



Coping With Covid: One Alumnae Family

From the WCAA Director

Dear Westerners,

Happy New Year! I hope you are all in good health ...

This past year, I found myself repeating Maya Angelou's mantra: "Hope and fear cannot occupy the same space. Invite one to stay." If I am being honest, the difficulties of 2020 made it tough for me to disinvite fear. However, there is new hope, namely a new vaccine which hopefully will bring families and friends gleefully back together in 2021. I have also found renewed hope in seeing first hand that nothing, not even a global pandemic, can stop the WCAA from accomplishing our mission. We are Western!



Mackenzie

It has been a very busy year for the WCAA. So many Zoom meetings — thank goodness for Zoom, right? The Board is focused on preparing for the sunset of the WCAA Inc. in 2024, and most importantly, ensuring our legacy. The Western College legacy encompasses a broad spectrum and helping to ensure it is invigorating.

We continue partnering with the College of Arts and Science on the Western Center for Social Impact and Innovation. Hearing the passion of the students and faculty involved with the Western Center leaves no room for anything but hope for a much brighter future.

Finally, some exciting news that exemplifies solid hope in the prosperous relationship with Miami and the WCAA. **In December, Sylvia Stanfield '65 was honored by Miami with an Advancement Award, bestowed upon those who have made a true difference at Miami University.** Sylvia was a member of both the Miami University Foundation Board of Directors and the WCAA Board of Trustees (of which she remains a member) for many years. Much of her motivation has been in ensuring that Miami plays an essential role in safeguarding the WCAA legacy now and well beyond 2024. We can't blame Miami for wanting to make her one of their own ... although we all know her heart is true blue.

I've got hope, thanks to all of you. Hope lives in a world where the WCAA legacy flourishes. Fear ain't got nothin' on us!

Happiest 2021 to you all.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mackenzie".

Mackenzie Becker Rice
Director, WCAA

If you have included the WCAA in your deferred giving plans, please confirm your gift designation with staff: (513) 529-4400, e-mail: wcaa@miamioh.edu.

IMPORTANT REMINDER:
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Mission of the Association:

- to preserve and encourage communication among and with alumnae,
- to support education and human values that continue the heritage and tradition of The Western College.

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On the cover: Susan James Duvillard '69 and family celebrating Mothers' Day, French style, their first outing after strict confinement: "1 hour outside of our homes; no farther than 400 meters from home; written reason (food shopping, pharmacy, doctor, physical exercise) for being outside, signed and dated in our pocket." (See her complete update, *Class Notes*, page 20.)



BLUE CARDS (see page 35) DUE UPON RECEIPT!
Don't wait for the February 2021 deadline — send your news and pictures NOW.
Your dedicated Class Rep will thank you for making her job easier.

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From the WCAA Board President

We are so fortunate! Yes, in this wild and challenging time, I can say that — we are so fortunate ... to have shared the experience of Western College! As President of the WCAA, working with a remarkable and dedicated Board of Trustees, I am reminded time and again of how special that experience was and how it has enriched my life. It is an honor to be engaged in preserving and enlivening that legacy on your behalf.



Fran Hoffman

This particular Board has a very different role from any before. We must carry out our normal operations — keeping alumnae informed and in touch, granting scholarships, carefully minding our financial status and health and tending relations with Miami University — *and* we must also prepare ourselves for our dissolution in June 2024.

If you think that we are slowing down and getting ready to fade away, stop right now! On the contrary, this amazing group of women has upped the ante, and picked up the pace with conviction and vigor. Yes, we are getting ready to close, but we are going to do it extremely well, in great form and with full heart. Here is what we have accomplished since June 2020:

- We reviewed our governance agreements with Miami University and the Miami University Foundation, clarifying tasks that are necessary for closure. Committees have their assignments and work is underway.
- We have selected legal counsel to guide us properly through this process.
- We held two days of wonderfully productive Strategic Planning Sessions in which we renewed and refocused our commitment to our legacy projects. We know where we are heading and we have a roadmap!
- We will be launching our final fund-raising project in early 2021.
- Our virtual 2020 reunion was a great success, although we would have much preferred face-to-

face, and a number of virtual class gatherings were spawned from that experience. We will be doing more of that.

As we draw closer to 2024 and our dissolution, our interaction with Miami is increasing. We are making sure that Miami administration and staff understand our sense of mission and the manifestation of our legacy. We are making sure that our donors' intentions are followed and that the endowments are adequate and secure. We will also be folding our alumnae services into the Miami framework.

The more we work with Miami, the more exciting, dynamic and forward-looking our legacy becomes. We are so fortunate to be working with such high caliber and supportive people at Miami — **President Gregory Crawford, Dr. Renate Crawford, Tom Herbert, Chris Makaroff, and Evan Lichtenstein.**

Here are some examples of our interaction with Miami:

- Miami's President Gregory Crawford launched a Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Initiative to engage the university in a response to the violent death of George Floyd and to help "put an end to structural racism and racial violence in our communities, our country and around the world." A new donation enabled us to provide support to this initiative, which we felt was closely tied to our own Western College legacy. This led to an invitation to our Board to participate in a series of "Town Hall Meetings" in which the draft recommendations of the DEI Initiative Task Force were presented and discussed. Three of our board members participated in the Town Hall Meetings and then met with President Crawford to share impressions.
- Preliminary courtesy notice of the first action on the DEI Initiative Task Force recommendations was shared with WCAA — renaming the Campus Avenue Building on Miami's campus in honor of the first African American graduate of Miami University — Nellie Craig Walker. [See article, p. 33]
- In early November, President Crawford awarded the coveted President's Medallion to the WCAA. In his own words:

Dear members of the Western College Alumnae Association,

I write today to thank you for your inspiration and support of Miami University's efforts to promote diversity, equity and inclusion throughout our Miami community. Specifically, your support has helped successfully launch our new Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Fund, which now stands at more than \$1.27 million and growing. We value your contributions and treasure your integral role in Miami's past, present and future.

It is my privilege to award the Alumnae Association the President's Medallion, honoring those Miamians who exemplify our mission and purpose of Love and Honor.

For more than 100 years, the Western College for Women developed in its students a strong commitment to social justice, civil rights, international education and leadership. Thanks to your dedicated example, that spirit survives and thrives at Miami today. Your efforts inspire us all and uphold the highest virtues and qualities of our mission and purpose as an institution.

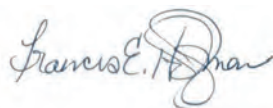
- The leader of our highly successful Strategic Planning Sessions was a Miami University alumna volunteer, **Sharon Mitchell, Class of '73**. Sharon has served as President of the Miami University Board of Trustees and is currently President of the Miami University Foundation. Sharon and her husband, Graham, were recently honored as part of the Advancement Awards Event with the Spirit of Philanthropy Award. She worked so well with us and helped us leap forward in our effort to define and put our legacy in place.
- Our own WCAA Board Member and former President, **Sylvia Stanfield '65** received the Honorary Alumna Award for her exceptional contributions to Miami in her service on the Miami University Foundation Board and in many other ways.

President Crawford established the Spirit of Western Award this fall. The award recognizes the advancement of education and human values at the local, national and international level in the areas of diversity, equity, and

inclusion. It pays tribute to an enduring social justice legacy and honors those who are carrying it forward. The first recipients of the award were **Rodney Coates**, a professor of critical race and ethnic studies in the Department of Global and Intercultural Studies and the co-chairs of the DEI Initiative Task Force, **Anthony James** and **Vicka Bell-Robinson Ph.D. '16**.

Please pardon the length of this letter to you. I thought it important to let you know what your Board is doing, how your alma mater is thriving and where we are headed. You are foremost in our minds and hearts. We hope you are as excited as we are. And there is more to come!

In the Spirit of Western,



Frances Hoffman '65
President, WCAA Board of Trustees

What's on Your Mind

When *Class of 1961 Bulletin Rep* representative **Mary De Jong Obuchowski** read classmate **Susan Baarsch Button**'s reaction to the letter from **Catherine Smith Strait '70** in the *Spring/Summer 2020 Bulletin* — and to her experience with the class reunion Zoom meeting — she spoke with Susan personally and prevailed upon her to share her story in our pages. Here, in her own words, is what Susan responded.

We were in the midst of a 1961 class reunion on Zoom, discussing why people had dropped out of contact from the college or from individuals in the group. Some thought they were aware of health issues with certain classmates but couldn't explain about others. I offered another possible suggestion. I said I had dropped out because I was a lesbian and didn't really know how to bring up my stories at a class reunion or offer them in class newsletter tidbits. How was I to tell people that I was happily married to a gay man for 23 years, raised three children, and now am happily married to my wife? It was easier to just drop out.

I did not plan to share my story, nor did I choose what part of it to tell. I don't even remember what I said on Zoom. I remember someone asked about the children's reactions. Once a subject is raised, it's easier to respond to questions. You know, I lied for years. It's not easy to lie when you think of yourself as basically a good and honest person!

One of my first experiences coming out happened when my 12-year-old daughter asked me if Roseanne and I were gay. I told her that was an important enough question that my friend would have to be asked directly, even though I knew my response would hurt her. Once that happened, I would answer my daughter's questions about myself if she really wanted to know. But once she knew, she would have information that could lead to my losing my job and maybe her dad's and more. She understood that and wanted me to continue. Through mutual tears, I proceeded. We talked at length. She asked if it meant that Daddy and I had to get a divorce, and I was able to say that he and I had gone through this and that we would not divorce. We talked about the importance of not telling others and how it would be hard to not tell. When we were exhausted, she had a final question: Did this mean I would hate her future boyfriends when she would have them!

Actually the time when Phillip and I wrestled with his discovery that I was gay was traumatic. He felt betrayed. And hurt. We talked and cried and cried and talked some more. There is more to be said but not here. Let me add that the story was complicated by his acknowledging that he was also gay but somehow it was different! We managed to survive all that and hold our marriage together. We decided to have a child together, our daughter. Because we were educators, we heard from Cuyahoga County Youth Services that mixed-race children were not being adopted, so we added two African-American boys to complete our immediate family,

while aspects of our separate lives also continued for some fourteen years until Phillip died.

When my husband was getting so sick that it became obvious, I had to begin to tell people: first people at work (we worked in the same agency), then his daughter and his sisters. They told his mother that Phillip had AIDS. The secret was out and it was easier to tell the more complete story. And when Phil died in March 1990, I began to become more honest with myself and found the freedom exhilarating. But I was more free with new friends than with old.

I was used to advocating for women's rights, and race relations, and parent participation with the special needs children. I wasn't used to speaking up for myself. Then a friend introduced me to the Affirmation and the Reconciling movements in the United Methodist Church. I found my voice. (Some of you may remember I was active in and eventually the chair of the Religion in Life Council at Western. I always had a spiritual bent, even though I never became a member of a church until I was in my 50s.) I took on the responsibility of ministering to the United Methodist Church to show that the consistency of loving your neighbor included your gay neighbor as well. I could preach on the subject but still found it difficult to bring my story, and myself, to old friends and acquaintances. It was easier to just move on.

In the *Spring/Summer 2020* issue of the *Western Alumnae Bulletin*, **Catherine Smith Strate '70**, in the "What's on Your Mind" article, writes about unrest across campuses and the closings without graduations in 1970. She related that deans Hoyt and Micks offered the students a choice to continue on campus or to have Western close down as many campuses did. The students chose to finish the year and graduate. Regarding student decision-making, my twin, **Sandra Baarsch Baumgardner '61**, had read Miss Hoyt's memoir to me; it described at some length the richness and uniqueness of Western's student government.



