere. Pennel was unbeatable in ping-pong, could throw a Frisbee with stunning accuracy, and crowned off his first soccer season at Taft by scoring a hat trick on Father's Day. We remained the greatest of friends. And since I am neither a king nor a queen and thus lack the ability to bestow a knighthood, I instead asked him to be the godfather of our first child, to show him my admiration and ensure that my daughter could seek guidance from such a fine and sensitive soul. He was an actor, comedian, lead singer and writer, and an empathetic husband, father, and teacher. The *LA Times*

published a beautiful tribute to him (as can be found in this *Bulletin's* In Memoriam). Pennel Whitworth Bird—an original, a true gentleman and a damn fine fellow. **Caleb Corkery** writes, "Pennel would regularly collapse into pretend sleep before someone came into his room, getting everyone else in the room to do the same. Then everyone would just laugh and laugh. No point. Just being goofy. He was funny even in the way he stood: skinny yet flabby. Shape shifting. I remember him joking about being the sad clown. And even that made me laugh. I wonder what I was missing about him. But I miss him so now. And I haven't seen him in decades, either. What a unique, wonderful person he was to me."

82 TAFT 40TH REUNION

Class Secretary: Joy Rosenberg Horstmann, joy@fancyfirepit.com; **Reunion Committee:** Tom Bishop, thbish@gmail.com; Poppy Hicks Clements, Poppyclm@gmail.com; Jill Bermingham Isenhart, jill@ecos.us; Liza Grant, grantliza@gmail.com; Andrew Horn, madcez@aol.com

I hope this *Bulletin* finds you all well and planning to return to campus in the spring for our 40th Reunion! **Poppy Hicks Clements** writes, "Counting Crows played here in Jacksonville recently, and we had most of our family there for an incredible concert—so great to have **Adam Duritz** back in action with his new music and all of his amazing standards. We are enjoying having our two oldest daughters, their husbands, and one grandchild in Jacksonville. We still have a son in LA and a daughter in NYC. Our grandchild, Willa, turns one soon. I was in LA recently and had a fantastic visit with **Mary Murphy Conlin!**" **Jen O'Hara Palmiotto** writes, "I met Joy's lovely daughter, **Bella '16**, this past summer at Point of Woods, which was very fun. I took a new job in March as senior federal policy advisor to National Rural Water Association. With all the focus on infrastructure spending, it has



Willa, granddaughter of Poppy Hicks Clements '82.



Mary Murphy Conlin '82, Poppy Hicks Clements '82, and Tom Murphy '78.

been a very exciting time. I visited Milwaukee recently and loved visiting the Museum of Art and also the immersive Van Gogh exhibit. Child #1 is off to college (RPI) and his younger sister is in 10th grade. Hoping to meet up with **Jill Bermingham Isenhart** this fall." As for me, I have recently retired from the family real estate business and am enjoying figuring out what is next. I hope to see many of you this spring at our reunion! Xo, Joy.

83

Class Secretary: Hadley Fink Kimberlin, hadley.kimberlin@gmail.com; **Head Class Agent:** Bill Tillinghast, tillb1@aol.com

Liz Eldridge Morton writes, "I had the trip of a lifetime in July, compliments of **Sergei Boissier**. We cruised the Greek isles for a week with his daughter and 11 others on a private yacht. The trip ended at his beautiful home on Hydra. It was amazing. Have been fortunate to see **Deborah Perry** down by me when she was visiting family in the area, and made it to **Emily Bernhard's** for tea while in Maine for our annual summer vacation there. All is well. I'm ready for this pandemic to be over. My company contracts with the City of



Artwork created by Patricia Pedraza '81—all work created on a smartphone.

78

Class Secretary: John Mooney, jmooney22@gmail.com; **Head Class Agent:** Chris Marvin, cbmarvin@comcast.net

In what has been a tough year, to say the least, here's something to celebrate: **Robin Gahagan** got married in late May to his longtime partner, Elise Heydorn. The plan was for the wedding a year earlier in St. Martin, but COVID squelched that. But it turned out even better. "We married in our backyard in Oyster Bay," Robin said. "It was really a fantastic time, the first party for a lot of people since the beginning of COVID."

The union brought together two families into what is now a clan of eight in all. "It's six kids between the ages of 22 and 27," Robin said, in what was a wonderful phone call between two old roommates. He continues to be an architect on Long Island, not far from where he grew up and where a few of us may have visited once or twice. We also got some updates from two other friends who just won't slow down. **Chip Bristol** went from publishing his book of meditations, *Spiritual Java* (with its few Taft references), to himself moving into the classroom as a seventh-grade language arts teacher at the Westchester Country Day School outside Greensboro, North Carolina.



Jenny Brandt '83 in Zion National Park.



Tom Cramer '83 sent greetings from the Panama Canal.



Christian, son of Peter Maro '83, competed in the National Camp for U16 (Team USA) this past summer.



Ashley Ransom '83 with her wife, Jan, and son Bodie in Colorado.



Rob Born '85 and his wife, Heather, with their newborn son, Beau.



Rob Born '85 with all three of his kids.

New York to deliver COVID vaccinations and testing both in the community and for city employees, and we're exhausted! Please get vaccinated, everyone!" **Tom Cramer** sends his greetings from the Panama Canal, where he vacationed recently. Both of Tom's kids (21-year-old daughter and 23-year-old son) have now graduated, so Tom is "enjoying the empty-nester life and living in Laguna Beach, California." **Jenny Brandt** shared that she "jumped back in to some travel this summer with trips to Zion, Cape Ann, and Palm Springs. Bought a standup paddleboard and am milking our Southern California Indian summer weather with some weekend day trips. I'm also training for the Mount Wilson Trail Race, which is an 8.6-mile trail run up and down one of our local mountains. My older daughter is in her second year at University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, Washington, and we are enjoying getting to know the Pacific Northwest. My younger one just turned 16 and got her driver's license. Time marches on, as they say!" **Ashley Ransom** and her family

are doing well. "We spent part of the summer in Vail, Colorado, playing baseball. Jan, Bodie, and I explored alpine lakes in the high country. Our son started high school, which seems impossible. Hope classmates are well and staying safe." **Peter Maro** writes that he and his wife, Lynne, are getting ready to celebrate 24 years of marriage. "Amazing someone can put up with me for that long! Our daughter, Elise, is a senior at Quinnipiac University and will go directly into the master's physician assistant program upon graduation. Our older son, Peter, is a senior at St. Mark's in Southborough, Massachusetts, and is in the process of looking at colleges for hockey and academics. Our youngest, Christian, is off to Exeter this fall as a sophomore, and just completed national camp for U16 for Team USA. Still staying in touch with **Mike Capo** and **Mark Wick** on a regular basis." **Catherine Trippeer Jameson** shares that she "had a wonderful visit here in Fort Collins earlier this summer with **David Shand** and his son as they drove from Utah to Georgia. It was great to catch up, and we have stayed in touch

since! I also had a chance to visit with **Kendrick Bailey** and his wife, Suzanne, and their sons in early July at their home in Highlands Ranch, which is only about an hour from me, but we don't get together nearly often enough!"

84

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Jeanne Pocras, jeanne5678@yahoo.com

I received a great photo from **Dudley Taft** of **Sammy Bloom**, **Dudley**, and **Joe Zipoli** in New York City. As per Dudley, "Michele and I visited NYC this summer and got to see Sam, **Patience '86**, **Joe**, and **Madeline!**" It's always fun when Dudley comes to town. Sorry I missed it. Hopefully, next time. **Cary Goodell Cuiccio** has some exciting news and writes, "It was a busy summer for us as we moved from Austin, Texas, to the beautiful historic city of Frederick, Maryland, and then took our oldest off to



Sam Bloom '84, Dudley Taft '84, and Joe Zipoli '84 in New York City.



Alex Scott '85 with his family.



Greg Hawes '85, wife and also Taft faculty member Rachael Ryan, and sons Lachlan '23 and Peyton '21.

college (two years early! She's going to Bard College at Simon's Rock). After 15 years I'm stepping back from my role as senior managing director at the American Institutes for Research to do some consulting in the organization development space, beginning in September. Would love to hear from anyone in the area!" Best of luck to you, Cary, in your new adventure. It all sounds so exciting! And that daughter of yours must be brilliant. And from **Paul Nash:** "I can report that we have our second college graduate as Jake graduated from Colby College. Even better, he returned home to start his career in Washington working on Capitol Hill. My youngest has started his senior year of high school, and we are gearing up for our fourth and final round of college applications. Michelle and I are both still working remotely so have the unusual experience of sending one child off to work (Congress is in-person now) and one child off to school every day, while we work at home. Just another strange artifact of COVID times! Fortunately, we are all vaccinated and healthy so far and are weathering the pandemic as well as possible." All good news, Paul. And how cool is it to have your son working on Capitol Hill. Following in his father's footsteps. You must be so proud. I continue to join **Katrina Gilbert Millard**, **Sara Thorson**, **Jennifer Ross**, **Julia**

Hodgson, and **Abi Wright** on a monthly hike through one of the wonderful parks we have close by. We even managed to get ourselves out on the paddle tennis courts, and we had way too much fun playing round robin. Imagine six girls attempting to play after so many years. It was a hoot! Until next time. I hope that everyone continues to be safe and healthy.

85

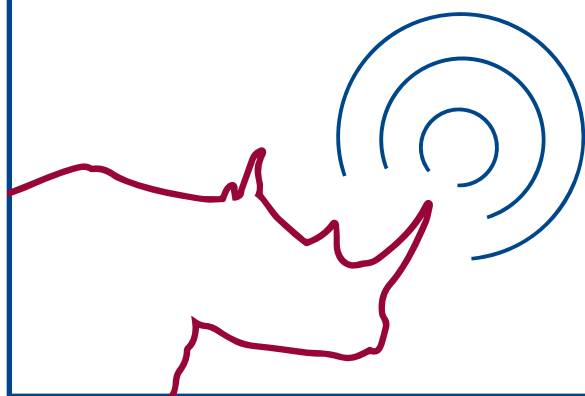
Class Secretary: Katie Maxey Sorrentino, katiemsorrentino@gmail.com; **Head Class Agent:** Jeff Atwood, jbatwood@me.com

Great to hear from so many people! We are all excited about our lollapalooza reunion this coming May. It will truly be homegrown, with good music, good food, and most importantly good friends. The seeds of friendship that we sowed at Taft so many years ago have grown stronger and deeper. What a delight! **Lee-Ann Wilson Harris** and her husband are on the move. Lee-Ann shared, "My husband got a great job opportunity, so we are leaving Connecticut and South Carolina and moving to Palm Beach Gardens, Florida. While it is sad to leave all our family and friends, it is also very exciting to do

something brand new. We're looking forward to our first winter down South!" **Nina Ryder Lynn** writes, "**Oliver Spencer** and I got together in Burlington, Vermont, when he was here visiting his son who recently moved to Burlington. I continue to sell real estate, and I'm now in my 19th year doing so. All three of my sons are off on their own now giving me more time to work and play! If anyone's ever in Burlington, would love to connect." **Greg Hawes** and his family had an adventurous summer: "We hit the Grand Canyon, Zion, Bryce Canyon, Capitol Reef, Arches, and Mesa Verde. Before that my family took a wonderful trip to the Southwest national parks. Near Capitol Reef, I found the place in the photo here (above)." Read the feature on page 50 about the amazing paddleboard expedition and fundraiser **Adam Nagler** recently completed on the East Coast. **Rudnick**, **Liz Kendrick**, **Lee-Ann Wilson Harris**, and **Katherine Rosefsky Leibowitz** (all are well). It's been wonderful spending time with Judy here in Atlanta, and we've gone from lunching the two of us to home renovations to dinners, the four of us with Brendan and Reuben, too. We love that the connections formed so many years ago continue to hold strong." **Alex Scott:** "As a little update, I just dropped off my son, **Henry '23**, for his upper mid year at Taft. Last year was his

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rhino crash
['rīnō kraSH]
(n.) a group of rhinos



Oliver Spencer '85 and Nina Ryder Lynn '86 got together in Burlington, Vermont.



