



SMITH COLLEGE CLASS OF 1973

Message from the Class President

Dear Classmates,

Greetings from Connecticut, where the days are longer, the temperatures are warmer, and the goldfinches are just beginning to turn yellow again. More than usual, I've been immersed in Smith-related activities.

Joyce Krawiec Dickey and I are collaborating with several other alums to revitalize the Hartford Smith College Club, which has been in abeyance for several years. Our first order of business is to host the annual Three-College Luncheon (Smith, Mount Holyoke, Wellesley) which will be held on April 30 at the Pond House Café in beautiful Elizabeth Park. Our speaker will be Carolyn Kuan '99, who has served as the Music Director of the Hartford Symphony Orchestra since 2011, so we're looking forward to what should be a festive and enjoyable event.

One benefit of where I live is that I was able to travel to Northampton for Founder's Day on March 8. In fact, I went the day before, visited the art museum, and reveled in the colors of the Spring Bulb Show. On Founder's Day itself, Joyce and I, along with eight or ten other alums from the Hartford area, met to discuss our most recent Smith Book Club choice, *Imperfect Alchemist* by retired Smith professor Naomi Miller. Following that, we were privileged to have a meet and greet with President Sarah who continues to impress me with her warmth, enthusiasm, and vision. As if that weren't enough, Laurie Sanders '88, co-Director of Historic Northampton, shared a fascinating presentation on the history of Smith and Northampton. I learned a tremendous amount and came away with even greater respect for Sophia as well as for William Washburn (yes, Washburn House!) who is somewhat of an

unsung hero. Here's the [YouTube link](#) – well worth an hour of your time. Of course, there was tea available after the lecture, and plenty of Smith tea to take home.

My time on campus reinforced my gratitude for Sophia's wisdom (no pun intended), the college's history, my Smith education, and my sense of belonging, along with my appreciation for what an extraordinary community we share.

Thanks for all you do for our class and for the college.

*Warmly,
Anne*

Reunion Update

And now a word from our 55th Reunion Co-Chair: Please be on the lookout soon for a link to a Reunion-related survey. We want your input!

– Virginia "GiGi" Benjamin

Class Spotlight

Sheila Bowe Sitomer '73

When Sheila finished Smith College with a major in theater and minors in education and music, she pursued work with the attitude of a hustler – not in pool halls, but in the front offices of film and TV production companies lining the streets of Manhattan. Ultimately, she "won" a position as a receptionist for one of the city's hottest TV commercial production companies at the time. Her boss there solicited college recommendations from her for his own daughter, but then added, "You went to Smith and look at where you ended up." That job was just the beginning. In subsequent stints in New York, Boston, Pittsburgh, and Los Angeles, she worked in network, local, cable, syndicated, digital, and streaming platforms on entertainment and news magazine shows, morning talk and information, reality TV, children's programming, documentaries, docu-dramas, and even a game show. The achievement of which she is the proudest is the Warm Coats and Warm Hearts Drive, a cooperative between the Burlington Coat Factory and the non-profit One

Warm Coat, which she helped establish during her years at *Good Morning America*. Over the drive's 12 years, more than two million new and gently worn coats were donated to those in need across the country.

Today she tells undergrads and grad students in her classes at Boston University that success in the TV industry requires hustle, empathy, curiosity, ethics, and certainly hard work. Her professional future includes starting additional academic administrative duties as Associate Chair of her department. The future of the television industry will be similar to her life, i.e., one of evolution. Sheila predicts more changes in the streaming landscape as competitors find more ways to "bundle" together to grow their subscription numbers, content creators (like TikTokers and YouTubers) will continue to have a major impact, and cable channels are facing an uncertain future. And yes, she, too, ponders the future of freedom of the press.

The evolution of Sheila's life has included vicissitudes as well as achievement. Her husband, Dan, died fifteen years ago. Her daughter is one of the kindest, most empathetic people Sheila knows. As she recalled her experiences at Smith, she expressed appreciation for getting to know other students from a wide range of backgrounds, since her hometown (outside of Hartford, CT) had been small – and not diverse! Those experiences helped prepare her for a career of sharing stories from a broad spectrum of people, from First Lady Rosalynn Carter to families living in abject poverty on Manila's garbage dumps. Our 50th Reunion—absolutely like being in a time-machine and definitely worth the trip—gave her insights as she heard classmates (known as well as new) recount significant choices and decisions they'd made over five decades. She would look forward to repeating that – scene 2028, take two!

– *Jean Godsall-Myers*

News from Smith



- **What's blooming** – Watch spring emerge at Smith through one of our [campus webcams](#).
 - **The Smith Basketball makes it to the Championship final!** [Read more here](#).
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Founder's Day

On March 8th, the Smith community celebrated Founder's Day, the day Sophia Smith signed her will establishing the college. Service opportunities, lectures, and events honored the spirit of generosity – from Sophia's original bequest to the exchange of knowledge in classrooms to the impact of alums leading change in the world.