Susan (right) with her wife of eight years, Lori Barbeisch. They have been living together for 15 years.

I was reminded that in 1971 the president of the Philippines was to speak at commencement but at the last moment he was unable to come. Someone at Western decided to put together a panel and included Phillip and me! I think we were chosen in part because we were returned Peace Corps Volunteers, teaching in inner city schools at the time, and possibly because Western College was going co-ed. In the early '70s, I doubt that we would have been asked if people had known we were gay. It was not discussed in those days. I'm a firm believer that topics that are not discussed cannot be examined and brought to new levels of understanding. I'm sure that gays coming out of the closet led to more understanding and acceptance. AIDS gave people an opportunity to see gays in a new light. People came to see partners as compassionate care givers and in advocacy roles.

Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins '74, also in the *Bulletin*, contributed an address she had made in Kumler Chapel in 2014, also in the Spring 2020 *Bulletin*, "We Are The Movement Makers." Since the '90s I've been in the movement toward full inclusion of gays and other sexually self identified people. But gay people are identified not only by their sexuality. I have been active, as well, in race relations, special needs children's rights, judicial and jail advocacy, and food security efforts. All of which is to say that I'm like a lot of Western alumnae who are active in social, religious, and political movements, and in valuing reaching out to one's neighbors.

—*Susan Baarsch Button '61*

*Nothing gives us more pleasure than in-person visits from alumnae and friends of the Western family. And so it was that on July 11, WCAA Associate Director Debbie Baker HA welcomed **Joanne Young Polowy**, daughter of former Western College President **Herrick B. Young**, and family members to campus [see picture, p. 34]. A bonus was Joanne's priceless memories, shared here.*

Recently I visited Oxford, Ohio in order to see the campus of Western College for Women, now absorbed by Miami University. Western holds a special place in my heart as even before my father was President of Western College for Women, he often went there to speak, since he was well-known for his international expertise. Additionally, my brother (Rod Young) went there to attend a Puppeteers of America conference his senior year of high school. While there, he made a connection for his first professional television job as a puppeteer for a TV station in Atlanta, GA. This started his lifelong career as a professional puppeteer. Then, a number of years later, my father was invited to serve as Western's president. The initiation of the International Program fit in perfectly with my father's career. He worked as a foreign correspondent for the UPI (now AP), then became an educator and helped set up Alborz College in Teheran, Persia. There, he met my mother, a Presbyterian missionary.

year, we stayed in the home economics house. Patterson Place was a special place for us, as was Western over the years. Because we spent so much time there while my father was president, it became our family home.

Both students and faculty participated in the international seminars for which my father was so important. At the Zoom session, several of the alumnae who participated said they had gone on some of the seminars. It was particularly wonderful to hear them talk about their memories of their journeys. Their memories reminded me of the stories my parents used to tell me of their travels around the world. My father always thought that seeing parts of the world and learning about other cultures helps broaden a person's worldview.

—*Joanne Young Polowy*

Even though I was an adult when my father became president, I was able to spend quite a bit of time at Western College. I remember a number of events at Western that were special for me. When my parents went on the first seminar, I spent the time they were away not only with my children, but also with my grandmother, who was living with them until she died several years later. I often took everyone for drives in the area, particularly Hueston Woods. Through the years, I also got to know several faculty families during the summers I was there, as well as members of the faculty who went on the seminars.

A few other special times at Western stand out to me. My wedding was held in Kumler Chapel and the reception was on the lawn of Patterson Place. When my children were young, we often went to Western for holidays. Over Christmas one



Joanne Young Polowy, daughter of former Western College for Women President, Herrick B. Young, visiting the Legacy Circle in July 2020

A Western Perspective ... from WCP/WP Professor Hays Cummins

So how did a nice boy from New Orleans end up teaching science in a small town in southwestern Ohio? Western 2.0 and 3.0 professor Hays Cummins is still wondering himself. But one thing is for sure: he's glad he did. He tells us why in the article below, his reflection on his 32 years at Western. This year, at age 70, concerned about Covid-19 and the restrictions it imposed on his teaching, he decided to retire. With B.A. and M.S. degrees in biology from Louisiana State University and a Ph.D. in oceanography from Texas A & M, he came to Miami by way of Muskingum College and put down his roots in what was then the School of Interdisciplinary Studies (Western College Program). Named a University Distinguished Teacher in 2013, prior to his retirement this year Hays was a professor of Geography; an affiliate of the Department of Geology; an affiliate and Fellow of the Institute of Environmental Science; and the former Harrison Scholars Professor in the Honors and Scholars Program. He taught in the natural science core in the Western College Program, and was director of Environmental Programs, Discovery-Oriented Science Instruction, and the Julia Rothermel Center for Science Discovery. Founding co-director of Project Dragonfly and science editor for Dragonfly magazine as well as co-founder of Environmental Education Press, he is the author of two books and countless articles.

I was asked to write a little about my retirement from Miami and Western. Quite frankly, I was as surprised as anyone at coming to this decision.

I originally came to Miami as a faculty member in the School of Interdisciplinary Studies (Western College Program) about 32 years ago. Mere words cannot express just what a pleasure and honor it's been to be a Western faculty and community member for my entire career. I thoroughly enjoyed the many interactions with students and colleagues Western afforded me.

As with students at Western, faculty at Western are encouraged to be part of the larger university community. I have particularly appreciated the collegiality, support, and professional growth not only with the Western program (past and present) but also with the University Honors Program, Project Dragonfly,* the Geography department, the Geology and Environmental Earth Science department, the Institute for the Environment and Sustainability, and my international partners in the Bahamas, Costa Rica, and Australia. My time at Miami has been everything I could have hoped for and more.

Thanks to all of you who have helped make my time here so satisfying and stimulating. Thanks to our students for keeping me interested and letting me share my many academic enthusiasms, whether it be research, interdisciplinary scholarship, restoration, tropical ecology, astronomy, photography, or the ecology of coral reefs! *It's been great ...*

WHO I AM

Upon finishing my doctorate in Oceanography, I wanted to teach in a small liberal arts college that combined

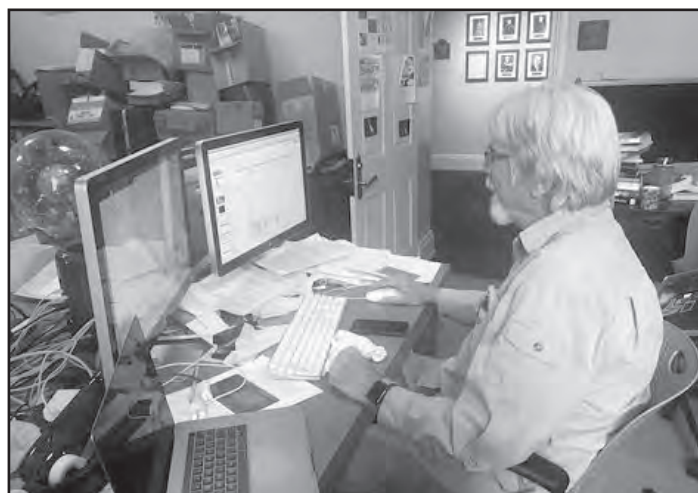


Photo by Arcadia Davies/Greenhawks Media

Dr. Hays Cummins, at work in his Peabody Hall office

the best of teaching and research. My first stop was Muskingum College, which had a clear focus on undergraduate education. In a class of 25, about three students would speak out in class discussion. I did most of the talking. I wanted more.

In 1988 I interviewed at the Western Program at Miami. As part of the job interview, I interacted with a class of 20 students on a topic I chose. Wanting to see if the students would read an article and how they would handle a discussion on it, I chose "Tornado Formation," a complex article. To my surprise and delight, all 20 students interacted in the class discussion. *I was hooked ...*

The Program is like having a small liberal arts college beamed down into the middle of a really fine university. *It is the best of both worlds ...*

LEARNING TO SAY "I DON'T KNOW"

Western taught me how to say the three simple words "I don't know." It was an amazing moment of clarity and

growth for me. Let me explain. I was a hot shot young professor on top of his game. I considered myself to be an expert in matters of climate and the oceans. We were talking about the *Coriolis Effect* in a Natural Systems 1 lecture and why winds blow the way they do. I got a question from a student that seemed so simple at first, but after careful thought, I realized that I couldn't really answer the question without a touch of bullshit thrown in.

I had a decision to make. Go with the bullshit or share my uncertainty? Despite my uncertainty (would I lose control of the classroom?), the students and I discussed this. That experience helped me become a better teacher and facilitator. I let go the mantle of "expert" on everything. It was wonderful! After all, I discovered that I was a learner just like our students. *What a relief ...*

Learning from students is one reason I love teaching — I often get from them as much as I give. **Erika**, a recent graduate, asked me to read aloud two pages of her senior project text, entitled "Heartstrings: the Power of love in Community," so that she could listen to her written words. Before I could get to the second page of reading aloud, I began to get emotional as her words came alive. I cried. *Thank you ...*

TAKING A LEAP OF FAITH (Ray Bradbury)

Students joining the Western Program are taking a leap of faith. Their UG route to a degree is very different from a traditional major here at Miami. Students take charge of their degree plan by designing a rationale for what they want to do. It takes courage to join the Western Program. Success is not just handed to our students.

The Western student senior capstone is a year-long interdisciplinary project on a topic of their own choosing. As director of the Senior Project Workshop, 2015-2020, my main mission was to facilitate the work of these fine students. We don't tell them what to do. They are not working on projects designed by other scholars, which is one of the most common ways undergraduates get involved in research. Western Senior Projects are of their own making, from original idea to study rationale to global synthesis of what others have done before them. Students risk multiple failures along the way. To complete this project requires personal growth and courage in dealing with the uncertainties inherent in interdisciplinary scholarship and creativity. One important goal of mine was for students to become comfortable with being uncomfortable. Living in the gray zone of uncertainty is inherent in doing scholarship.

Not playing it safe, **Cole**, a senior focusing upon business, decided that he needed more than a traditional degree! He wanted to be challenged in ways that other majors didn't offer. He chose Western as his creative option. His senior project focused upon religion and politics.

In the middle of her senior year, **Sarah** came to me and said that she felt like she was playing it safe, that she was doing a senior project that had minimal risks. After working with her peers, she had realized that her project was all boxed in. *She had the courage to let it go and start again!* Sarah took the leap of faith that she could deal with the risk and uncertainties inherent in nurturing an idea that was her own and not confined by the boundaries of getting a preconceived answer. *Bravo to all our students who have taken this journey in the Western program ...*

OK, I love birds. I'm freaky for birds. As I was writing this text, I couldn't help but think about wood ducks. These beautiful North American ducks are often seen perched high in trees where they frequently nest in tree cavities. They can produce two nesting broods each season. Nestlings leave their nest within days of hatching. They "leap" from their nest at heights as high as 75 feet above the water surface or ground. Imagine that, jumping out of the nest so high in the air. *That is a leap of faith. Our Western students have done this ...*

Parents and family, you have also taken a *leap of faith* by supporting your students in their decision to join the Western Program. Their path is not a typical one. Undoubtedly you wondered what this was all about and what they would do with this unusual UG degree. Will they ever get a job? What will they do after college?

I have a story to share with you. Years ago, I was working summer orientation for the Western Program. After lunch, hundreds of students wandered off for focused orientations on the programs they would be entering. We had about 25 students present to learn more about the School of Interdisciplinary Studies major. Just before we began our question and answer session, a father came rushing into the room and began yelling at his daughter. He told her that if she enrolled in the Western Program, all of her funds for college would be cut off. All of us were in a state of shock as the crying daughter, crying mother, and angry father left the room. I'll never forget that scene. *Thank you, friends and family, for your support ...*

A Shocking Experience!