Gunnar, new dog of Kelley Coyne Campoli '86.



Emily Phillips Fisher '91 and Lexie Goulard Powers '91 at Bryce Canyon in June.



Beautiful Lake Waramaug provided the backdrop for a gathering of former Taft students and faculty and their families. From left, Chris Eanes '94, Tom Brand '91, Pam Getnick Mindell '89, and former faculty members Chris Shepard, Amy Bernon, and Jon Bernon.



Mandy Shepard Brooks '91 had the pleasure of having two more Tafties in her SoulCycle class: her daughter, Olivia '19, and A.J. Mleczo Griswold '93, for the win!



Xavion and Tyson, sons of Stephanie and Winston Lord '86.



Brooke Donahoe Roberts '90 with her two Tafties—Ben '18 and Paton '21—at this year's graduation in May.



John Utley '90, Ben Levin '90, and Billy Carifa '90 got together this past summer.

first year, and he enjoyed it. ISP is being used as a boys' dorm this year, and that is where he is. It is exciting to have him at Taft and fun to be back on campus. I have enjoyed seeing **Mrs. McCabe** and **Willy Mac**. Otherwise, my wife, Molly, and I are living in New Canaan, Connecticut, where I have been for the last 12 years. My two other children, Ashley and Elise, are off to college, Molly and I will be empty nesters this year!" **Rob Born** shared the best news: "My wife, Heather, and I welcomed our son, Beau, to the world in August. As a Santa Cruz native, he will be undergoing standard surfing and skateboarding training starting next month. Everyone is happy and healthy, including his two adoring sisters, Ellery, 10, and Ivy, 5."

86

Class Secretary: Patience Smith Bloom, patiencebloom@hotmail.com; **Head Class Agents:** Sarah Curi, scuri14@yahoo.com; Matthew Park, matthew@park-family.org

Kelley Coyne Campoli's is one of many families that got a COVID puppy, Gunnar. He is a black German shepherd who will be one year old in September and already weighs 83 pounds. He is happy to share the house with their 13-year-old shepherd named August. He is not as happy sharing with their cat KeKe, who keeps him in his place. We're sure many can relate to how much those four-legged family members do the hard work of keeping us going. On the job-change front, **Melissa Kennedy Workman** writes, "After 20-plus years in the employee global mobility space, I have changed careers! In March of this year, I took a director of business operations role at fintech start-up Celsius Network. Celsius is the leading digital asset lending platform for retail, institutional, and corporate customers. The world of crypto is fun and exhilarating—it's a bit of the wild, wild, West but I am loving it!" We also bring excellence from **Marsh Prause's** household. His oldest son, Jackson, graduated with high honors from the international baccalaureate program at Grimsley High School in Greensboro, North Carolina, this past spring and has started his freshman year at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. His younger son, Thomas, entered eighth grade this year and attends Brown Summit Middle School for advanced academics. In Bermuda, **George Jones**

relays that after 11 years he has left the Argus Group and life as in-house general counsel and is now managing partner of Ocorian Law Limited (Bermuda), primarily corporate and commercial work in the insurance, asset management, and trust/private client industries in Bermuda. He is also the president of the Bermuda Bar Council and Bar Association and as a result, sits on the island's Judicial and Legal Services Committee. Otherwise, he is trying to squeeze in as much time with his family as he can! And to end on a miraculous and especially joyful note, **Winston Lord** writes, "Words can't describe how thankful we are to welcome to the world Tyson and Xavion, born at 33 weeks on Tuesday, August 17 at 11:40 a.m. Momma and boys are doing well with the boys getting a little TLC in the NICU. They were the riskiest and rarest type of twin pregnancy because they shared the same sac. They're called monochorionic monoamniotic ('MoMo' for short) twins, and these types of twins only occur 300 times a year in the U.S. Xavion Bao Lord, 4 pounds 3 ounces, 16½ inches. Xavion means 'fighter.' Bao is my mom's maiden name. Tyson Everett Lord, 4 pounds 6 ounces, 17½ inches. Tyson is Stephanie's maternal grandmother's maiden name. Everett means 'brave boar' inspired by my mom's children's book, *In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson*.

87 TAFT 35TH REUNION

Class Secretary: Suzy Wall Sensbach, suzywall@gmail.com; **Reunion Chairs:** Holcombe Green, holcombe.green@lazard.com; Leslie Armstrong Culbertson, lculbertson88@gmail.com; Alison Hoffman Almasian, aalmasian@taftschool.org

88

Class Secretary: Kingman Gordon, kingmangordon@hotmail.com; **Head Class Agent:** Charlie Watson, cwatson758@aol.com

89

Class Secretary: Laurie Odden Brown, lauriebrown6@gmail.com; **Head Class Agent:** Dylan Simonds, dylan@dylansimonds.com

Read what **Dyllan McGee** is doing in her excellent documentary filmmaking and producing on page 8.

90

Class Secretary: Kate Solomon, katesolomon212@gmail.com

Dear fellow classmates! I write this as fall is approaching after a summer that almost felt normal. Despite devastating wildfires in the West, the Delta variant's rapid onset and Hurricane Ida flooding my hometown, Scarsdale, the sun is out, the kids are back to school, and I am excited to meet the new president of The New York Botanical Gardens who just joined. I very much enjoy serving on that board and recently learned they have had several Tafties as interns in their science program. From some other Tafties, there is

wonderful news. **Jessica Wynne** celebrates the publication of her marvelous new book, *Do Not Erase: Mathematicians and Their Chalkboards*. Check out Jessica's amazing artistic work at jessicawynne.com. (And see the Fall 2020 *Bulletin*: www.taftschool.org/bulletin/fall-2020.) **Melissa Wilcox** writes, "Hi Tafties! My family and I are still here in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. The pandemic has not been too kind to churches, as you can imagine. We did, however, learn how to do virtual church, so acquired a new skill set. My children are all back to school, and that is a real relief. Again, if you ever visit Dickinson, please reach out." This past summer, Jen and **John Utley** hosted Lauren and **Ben Levin** and **Emily '91** and **Bill Carifa** for some jet-skiing and wake boarding. For those who don't know, John and Ben are brothers-in-law! I don't think we could have ever anticipated that when we were in high school! Also this summer, **Kathy Kwei Wong** visited Maine before she headed back to Hong Kong. She and **Scott Reiner** had a wine-filled lunch, and he enjoyed meeting her four kids! Read about what professional classical flutist **Vanessa Holroyd** has been doing in the feature on page 40. I'm short on news from the rest of you Tafties. Hopefully this next year brings health and equilibrium—and I do hope to hear from many more of you! To treasured friendships, xo, Kate.

91

Class Secretary: Holly Martin Wendell, hollywendell@yahoo.com; **Head Class Agent:** Peter Bowden, pbowden@jefferies.com

Kate Shaw Kripke checked in from Colorado. She writes, "Boulder has been a bit of a godsend during the pandemic, and I have felt blessed to have the mountains and nature out my back door. This summer brought adventures in backpacking, camping, paddle-boarding, biking, and hiking, which seems to

help exponentially when life feels so messy. The Postpartum Wellness Center continues to grow, and we now have a staff of 14 employees helping to support mothers and families in our state. I recently caught up with **Palmer West '92**, who was in Boulder briefly with his business, Aether, and he, **Sara Sutton '92** (aka Tay!) and I had some laughs as we reminisced about days at Taft, 30 years ago (how the heck did that happen?) **Emily Hopper Carifa's** clan weathered the never-ending pandemic this summer with road trips to see family in North and South Carolina, the Jersey Shore, and the Adirondacks. They adopted a third dog (Pug-Dachshund mix?) named Tilly, who has kept them busy and on their toes. A feral neighborhood cat has decided that their place is pretty fun so it has adopted them as its family—bringing the zoo total to three dogs and five cats. They are starting to rival my small farm in Vermont! Emily also reports that her girls are happy to be back to school. She has a sophomore and a senior in high school and a sophomore in college studying global health. Emily is still freelancing in the executive search business and selling (and drinking) "clean crafted" wine with Scout & Cellar. Like all of us, she is sad to have missed our reunion but is looking forward to when the Class of '91 gets together in person the next go-around. Continuing the theme of pandemic adventures, **Emily Phillips Fisher** and **Lexie Goulard Powers** went on a western national park adventure this summer with their families. It looks like they had a great trip together! I have been getting out of Vermont quite a bit this summer, chasing my 10-year-old around hockey rinks all over New England. I got to see **Alix Krinsky Gruber** during my trips to Boston, and she has recently dropped off her youngest at college and is an empty nester! Tomorrow, I begin my 15th year at Stratton Mountain School. Like many of you, I am hopeful that this school year will look a little more normal than the last. I hope this finds you well.



Andy, son of Dave Baer '92 and Landon, son of Kristen Hartnett Jones '92, who are on the same soccer team and attend the same school in Manchester, Vermont.



Palmer West '92, Sara Sutton '92, and Kate Shaw Kriple '91 recently caught up in Colorado.



Eric Caisse '93 with his son, Alexander, standing in the Stanley Cup, with Tampa Bay Lightning left winger Pat Maroon.



Meg Stokenberry '95 with her husband, Corby, and daughter Ceny.



Craig Dumesnil '69 and son Joe Dumesnil '96.



Joe Dumesnil '96, his wife, Rebecca Stavros, dog Ollie, and daughter Lauren, 5.

92 TAFT 30TH REUNION

Class Secretary: Jennifer Ciarlo
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 Applegate, william@yarboroughapplegate.com

Kristen Hartnett Jones shared this, "Hey! I have a good pic of **Dave Baer's** son, Andy, and my son, Landon. They go to the same school in Manchester, Vermont, and play on the same soccer team. What are the chances?! Hope all is well with you. XO, Kristen." **Sara Sutton** had this to share: "Greetings from Colorado! Hope all my classmates are doing well, and enjoying the fall. It's been great to catch up with a few Tafties recently. I got to surprise **Palmer West** when he came to town with his company's (Aether) Airstream popup shop, and my Boulder neighbor **Kate Shaw Kriple '93** was at the event as well. It was fantastic to catch up, and in some ways felt like no time has passed...yet here we are almost at our 25th Reunion! Crazy, and hope to see you all there. Then I got to spend a great weekend in Manhattan Beach, California, with **Rachel Bell Robards** and her amazing family, which was so fun, and I didn't want to leave. Otherwise, my boys (now 13 and 15) and my company, FlexJobs, have been keeping me busy. Would love to catch up with any Tafties coming through Colorado, so please drop a line."