SEE THE FESTIVITIES

Report from the Class Treasurer

I became Class Treasurer at the end of our 40th class Reunion. That means I have gone through two full cycles of our class reunions (45th & 50th). About the time I was elected as Treasurer was about the time the college took over the management of our class treasury. Prior to that the class treasurer had a checkbook and reimbursement meant writing a check to the person

requesting reimbursement. Now the process has to go through the college. When you need to be reimbursed you need to submit your request to me so I can have a handle of what money is going out the door. I will then forward your request to the college. If you want to submit your request directly to the college you still need to cc: me on the email. At a recent Zoom meeting [Maddy Neely](#), who is our Class Liaison, mentioned that sometimes it's quicker if the college buys the item (let's say Reunion swag) and takes it out of our class treasury. That way you don't have to deal with the reimbursement process. Either way I, your Class Treasurer, still need to know about the expense.

If you have further questions, please contact me via text or call my cell phone (763-464-8323) or email me at smkooyman@gmail.com.

– Shirley Mah Kooyman

Update from the In Memoriam Committee

Some days it seems as if we just had our 50th Reunion, and other days it seems that next month will be our 55th! But the work of the In Memoriam Committee continues throughout all the weeks in between. Janny Josephs Wang and I (Jean Godsall-Myers) share the tasks of responding to news of the passing of classmates as well as oversight of the IM program in 2028. At this point, Janny is sending condolence notes, as well as thanking our classmates who donated financial gifts in memory of former classmates. I am pursuing biographic information about those classmates.

So I regret to inform you that the college has notified us of two classmates whose names must be added to the list offered in the program bulletin in 2023: Karen Kaplan and Alice Weinstock Wight, both of whom passed last summer. I knew Karen by sight, and especially in my work on this committee, I am grateful for her efforts as editor of our yearbook. I did not know Alice, but I have now learned she lived within a half hour of me, and I am sorry our paths did not cross.

Many of you attended the 2023 In Memoriam event and can recall the comments about each classmate listed. Such eulogies are offered voluntarily and help us all to recall the individual and/or appreciate the life of an unknown classmate. As you learn of a classmate's death, we encourage you

to contact us, should you know details about the woman. If you wish, please also let us know if you would be interested in sharing your remembrances during the 2028 In Memoriam event. We thank Mary Hinkel (and others) for the event in 2023, and we hope to honor classmates similarly at our 55th gathering.

With greetings from Seattle in the West and Philadelphia in the East to all points in between and beyond,

– Janny (jcoltj1973@gmail.com) & Jean (wittjgm@gmail.com)

An Update from your Media Team of Margie and Jess

The class FB page receives about two requests a week to join from "people" who are not members of the Smith Class of 1973. I think many of them are probably bots or trolls. Of course Jess and I decline their requests.

Class website: Let us know if there is anything that you want posted or updated.

Fundraising Update

Greetings from your fund team coordinators and a big THANK YOU to the 145 classmates who have already donated this fiscal year. As of early March we have a participation rate of 25% and have raised \$466,230!

In our last newsletter we spoke about our great results for fiscal year 2024 (37% participation!) and our tentative plans for 2025 – supporting the Rally Day initiative and focusing on participation with a leadership team challenge at the end of the fiscal year in June.

Plans change – the Trustees did not have a matching gift challenge for Rally Day this year. But, your leadership team has committed to our June participation challenge! We will focus on outreach to those who have not made a gift and if (when) we reach our participation goal, your leadership team's gift will be triggered. As with last year, the emphasis will be on participation – a gift of \$1.50 will count as much toward our participation goal

as a gift of \$15,000. Obviously, more details will be forthcoming, but that's the basic plan.

As always, volunteers are welcome. Feel free to contact either one of us.

– Margie Rowland (margierowland@gmail.com) & Crissy Taylor Waddill (cwaddill@ufl.edu)

GIVE TO SMITH

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- [Update your contact information](#)
- Follow Smith on [X](#) (formerly known as Twitter), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn](#)
- Access every issue of the [Smith Quarterly](#), going back to 1909, in the magazine's digital archive
- View past issues of [Notes from Paradise](#)
- [Be A Friend](#) (of the Libraries, Botanic Garden, Athletics, or Museum of Art)
- [Volunteer for Admissions](#)
- Join a [Smith Club](#) in your area

Class Leadership Team

[Anne Pidano](#), President

[Virginia "GiGi" Benjamin](#), Reunion Chair

[Laura "Lolly" Olena Mixter](#), Secretary

[Shirley Mah Kooyman](#), Treasurer

[Margie Hunt](#), Digital Media Coordinator

[Jessica "Jess" Tava](#), Digital Media Coordinator

[Margaret "Margie" Rowland](#), Fund Team Coordinator

[Christine "Crissy" Taylor Waddill](#), Fund Team Coordinator

[Barbara Robbins Simanek](#), Planned Giving Chair

[Jean Godsall-Myers](#), Memorial Co-Chair

[Janet Josephs Wang](#), Memorial Co-Chair

[Wendy Kassel](#), Reunion House Rep

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