Teaching a field course in the Bahamas on San Salvador island. As the students and I were admiring the panoramic view from the lighthouse, I noticed a thunderstorm developing to the south. The storm was not as large as the ones we had recently experienced. Nevertheless, I immediately told the students to come down from the lighthouse. Soon afterward it began to rain, but the lightning was still in the distance. Instead of walking back to the uncovered, open flatbed truck to return to the field station, we moved from the lighthouse to the lighthouse keeper's home, which is located about 20 meters south of the lighthouse. We knocked on the front door but received no response, so I decided the group should stay on the covered front porch, reasoning that this would be a relatively safe spot to wait out what seemed to be an average storm.



Joking around pre-lightning strike ...

The rain came down harder as we gathered on the large, deep porch, and as the storm moved closer, I experienced a sinking feeling. A narrow band of intense lightning was advancing directly towards us. I told the group that we would be in a "lightning danger zone" in about two minutes and I suggested that everyone sit down away from the front of the porch. Then we waited. Joe, sitting against the front wall of the house, said: "If one of us gets struck, we all get struck." We laughed nervously. No one really expected to be struck by lightning.

After that things happened quickly. Lightning lit up the sky. Three seconds later thunder followed. One km away. In the next moment more lightning. Closer. Then, lightning, thunder, and shock hit all at once. Electricity flowed through the group. We were thrown into the air. My body was numb. I couldn't speak. I lost any sense of time. A frozen moment. And then I looked to my left, and locked eyes with John, a student. We both screamed.

Everyone screamed. A strong, peculiar odor of burned rock, hair, and ozone permeated the air. Barely able to move, I banged on the front door, trying to awaken the lighthouse keeper. Students banged on the door, too. The lighthouse keeper, who had been sleeping after a night's work, let us in. We stumbled and crawled over one another onto the floor of his living room until, with four walls wrapped around us, we felt safer. We stayed until the thunderstorm was over.

Was anyone hurt? Was everyone present and accounted for? I couldn't bear the thought that any of the students might be dead or seriously injured. The electric field of the lightning strike had enveloped us. One student had been knocked unconscious but quickly recovered. We compared peculiar star-shaped burn marks on our thighs, arms, backs, and shoulders where electricity had entered and left our bodies. Eight students, upon returning to the field station, required a visit to the doctor's office with problems ranging from sore muscles and electrical burns to hearing loss.

Being a reasonable professor, I put the syllabus aside and gave the class the afternoon off. A few students and I completed field work on a research project in Grahams Harbor, San Salvador. While on the boat ride to the transect location, I broke into uncontrollable laughter. It was impossible to take the work at hand seriously. I laughed till I cried as tension left me. It was great to be alive.

— H.C.

BETTER PREPARED TO DEAL WITH A COMPLEX WORLD

I have taught many courses that required students to learn lots of facts. To get an A in my intro geology course, many of these facts had to be spit back on exams: what was the name of that geologic time period when amphibians first evolved? I often wondered how much my students remembered five years later! While facts in themselves are important in many circumstances, I feel that *learning how to think and how to ask the right questions* are far more valuable.

Our graduates have learned that dealing with uncertainties, that being willing to change your mind, that living in the gray area of uncertainty is a very *creative* place to be. If our students *can be comfortable feeling uncomfortable* and look at life's challenges through an interdisciplinary lens, I feel that the Western Program has succeeded in its educational mission.

School of Interdisciplinary Studies Western College Program

The old Western, the School of Interdisciplinary Studies (1974-2006), was its own division within the university. The bulk of our students entered Miami as Western majors. It had a two-year on-campus residential requirement. All of the core classes were team taught. Majors were required to take approximately 50 credit hours within the Western major. There were more than 12 tenured/tenure track full-time faculty. We had about 200 majors. The sense of community was very strong. The School of Interdisciplinary Studies was a unique program that, for reasons still not clear to me, was closed down in 2006.

I'd like to give a special thanks to the amazing interdisciplinary faculty and staff that I worked with (1988-2006). I learned so much from you: **Dr. Muriel Blaisdell, Dr. Geoff Chase, Dr. Gail Della-Piana, Dean Curt Ellison, Kim Ernsting, Dr. Andy Garrison, Jane Goldflies, Dean Bill Gracie, Dr. Bill Green, Dr. Sally Harrison-Pepper, Dr. Carolyn Haynes, Dean Burt Kaufman, Jillian Kinzie, Celia Knight, Dr. Enid LaGesse, Jeannie Brown Leonard, Dr. Xiuwu Liu, Sharon Long, Dr. Mark McPhail, Dr. Gene Metcalf, Dr. Chris Myers, Dr. Bill Newell, Cheryl Newton, Dr. Nancy Nicholson, Dr. Charles Nies, Dr. Mark Pedelty, Dr. Terry Perlin, Assoc. Dean Karl Schilling, Dr. George Stein, and Dr. Chris Wolfe.** *Thank you all ...*

Today's Western is not the old Western, it's new. After the closing of the School of Interdisciplinary Studies, I was not certain if the new Western would be able to survive the transition. We went from being within our own division to being a smaller program within the College of Arts and Science. Resources available to the new Western would be harder to come by. Could this work?



I need not have worried. Despite the reduction in credit hours required for an Individualized Studies degree and the number of faculty/staff less than half that of what it was when the School of Interdisciplinary Studies existed, I have been so pleased at the current staff and faculty's dedication to the new Western and student success. Students basically design their own major with faculty guidance. Most of our majors enter the program in their second or third year. Majors take about 22 credit hours of required courses. All majors still do a rigorous year-long senior project. While we have to work harder to build our community than in the past, thanks to the efforts of the current faculty/staff, the Western community traditions continue to grow.

The current faculty and staff — **Dr. Nik Money**, Western Program Director; **Dr. Jacque Daugherty**, new Western Center Director; **Dr. Wen-Ching Chaung**; **Zackary Hill**, Coordinator/Advisor; **Dr. Xiuwu Liu**; **Anita Randrianantoanina**, Program Associate; **Billy Simms**, Western Center Coordinator; also former Administrative Assistant **Lisa Iams** and former Visiting Scholar **Yama Chiodi** — are doing a really fantastic job. Others who have taught at Western and/or helped develop the new Western include **Dr. Anne Elizabeth Armstrong, Dr. Mary Jean Corbett, Dr. Charles Ganelin, Dr. Kathleen Johnson, Dr. Mary McDonald, and Dr. Lisa Weems**. I am proud to have worked with them — and so many others, like **Genevieve O'Malley Knight, Virginia Moore, Julie Schlichter** — toward Western's common mission. I hope to be involved in some capacity in the future. *Thank you ...*

WHAT I PLAN ON DOING IN THE FUTURE

I hope to continue advising and working with students in the Western Program, Geography and the Institute for the Environment and Sustainability. Some possibilities



include advising Western students on their senior project ideas, independent research, and ecological restoration projects. My wife, Donna, and I plan on welcoming students and faculty to our place for nature hikes and gatherings (such as senior dinners, annual crawfish and shrimp boils), and continuing programs for students and the community on astronomy and telescope use. I hope to be available for master's degree projects in Geography and IES. I also plan to continue teaching with the Project Dragonfly* graduate program. I'm sure there will be other ways of working with students — I hope you will keep me in mind if you think I can help with something.

One area that I'm intensely interested in is environmental restoration and conservation. Donna and I have two properties in conservation easements with Three Valley Conservation Trust in Southwestern Ohio (Edge of the Farm Conservation Area) and Tall Timbers Land Conservancy in Florida (Big Bend Wildlands Preserve) east-southeast of Tallahassee. Our mission statement for both properties is: "... to conserve biodiversity by enhancing habitat while educating and sharing some of the many natural wonders of the world around us with present and future generations." Conservation easements protect both properties from development now and — at least as the laws are currently written — in perpetuity.

Edge of the Farm has tall and short grass prairies, five wetlands, and forests along with plenty of hiking trails. Restoration work is always ongoing. Our Ohio ecological restoration efforts have involved over 2,000 Miami students and other community members over the years. We'd be happy to host a visit with you! You can also meet our three dogs — Too Tall Jones (aka Jonesey), Spider-Man (aka Spidey), and Groot.



Hays and his wife, Dr. Donna McCollum, on a Costa Rica field trip



Big Bend Wildlands Preserve, our Florida property, has 150 acres of mixed hardwood forests, cypress swamps, and a huge freshwater marsh. There are also bears, wild boar, deer, bobcats as well as plenty of alligators. Birding is good too!

In closing, it's been an honor. I'll be reaching out to Western for opportunities. I encourage you to reach out to me as well. I hope to see you around when things get more back to normal. It's a big transition for me—wish me luck!

— Hays Cummins



Western Program seniors '18 (and others) enjoying a bonfire in Hays' backyard. That's Spidey's rear in the foreground. (Missing from picture: Jonesey and Groot.)

* Project Dragonfly was born in the fertile ground of the School of Interdisciplinary Studies in the early 1990s. It continues stronger than ever to this day and has worldwide forward thinking impacts. Thank you, **Dr. Chris Myers, Lynne Born Myers, Dr. Carolyn Haynes, Dr. Chris Wolfe,** and the amazing support staff! I was honored to be a founding member of the Dragonfly team.

See Hays' books: Coral Reef Fishes and Birds of San Salvador, Bahamas. And visit his incredible website [<http://jrscience.wcp.miamioh.edu/html/index.html>], where you'll find dozens of pictures from over 50 field seasons he's taught in Costa Rica, the Florida Keys and Everglades, and San Salvador, Bahamas.

All Hail, Golden Anniversary Class of '71

"Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around." — Leo Buscaglia



I am excited to have heard from some classmates this time around, especially my freshman year roomie, **Val Spooner Kelly**. She and I keep in touch regularly on Facebook, which is neat

Val Spooner Kelly: "Deb, as I was only there for the first year, and it was AMAZING, I doubt anyone other than you and **Linda**



We remember you, Val

Harivel knew me. Nonetheless, I am a retired forester/soil scientist/wetland scientist/school-bus driver (!) now living in Olympia."

Cheryl Fisher Eling: "I have not been good at all at keeping in touch with my fellow Westerners, and I have no good excuse. So, for a short recap: my husband, Michael Eling (MU '71), and I raised a family of three boys in Vermont, retired early then moved to Portland, ME, in 2005 to be in place for the arrival

of our two grandsons. While in Vermont, Mike had a career with the state of Vermont in various positions while I started and ran a small bookstore until it sold and I took a position at a municipal library in children's services. Since we moved to Maine, we have both volunteered at local historic sites (Dr. Esterquest's influence must have taken root!) as well as at the Municipal Auditorium for the Symphony, Ovarious cultural presentations, and the concert organ's performances.

"**Sandy Rawson Smith** is living in San Antonio and writing children's books. Her husband, Steve Smith (MU'70), illustrated some of them and her sister, Barb, illustrated others. **Chris Kirkland Hunt** also lives in Maine up the coast a bit and last I heard had a trendy little boutique in Damariscotta.

"**Linda Thomas Carey** and husband Mike (MU '70) have retired to Savannah after careers in Vermont; Linda was a police officer in Essex Junction. I'm afraid that I have that little bit of info from only social media, not personal correspondence.

"We had just started to travel to National Parks a few years ago, but the current pandemic has put that on pause. Just like everyone else, we are hoping life can get back on track soon. Thanks for reaching out, Deb."