93

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Just when we thought we could swing back into a semi-normal fall, COVID strikes again. After a year spent 30 miles out to sea trying to escape

the pandemic on Nantucket Island, my family decided to move back to Charleston, South Carolina, and make this our forever home, and we couldn't be happier. We've spent our summer setting up our new home and out on the water: exploring the saltwater marshes, discovering remote island beaches, and ripping the kids around on a tube. I'm hoping to connect with fellow classmates in the area, **Jon Marcoux** and **Mark Allan**, one of these days! **Eric Caisse** is also enjoying life in the Southeast, writing, "Out of the blue, Tampa has become a sports mecca. We had the Stanley Cup playoffs in my backyard last month. While I wasn't able to connect with **A.J.**, when she was in town to cover the second round, I did manage to bump into Pat Maroon at our local coffee shop on Davis Island. He politely asked if I would like to put my son, Alexander, in the cup. To which I replied, 'Why yes, I believe I would, kind sir.' Those are tears of joy that he will thank me for when he gets older!" Great story. I got a chance to catch up with **A.J. Mleczo Griswold** myself on the beach in Nantucket a couple months back; was great to see her in person and not just on the TV calling hockey games! She had a busy summer, including hosting a wonderful charity event, Ice Out ALZ, to raise money and awareness for Alzheimer's disease research and care. The event raised more than \$225,000! As I write these notes in September, I'm sure that we are all facing similar feelings of frustration as we deal with the pandemic, but I hope that each of you are finding ways to stay positive and resilient. Please give a shout if you find yourself in Charleston. Until next time, Moose out.

94

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My inbox was figuratively overwhelmed with Taft 1994 updates, so thanks to all who contributed to what could be a record set of *Bulletin* notes. Jeers to all those who didn't, but there is always the winter edition. So without further ado, let's kick things off in South Dakota, where the Taft Club of Sioux Falls had its first in-person meeting since the pandemic began, and it was an eventful one. President **Adam Gorra** accused treasurer Adam Gorra of looting the club's coffers, while secretary Adam Gorra accused vice president Adam Gorra of graft. It appears that running a one-man alumni society has its drawbacks. Perhaps the club should have retained **Ant Gibbs** of the Washington Bar Association, who happens to specialize in family law. Ant lives with his "sweetie" and her son, as well as dog Moccio "aka the Mayor of Cutesville," in Seattle. Dollars to donuts, 1994 Ant Gibbs would probably make fun of 2021 Ant Gibbs. **Margaret Grant Mitchell** is in her second year as the head of middle school at a small independent school in Denver. Her two children, ages 11 and 9, are at the school, along with the niece and nephew of **Ginger Kreidler**. Speaking of Ginger, she is getting married in November to Andy Gribbel. Combined, the Brady Bunch has five kids and three dogs between them, yet are missing an Alice. Not sure how one cooks a 27-pound "Sam the Butcher Choice Cut" meatloaf for dinner without an Alice, but if anyone can do it, that person is Ginger. Ginger also moved, with her sons, Bear, 12, and Hawken, 9, from Kittery Point, Maine, to Andover, Massachusetts. She spent the summer on Lake Winnepesaukee with Andy's extended family and **Abby D'Ercole '22**, where she hoped to connect with **Tobin Greer**, but never made it happen. Speaking of lakes and water activities, **Ery Largay** spent last year living on board her 40-foot sailboat, *Starry Night*, boat-schooling her two children with husband Tim. They stopped in 12 East Coast states, and eventually sailed east from Florida across the Gulf Stream to the Bahamas for six months. She reports, "It was an extraordinary adventure

filled with turquoise waters, sandy beaches, sea turtles, rays, dolphins, and thriving coral reefs." Now back home in Marblehead, Massachusetts, she no longer sees any of those things. Check out her blog at: bit.ly/3oEA2oW. Continuing the story of interesting adventures, **Meredith Currier**, who over the past 20 years has gone from wooden boatbuilder to timberwright to architectural designer. She is now working in a very small architecture and design office and loving it. She still ski patrols in her free time in the winters, and performs mountain search and rescue rounds in the summer. "One dog (down from five), fiancée, and no kids," she reports, and welcomes all who wander to see her in Lincolnville, Maine. On the opposite side of the country is **Virginia Fisher Feira**, who just dropped off her oldest at the Thatcher School in Ojai, California. Virginia has a trip planned to Santa Barbara to see **Whitney McDowell**. (Secretary's note: stop by and see **Thomas Jackson** as well). Kudos to Virg for passing her CPDT-KA dog training exam! Heading back east, we take a stop in Pittsburgh, where **Holly Houston Sommer** just celebrated her 18th year at Deloitte. Even more exciting than working at an accounting firm for 18 years was Holly and bro **McKenna Houston's** family trip to Yellowstone and Grand Tetons, along with the rest of America. Highlights were waking up at 3:30 a.m. to get into the Lamar Valley to see wolves and climbing the Via Ferrata in Jackson. See picture of McKenna, his wife and two children on said vacation. Next—the nation's capital and newly minted interim head of the upper school at National Cathedral School, **Jessica Clark**. After serving as dean of students for 13 years, Jess has been in the new position since July 2021. Nicely done! Also in D.C. is **Chris Eanes**, who is the executive director of the Cathedral Choral Society at Washington National Cathedral. I get the sneaking suspicion that there are a lot of so-called cathedrals in Washington—note to self to check out sometime. Chris spent the pandemic in Washington, Connecticut, where he was able to connect with chef extraordinaire

Gabe McMackin. With the states covered, let's move across the pond for one update from **Jonathan Griswold**, who still lives in Blighty, with wife and two children, Henry, 2, and James, 5. Jon recently dined with **Irina Prentice** for a "splendid lunch" a few months ago.

95

Class Secretary: Neil Vigdor, neil.vigdor@gmail.com;
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Theodore Crispino and his wife, Siobhán, welcomed a twin boy and girl, Cormac Logar and Aisling Hanora Crispino, on August 26. "A few weeks early but both are healthy and hopefully they'll be home soon," he writes. "Siobhán is doing well and both of us are thrilled." **Meg Cleveland Stokenberry** writes, "My son Walker just graduated from high school and is taking a gap year before going to Boston University in the fall of 2022. He will be doing some volunteer programs and traveling around Europe, so we decided to join him for the year and have moved to France. We are living in a very small town, Verteuil-sur-Charente, about an hour-and-a-half north of Bordeaux. Our 4-year-old daughter, Ceny, will start school there this fall, and our pup, Moby, is enjoying French life so far. If anyone is over this way, we would love visitors!" **Martha Reichert** is practicing *Non ut sibi*: "I am running for political office so I guess that's some news. I am running for the Southampton Town Trustees, one of the oldest governing bodies in the country known as the Trustees of the Freeholders and Commonalty of the Town of Southampton. They are charged with managing all of the underwater lands in the Town of Southampton. I'm honored to be running, and I really hope to put the Taft School motto into effect and do some good!" I, **Neil Vigdor**, went to my first concert of the pandemic, *Guns N' Roses*—how '90s—with **Rachael Zichella '96** and **Tamaryn Nelson '96** in August.

96

Class Secretary: Rachael Zichella, rzychella@gmail.com;
Head Class Agent: Roo Reath, rooreath@yahoo.com

Hello Class of '96. Apologies for not submitting to the last issue—life was in flux, and I missed the deadline. In lieu of our reunion in May, which COVID prevented, **Roo Reath** hosted our class video call. He writes that approximately 10 people attended, "Zooming from California, the Midwest, three East Coasters, and two were calling in from Hong Kong! We spent that hour catching up, finding out what had been going on, how we have coped over the past [COVID] year... and it was actually really nice. As I hung up, I felt lucky that I knew these people. Half of the folks I haven't seen in 25 years and immediately had stuff to talk about and was generally interested in how they are doing and what course their life is currently on." Following the video call, which he could not attend due to a work conflict, **Joe Dumesnil** reached out to Roo and me, and it was so lovely to connect with him. Joe lives in Denver with his wife, Rebecca Stavros, beautiful 5-year-old daughter, Lauren, and dog Oliver. He is working in the oil and gas industry as the managing director of new ventures and geoscience at Overland Oil & Gas. Joe is hoping to make it to our next reunion, and fondly recalled a visit to Taft a few years ago with his wife and daughter, writing: "We had a wonderful visit, chatting with **Mr. Mac** and **Mr. Campbell** as well as some other folks I recognized. I think we even made it the Jig for a bacon, egg, and cheese on a hard roll, which I have dreamt about nothing shy of 1,000 times since graduating." Joe has extended an "open invitation to any of our '96ers to please reach out if ever in Denver. I exchanged some emails with **Molly Hall Dorais** during a visit to Aspen this past winter, but it was all so COVID-y at the time, we couldn't meet up." Echoing Roo's comments, it has been such a great joy and privilege to reconnect with so many of you over the past few years. I've been



Jocelyn, 2, daughter of Sarah Banister '97, sporting her Taft gear.



Joe McKenna '97, Mike Hoffman '97, and Ben Pastor '97 met up to welcome the Pastors back from the West Coast.



Children of Jillian Hunt Seredynski '01: Charlie and twins Lila and Caroline.



Ryan Shannon '01, Jessica Goldmark Shannon '01, Nate Readal, and Krissy Grey Krackzowsky '01 hiking in Glacier National Park.



Children of Joel Yu '05, Abby, Ellie, Joey, and newborn son Judah.



Jason Barreto '97 and Mat Solso '97.



Mat Solso '97 and Joe McKenna '97.



Children of Jennifer Nichols '01, Thomas and big brother Noah.

so pleasantly surprised to stumble on more than shared reflections on our Taft past, but common interests in our current lives. Please stay tuned for plans for our 25th Reunion, which **Ryan Raveis** and **Whitney Tremaine O'Brien** have been working so hard on to plan for the spring of 2022. We hope everyone will return—if only to hit the Jig one more time.

97 TAFT 25TH REUNION

Class Secretary: Caroline Montgelas, cmontgelas@gmail.com; **Head Class Agent:** Charlie Wardell, cwwardell@gmail.com; **Reunion Committee:** Caroline Montgelas; Christie Johnson O'Keefe, Christinaoefeefe@gmail.com; Mike Hoffman, mhoffman@taftschoo.org; Jim Murdica, jmurdica@btlaw.com

Joe McKenna had a few wonderful get-togethers with classmates recently. The McKennas met up with **Mike Hoffman** and **Ben Pastor** (see photo above) and their families to welcome the Pastors back from the West Coast. **Ben Pastor** has recently moved back to the East Coast! Joe was also happy to welcome **Mat Solso** (see photo above) and

his family to his farm in Virginia as the Solsos headed out on a three-month road trip in an RV. Mat reports that the trip "included a 60-day, 7,500-mile road trip in a 31-foot motorhome to 13 national parks and four halls of fame, with my wife, Kim, and my daughters, Maddy, 12, and Emmy, 10. Even our 13-year-old basset hound, Murphy, was able to join us on the trip. It was absolutely amazing. We had a blog about it (solsoadventures.com), so we could share the adventure with friends and family." Mat also reports that **Jason Barreto** was able to join him on one leg of the journey (see photo above).