Kathryn "Kitty" McWilliams, retired and living in Cleveland Heights, OH: "Enjoying time not working, and traveling to see family and friends until Covid. I'm active in my church and community, working on getting out the vote for the upcoming election. My three children are healthy and working and doing well. I just miss seeing them often. My time at Western has many good memories. I am still in contact with **Lynn Achtenberg** who was one of my roommates and another roommate **Susan MacMillan** through Facebook."

Carol Whitney Sabol: "I have never written anything to be included in the Bulletin but here goes! After graduation, my husband of 49 years, John, and I settled in upstate New York for 45 years. Besides owning Country Wine and Spirits, I had my own bookkeeping business for 25 years. We finally decided to retire three years ago and settled in Wilmington, NC. Quite a change from the snowy, cold winters in Schenectady. I'm actively involved in the New Hanover Senior Center delivering meals to shut-ins and knitting, crocheting, and sewing for the hospital and Salvation Army. Life is grand. (I'm writing this as John

and I are heading out for a game of golf.) Hope everyone is staying safe and is well."

Nancy Stokes Saumsiegle: "I retired from teaching in 2015 and celebrated with a fall trip to Bermuda (where we lived for four years) with our kids and their significant others. Bill retired in 2017 and we moved from New Jersey to Hilton Head Island, SC, where we feel fortunate to be now. Plenty of amazing nature, golf, activities and new friends that have made the COVID bearable. Our son, wife, and granddaughter live in Milwaukee, where David is in the food service business. Our daughter and fiancé live in Boston, where Liz is Director of International Student & Scholar Programs at Babson College. (Their September 2020 wedding has been postponed until September 2021 in Boston.) Happily, we were able to make two trips to the family lake cottage in Maine this past summer to be with family and friends for more treasured memories. I think back on my college days and still marvel at the changes we witnessed. Certainly my six-week trip to Asia with Dr. Sturm was a highlight, and I can't believe all the adventures we had while earning six credits! Bill and I celebrated our 45th anniversary this summer and our planned road trip with friends to France is on hold until post COVID. The main thing now is we all stay healthy, and we hope our country heals after the election!"

Pat "P-Jo" Kinney Gross: "I have been a Floridian since early '70s — first in the Palm Beach area, then mid-'80s moved to Ft Walton Beach on the Gulf Coast panhandle to marry husband Ron. Spent most of my career as a financial advisor and retired from



Do P-Jo and Ron Gross look like golf fanatics?

Merrill Lynch in 2011. Since retirement, I began golfing again, and it's safe to say it's my 'passion'! Ron and I travel several months of

the year in our motor coach, golfing as we go! During one of our trips several years ago, we stopped in Oxford and walked the Western campus. It brought back many fond memories! My children are canine 'fur babies'!"

Karen Shelly Arias: "Greetings from California. I am now retired from a long career in the field of supporting persons with intellectual disabilities and am now raising three grandchildren. As all school learning for us is virtual, we have numerous Zoom classroom meetings and lots of technology challenges. I have continued with choral singing since college and now participate in Zoom rehearsals and record my vocal part into my iPhone, which is then digitally added to other voices for virtual performances. I have also been busy sewing face masks for family, friends and charity donation. Wishing everyone well in these challenging times."

Kathleen Fendrich Addis: "Am writing from California where I am visiting a daughter and her family. I'm still living in New Jersey and recently was forced into retirement from real estate job in corporate relocation. Planning to move to Utah in 2021."

Kathy Staubach Robison: "Almost 50 years ago I, then Kathy Staubach, concluded my studies at Western College. I had taken extra classes since my freshman year and could 'graduate' early in December 1970. So, after I took my last exam the next Saturday in Kumler Chapel with Dr. Quigley officiating, I married my husband, Jeff Robison. Met Jeff, a sophomore at Miami, on a blind date my freshman year. At the end of this year we will celebrate our 50th anniversary. Time truly does fly when one is having fun."

"To date, life has been very good with many moves over the years around the country due to our careers. Our two sons quickly learned that home was wherever the four

of us were residing. They also learned flexibility, resilience and the art of making friends. In 2004, I retired from the corporate insurance world and began consulting. By then the boys were grown. Jeff and I bought a lot on Tellico Lake in east Tennessee and built our forever home. As gardening, hiking, kayaking, and fishing began to occupy more of my time, I gradually cut back on my consulting hours until early October, I once more retired. This time for good to enjoy life, the outdoors, grandkids and read all those books bought over the years but never had time to read. At Western, history was my minor and has become a major interest. Currently my big project is writing my father's WWII story based on letters he wrote home from the European front that my wonderful aunt saved and gave to me. Life continues to be very good."

Lesley Moore Anderson: "In looking back from the vantage point of this stage of my life, how grateful I am for my days at Western. It was exactly where I needed to be when I needed it. The small class sizes, the all-women classes when we were just coming into our own, the beautiful surroundings and caring staff — such a wonderful place. I met my husband the summer after graduation. We lived in south Florida, then followed a business opportunity to Georgia. It turned out not to be what we were looking for, and so followed our hearts back to Flagler County, FL. We made a wonderful life there, bringing up our children (a girl and a boy), my husband serving on the school board, owning two hardware stores (which he ran) and working as finance officer for the clerk of courts."

"My idyllic life was rocked in 1995, when my husband passed away from pancreatic cancer, when our children were 14 and 16. As many of us have had to do, we refuse to allow life's challenges to defeat us ... I retired from my job as administrative assistant to the superintendent of schools in my late 50s,

and sold the then-three hardware stores in my early 60s, and remained in Flagler County. A few years ago I decided, at my daughter's invitation, to come and live with her and my three grandchildren in Winter Haven, FL. It was a wonderful decision, because I get to have a close relationship with my grandchildren, while living in a separate guest house. My son, after his Marine Corps service, lives in Wyoming where he now builds log homes after many years as a working cowboy. I would love to hear from other Westerners!"

As for me, Deb, I've had a lot of change in my life. My childhood "sweetheart" and I divorced the beginning of 2019, and he passed in October. My oldest son made his transition in March. I'm doing fine, but it was a lot to go through in such a short period of time. My youngest son lives here in town, so between him, former students, and my bestie, I've got lots of love coming my way. I finally retired from my second career, teaching, after 23 years, and the adjustment has been wild. I'm used to going all the time. In a weird way, I miss the stress. I do love spending all day in my garden, or playing with my Akita puppy, Prince, and not having to get up at 5:30 after a late-night NFL game. I am almost finished with my interactive biography and am starting to get excited! Hopefully, it will be done and available the next time it's our class's turn to share. I also have time to cook again, which means I'm eating a lot healthier."

I hope everyone is staying healthy and safe during this strange time of Covid. (See pictures from our freshman year to make you smile. Val, I swear you look the same!) I wish everyone all the best, in all you do ...

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“What a long strange trip it’s been” — *Grateful Dead*



Ann Schiffmayer Bugbee sends this beautiful eulogy for her classmate and dear friend,

“Remembering **Peggy Keiler Ragnar**”:
“Upon hearing of her passing in March, I was very saddened. Altho we had a different group of friends at Western, never lived in the same dorm; never had the same classes; we were good friends at home, living only five miles from each other.

1. We traveled on the 14-hr. train ride from Richmond, IN, to Newark, NJ, many times together.
2. She took voice lessons our freshman year, using the practice room next to mine, singing songs I’m sure Miss Merritt never assigned!
3. We double dated. My beau’s best friend was smitten with her.
4. We indulged in a nearby swimming pool and enjoyed a Rutgers-Columbia football game, courtesy of my father.
5. My parents and I shared a delicious meal at the Keiler home.

After graduation, Peggy was in a buyer’s training program at the finest area department store along with a dear friend of mine (K-12).

I was not able to attend her wedding, but my father and I went to the very large reception. She and Jan were the golden, magazine cover couple.

May you rest in peace, Peggy. You were special to many of us.”

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Maryel Wertis Clare writes: “I don’t know about everyone else, but it seems my life is in a holding pattern. As I tell my friends up north, ‘Now you know what summer is like in Florida when everything shuts down awaiting the arrival of the next year’s ‘Snowbirds.’ Because of that, I really haven’t felt the effects of the ‘shutdown’ as my friends have felt it. Also we’ve had great weather since March ... and hope it continues through the hurricane

season. However, I have been disappointed in that I felt it prudent to cancel my plans this year to go to Japan, with a layover in California to visit friends. We’ll see what next year brings! I hope all of you and your families have weathered the pandemic successfully.”

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Patricia McDonald Mote writes that she “has retired from a second (or third) career as an author, educator and owner of Quixote Publications.” She is now writing “for pleasure” only and enjoying life at the Renaissance Retirement Campus (Olmstead Falls, OH). Pat recently welcomed her eighth great-grandchild.

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For me, 2020 is like the year that wasn’t. Ever since my sister’s 90th birthday in early March, life has been so different that I hardly recognize it. My book club no longer meets. The archaeology group meets only on Zoom, which I cannot connect with because my computer is too old. Even my church closed down for a while until we realized our congregation is so small we can social distance easily and not exceed the number of people allowed in a public gathering.

When I suddenly remembered that I had this article to prepare, it was really too late to try to reach out for your news except by email. I had only one email response of news, so here it is!

Sally Miller Ihne actually was more involved this summer than last when she spent two short stays in the hospital, first for dehydrating herself and then over-hydrating herself. Then they discovered she had the beginnings of an ulcer and, “oh, just incidentally, Lyme’s disease.” After clearing up those problems she went into Minnesota winter hibernation. When the Chinese Plague hit, she just extended her hibernation. Last fall

her friends bullied her into getting a Personal Care Assistant who comes for three hours two days a week and helps her with stuff “I can no longer do, shouldn’t do, and just plain don’t want to do around the house. How did I live without her!” Her sad note was the death of her 15½-year-old Shetland Sheepdog that she had so much fun training and competing with in high level Obedience competition. Cash, her other Sheltie, and she still miss him every day. She reads a lot, takes The Great Courses, and is fulfilling her passion for history. “I think Dr. Esterquest would be pleased.” Right now she is reading Ron Chernow’s *Alexander Hamilton*. “No Minnesota Opera or Orchestra seasons this year, so my concerts occur when I turn up my sound system, sit on the back deck, and sip Pinot Noir — enveloped in a haze of mosquito repellent — during our glorious Minnesota summers.”

From last year’s Christmas cards ...

Sara Babcock Burneson says she “continues to chug along — busy and healthy.” I do hope this virus has not changed that.

Madelon Operer Hall sent a card of tweeting birds that she said were “telling us to straighten up and behave like there’s work to do. Maybe there’s hope for 2020.” We certainly need to heed that warning and to also, “Stay well and keep busy doing all the things you enjoy.” That, Madelon, I hope we are all doing.

Liz Dunham Gibbons wrote a real Christmas letter, too long to quote in its entirety. She keeps so busy it puts me to shame. She has added a class in beginning watercolor and another in Tai Chi to her already busy schedule. She also was granted a garden plot in the community where she lives. “Of course, the growing season is much shorter in Colorado than in Georgia. On July 5th there was an intense hail storm that shredded my bell peppers and destroyed my tomato plants. ... Regardless of these issues, it gave me a chance to be out in the sun, and I did manage finally to get some nice produce.” I hope the summer of 2020 was better for your garden. Her son and his wife live close to her and often take her to special events. Together they saw a superb Monet exhibit in the Denver Art Museum.