98

Class Secretary: Addie Strumolo, strumolo@gmail.com; **Head Class Agent:** Devin Weisleder, devin@weisleder.com

99

Class Secretaries: Molly Barefoot Matchak, mollybarefoot@gmail.com; Kate Bienen Furst, kbfurst@gmail.com; **Head Class Agent:** Lindsay Tarasuk Aroesty, aroestyl@pghfdn.org

00

Class Secretary: Ribby Goodfellow, rbgoodfellow@gmail.com; **Head Class Agents:** Andrew Goodwin, afgoodwin@gmail.com; John McCardell, john.m.mccardell@gmail.com

01

Class Secretary: Jessica Goldmark Shannon, jshannon@taftschoo.org; **Head Class Agent:** Katharine Fenton Tuckerman, ktuckerman@gmail.com

Jennifer Nichols, her husband, Christopher Robinson, and Noah (5 years old) welcomed baby Thomas on July 4 of this year. Congratulations, Jennifer! **Jillian Hunt Seredynski**, her husband John, and big brother Charlie (6 years old) welcomed twin girls Lila Barnes and Caroline Carter on August 1. Congratulations, Jill! **Kat Fenton Tuckerman** and her family had been parked out in Bedford, New York, for most of the summer before heading back to New York City for the start of the kids' school year. **Anne Stephenson** has a weekend house on the same driveway, so it's been great to see her. Anne's

daughter Lucy (nearly 2) plays with Kat's kids Edie (4½) and Lucius (2½). Kat still works in real estate in NYC, which has experienced a major comeback this spring—which motivated them to move within the city as well. Bedford seems to be a hotbed for Tafties: **Brooks Comstock**, **Robert von Althann '05**, **Isabel Cowles Murphy '02**, **Harry Grand '96**, **Phoebe Polk '95**, among others. It's fun to catch up when we can and have our children play. Kat hosted the class reunion over the summer via Zoom and it was great to see everyone doing well and hopeful that we can do something on campus in the future. Read about the creative work of photographer and multimedia artist **Margeaux Walter '01** on page 18 and about the work **Tarik Asmerom** is doing as a pediatrician on page 11. **Krissy Krackzowsky** shares, "**Jess** and **Ryan Shannon** joined Nate and me for some backcountry hiking in Glacier National Park in July. We spent three days exploring over 30 miles of terrain and were treated to beautiful weather, lots of wildlife sightings, and many amazing views (even with the crazy fire season we have had here in Montana). It was an incredible adventure, and we were grateful to spend it together." I, **Jessica Goldmark Shannon**, concur with Krissy. We had a wonderful trip and look forward to many future adventures together!

02 TAFT 20TH REUNION

Class Secretary: Luke Labella, luke.labella@gmail.com; **Head Class Agent:** Pete Hafner, peter.hafner@gmail.com; **Reunion Chairs:** Emily Townsend Fisser, emilyfisser@gmail.com; Abby Kell Sutcliffe, abigail.kell@gmail.com

03

Class Secretaries: Ashley Ciaburri, ashleyciaburri@gmail.com; **Brie Bidart Sullivan**, bidart@gmail.com; **Head Class Agent:** Courtney Reardon, courtney.a.reardon@gmail.com

Congratulations to **Alison Sadvari** and her husband on welcoming their first child, Maeve Olivia Taylor, on June 18. **Eliza Clark-Whedon** reports, "I spent the year shooting a show I created and executive produced called *Y: The Last Man* (based on a comic book) in Toronto. It aired on FX on Hulu starting September 13." Can't wait to see this, Eliza! **Courtney Reardon** reports, "I had a great time hanging out with **Kaitlin Gangl Alden** and **Sam Whiting Ulrich** on Cape Cod, and my son and I also managed to make the trip to see **Maggie Smythe** and the entire Smythe clan in Rhode Island. I am adjusting to living outside of NYC and would love to connect with any Tafties in or around Darien, Connecticut. I saw a guy with a Taft lacrosse shirt on at the grocery store, so I know there are Tafties abound around here somewhere." All you Tafties out there near Darien, look up Courtney through the Taft Connect alumni network and reach out! Finally, I, **Brie Bidart Sullivan**, have moved with my family back to my hometown of Bakersfield, California. We are all still getting used to the weather but look forward to setting down roots here with our four kids.

04

Class Secretaries: Rob Kneip, rob.kneip@gmail.com; Hillary Lewis Murray, hillarymlewis@gmail.com; **Head Class Agent:** Mike Palladino, palladinomi@gmail.com

05

Class Secretaries: Liz Shepherd Bourgeois, elizabeth.s.bourgeois@gmail.com; Sam Dangremond, sdangremond@gmail.com; **Head Class Agents:** Andrew Foote, andrew.foote@stifel.com; Matt Mortara, matt.mortara@gmail.com; Tamara Sinclair, Tamara@choiceboarding.com

It is with great sadness that we report the untimely death of our classmate, **Javier Garcia**. Javier died in a tragic surfing accident in Oregon

on June 19. At the time of his death, Javier was associate professor of religious studies at George Fox University, whose faculty he joined in 2016. He was also the director of the university's George Fox Honors program, a prestigious great books program. Javier received his PhD in theology at the University of Cambridge in 2016, specializing in Dietrich Bonhoeffer. His first book, *Recovering the Ecumenical Bonhoeffer: Thinking After the Tradition*, was published by Fortress Press in 2019. Two days after Javier's death, George Fox University President Robin Baker published a memorial from one of Javier's fellow professors, Brian Doak, on his blog. It read in part, "Javier Garcia had a face that radiated light. His smile could turn your day around. His laughter, listening ear, and friendship changed my life—and those of us who loved him will be spending the rest of our lives wondering why this happened. Lord, have mercy." (See In Memoriam.) On a much lighter note, **Joel Yu** writes, "My wife and I just welcomed our first son, Judah, on August 6. His big sisters, Abby, Ellie, and Joey, are very excited." **Carolyn Luppens** completed general surgery residency at the University of Utah in June and moved to Albuquerque, New Mexico, for fellowship training in trauma and emergency general surgery at the University of New Mexico. **Donald Molosi** reports, "I am currently in London, England, completing my year as a Chevening scholar. I have been studying for a master's in creative writing while I am here and launching my new book called *Dear Upright African*. I hope to meet up with more Tafties now that things are open here after COVID lockdowns!"

06

Class Secretary: Tyler Godoff, tylergodoff@gmail.com; **Head Class Agent:** Su Yeone Jeon, sj5dn@virginia.edu

Phil Thompson caught up with **Brook Stroud** and met **Padgett's** baby while in Prouts Neck this summer. **Hassan Dawood** had this to share:

Join
TAFT CONNECT
Alumni Network
and

Connect

ENGAGE

SUPPORT

Desktop
www.taftconnect.org

Mobile App
Search "Graduway Community"

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taftconnect@taftschool.org



A group of Tafties celebrated the first wedding anniversary of Brendan Gangl '06: Alex Lescroart '07, Brendan, Michael Shrubbs '06, Peter Irving '06, Tyler Godoff '06, and Whit Brighton '06.



John Ale '06, Hassan Dawood '06, and Alex Dodge '07 caught up this summer in Atlanta.

"This past summer, I was able to catch up with **John Ale** and **Alex Dodge '07** in Atlanta and caught **Pat Clancy** in Boston recently for dinner. Attached is a photo of the three of us (above)." **Brendan Gangl** married Zuzy Zvarova in Stowe, Vermont, last summer. While the pandemic didn't allow for guests at the wedding last summer, they hosted a big one-year celebration on August 14 where a big group of Rhinos rolled in, in full force. After a few years of living in the Bay Area, **Orlando Watson** moved back East and now lives in Durham, North Carolina.

07 TAFT 15TH REUNION

Class Secretaries: Holly Donaldson Casella, holly.casella@gmail.com; Grace Scott Huefner, gscott156@gmail.com; **Head Class Agent:** Lee Ziesing, lee.ziesing@gmail.com; **Reunion Chairs:** Holly Donaldson Casella; Ned Durgy, edurgy@gmail.com

08

Class Secretaries: Conor Holland, conorholland8@gmail.com; Beth Kessenich, ekessenich@gmail.com; **Head Class Agent:** Max Jacobs, maxkjacobs@gmail.com



Deni Tseretopoulos '07 and Beth Kessenich '08 caught up over lunch in Paris.

I, **Beth Kessenich**, recently got lunch with **Deni Tseretopoulos '07** in Paris. It was so great to catch up with her! I am also living between Paris and NYC and working for Cheddar News, a part of Altice USA on their brand partnerships team helping them expand their advertising partners and grow the business.

09

Class Secretary: Kira Parks, kiraaparks@gmail.com; **Head Class Agent:** Ben Brauer, bbrauer90@gmail.com

Sarah O'Neill White and her husband, André, welcomed their second son, Rhys, on April 5. **Henry Millson** and his wife, Hannah, welcomed their first child, Frances Aubrey, on April 25. **Kristen Proe '10** and **Alex Kendall** got married in June in Telluride, Colorado. They are now living in Denver, taking advantage of all the wonderful outdoors. **Michael Atsalis** married Erica Mazman on August 7 in Thompson, Connecticut. Many Tafties were in attendance including **Niki Gilbane**, **Gobakwe Montshiwa**, **Blakeslee Johnson Reiter**, **Elliott Bostrom '10**, **Yara Benjamin**, and **Mina Blossom**. Michael and his wife have bought a house and moved to



Tafties celebrating the wedding of Michael Atsalis '09: from left, Niki Gilbane '09, Gobakwe Montshiwa '09, Blakeslee Johnson Reiter '09, Erica Mazman, Elliott Bostrom '10, Yara Benjamin '09, and Mina Blossom '09.



Maude Walker Brandeberry '09 and her husband, Jeremy, welcomed their daughter, Adelaide Mabel, on August 4.

Winnetka, Illinois, where they are accepting visitors! Michael has also enjoyed golfing with **Al Root '11** and **Rex Merdinger '08** all over Chicago. He also spent some time with **Jesse Root** in Chicago. **Mel Mendez** started a new position as strategic communications manager at the Natural Resources Defense Council. My husband, Marc, and I have recently bought an apartment and will be moving to the Upper East Side in Manhattan and are looking forward to reconnecting with Tafties in the area! My practice Parks, Therapy LLC, has celebrated its first year and continues to thrive.



Maude Walker Brandeberry '09 and her husband, Jeremy, were married in March.