Charlene Ashing Barry calls me periodically if I have not called her. “Just taking roll,” as she puts it. She always finds funny clips from her newspaper to share with me. As with all of us, she is getting older and is now on oxygen full time. Her husband, Jim, does all the grocery shopping and most of the cooking. (She really picked a keeper, didn’t she?) But both are healthy and “still standing,” as a friend of mine always says.

So what did I, **Mary Sicer Moore**, do during this Covid Virus shutdown to pass the time? Since my Prescott library was almost inaccessible (books had to be reserved; when they arrived, I had to make an appointment to pick the books up to be placed either in my car trunk or through a rolled down back seat window; and of course, I had to be wearing a mask at all times), I decided to reread some of my all-time favorite books. I started with Jane Austen. Then I moved to Ellis Peters' mysteries with Brother Cadfael in 13th Century England. Still with mysteries I revisited Venice with Donna Leon and *Commissario Guido Brunetti*. I read a hilarious mystery by Edna Buchanan called *Legally Dead*. Then I turned to happier topics with Jan Karon's Mitford series about a bachelor (in the beginning) Episcopal priest in a small town in North Carolina. I also read the memoirs of Jennifer Worth which inspired the PBS series, *Call the Midwife*. I'm sure I read other books, too, but I can't remember them all.

I'll try to be touch with each of you before the next Bulletin comes out, but remember, it is up to YOU to keep me informed on what you are doing.

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No big news, but a beautiful picture from Ex Officio Class Rep **Charlotte Klein Varzi**: "The tree is bougainvillea — or actually a bush — but in California bushes become trees. **Alicia (Melendez)** and **Dennis McLaughlin** met me at a local park in Irvine for a picnic and walk."

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It seems as though California wildfires are part of the Mascali news each year. Most of the fires burning nearby are under control at the moment so it's only the virus that's keeping us close to home. Our son has moved to Incline Village, NV, with a view of Lake Tahoe and within driving distance and our daughter still lives in Annapolis but comes to California often, so we can avoid airports



Charlotte Varzi (left) and Alicia McLaughlin, both '57, under the bougainvillea tree in an Irvine park

for a while longer. Our travel bucket list is short and John and I are well and content for now. Catching up with classmates on Zoom is great fun! I hope more of you will join us next time and after our quarantines end, please email and let us all know how/what you're doing.

Ellie Spittler Buford can't join our class Zoom because of the time difference to her Italy home but sends her best to all of our classmates. A summer in Venice without tourists was something new this year. It was like a ghost town — absolutely unbelievable! She is staying close to home and even passed on her annual visit to America to visit family and friends this fall. The one saving positive note is that there was an early snowfall in the nearby Dolomites, so at least she has a beautiful view.

Judy Conant is still living in NYC and has just retired from teaching after 60+ years! She stays in touch with her senior year roommate, **Ruri Kawashima**, who still lives in Tokyo. Traveling together several summers ago, they vacationed together on a flying safari in Namibia and a driving tour around Lebanon, thankfully before the Beirut explosion!

Joan Crittendon Seiffert is still working. After earning two master's degrees and setting up a private practice, she still enjoys her work as a psychotherapist ... and hosting our bimonthly class Zooms! She lives in Durham, NC.

Pat French (Cook) Richardson writes that she is staying home these days since there's no theater or concerts available to attend.

But in December, Bob will be turning 90, so many of the kids and grandkids will be coming to help them celebrate! Fernandina Beach, FL, is a lovely place for a December birthday party!

Jane Toy Thomason still lives in Brooklyn and says she and half of the people in Brooklyn are also from Ohio. Husband, Bob, suffers with Lewy Body Dementia so they have aids helping twice a week plus help from their church where Bob was its minister for many years. Happily, both daughters also live close by.

[Sadly, news of Bob's death November 10 reached us after the Class Reps' deadline. Our condolences to Jane, herself a longtime Class Rep, and their family.]

Betty Thebaud Sharr and Joe spent the summer at their Big Bear Lake, CA, cabin, a much cooler place in summer than their Arizona home. Fortunately none of the California wildfires reached them and thankfully their whole family is still healthy. She has been in touch with **Lois Maguire Wisniewski**, who will be joining our next Zoom.

Peggy Mayer Hill is staying safe at home and "just trying to stay sane." I certainly understand that feeling!

Luci Bilsland Galloway is living in a senior assisted-living complex in Carmel, IN. Hopefully, after our October Zoom I'll have more news from her.

Thalia Crane Sudnik left Western in '57 and went on to Columbia Teacher's College, where she graduated, taught fourth and fifth grades in New Jersey for 10 years, then worked at the International Division of Western Union until age 70. She and Richard have a son and two grandsons who live in Croton, NY, and a daughter and two grandsons, who live nearby in Bridgewater, NJ. Thal and Richard live in a continuing-care community called Laurel Circle, where her activities are nature-centered (identifying birds and plants) and her fitness classes. She participated in our August Zoom and, after 63 years, said she didn't recognize everyone, but thinks it's a good way to stay in touch. We agree!

Here's the list of the participants in our October Zoom: **Joan Crittenden Seiffert (host)**, **Konnie Konheim Kolb**, **Gail Budelman Nutty**, **Luci Bilsland Galloway**, **Julia Altoff Laker**, **Betty Thebaud Sharr**, **Sue Forester Kincade**, **Lois Maguire Wisniewski**, **Jane Toy Thomason**, **Ann Ferguson Zeigler**, **Sue Marquis Gordon**, **Peggy Mayer Hill**, **Diana Koch Mascali**

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Flora Zimmerman Cohen records that "On Saturday, June 27, with the tremendous help of Debbie Baker in the office, we had a Class of '61 Zoom reunion. Eleven of us gathered — **Sharry Patterson Addison, Sandra Baarsch Baumgardner, Sandra Metildi Brandt, Ann Kendrick McCrillis, Jane Miller Brooks, Susan Baarsch Button, Flora Zimmerman Cohen, Marcia Jones Friddle, Ann Bronaugh Kyle, Mary DeJong Obuchowski, and Anne Adkins Weissenborn.** We spent a delightful couple of hours catching up on each other's lives, marveling about how well we had all aged, and reminiscing about our time at Western and how that time had so greatly impacted our lives. We also were able to watch a great video tour of the campus. We really missed all of you who weren't with us and hope you'll join us if we put another one together. Next year is our 60th reunion (how did that happen?), and we thought that it might be a great idea to do a virtual one at that time for those who can't physically attend."

Flora adds that personally, "We are still hunkered down trying to stay well." She and Richard miss volunteering but Flora is busy on the computer. She announces, "Our daughters surprised me with a Zoom 80th birthday celebration including flowers, dinner, a cake, and friends." Unfortunately, they were unable to have a big 55th anniversary gathering. They have three grandchildren in college — two freshmen, one senior, and one senior in high school. "Truly reminds us of how old we are! While it's not quite the same, we do feel fortunate that we are able to stay in touch with family and friends electronically. Hope you all are safe and well."

Ann Bronaugh Kyle echoed many classmates saying, "Wow, such a great way to spend the Saturday afternoon. It was lovely visiting. Great thanks for those who put it together. I pray we all stay well and can do it again." She hopes to make next year's in person reunion.

A planned reunion for **Marcia Jones Friddle's** family required adjustments. She, Phil, and his family had planned to fly to Chicago to introduce the new baby, Quinn Andie, over Easter. With Covid-19, sons "Pete and Phil decided that no one should fly anywhere." They gathered in a ski resort in New York State. She added that she had not had any length of time with them recently, and "the week was absolutely great!" They celebrated Zella's third birthday, and she added, "Peter and Amy's three teenagers (ages 12 to 17) are wonderful with the little girls."

One of the two trustees from our class, **Anne Adkins Weissenborn**, though mostly

confined to her apartment, escapes to take part in her church's "non-partisan get-out-the-vote postcard-writing project focused, in our case, on rural Texas. Have been picking up and delivering supplies for that endeavor, which gives me an excuse to get into my car." She also joins in Zoom meetings of WCAA committees, and urges, that as only four years are left for the Association, many in our class return for "our last reunion in 2021. The current stay-at-home situation just has to be over by next June, right?" Regarding the Zoom meeting, she adds her appreciation to catching up on whereabouts, families, and activities. "I loved it!"

Our other trustee, **Sharry Patterson Addison**, joins Anne in her enthusiasm for the Zoom meeting, notably because she had only one year at Western. She and Anne also urge that next year's reunion "include a Zoom aspect for those who can't come to the campus." Planning for "ending the era of Western is extremely involved," and she is grateful for Debbie and Mackenzie as guides. Sharry and Harry remain healthy and busy, Harry with insurance business and Sharry with Cincinnati Children's Hospital, International Adoption Center, and Cancer Free Kids. With daughter Traci, husband, and granddaughters living in Dayton and son Stuart in Cincinnati, they are happy to have family close by. Sharry announces that in June the WCAA, Inc. made a \$25,000 gift to Miami University to help fund its president's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force, citing Western's "rich history of advocacy."

Although **Linda Marsh Koser** asserts that she has "nothing to report," the fact that her family is well ("actually, that is exciting"), and that, being scattered, they have Zoom conferences, are good news. Moreover, they anticipate a trip to the UK for their son's wedding and a family week in Tuscany and trip to Rome. Her new address is 700 Sharkey Road, Unit 1414, Largo, FL 33771.

"Seen-ager" is how **Nicki Peth (Coan) Henry** describes herself, recalling "classmates freaking-out when they hit the 30 mark." In her 11th year as a widow, she enjoys a full life, with church, cultural and exercise activities, and "conservative politics — guess I just lost much of the class here." She admits to "two speeds — slow and slower," but enjoys old friends as well as new ones which "seem to come along — God keeps opening another door." Her son Mark, retired from 22 years in the USAF, is a captain pilot for FedEx; with his Spanish wife, a veterinarian, he has a rescue ranch in Colorado. She hopes we are avoiding COVID and wishes that we will let her know, as she remains concerned for all of us. She left Western after her freshman year,

and spent many years before receiving a B.S. in Health Services Management, with a craniotomy in between. Nicki says, "I feel honored to have received such a valuable liberal arts foundational education, as long as I did, at The Western College for Women with such lovely gals, whom I'll remember as long as the mind stays sound." She adds, "Yes, I still can be 'silly!'" She would be happy to hear from you at Nicki Peth (Coan) Henry, P.O. Box 37, Gates Mills, OH 44040; H: 440 461 8869; nicki.p.henry@gmail.com

The Zoom reunion "brought smiles and many fond memories," according to **Sandra Baarsch Baumgardner**. She tells us that though she hasn't been able to attend reunions on campus, she reads the Notes, and with twin sister Susan, "especially enjoyed reading Dean Hoyt's memoir," *Where the Peonies Bloomed*, while being together for a week, and said it initiated good talks. San says that her life has been gratifying. She taught for two years in Iran, received a master's in the Art of Teaching, followed by "teaching and doing community organization work with social and mental health agencies." She has three children, ("all what I call half baked, coming into my life at 8 and 12, and, later at 11½") plus nine grandchildren and, "at the moment, five great-grandchildren."

Fifty years after graduating, San visited with roommate **Marian Robinson** in Houston, TX, who was teaching and "responsible for the Public School Art display at the State Fair." She sends San and Susan gifts of her art. San's husband misses playing music with his buddies and orchestra, but both he and San are keeping busy.

Twin **Susan Baarsch Button** writes that she was moved by articles in the last *Bulletin*, particularly "We Are the Movement Makers," by **Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins '74**. "What's on Your Mind," by **Catherine Smith Strate '70**, triggered thoughts of Dean Hoyt's memoir, especially "revisiting the uniqueness" of



Much of Susan Button's family gathered for grandson Tony's wedding two years ago in upstate Pennsylvania. Standing: Tony, bride Kylie, and Susan's daughter, Mayme, are third, fourth, and fifth from left. Seated: Susan, far left, and her wife, Lori Barbeisch, second from right.



Julienne Mulette, at a conference she organized, Estere, Quebec

the GA, and recommends the book. She adds that as we slow down and during the quarantine, "our reaching out to others can mean more than we can fully understand."

During the Zoom reunion, Susan told what led up to her own "Movement Making," and she shares it in her own "What's on Your Mind" column in the *Bulletin* [see page 6], hoping that it will help other people wrestle with their own relationships to gay issues in their families and communities and also to understand that it has been difficult for her to write her article because she cannot read and write comfortably because of a series of strokes. She finds tremendous comfort in gardening and in baking with her wife.

To counter her frustration with "these very debilitating times," **Sharon Botsford Moyer** recounts how the year began "beautifully" with a trip to Southern Italy and Malta. She spent February in Brooklyn with family and had a long lunch with **Judy Buck**. She returned home to quarantine, but was able to host more family in July. She says, "I am thankful that I and my family and friends are safe and healthy. I wish this for all of us and hope we can gather safely next year." That is a wish for all of us to share.

Having retired at last, **Jane Miller Brooks** accompanied Sharon and a friend to Italy, including her "favourite place," Sicily, to which she intends to return. She says, "I have wonderful lifetime memories of **Cynthia Ackerman Horne**, **Judy Ulmer Brockschmidt**, and **Suzanne West Negron**. I wish there were some way to honour them." m **Jane Brooks Leaky** says that although she has no news, she wants us to have her current address (6020 W. Old National Rd., Knightstown, IN 46148; leakyj@gmail.com; 765-571-0774) and wishes us well.

Downsizing, **Cecelia Ann Kendrick McCrillis** writes that she will move to Phoenix, AZ, with the help of her sons, and will send her address after settling there. On the way, Ann will visit daughter Kathleen in St. Louis. We understand when she says, "Saying goodbye to old friends is very difficult but a new adventure is waiting."

Jeanette Kirkpatrick Duvall enclosed an announcement that her oldest son, Harry "Duvie" Duvall, recently received a Multicultural Alumni Partnership Award for his "com-

mitment to addressing issues of diversity, openness, multicultural enrichment, and social equity" from Belmont Hill School, for his work as Executive Director of the Edgerly Family South Boston Boys & Girls Club, as well as many international activities. Johnnie sees "a big part of Western College in him." Moreover, son Donny spent time in America Corps after graduating from college, majoring in Spanish and minoring in English. He has worked in diversity and community organizing as well.

Gretchen Zimmerman Crawford writes: "There is no news to report as I have done nothing but stay home for all this time of the pandemic. My good fortune is that I am quite healthy and comfortable with no complaints at all. I've heard nothing from the classmates I used to keep up with, Corinne, Kitty and Marcia. It gets harder to stay in touch as the years go by. Our Columbus area alumni meetings have been interrupted and I suppose it's going to be difficult to get them started again now. Thanks for reaching out to us by email."

Inadvertently omitted from Mary's 2019 Class Notes and again from an intended correction in the Spring '20 issue, here, finally, is Julienne Mulette's updated update from a year ago: Both egregious omissions were entirely the result of negligence on the part of the editor, who, while she cannot guarantee it will never happen again, will promise to try harder from now on.]

Julienne Mulette predicted that 2019 would be one of the worst years of her life. In January, an accident left her without a car or help and with severe injuries on top of previous and ongoing health problems that come with age — many of which she says she never heard of before. As there is still the financial necessity to work full time it has been and is very difficult and painful. In addition, her brother and her children's father both died leaving deep holes. She was happy to have her son Dhanny home from Singapore with his wife and 3-year-old wonderful baby, Seri. Her son Noah has written more books and is also teaching and received his master's degree from Sarah Lawrence. 2019 has turned into 2020, and we are all having a very difficult time politically — affecting our lives deeply. "I am afraid it will last longer. My hopes are with you all. ..."

[We **Obuchowskis** like to say that we remain vertical. Our sons are looking after us during this difficult time, so we feel lucky to have them as well as Tim and Autumn's Evan (7)



Above: Debbie Hunt Perrin '63 (far right) at the wedding of her son, Tony (next to her). Inset: Debbie with classmate Nia Terry

and Lauren (5), and John's Mira (Miranda, 4) in Mt. Pleasant with us. And, as I have said before, we cherish each day, and I remain grateful for all that Western and classmates have meant.

Mary DeJong Obuchowski '61
1119 Kent Dr.
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858
obuch1mc@cmich.edu



Debbie Hunt Perrin writes: "Hi Westernites! This has been a very exciting year for me. Despite the pandemic, my son, Tony, got married to a beautiful young lady named Janna. The wedding took place in Cincinnati, OH, on September 26, 2020. Since I was in Cincinnati, I got in touch with **Nia Terry**. She was the perfect historian and tour guide of Cincinnati. We had a great time together, along with my goddaughter, Vickie. Wanted to include a picture of Nia and me at the wedding reception, along with a picture of my family: my nephew Duan, who is a TV producer for 20/20; his mom, Juanita Perrin; daughter-in-law, Janna; my son, Tony; and me. May God bless each of you and may His choicest blessings be yours."

Jill Hartley Fulton '63
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Jo Ann Wittman '67, with samples from her DIY wardrobe



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Thanks to **Jo Ann Brombaugh Wittmann**, who writes: "We are staying close to home, only going out for groceries and dinner pickups. Our April cruise to Bermuda, line dance trip to the Catskills, and a Caribbean anniversary cruise coming up in November have all been canceled. I am doing my exercises, yoga, line dancing, puzzles, and church online, but I miss our senior meetings and lunches. I enjoyed seeing a few classmates on the Zoom reunion. Sorry that some said they were unaware of it happening. I have been sewing a lot of masks, dresses, and outfits, some of which I photographed here. I am not bored, it is a good time to get caught up and sew up the fabric which has been lying around here for ages." 8654 Brae Brooke Dr., Lanham, MD 20706; 301-552-2676; jwitt2@gmail.com

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Here we are approaching the end of 2020, a year very different from any we have known before. Perhaps that is why it seems right to depart from the usual format of writing as if relaying each classmate's news to all of you. It seemed more appropriate to let you

speak for yourselves, and so I am quoting great chunks of what you wrote. I think what was written will be of interest to us as friends now and to anyone looking back on this time in the future.

Karen Kling Plumb wrote about how her life is different these last five months: "Last fall we went on a wonderful Danube River cruise, with friends. Then in November, Larry had hip replacement surgery, which was very successful. We were able to enjoy the month of February in Florida visiting friends, then everything fell apart. I spent three months making masks with a group in our town. I probably made a few hundred in that time. It was a great way to stay busy while our state [New Jersey] was basically in lockdown. We were, however, able to have a Covid type celebration for our 50th wedding anniversary in July. Just close family and friends, outside, under small separated tents. I enjoyed being part of the Zoom reunion this past June. Hope you are staying well."

Stephanie "Stevie" Bentzen Snook wrote that despite all, life continued: "I am excited to say that since last fall, I have been learning to play Mahjong. For anyone who has played the game only online and thinks that it is simply matching up pairs, that is NOT the game I am playing. It is challenging, especially if you don't get any jokers (wild cards), and really loads of fun. ... I took advantage of the opportunity to organize old family photos. I'm still not completely finished, but the project is coming right along. It is surprising how long it takes. ... Fred and I had planned a fabulous South Seas cruise (flying to Australia/NZ, then island hopping back to Los Angeles) in April, but obviously, that didn't happen. Fortunately, we received a full refund which we are putting toward much needed re-landscaping and other home improvements. ...

"We have had the chance to visit a few times with the grandkids during the summer months, attending Mary's four softball games. Mary is now 8, Lucas is 5 and starting kindergarten Both are doing virtual learning. Little Mallory will soon be 2. School will be challenging for the Snooks because both our son, Devon, and his wife, Kendra, are teachers; between teaching their students and their own children, they will be quite busy. No one knows if virtual learning will last the entire year or if they will go back to in-person learning at semester time. ...

"Fred's golf league played over the summer, since they were able to social distance, but the annual banquet was called off. My poker and euchre groups hope to return to playing soon. I really miss it. Fred and I have managed to stay active. Fred works in the yard; I have also worked in the yard and continued walking (some walks were cut short — hip trouble). But on the up-side, we have avoided the virus and feel fortunate to be in good shape for 73. We have been blessed."

Annette Bevan Gallagher wrote that she appreciates every day she is without symptoms, giving her one more opportunity to be a help rather than a burden: "Thank goodness for technology, which keeps us connected to our loved ones. Support work has become more efficient in our county and state as we rely more on the network system we started 13 years ago. When Ohio Schools were shut down in March, it took our community only 24 hours to organize for distribution of the necessary food and set up assistance contacts for families. ... Throughout the 80 days of Ohio quarantine/shutdown, Dick used Sandusky Children's Museum Facebook page, and posted a Science Activity Link each day. Those 80 suggestions for families to use to learn science at home are still available. The museum was approved to reopen on June 9th under the guidelines for restaurants and daycare, and visitors have returned. We are exploring ways to provide services to public, private, charter, and home-based schools within the pandemic constraints

"Even though some doors (like choir) have been closed to me, I have enjoyed the windows which have been opened: Via Alex Bevan Facebook Home Music, I can listen to my brother's newest songs and his earlier ones along with folksy covers he is performing that day.

"I have learned so much while watching our daughter, **Megan Gallagher Fogt (Western Program 2002)**, present her Interactive Storytime series of videos she has sent out from home. She had just started her new job as the department head of Youth Service for Cooper-Siegel & Sharpsburg Community Libraries in Pittsburgh, PA, with Allegheny County Library System in March before the libraries in PA were closed. They have made it to the curbside services level of their cautious reopening plans."

Annette continues, "We are fortunate that our son, Glen (Division Director, Molecular Diagnostics and Virology of Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Boston), updates us about his aspect of the research related to COVID-19. Two of his seven labs began their detective work when participants became ill after the International Biogen Conference in Boston. Their data showed a quick spread through homeless centers and nursing homes. The data from those two labs has been utilized by researchers who are focusing on Genomic Epidemiology & Asymptomatic Spread. The approach by several studies is helping us to learn more about COVID-19 via our information about SARS & MERS. Meanwhile, mask it up, friends!"

Susan Hodge wrote about this recent episode: "There is a famous expression, 'When the going gets tough, the tough get going.' Being at heart what the Brits call a rambler, I find this apropos. I have different walks, depending on the level of aggravation. For off-the-charts impossible situations I drive

north an hour to hike in virgin forest. That was my plan this April. However, the Indiana DNR, in a move most called incredibly stupid, limited access to the park and closed all the toilets and trails except for one that provided zero social distancing. So I planned a stealth attack on the park, since I know all the back entrances. Then I read comments on Facebook about DNR agents lurking on the northern trails and issuing tickets. It was on to plan B. ... When weather shuts me out of my favorite park, a solid second choice is St. Marys of the Woods. St Marys was founded by Mother Theodore Guerin (recently declared a saint) in 1840 as a frontier outpost for the Sisters of Providence. I like to spend time in their prayer chapel, see the stained glass in the church, and do a loop through the tall pine trees. One winter I saw a herd of deer in those trees. This spring, in response to Covid, the Sisters locked down their buildings, so I walked further afield on the grounds, up to the horse and alpaca pastures.