10

Class Secretary: Caroline Castellano, ccastellano24@gmail.com; **Head Class Agent:** Leigh Anne O'Mealia, leighanne.omealia@gmail.com

Congratulations to **Alex Philipson** for starting a new position at RS&H as an aviation environmental specialist and pursuing his dream profession in aviation. **Owen Atkins** relocated to Tokyo to become the first Asia-based employee at AlphaSense, a linguistics-based fintech platform. Owen successfully pitched for a greater global presence as the company is positioned for explosive growth and has been selected to run the expansion and launch the official APAC office in Tokyo. Fellow Tokyo-based Tafties, shoot Owen a line if you are in the area!



Kristen Proe Kendall '10 and Alex Kendall '09 on their wedding day.



Rhys, son of Sarah O'Neill White '09.



Caroline Castellano '10 on her trip down to Kiawah/Charleston with her fiancé, Mike Galzerano, and puppy, Koda.

Chelsea Maloney welcomed a four-month-old kitten, Goose (after Captain Marvel's Goose—a name after my own heart), into her home. **Jan Stransky** and his wife welcomed their first child, baby girl Maja, this past summer. **Max Frew** fared yet another epic fishing season in Bristol Bay, Alaska, but this time was accompanied by fellow classmate **John Wyman**. As for me, Mike and I scratched our travel itch, taking trips to the North Fork, New York; Naples, Florida; Kiawah Island, South Carolina; and Charleston, South Carolina. We are looking forward to a few upcoming weddings that had been



John Wyman '10 and Max Frew '10 fishing in Alaska.



Elena LoRusso Dieterle '13 with her husband, Caleb.



Sally Yan Rochefort '13 as her Tampa Bay Lightning win back-to-back Stanley Cups.



Morgan Manz '13, Elena LoRusso Dieterle '13, Katie Feda, Amy Feda VanHoesen '13, Cydney Conley, Mary King, and Maggie O'Neil '13 at Elena's wedding.



Matt Foes '14, Eric Macken '14, Dean Foskett '14, Angus Viebranz '14, Mark Sperry '13, and Derrick Foskett '20 at the Dead & Company Show at Citi Field.



Sarah Nyquist '12 and fiancé Brian, and Cathy Chen '12 and her boyfriend, Riley.

postponed due to the pandemic, and just as importantly, our puppy Koda's first birthday. Hope everyone is staying healthy and safe.

11

Class Secretary: Kate Moreau, kate.e.moreau@gmail.com; **Head Class Agents:** Nick Auer, nickwauer@gmail.com; Sara Guernsey, saraeguernsey@gmail.com

12 TAFT 10TH REUNION

Class Secretary: Christopher Browner, cbrowner@metopera.org; **Head Class Agents:** Eliza Davis, elizadavis2012@gmail.com; Will Dawson, williamfdawson@gmail.com; **Reunion Chairs:** Eliza Davis; Will Dawson

It was a summer of friends, fun, and firsts for the Class of '12. After returning home from a long deployment that spanned all of 2019 through the Middle East and Mediterranean, **Rhydian Glass** bought a beautiful house on the beach in Norfolk/Virginia Beach and transferred from surface warfare officer to information professional officer. She is currently working

cybersecurity and cyberwarfare operations, joint tactical communications, and space operations, and was promoted to lieutenant in April, marking four years as a naval officer. When she isn't keeping us all safe, she spends her free time playing on the beach and hiking with Rudy, the puppy that she rescued. Together, they'll soon travel to Shenandoah National Park and then to visit Rhydian's family in Goshen, Connecticut—for the first time in three years. **Alex Reiff** recently made a new friend of his own, adopting a cat name Merlot. Other members of the Class of '12 spent time with old friends this summer. **Sarah Nyquist** and **Cathy Chen** got together for a delicious tapas brunch in New York City while Sarah was visiting. A few weeks earlier, I, **Christopher Browner**, too shared a meal with Cathy, meeting her for some tasty BBQ in Koreatown. And a week or so later, I caught up with another Taftie, **Blake Turner**, for dinner in Chelsea.

13

Class Secretary: Will Pope, wpope17@gmail.com; **Head Class Agents:** Jagger Riefler, jaggeriefler@yahoo.com; Elizabeth Shea, els19@me.com

It was a burning hot summer for the Class of '13, headlined by not one but two weddings. First over Memorial Day Weekend, **Elena LoRusso** married Caleb Dieterle! Shortly after in July, **Amy Feda** married Steve VanHoesen, with a cast of Taft folks in attendance! None other than Elena, **Maggie O'Neil**, and **Morgan Manz** were three of her bridesmaids, while **Katie McLaughlin** and **Sierra Hannough '14** helped keep the party rolling. Amy's now arrived with Steve in Pomfret, Connecticut, for their new adventure at Pomfret School! She can't wait to coach field hockey this fall after a three-year hiatus from her normal August through November lifestyle. Katie kept plenty busy outside of Amy's wedding, starting her

summer by gaining a new position at Kents Hill School as the registrar and college counseling administrative assistant. She then continued her adventures by exploring Nashville, Tennessee, and then spent a few days in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, to coach a hockey camp with some colleagues. She also did some camping and hiking, even summiting Katahdin in Baxter State Park in Maine, before rounding the season out with a Luke Bryan concert in Bangor, Maine, in August. **Ames Sheldon**'s true love is learning, because he'll be starting his MBA program at Columbia Business School this fall! Even though it's a top program in the country, he says the part that he's most excited for is that he'll be able to stay in his New York City apartment. All **Sally Yan Rochefort** does is win, because she's been celebrating back-to-back Stanley Cup Championships with the Tampa Bay Lightning, while also already getting busy preparing for next season! **Ana Albarran** has been in San Diego working for the University of California, and she's now looking forward to moving back East soon. She and **Wallis Kinney '12** formed a book club last year and keep up regularly through the modern marvel of video chatting. They keep each other young and on the cutting edge of pop culture by sharing the latest slang and TikToks (the sound a clock makes?). Last but not literally most from a quantity standpoint, team Denver with **Leah McIntosh**, **Emily Blanchard**, **Elias Clough**, and **Dan Rubin** all went camping over the July 4th weekend! They've heard rumblings of an impending visit from **Max Flath** and **Jack Simonds**, so we're all looking forward to stories from that for the next quarter as the mass migration continues! This has been **Will Pope**, stay classy, Taft classes.

14

Class Secretary: Heather Gordon, heather.gordon.leigh@gmail.com; **Head Class Agents:** John MacMullen, jmacmullen@mxschool.edu; Gwendolyn McGee, gwendolynmcgee@yahoo.com



RC O'Shea '14 graduated from Officer Candidate School, Fort Benning, Georgia, in August. Next stop for her is Fort Jackson, South Carolina; pictured with her mother, Ginger O'Shea, Taft faculty member.

The Class of '14 has had an eventful few months! **Rita Catherine O'Shea** graduated from Officer Candidate School in Fort Benning, Georgia, and is headed next to Fort Jackson, Columbia, South Carolina. Thank you for your service! **Linh Tang** was awarded the Rising Star of the Year award at Morgan Stanley Technology in May and moved to Somerville, Massachusetts, to attend Harvard Law School. **Sierra Hannough** recently took a job at Bauer Hockey as the associate brand manager on the skate team. She has relocated to southern Maine and is in the process of buying her first home. She is super happy to be back in New England! Also on the East Coast, **Paul Prentice** and **Troy Moo Penn** are now roommates living together in the East Village, NYC. Finally, pictured, we had a Taftie reunion on Friday, August 20 at the Dead & Company Show at Citi Field. In attendance were **Matt Foes**, **Eric Macken**, **Dean Foskett**, **Angus Viebranz**, **Mark Sperry '13**, and young buck **Derrick Foskett '20**. An awesome show and great time together!

15

Class Secretary: Caroline Leopold, carolineleopold@gmail.com; **Head Class Agents:** Eli Cooper, Elisha.h.cooper@gmail.com; Talley Hodges, talleyhodges2@gmail.com

16

Class Secretary: Hannah Wilczynski, h.k.wilczynski@gmail.com; **Head Class Agents:** Teddy Zoellner, teddy.zoellner@gmail.com

It is with great sadness that I share the tragic news of the passing of **Ryan Rothfuss** on July 23. A friend to many, Ryan will forever be remembered for the great kindness and support he showed his peers. On behalf of the entire Class of '16, I extend my deepest condolences to Ryan's family and loved ones during this difficult time. This fall, **Amanda Roberts** is starting grad school at Goldsmiths University in London, where she will be studying contemporary curating. **Ege Ercan** is also headed to grad school; he will be pursuing his PhD in finance at Stanford Graduate School of Business. Finally, **Chandler Houldin** is excited to begin work on September 1 as an assistant director of admissions at Yale.

17 TAFT 5TH REUNION

Class Secretary: Caroline Moore, caroline.moore@yale.edu; **Head Class Agents:** Eliza Denious, edenious8@gmail.com; Michael Wasserstein, michaelwasserstein@yahoo.com; **Reunion Chairs:** Eliza Denious; Emma Vermlyen, evermlyen@gmail.com

It has been an eventful year for the Class of '17. Many of us graduated from college and are, for the first time, experiencing life without the title of "student." Many of us have moved to new places to pursue new passions, careers,

and degrees, while some took time off from school during COVID and returned to campus as "super seniors." While this has been an exciting time of transition, it has also been incredibly difficult. This was also the year we lost our friend **Charlie**, and we miss him every day. In May, **Gabriela Gonzalez** became the first in her family to graduate with a college degree. She recently moved out of her family home into her first apartment in Brooklyn, New York, and is working as a recruiting coordinator at J.Crew. After graduating from Middlebury College this past spring, **Michael Wasserstein** decided to continue his academic career at the University of Utah, where he is pursuing a graduate degree in atmospheric science. He is loving the active and outdoorsy lifestyle of Salt Lake City. If any alumni are in the area, Mike asks that you reach out so you can enjoy a day of skiing together. Don't miss this opportunity to hit the slopes with a living legend/former captain of Taft's ski team. **Peem Lerdputtipongporn** recently moved to Pittsburgh, where he is pursuing a PhD in statistics and public policy at Carnegie Mellon University. **Allie Gilland** moved to Boston this summer to work in analytics for a tech company in Cambridge. **Marisa Mission** lives in Washington, D.C., and is working as a Stanford community impact fellow for a nonprofit consulting company. On the side, Marisa mentors students in middle and high school, serves as an advisor for her sorority, and is a residential assistant for Stanford's D.C. program. **Sydney Trevenen** lives in New York City and is working in investment banking at Goldman Sachs. **Maevie Millen** is living in New York City, where she works as a litigation paralegal at Cravath, Swaine & Moore. **Jason Bab** commissioned into the United States Marine Corps and is currently training at the Basic School at the Marine Corps Base in Quantico, Virginia. **Logann Guiney** lives in Washington, D.C., and is working in tech consulting at Deloitte. **Carter Stovall** recently moved to Denver, where she works as a clinical research coordinator at the University of Colorado Anschutz. Carter's



A large group of Class of '18 Tafties were able to spend the weekend together in Clinton Corners, New York.



Juliana Yamin '18 and Maggie Keeler '18 met up to take a picture in front of Georgetown University's signature John Carroll statue on their first day of senior year.



Dennis Kennedy '18, Jack Mooney '18, Zander Salnikoff '18, and Hanna Murphy '18 met up in Nantucket.



2018 classmates Jack Mooney, Jack Sheehan, and Charlie Wright reunited with Joe Hardison to watch the Duke men's lacrosse team compete in the NCAA lacrosse semifinals.

Also this summer, a large group of Tafties were able to spend the weekend together in Clinton Corners, New York. Finally, **Maggie Keeler** and I met up to take a picture in front of Georgetown University's signature John Carroll statue on our first day of senior year.

19

Class Secretary: Margot Odden, modden28@gmail.com; **Head Class Agents:** Eva Baurmeister, evabeneva@gmail.com; Rex Riefler, rexfiefler@yahoo.com

The Class of '19 spent this summer working hard and catching up with one another. **Quincy Morgan**, a PPE major with a minor in legal studies and business ethics at the University of Pennsylvania, pursued an internship this summer with Twitter, working on corporate partnerships in entertainment. I, **Margot Odden**, was happy to catch up with classmates **Olivia Brooks** and **Ellie Barton**, who were both working as servers at the Westmoor Club on Nantucket this summer. Classmates **Dennis Franklin**, **Elspeth Leckie**, **Emily Crouch**, **Annelise Pizzitola**, **Eliza King Freedman**, and **Lani Adedoyin** gathered to celebrate **Natalie Locarno's** birthday over dinner in New York City.

20

Class Secretary: Katie Bootsma, kkb61@georgetown.edu; **Head Class Agents:** Hartley Messer, hartley.messer@gmail.com; Jack Adams, jack@adamsgreen.com

21

Class Secretary: Jack Church, jackchurch02@gmail.com; **Head Class Agents:** Darren McNerney, dmcner@u.northwestern.edu; Paton Roberts, patondroberts@gmail.com

research specializes in phase 1 cancer clinical trials. **Andrew Farrier's** favorite movie is *The Emperor's New Groove*. He is currently a senior at Colgate University. I, **Caroline Moore**, recently moved to NYC and am a paralegal at the Manhattan district attorney's office, specifically working in the trial bureau and in sex crimes. I'm here until July before I move to Durham, North Carolina, to begin law school.

18

Class Secretary: Juliana Yamin, julianacyamin@gmail.com; **Head Class Agents:** Joe Hardison, jhh39@duke.edu; Maddie Savage, madeleine_savage@brown.edu

Members of the Class of '18 found plenty of time to get together throughout the summer and early into the fall! **Jack Mooney**, **Jack Sheehan**, and **Charlie Wright** reunited with **Joe Hardison** in East Hartford, Connecticut, over Memorial Day Weekend to watch the Duke men's lacrosse team compete in the NCAA lacrosse semifinals. In August, **Dennis Kennedy**, **Jack Mooney**, **Zander Salnikoff**, and **Hanna Murphy** met up in Nantucket.

Milestones

Marriages

1978
Robert Gahagan to Elise Heydorn
May 2021

Alexander Kendall to **Kristen Proe '10**
June 2021

2010
Kristen Proe to **Alexander Kendall '09**
June 2021

Elena LoRusso to Caleb Dieterle
May 29, 2021

2009
Michael Atsalis to Erica Mazman
August 7, 2021

Maude Walker to Jeremy Brandeberry
March 20, 2021

2013
Amy Feda to Steve VanHoesen
July 10, 2021

Births

1985
Beau to Heather and **J. Robert Born**
August 2021

2000
Christopher Lincoln to Isaac laea and **Kathryn Parkin**
July 2, 2021

2005
Judah to Dana and **Joel Yu**
August 6, 2021

2010
Maja to Mackenzi and **Jan Stransky**
June 4, 2021

1986
Xavion Bao and Tyson Everett to Stephanie and **Winston Lord**
August 17, 2021

2001
Thomas to Christopher Robinson and **Jennifer Nichols**
July 4, 2021

2009
Adelaide Mabel to Jeremy and **Maude Walker Brandeberry**
August 4, 2021

Faculty
Oscar Mark III to **Lisa and Oscar Parente**
August 30, 2021

1995
Cormac Logar and Aisling Hanora to Siobhán and **Theodore Crispino**
August 26, 2021

Lila Barnes and Caroline Carter to John and **Jillian Hunt Seredynski**
August 1, 2021

Frances Aubrey to Hannah and **Henry Millson**
April 25, 2021

1998
Lily Grace to Ashley and **Paul Coppola**
May 27, 2021

2003
Maeve Olivia to Linton Taylor and **Alison Sadvari**
June 18, 2021

In Memoriam

1947
Donlan V. Aberg Jr.
Date unknown

Miles Carlisle
January 13, 2021

Joseph W. Spalding
September 2, 2021

1957
Ralph F. "Dick" Spencer
August 23, 2021

2016
Ryan F. Rothfuss
July 23, 2021

1948
John. J. Philips
Date unknown

David J. Nerrow
May 31, 2021

Herbert I. Willetts
November 17, 2020

1975
Peter F. Moore
August 14, 2021

1949
J. Douglas Stewart
March 4, 2021

1951
Richard A. Mathews
July 25, 2021

1956
Morton D. Cross
July 16, 2021

1981
Pennel W. Bird
August 23, 2021

1950
Charles F. Bennett
July 2, 2021

1952
Robert S. Richards
August 29, 2021

Robert E. Peterson
July 4, 2021

2005
Javier A. García
June 19, 2021

Thomas "Tobey" Shiverick
August 27, 2021

Please Remember

to include full names (with maiden name) and dates for marriages and births in order to be included in Milestones. taftbulletin@taftschool.org

When's the deadline for Notes?

Please send your news/updates for each issue before the dates listed below to either your class secretary or taftbulletin@taftschool.org. You can also submit news online at www.taftschool.org/alumninotes.

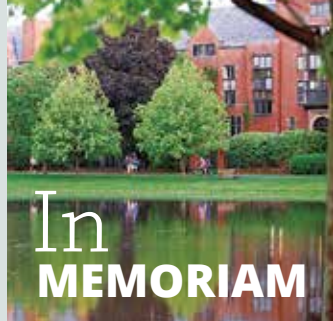
Winter—November 15 / Spring—February 15
Summer—May 15 / Fall—August 30

Class Notes Guidelines

The *Bulletin* may edit class notes for clarity and brevity and to match the magazine's editorial style. Class secretaries may also choose to edit submissions.

To respect the privacy of our alumni, we do not publish engagement or pregnancy announcements. Wedding and birth announcements will continue to be featured in class notes, photos, and Milestones.

These notes are intended for The Taft School and not to be used elsewhere.



Taft *Bulletin* wishes to express its sincere condolences to all family and friends of the deceased.

Charles F. Bennett '50 passed away peacefully surrounded by his family on July 2. He graduated from the University of Colorado, then served in the U.S. Army military police for two years before attending the University of California Hastings Law school in San Francisco. He practiced law in Colorado Springs for 30 years. He is survived by his children, Amanda and Jeff; his three grandchildren; and stepchildren Courtenay, Laura, and Christopher. He was predeceased by his son, Bill; a daughter, Nina, who died at birth; and his brother, Jerry. Active in the community, among his many volunteer experiences he served as president of the El Paso Bar Association, president of the Humane Society of the Pikes Peak Region, the chairman of the board of the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo, and director of the Colorado Springs Fine Art Center. He loved golf and was the oldest tenured member in the history of the Broadmoor Golf Club, having joined when he was 17. He was a member of both the Broadmoor Golf Club for 72 years and the Cheyenne Mountain Country Club for 54 years. He also enjoyed tennis, running, fishing, walking his dogs around the reservoir, and playing squash. He was well known for his lively wit, great sense of humor, and the love he had for his family. He treasured Amanda and Jeff who, in turn, loved every minute they spent with him. He was devoted to the love of his life of almost 30 years, Kristen Freeland. SOURCE: *The Gazette* (Colo.)

Miles Carlisle '50 of Chevy Chase, Maryland, died on January 13. After graduating from Thacher School, he received his undergraduate degree in 1954 from Stanford University. He served two years in the U.S. Army before attending the Wharton School of Business and graduating with an MBA in 1958. He worked in investment finance at Loomis Sayles first in Boston and then Washington, D.C. He continued his career at the International Finance Corp., where he worked in international banking for over 20 years. He never missed a chance for outdoor sports, camaraderie, and adventure. He often shared memories with family and friends about his bicoastal adventures, most notably fearless, weatherworn stories of flying his small plane during the '50s and '60s. He married Margo Duer Black in 1961, and they raised their two children in Washington, D.C., until Margo died in 2006. In 2010, he married Kate Dawson Clark in Chevy Chase, Maryland. He and Kate lived together in Chevy Chase and spent their summer months on Nantucket Island. A direct descendant of the founders of Nantucket and its whaling industry, he maintained an important collection of whaling and Coffin family memorabilia in his family's historic Main Street house, built by his great-grandfather and whale ship owner, Henry Coffin, in 1834. He was known for his special tours in which he would regale friends and visitors with stories about the history of the house and the island. He will be remembered for his intelligence, kindness, and humor to all who knew him. He was an authoritative and humorous raconteur, an accomplished racquet sports player, and an avid bridge player. A loyal and devoted friend, he was a member of many social organizations including the Chevy Chase Club, Nantucket Yacht Club, Nantucket Wharf Rat Club, Metropolitan Club, and an informal group of friends he called the "Bar Trash" at the Chevy Chase Club. He is survived by his wife, Kate; his children, Mary and Tristram '85; his four grandchildren; as well as his nephew. He was predeceased by his first wife, Margo, and his older brother, Henry. SOURCE: *San Francisco Chronicle*

David J. Nerrow '50 of Colonie, New York, passed away on May 31. He grew up in Waterbury, Connecticut. He loved Taft and extolled its virtues. Cornell University welcomed him in 1951, graduating him in 1955 with a degree in chemical engineering. After a short tenure with Mallinckrodt Chemical in St. Louis, Missouri, he began a long career with the General Electric Co.'s silicone division in Waterford, New York. His most proud professional moments came with his participation in the NASA Space Shuttle program. For those that knew him, please know that the pocket-pen protector with a Space Shuttle logo was with him when he passed. He would like folks to have that smile. On June 3, 1961, he married Barbara Forth, whom he met one day at the office. It was a stroke of brilliant fortune. They settled in Colonie, New York, where they raised a family and reside in the same "starter home" to this day. He was a stickler for precision, and while he and Barbara were married for "nearly 60 years," he would more proudly say "59 years, 362 days." Details are his enduring legacy. He was a 50-year communicant at the Church of St. Clare, where he served as a steadfast lecturer for decades. He enjoyed chasing the small white ball and loved the ageless challenge of bridge partners. The St. Louis Cardinals were his team, and the New York Giants never failed to disappoint. Genealogy caught his interest later in life and became his very entertaining research obsession. He pored over century-old immigration records and doggedly chased down every branch of the family tree. He is survived by his loving wife of 60 years, Barbara; two sons: David, Jr. and Stephen; a daughter, Linda; four grandchildren; and a nephew. SOURCE: Cannon Funeral Home (N.Y.)