"And that is where I ran into this **delightful baby alpaca**, cavorting in the field. **The Sisters named him Tony**, in honor of St. Anthony and Dr Tony Fauci. He is such a



charming, curious guy. When Trump was contradicting Dr. Fauci yet again, I emailed Dr. Fauci this photo of his namesake, which I hope you also will enjoy. ... I have grown a bit tired of people telling me to stay safe, stay healthy. So I will close with a quote from Ralph Waldo Emerson, 'What lies behind us and what lies ahead of us are tiny matters to what lies within us.'"

Susan "Suzy" James Duvillard wrote, "Bonjour" to her dear classmates with hopes that we have managed well the pandemic, fires, and hurricanes: "We have had the hottest spring and summer in history which has greatly affected our mountain glaciers, but no bad storms and the fires have been small and far between. For us confinement was made easier by having good weather. And of course we are lucky enough to have a big backyard and garden to keep us busy. I, of course, did a lot of painting for my shows and also for an association of artists making small works to sell online with

the total sales being donated to hospital aid and research into the COVID-19. It went very well, and was motivating for artists at a time when everyone seemed to have put their life on hold. ... In June, when we were able to leave our county, we headed up to our mountain retreat at 1,500 meters altitude just in time to escape the heat wave. Georges and I have spent most of the summer renovating. Something we have longed to do since 2000 but lacked the time due to our hotel business (closed due to Covid since March 15th). So we made up for all those years in time and work. We are now looking forward to the end of the Covid restrictions in order to have a few parties up there.

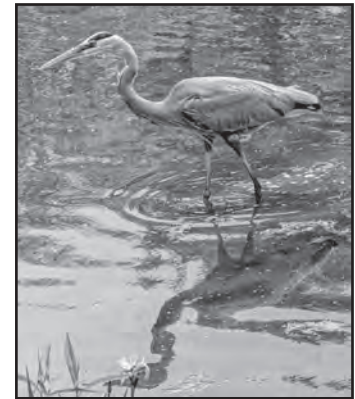
"This year we had had so many reasons for celebration: the 40th year in the hotel business and 20 years since we bought our farm, but biggest of all our 50th wedding anniversary, so next year, God willing, we will celebrate 41, 21, and 51. What will a year matter if we are still healthy! ... The family celebrated Mothers' Day, our first outing after the strict confinement (1 hour outside of our homes; no farther than 400 meters from home; written reason — food shopping and pharmacy, doctor, physical exercise — for being outside signed and dated in our pocket). So you can see we have been (we are still masked) pretty serious about the pandemic. School is now open for all. Our grandchildren are all masked in class, but seem to be taking it seriously for our benefit. ... We still have no idea how this fall and winter will be but I am being positive. Two of my art shows have been reprogrammed so I am back to my atelier a few days a week, and we will continue to go up the mountain as long as the weather is nice. So, hope you all have a lovely fall and the New Year 2021 brings us all better times."

Nancy Galbraith Karoll wrote: "Richard and I have been keeping close to home since March and don't see any change in following this routine for the foreseeable future. It has been especially difficult not being able to visit family on the West Coast but thank goodness for Facetime and Skype. We originally had several trips planned for the year but we now just hope and pray that the Covid cases will continue to decrease around the world and a vaccine will eventually bring this about. My heart goes out to all those who have suffered and lost loved ones."

Betsy Summers Solis sent a short note: "Minimal news this year. We sold our house in California in June. Due to Covid and ovarian cancer treatments in California, we have rented a condo here in Marin, CA, until we can get back to Hawaii, hopefully, in January. With no symptoms or family history, cancer has been a surreal shock."

Linda Galantin wrote about one benefit of spending most of her time at home, the ability to stick to a routine: "A docu-series on sleep stressed the benefit of sticking to a schedule,

of getting up and going to bed at same time, so I started getting up at 6 a.m. and walking around a nearby lake. At first it was the **great blue herons** that motivated me to get



up. Two heron couples built nests in a dead tree on a little island in middle of the lake. Local talk revolved around when the eggs would hatch. Later it was fun watching the parents fishing and feeding their young. They have long since 'flown the coop,' so now I am content to look for the four beavers that live in the lake (they are only active at dawn and dusk). Visitors from out of town are often bemused that all the trees along the lake have protective fences around them. A dozen new trees were planted early in the spring, surrounded by their own little fences. Well, last month three of the new trees closest to the water's edge had been gnawed down and consumed by the beavers."

Pam Baldwin Lustig wrote that she continues to bask in the wonderful memories of the weekend we all shared for our 50th Reunion: "It is impossible to describe the experience of sharing those days with so many of the amazing women who attended! There we were, all grown up, and still so much the same as we were when we arrived on campus in 1965. My favorite moment of the three days would have to be when we all gathered in the lounge in the dorm, sipping wine into the wee hours, and laughing and crying as we remembered fondly days gone by! Luckily someone had the sense to say, 'we need to get to bed!' This is, of course, the year of canceled plans, staycations, and missing family and friends. It has been relatively easy to adjust to entertaining small groups of friends when you can be on the patio or screened-in porch but what will happen as winter moves in and we can no longer be outside? John and I are lucky as one daughter and family live right here in Carmel, IN. We can also reach our other daughter and her family in Overland Park, KS, in a day's drive. This makes it relatively safe for travel."

Betsy Philipson Kensinger sent greetings: "Hello, fellow Class of '69. It's hard to have much to report for the year 2020 as most of my time has been spent inside at home."

I have been doing a lot of reading, sewing, and Zooming. ... In December 2019, my two daughters and I flew to Ohio for a family wedding. We rented a car and drove to Oxford so I could show them Western and the beautiful campus. Everything looked well-kept and just as beautiful and I remember it — especially the bridges and pond. ... My oldest daughter, Katie, and I are planning a Rhine River cruise next May; hoping all is back to normal by then, but I'm not sure it will ever be."

Penryn "Penny" Earle Cook wrote: "This is certainly a crazy time. Some days I wonder whether we are going to survive it all. We are, however, managing to keep busy with our photography, lots of Zoom meetings, and so many family and friends to put things in perspective. I am so glad that I went to the Western 50th as I can now actually picture so many of my classmates from years ago."

As for me, **Nancy Wilson Kobayashi**, I am writing from Kamakura, Japan. My 2020 got off to a good start with a great trip to Laos in February. March brought disappointment with the end of travel and the cancellation of trips with family to Hawaii and Newfoundland and Reunion Weekend in Oxford. At times it seems the chief goal set for the old is to stay well by avoiding viruses and then heat stroke in the summer. Kazu and I have managed quite well in this regard. We had our family 50th wedding anniversary gathering on Messenger and will join our son, Dean's, wedding in October the same way. With no travel, I did a wee bit of balcony gardening, and took an online photo course during our state of emergency. The little paper, "The Shonan Post," that I work on managed to put out every issue with one being online only.

Other gatherings have been online, so I'm learning to live in the new expanded world of the internet. I joined a committee of the Association of Foreign Wives of Japanese that was putting together a cookbook all done online with members all over Japan and some overseas as well. We are now quite free to travel domestically and socialize while following guidelines of masking, sanitizing, distancing and airing spaces — a new way of life. Hula classes have begun (masked in a well-ventilated room). Twice in the summer we joined our daughter, Chrissy, and family for a day at Kamakura beach during the grandsons' extremely shortened summer vacations to make up for closures in the spring. The boys are now back at school.

I'm looking forward to the day when international travel is not so complicated. It is my hope to be able to attend Reunion Weekend 2021. It would be fantastic to see you all again on campus.

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**For news from Class of '71 —
our 50-year Anniversary class
— see page 13**

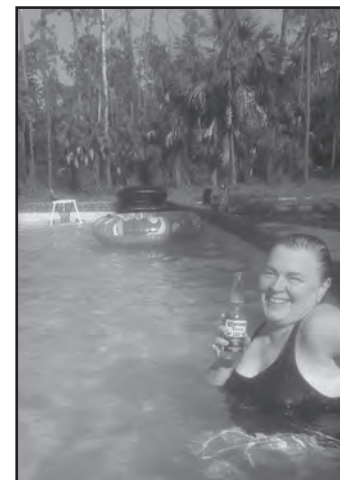


Greetings fellow classmates! I imagine this crazy pandemic and corresponding disruption to our lives and livelihoods has put a lot of things on hold — not the least of which is giving our news to The Bulletin. None of the class of '73 sent me news, so y'all are just gonna have to read about ME!

The pandemic hit my business hard, and I am seriously considering full retirement. I had slowed down a bit already, but this Covid-19 situation has made people fearful of leaving their homes. Since many of my clients already have some of the so-called "co-morbidities," I can't say that I blame them. And I haven't yet figured out a way to do massage remotely on Zoom or Skype. (LOL). Dear Corona also stymied my plans to return to the British Isles to visit my son, Gino, who is on his fourth year of a six-year contract with the County of Somerset employed as a social worker.

But I was able to fly to FL at the end of March to wait out the pandemic with my two older kids and their families in Naples. The airports were like ghost towns, and my last flight had only about a dozen passengers! It seemed like one of those dystopian end-of-the-world movies was being filmed! I thought I'd be there a "month or two" at most, but numbers kept rising, information kept changing, and so on I stayed. What finally brought me back to California was that I had to move out of my place of business and make some decisions about my career. (Flights back were more "normal" except for keeping the middle seat empty, wearing those gosh-darned masks the whole time, and not getting anything to drink except water. (?) I wonder at the logic of that. If a virus could hitchhike on a cup of coffee or soda, it certainly could on a can of water. Oh well.)

While in Florida, I read about 100+ books on Kindle, helped home-school/virtual-school the grandkids, cooked lots of my family's favorites (adjusted accordingly for the vegetarians among them), and basically just vegetated for five and a-half months. Despite



*A Corona in the Time of
Corona! Christy Wines '73,
enjoying her daughter's pool.*

restrictions due to the virus, we were able to take a few vacations — one to celebrate a birthday in Sarasota; another was taking a ferry from Ft. Myers to Key West for a weekend; and a week in Georgia where I swam in the Ogeechee River, toured Savannah, and spent several amazing days in the Blue Ridge Mountains in a beautiful B&B. (All with our "quaran-team" of my two kids and families and the next-door neighbors.)

My plans for the future? Kind of up in the air, but if my holistic health business doesn't pick up by the beginning of 2021, I may completely close down and move back to Florida to be with family. My daughter has a little over two acres out near the Everglades, and I'm in the process of speaking with a builder of tiny homes. The idea is to build a self-sustaining one that I can put out at the back of Allegra's property so I can be with family but have my own (and let them have their own) privacy from time to time. I've been talking about doing that for years, but since the Corona situation doesn't appear to be anywhere near ending, I may as well put my money where my mouth is! Wish me luck! Maybe I'll have some groovy news for the next Bulletin.

Well, that's enough for now. Wish I had heard from some of you, but you can always send me an e-mail and I'll include you next time! Blessings to one and all!

Christy Wines '73
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Molly Logan Foard writes: "My husband, Chris, and I have remained well throughout the pandemic, and since we are retired have been less impacted than many others by the major changes to life as we knew it. We have been able to continue and even increase our prior volunteer activities, due to virtual meetings, etc. Of course, there are many ways we feel the sense of deprivation — no in person church, cancellation of scheduled travel, and family gatherings. When my sister's husband died in July, it was painful to be unable to have a funeral to gather the mourners for mutual support in our grief. Our children and their families have been healthy and have coped pretty well throughout the pandemic, though job loss has impacted several and all virtual instruction for Chicago Public Schools has been a significant burden."