Richard A. Mathews '51 of Wall Township, New Jersey, died on July 25. He was a grandson of Gustave Xavier Mathews, a prominent multi-family developer in Kings and Queens Counties, New York City, in the first half of the 20th century. He was also a descendent of Colonel Peter P. Bellinger, who was a member of the American Revolutionary forces at the Battle of Oriskany, New York. He was educated at The Emerson School (Exeter, New Hampshire), Cornell University, and Fairleigh Dickinson University, holding degrees of both AB in fine arts and MA in English. He served in the USAF in England in 1957 as a first lieutenant, then worked as a copywriter, sales promotion manager, and advertising manager for metropolitan NYC agencies and companies for two decades; and then as an English teacher and adjunct professor in New Jersey for another decade until retirement. He resided with his wife of 67 years first in Ridgewood, New Jersey, for 30 years; then in Avon-by-the-Sea, New Jersey, for 22 years; and finally in Wall Township, New Jersey, for six years; and spent 25 years wintering in St. Croix, USVI. He was predeceased by his son, Charles, and is survived by his wife, Anne, and their children: Dr. Gustave Xavier Mathews III and Julia Isles Mathews Meneghin; eight grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. He was an avid writer of historical fiction, grammar manuals and poetry; a hunter, fisherman and photographer. "GAUDEAMUS IGITUR..." SOURCE: Mathews Family

Robert S. Richards '52 passed away August 29. He served his Taft Class of '52 as an assistant class agent from 2001 to 2007 and then again from 2011 to 2012. He leaves his daughter, Sarah Richards Hedges '88; his brother, Charles Richards '55; his niece, Bettina Richards '83; and his nephew, William Grant Evans '11. He was predeceased by his father, Charles Richards '21, and uncle, Robert Richards '24. SOURCE: Bowman Funeral Directors (Idaho)

Joseph W. Spalding '52, loving husband and father of three children, passed away on September 2. He spent his childhood in Watertown, Connecticut, visiting Skaneateles, New York, in the summers. He graduated from Columbia College in 1956 with a BA in geology. After college, he worked as a geologist from 1957 to 1958 in northern Brazil, returning briefly in September 1957 to marry Susan Lapham, whence they both returned to Brazil. They then moved to Skaneateles and raised three boys in a place so special to him. He worked as a sales engineer in heating and ventilation in Syracuse, New York, and selling prefabricated commercial buildings in Oswego for several years before founding Upstate Temperature Control in 1975. In the 1970s, he was a leading figure at the Skaneateles Ski Club, installing the first snowmaking system and as a fixture on the ski patrol. He was a past commodore of the Skaneateles Country Club, most notably running several lightning class anniversary regattas and instilling his deep love of sailing in his boys. He was a member of St. James vestry, drove the SAVES Rescue, and served on the Skaneateles school board for many years. He so loved living on Skaneateles Lake, which inspired him to write his column "On the Lakeshore" for the *Skaneateles Press*. The ducks and other wildlife he saw, the adventures of his beagles, children, and grandchildren, were frequent topics. He enjoyed wooden boats, restoring several and building new ones. His favorites were the Thunderbird class sloop *Dragonfire* and the *Samuel Clyde*, his custom canal cruiser. He actively curated the boat collection at the Skaneateles Historical Society. He and Sue traveled extensively in their latter years, taking trips to the U.K., Ireland, France, Alaska, Brazil, other interesting cruises, their own excursions on the Samuel Clyde, and lengthy road trips around the country visiting friends and family. He is survived by his wife, Susan; sons Curtis, Joseph, and William; and seven grandchildren. SOURCE: Spalding Family

Herbert I. Willetts '52 of Seven Lakes, North Carolina, passed away November 17, 2020, at FirstHealth Moore Regional Hospital in Pinehurst. He was a graduate of Union College in Schenectady, New York, and Columbia Graduate School of Business with his MBA. He married Mary Mandeville in 1958. He worked for Mobil Oil and Marcoin Inc. After his retirement, he and Mary moved to Seven Lakes in 1986, where he enjoyed boating and golfing. He was a volunteer for the Sandhills Moore Coalition, FirstHealth Moore Regional Hospital, and the Radio Reading Service for the Blind. He was also a former member of Seven Lakes Lions Club. He was a member of the Chapel in the Pines. He is survived by his wife of 62 years, Mary; his children, Nancy Mae and H. Daniel; three grandchildren; and his nephew, and his niece. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his sister, Barbara. SOURCE: *The Pilot* (N.C.)

Morton D. "David" Cross '56, a resident of Barrington and longtime resident of Providence, Rhode Island, and Dennis, Massachusetts, died July 16 at Miriam Hospital. He was the husband of the late Suzanne (Dursin) Cross and brother of the late Harry King Cross Jr. '53. He resided on the East Side of Providence for most of his life and was a summer resident of Dennis since childhood. He attended Moses Brown. He went on to Yale University and was a member of the Class of '60. He received an MBA from Providence College in 1998. He was an avid tennis and squash player and excelled in track and field at Yale where he competed in the NCAA and Olympic Trials in the hammer throw. After graduation, he was a navigator in the Air National Guard. He worked for the Rhode Island Tool Co. and was owner and president of Apco Mossberg in Attleboro, Massachusetts, for many years. He was a longtime member of the Hope Club and the Agawam Hunt Club, as well as the Mashantum Tennis Club in Dennis. He leaves four daughters: Suzanne Cross Foxley, Alexandra Davidson Cross, Marilyn Cross Piedra '90, and Virginia Cross Marshall '91. He also leaves four grandchildren. SOURCE: *The Providence Journal* (R.I.)

Robert E. Peterson '56, most recently of Essex, Connecticut, passed away on July 4 after a long and difficult battle with Parkinson's disease. His loving sons, Rob '80 and John '84, are eternally grateful that they were able to be holding his hands and telling him how much he was loved when he took his final breaths. His family is also tremendously thankful for the exceptional care and extraordinary support that was provided by his caregivers and Essex Meadows. He and his sister, Dianne, grew up in Farmington, and he attended Lehigh University. He was honored to attend the Taft graduations of both of his sons and three of his grandchildren and the Lehigh graduation of another grandchild. He served his Taft class as an assistant class agent in 1995. After Lehigh, he returned to Connecticut, joined Ernest Peterson Inc., a roofing and sheet metal business founded by his father, enrolled in the U.S. Army, earning the rank of first lieutenant, met and married his former wife, Karin (Amport), and built a house that was a replica of the historic 1720 Stanley-Whitman House, where they raised their two sons. While still in his 20s, he built a second home on Round Top in Plymouth, Vermont, and skied there through six decades. Skiing would bring him to the tops of many of the world's most majestic mountains in the Rockies, the Alps, British Columbia, even the Andes, yet he most enjoyed skiing the Green Mountains with his friends and family. He worked over 50 years at Ernest Peterson Inc., serving as president, building a successful business focused on the highest-quality workmanship and customer service that attracted the area's premier aerospace, insurance, and institutional clients, and resulted in him being awarded the design and installation of Connecticut's highest roof, CityPlace, the rehabilitation of the historic Old State House, and innumerable other prominent projects. Professionally he served as president of the Associated Roofing and Sheet Metal Contractors of Connecticut, Connecticut's delegate to SMACA, and was the roofing instructor for BOMA of Hartford. He was a member of the Freemasons, the Shriners, and the Royal Order of Jesters, where he served as impresario. He was a member of the Farmington Field Club and a devoted member of the Hartford Canoe Club, and his family is immensely thankful for

the many loyal friends that were developed and maintained there. He loved to travel and that took him on many adventures with family and friends to all 50 states, Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, and South America. He was blessed with many successes, friends, and good times, but he was most passionate about his family as evidenced by the abundance of enthusiasm that he put into spending time with his children and grandchildren. He was a force of nature and was constantly moving. He loved action sports, especially skiing, but also waterskiing and mountain biking. Even while well into his seventies, he was still schussing down double black diamonds, slalom waterskiing, and mountain biking in his cherished Vermont. His adventures were always a family affair and both of his sons and all six of his grandchildren found success in ski racing, were instilled with a lifelong love of skiing, and blessed with countless fond memories of chairlift rides with their Dad and their Pa. He was predeceased by his parents, Ruby and Ernest Peterson. He is survived by his two sons, John '84 and Robert '80, and his daughter-in-law, Janet Chayes Peterson '81, as well as six grandchildren including Kramer '13, Karlea '14, and MacGregor '19. He is also survived by his sister, Dianne Ross; many nieces and nephews including Alexander Ross '92; and his close friend, Martina Hamilton, of Old Lyme, Connecticut, and her family. SOURCE: Robinson, Wright & Weymer Funeral Home (Conn.)

Ralph F. Spencer '57, known to friends and family as “Dick,” passed away on August 23. He grew up in the small town of Claverack, New York, in the Hudson Valley. He and his friends enjoyed growing up in a small rural fruit town at a time when farms were the backbone of Columbia County and it was safe to keep the back door open at night. He started pre-medicine at Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire. Eventually he shifted his professional focus to electrical engineering and received his PhD from the University of Pennsylvania. Before graduating from UPenn, he married Ann Whitbeck of Hudson, New York. Prior to graduation, their two sons, Bradford and Jeffrey, were born in Philadelphia. After completing his PhD, the family moved to Dallas to begin his career in the emerging computer industry. A few years later the family moved to Massachusetts, where he spent the remainder of his career at Digital Equipment Corp. (DEC), which was eventually acquired by Compaq Computer and then by Hewlett Packard (HP). The family settled in the towns of Carlisle and Acton, Massachusetts. He retired from DEC in 2003 and worked for several years as a consultant with Hamilton Technologies Inc. in Cambridge, Massachusetts, before retiring full time. He and his first wife, Prudence, divorced after their two sons graduated from college and began their own careers. Shortly thereafter, he met Nancy Meng of Newton, Massachusetts, and began a partnership that lasted until Nancy's death earlier this year following a battle against Parkinson's disease. The couple had settled in the towns of Salem and Atkinson, New Hampshire. Shortly before Nancy's death, he moved to the vibrant new Tuscan Village community in Salem, New Hampshire, with his upscale Tuscan Kitchen restaurant and bustling local shops, cafes, and microbreweries. He was passionate about building the Amazon e-commerce reseller business he started several years earlier. He was an avid golfer who for many years played with his father, Ralph Sr., at Columbia Golf and Country Club in Claverack. He also enjoyed riding off-road motorcycles with his sons as they grew up and had a lifelong passion for reading, learning, and personal growth. He was always exploring new trends in alternative health and applying what he has learned in his own life. He remained loyal to the Dartmouth College Alumni Association over the years, often participating in activities, keeping in touch with former classmates and donating to their charities. He is very much missed by his two sons, Bradford and Jeffrey. In addition to his children, he leaves behind his two siblings, Sandra Wiley and John Spencer, and his four grandchildren. SOURCE: AdvWisdom

Peter F. Moore '75, husband of Patricia Barkhorn Moore, of Wamphassuc Road, Stonington, Connecticut, passed away at Yale New Haven Hospital on August 14 after suffering complications from a yearlong battle with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. He graduated from the University of Rhode Island after spending time at Macalester College and the University of Vermont. For most of his professional career, he held the positions of president and chair of the board at the Moore Co. in Westerly, Rhode Island. His parents gifted him with a passion for travel. From a young age, he took every opportunity to venture around the world. Whether he was on his own or accompanied by various family members, his wife and their children, friends, or colleagues, he always returned home with memorable stories and new connections. Most remembered for his larger-than-life personality, unfailing sense of humor, and endless interests, he was as comfortable and content performing for a crowd as he was quietly tending to the living things in his backyard. When not singing lead vocals and playing harmonica for The Sidewinders with his brother, John, on the drums, he was watering his garden, harvesting oysters from his dock, feeding his chickens, or fishing for striped bass off of Napatree Point. He sincerely enjoyed sharing his knowledge about and enthusiasm for his many hobbies with his community. He organized the Blue Monday Concert Series every summer in the Mystic River Park and served as a proud member of the Stonington Shellfish Commission. In addition to Patricia, he leaves behind three daughters, Lucy, Millicent '10, and Cecilia '13; siblings Dorothea, Marguerite, Liza '77, John, Alexandra '81, and Susan '86; brother-in-law James Smythe '70; as well as many nieces and nephews, including Marguerite Smythe '03, Samuel Smythe '05, and Catherine Carter '03; and his cousins, R. George Abood '07 and Lydia Abood '11. He was predeceased by his brother, Timmy, and his parents, Thomas '43 and Marguerite. His spirit was best exemplified by his ability to be equally engaging and entertaining, uniquely offering a quick quip and genuine generosity in the same breath. He will be dearly missed and eternally celebrated. SOURCE: *The Day* (Conn.)

Pennel W. Bird '81, who passed away in Los Angeles on August 23 from a tragic interaction of medications resulting in an accidental suicide, was a supernova of creative energy and soul with many identities: adored special education teacher, gifted singer-songwriter, witty comedian, passionate writer, doting husband, and proud father. In a family with a Robert, a Christopher, and a Cameron, Pennel's distinctive name set him apart from birth. The name Pennel, a variation of the family name “Pinnell,” conjured up both history and a sense of whimsy that absolutely suited him, said his sister, Lara Kalt. “Everyone knew Pennel. What a name. He was so proud of it. From a little boy, he was larger than life. He just had this personality.” He was someone who noticed and appreciated everything—and everyone—around him, whether sending a birthday card to an old friend's child, or noticing a beautiful full moon and shouting out “*Viva la luna!*” at the top of his lungs, he was mesmerized by the beauty in the world, said longtime friend Eric Coleman. “He would find the grace notes in life everywhere.” He graduated from NYU, majoring in English and art history. He pursued his passion for music, playing in bands before, during, and after college, including Kinetic Sect, Tinderbox, Gravityhead, and Low. He performed at some of New York's and Connecticut's biggest clubs, and for a short time was signed with a major record label until a management change shifted the label's priorities. He was a talented comedian, performing improv, monologue, and sketch comedy on the New York and Los Angeles circuits, winning the Manhattan Monologue Slam six times. Even beyond the stage, his boundless creativity endeared him to both friends and strangers. He invented games, staged pratfalls, and transformed ordinary moments into memorable, joyful fun. According to one of his closest friends, Pete Begler, “Pennel was so warm and welcoming. He

wanted to live life to the fullest, to 110 percent, to experience and to enjoy every single thing.” While performing at comedy and music clubs in the evening, he began teaching during the day. During that time, he began dating Michelle Oricoli, who had just graduated from New York's Cardozo School of Law. They had met several years earlier and kept bumping into each other on the streets of Manhattan. As his father toasted at their wedding, “The gods of love kept giving them a chance to understand they were supposed to be together.” Michelle said she fell for him because of his deep intellect, incredible soul, and ability to make her laugh until her sides hurt. While still dating, Michelle moved to Los Angeles and he followed. He shared a ramshackle Silver Lake house with a handful of roommates—all of them struggling performers like himself—who soon became some of his closest friends. Friends spoke of escapades around town led by him, whether sneaking into a party in the Hollywood Hills and delighting new friends until dawn, or arriving at a concert without a ticket and winding up in the front row, or dramatically hitting every note of Celine Dion's “My Heart Will Go On” at karaoke. Friend Adam Scott said that he taught others to find the joy in each moment, and to live out that joy—a philosophy Scott says he has internalized and passed on. “It's such a profound way to give yourself permission,” he said. Scott and other friends asked him to officiate their weddings, something he did with soulfulness and flair. “Pennel made every dinner, holiday party, and game night 10 times more fun with his larger-than-life personality and amazingly infectious laughter,” said friend Hillary Seitz. “Everyone's hearts lifted the second he walked through the door. He was that special.” After marrying in 2000, he and Michelle had two sons, Wyatt and Callahan. Fatherhood was a revelation to him and a time of great joy. The couple faced unique challenges and worked tirelessly for their sons. “He was an incredibly devoted father,” said Begler. “He wasn't sure he was going to be a great dad, but he took to it instantly.” He taught his boys to live life to the fullest—inventing games, playing music, passing along his infinite curiosity. He would turn reading something as dry as *The Dictionary of Cultural Literacy* into a game he dubbed “The Smartening,” where they would read together and then discuss topics from Winston Churchill to Bob Marley. “The boys became his focus,” Begler added. “He was their biggest cheerleader.” He was also both a cheerleader and an advocate for his students with diverse needs, including ADHD, autism, and other challenges. “Pennel kept his eye on the forest and on each blade of grass,” wrote Lynda Rescia, principal of Ivanhoe Elementary School, where Pennel worked for nearly two decades as the special education resource teacher. “He supported his students with boundless love and intensity.” He believed it paramount to instill resilience in his students—that they were learning a valuable life lesson by working so hard at what came so easily to others. Former students have often credited him with getting them to a place where higher learning became possible. One Ivanhoe parent said, “During the most critical stretch of our son's development, Mr. Bird was a godsend.” At Ivanhoe, he called upon his roots in entertainment to bring something extra to the school experience. A colleague stated, “Pennel found it important to keep bringing that silly wild joy and laughter to the community, and especially, especially, especially to those who needed it the most.” He exceed assemblies, and every few years at the holiday program, students performed a song he had written, “That Christmas Feeling,” an homage to his and his mother's love of Christmases long gone by. Each October, third-grade students performed “Halloween Is Coming Soon,” another of his songs. He remained deeply connected to music and culture, as well as to politics. In recent years, he wrote for conservative websites. While he voted for Obama twice, he became disheartened with the political state of the world. Those closest to him link his childhood of inquiry and exploration to his desire to question and weigh all sides. Friends say he sought out civil discourse, even with those who held differing views. Kalt said, “It was very painful for him to see disharmony with no opportunity for

dialogue.” As the pandemic hit and his teaching went online, “Pennel fully recognized the depth of what he was doing as a teacher,” Begler said. “He was feeling successful. He wasn't chasing anything.” He leaves behind his wife, sons, siblings, and numerous cousins, nieces, and nephews, in addition to the friends and students whose lives were buoyed each day by his joyful spirit. They have created PennelBird.com in his honor and a GoFundMe site to aid his family with college tuition and mounting expenses. As one parent posted on the Ivanhoe PTA Instagram: “Forever for me, Mr. Bird will be the unofficial mayor of Ivanhoe. His big smile in the morning, standing by the auditorium posts, surveying the mayhem, helping the kids, sharing a quip...May the light and learning he brought into their lives be his legacy.” SOURCE: *Los Angeles Times*

Javier A. García '05 died tragically in a surfing accident at Short Sands Beach, Oregon, on June 19. He joined the faculty at George Fox University in 2016 and was the director of the George Fox Honors program, a prestigious great books program. He was a gifted teacher, a beloved professor and mentor, and was promoted to associate professor of religious studies in 2021. He completed his PhD in theology at the University of Cambridge in 2016, specializing in Dietrich Bonhoeffer. He was awarded the MPhil Prize in Theology and Religious Studies in 2011. Prior to his studies in Cambridge, he graduated magna cum laude from Georgetown University, majoring in philosophy and French. His first book, *Recovering the Ecumenical Bonhoeffer: Thinking After the Tradition*, was published by Fortress Press in 2019. He was known as a faithful man of God, a brilliant theologian, a loving son and brother, a world traveler, a dedicated teacher and scholar, the most loyal of friends, and a lover of Oregon's natural beauty. He was an active parishioner at All Souls Anglican Church in Portland, Oregon. He is survived by his father, Fabián García; his mother, Ana Carola Brcek García; his sisters, Patricia García-Grasmann and Daniela Gonzalez; his brother, Carlos García; and his girlfriend, Karina Peters. SOURCE: García Family

Ryan F. Rothfuss '16 of New Canaan, Connecticut, passed away unexpectedly on July 23. He was a beloved son, grandson, brother, nephew, cousin, boyfriend, and friend. He was a gifted oil painter from the age of 7. He loved art and American history (especially the American Revolution) and a world history buff. He was so proud of his Italian and German-American roots. He was a diehard New York Yankees fan, Star Wars fan, and enjoyed classic films. He was a wonderful brother to Hope, John, and William. He attended Rippowam Cisqua School from 2001 to 2012. He graduated with a bachelor in history from Boston University in May 2020. He was going for his master's degree in history at the University College London in January of 2022. He is survived by his mom and dad and two brothers, John, 18, William, 10, and a sister, Hope, 21; his grandfather, John Vogelstein '52; uncles Hans “Fred” Vogelstein '80 and Andrew Vogelstein '85; and cousins David Vogelstein '17, Natalie Vogelstein '20, and Matthew Vogelstein '23. SOURCE: *New Canaan Advertiser* (Conn.) ■

Looking
BACK

Looking Back Opening Doors



An article in the October 1971 Papyrus.

The 1971-72 Girls' Interim Council, the first group of young women who were chosen to help new female students make Taft their school; this photo ran with an October 1971 Papyrus article. BRAD JOBLIN '73

As we recognize the 50th anniversary of coeducation at Taft, we've been looking through the Archives' material to celebrate how we have grown as a community.

One group that stood out was the Girls' Interim Council. This group of mostly upper-school female students was elected by the 82 girls who were enrolled in the fall of 1971, the first school year that included female students. The Interim Council was a creation of the Coeducational Committee. The hope was that this group would represent the interests and concerns of the female students as well as act as a sounding board for students who had concerns to convey to the faculty and administration.

During the fall of 1971, the council met with Headmaster John Esty, the head monitor, and the senior monitors to address student issues and the tension of that first year. They fought for privileges such as late lights, dress code changes, and for seniors to be out of the dorms after 10:30 p.m. They also met with the school's trustees and class agents to report on their experiences as members of the Taft Community. This group of young women started the transition from the all-boys' school to the Taft we are today.

—Beth Nolan Lovallo '93,
The Leslie D. Manning Archives

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