"We look forward to the gradual easing of necessary restrictions and support our state's leadership in New Jersey. We are actively working for change in our country including its leadership, to achieve equal justice, a sane environmental policy, and greater economic security for all our citizens. As we Lutherans say, 'God's Work, Our Hands.' Wishing everyone peace."

Deborah Briggs (who was with us for one year) offered the following: "About me: I am living in Boca Raton, FL, and also have a place in NYC. I haven't been there since COVID showed up. Since retiring from and selling my NYC-based businesses, I have started several nonprofits and am running groups that are focused on 'aging wisely.' As a Certified Sage-ing Leader, I help/support people with their journey of becoming a 'Sage' as they age. I have two married children (one in NYC, the other in Phoenix) and one grandson."

Cris Arguedas, who joined us on the virtual Class Reunion in August, wrote: "I'm finally starting to close up my law practice. I had already started to cut back, but now I am definitely taking no new cases and just finishing up the ones I had. The prospect of practicing criminal law by Zoom does not appeal to me at all. Nor does going to courthouses that will most certainly not be safe from Covid. So I'm filling my days with golf, yoga, reading, spending more time with Carole, cooking and watching great TV at night. I like all of those activities quite a bit. As for TV, I highly recommend *The French Village*, *David Makes Man*, *Mrs. America*."

Rachel Price-Kreitz earned her Ph.D., continues to wander back and forth between France and the United States, and is still teaching at the University of Strasbourg, as is her husband. She enjoyed her years

in the 1990s working with a U.S. exchange program, helping with student recruitment and placement. ... She connects regularly with **Karen Egerod**, who lives in Denmark. Rachel shared with us on Zoom in August the framed piano picture she had bought from **Mary Ann Hoopes** when they had rooms near each other at Western.

Rachel writes: "A short review since 1973 when I left Western for my junior year abroad in France. Upon recommendation of Western's two French professors, Debbie Nelson and Jacqueline Wallace, I embarked on an extended junior year abroad. Several years later and still in France ... I obtained a Ph.D. from the University of Provence and had an associate professorship of American Studies at the University of Strasbourg until recently. I continue to give a few lectures and direct U.S. programs for the EM Strasbourg Business School. An early retirement from my tenured position has allowed us to now spend several months in the States every year where I enjoy performing with my sister and sharing music with residents in retirement communities. My German husband, whom I met the very first year while in France, is also a professor. We have three sons who grew up speaking three languages and who live in three different countries today. We live and support internationalization!"

E. Maria Janavicius Vasys shares this: "My world has certainly changed because of the pandemic. Still working at the Space Science and Engineering Center at UW-Madison, but virtually since March. We study the wildfires affecting millions of people, the frequency of hurricanes, and the deterioration of ice shelves both in the Arctic and Antarctic areas. I'm also on the Inclusion, Community, Equity and Diversity (ICED) Committee for our Center, and our next focus will be getting folks to vote. On a personal level, my younger daughter was supposed to get married in Vegas in April; that has now changed to their hometown (Denver) in October. Three of my children live in Denver, the oldest in Columbus, OH. I haven't seen my granddaughters since last fall, so I'm hoping to visit Columbus soon. Travel is going to take much more courage than in the past, but I'm so excited about finally seeing my family again!"

Maria was able to share viewing the latest eclipse with **Janice Condouris Forsyth** in St. Louis. Janice is retired from serving as legal counsel for Blue Cross Blue Shield.

Kay Thomas Berger writes that her family is fine, but their lives have changed due to COVID. She and her family live on 120 acres in Missouri and their gardens have been in marvelous shape, since they've been home more to tend and weed! Kay gave up subbing at school, due to changes in the school administration. She has been able to see family and friends — outside with safe practices. She and her husband have one kindergarten-aged grandchild. Kay called

Kansas Cooke soon after COVID started and found that Kansas has had it tough, with health concerns and the only outdoor space for her is a second-floor porch. Although infection levels in Kay's rural area have been low, she is concerned about what might happen as schools open.

Anne Curley Bowen writes: "I have retired from working as a clinical laboratory administrator. It began with a B.S. from Miami U in 1975. I have fond memories of my three years at Western. After leaving Oxford, I worked in the Dayton area for three years, then grad school at the U of Dayton. Then I migrated west to Colorado and then to the San Francisco Bay area, where I have lived since 1990. My husband, Tim, and I raised two daughters (now 24 and 28) here. We enjoy an active life and travel often (before COVID). **Jackie Daw** and I were able to see each other in Phoenix in January 2020."

Mary Anne Hoopes went to law school after her B.A. degree and worked for the federal government for 35 years, the last 10 with the Justice Dept. Currently retired, she lives near the beach in Delaware and helps volunteers with a group that conducts therapeutic riding sessions.

The biggest news from me, Faith, is my youngest son's Virtual COVID wedding. He, his bride, their witnesses and the officiant were in person, with family and friends watching livestream. The live-chat was great and we parents had a separate Zoom link to be able to talk with one another. They did a nice job of making it festive, virtually. Tears were spread out in households across the country! In between doing some work in "retirement," Zoom church on Sunday and two consulting gigs, I've been taking time to get away to safe places! Went tent camping several times this summer in Minnesota State Parks. Mostly good weather and great hiking. I drove to Colorado for my nephew's (virtual) high school graduation. The class was spread out on the football field and we all watched from home. I've been doing some dismantling racism work with our churches and discovered a great YA author, Jason Reynolds. I have been entertained by Facebook postings of the neighborhood alligator that resides near **Susie Johnson Cummings'** backyard in South Carolina.

Thanks to everyone who joined us for the Virtual Class reunion in Aug. **Maria Janavicius Vasys** and I hope to hold another Zoom reunion next summer. If you get this Bulletin and did not hear from me by email or snail mail, please send me your updated info. I had several cards returned to me.

Faith Crook Perrizo '75
541 Deer Ridge Ln. S.
Maplewood, MN 55119
fperrizo@gmail.com

In Memoriam

Barbara Helen West '39

August 2020

Janet Graham King '40

December 2020

Marjorie Walters Allbee '44

January 2015

Francile Caylor McClure '45

Date unknown

Dorcas Robson '46

July 2020

Barbara House Crenshaw '47

October 2020

Jane Carpenter Jones '49

August 2020

Dorothy Kruse '49

July 2020

Barb Burklund Copenhaver '50

August 2016

Donna Lamb '51

December 2020

Janet Hawk Adams '52

July 2020

Suzanne Stanley '52

Date unknown

Lydia Given Argo '53

April 2020

Sally M. Barrere '53

April 2020

Ann Reagan Hallier '55

July 2020

Nancy Bercaw Kushman '55

2018

Darlys Tracy Graham '56

October 2020

Judith Weir Vandergriff '58

November 2020

Gwendolyn Dixon West '64

July 2020

Falciano Klingel Stadler '67

Date unknown

Patricia Dimmick '71

March 2020

Lee Esterly Richter '74

March 2020

Janet Marie Russo '74

July 2020

Jonathan W. Wye '76

September 2015

Henry G. "Hank" Stern '81

September 2020

Kathryn O'Connor Kuhn '91

November 2020

*Bulletin policy is to list deaths of Western College alumnae, former administrators, faculty and staff in "In Memoriam." WCAA trustees and Bulletin class representatives will be so designated and their terms of service noted. Obituaries are not printed, but class representatives are notified and encouraged to include personal remembrances in class notes at their discretion. * Administrators and faculty members with exceptional, long-term service will be eulogized in the current or a subsequent issue. Deaths that occurred more than five years prior to publication are not included.*

The Western College Program

Greetings from Ithaca, NY! In the Finger Lakes, we are saying goodbye to fall and welcoming winter weather.

Reflecting on 2020, I am struck by the challenges we are all facing. Our new reality is clearly impacting us all in different ways. We do not know when we will return to “normal” and we are constantly trying to adjust to this *new* “normal.” We are all doing our best to manage these challenges while also trying to be mindful of ourselves as we interact with those around us. In the end, it is an intricate balance between the self and the community; reminiscent of the seminars at Western!

However, when I think about the past six months, I am equally struck by the dedication and commitment of so many towards strengthening the current Western Program: Individualized Studies. Alumni I speak with are consistently concerned with the welfare of the current students and want to do what they can to help. When I speak with the current program staff and faculty, I am reassured that the students are persevering and receiving strong support. I know from **Jacque Daugherty** that the Western Center for Social Impact and Innovation continues to be active academically as well as supportive of student engagement. [See *Jacque’s article, page 32.*]

This year has also brought changes closely related to Western. In May, we learned of the passing of Western’s inaugural Dean; **Mike Lunine**. As founding Dean, Mike helped lay the groundwork for countless student experiences; both in and outside the classroom. Although he was at Western for only a relatively short period (’74-’80), he had a tremendous impact on students and faculty members. Mike’s legacy is felt



Mike Lunine

by many of our alumni and will continue for many years. To hear Mike reflect about his time at Western, I encourage you to listen to the Miami Stories Oral History Collection that he participated in when he visited campus in 2008. (The WCAA remembered Mike in the Spring 2020 *Bulletin* with the words of **Christopher Kerosky ’81** and **Steve Roos ’81**.)

I would like to recognize **Hays Cummins** for many years of dedication to Western. As you may know, Hays retired this year after almost 35 years of teaching, advising, mentorship, leading study abroad programs, and serving the Miami community. Hays is an impactful educator and most recently was leading the Senior Project courses for the



Mike Loeffelman

Individualized Studies program students. Please see Hays’s article in the *Bulletin* [page 8], reflecting on his career with Western and Miami.

As Board president of the Western Alumni Association at Miami University (WAAMU), my continued goals are to provide leadership to the Board, engage with the current program and reach out to our alumni. Through various programs and initiatives, the Board is working to further strengthen the Western alumni experience and legacy. Each member of the Board exhibits passion for supporting Western and dedication to strengthening the student experience. I am continually inspired by so many of our alumni.



Hays Cummins

We are expanding communication by providing additional information and updating relevant websites. I encourage you to visit the Individualized Studies program and WAAMU websites. Both reflect alumni commitment to the current Western Program and inform alumni about WAAMU Board initiatives. Additionally, the Board will continue the e-publication of our newsletter, coordinated by **Laura Dobbins ’86**.

A top priority over the next several months is updating contact information in collaboration with the Miami Alumni Association Office. Our alumni base is currently over 1,700, and we want to ensure that all receive pertinent information. If you are interested in assisting us, please email me at the address below.

Again, we are living in challenging times and I wish all alumni, friends, and students of Western to be of good health. I encourage everyone to be mindful of yourself while also balancing the needs of the community. I am taking it one day at a time and looking forward to brighter days.

— Mike Loeffelman, ’03
WAAMU Board President
mloeffelman@gmail.com



Greetings from the class of 1981! What a long, strange trip 2020 has been so far. Following are some of our noteworthy moments.

Rich Kemmett: "It is with a very heavy heart that I share great sadness with the Western community. Our friend, **Hank (Stern)**, passed away (9/3/2020). Hank and I met as freshmen assigned to Mary Lyon. Despite our differences, our friendship grew and continued to this day. I will miss him." Obituary: <https://www.weilkahnfuneralhome.com/obituaries/Henry-Stern-3/#/Obituary> (I talked with Hank and his wife, Gail, at our last reunion. Both of them were truly warm and funny and friendly, and I truly enjoyed visiting with them. Hank will be missed.)

Mike Manos: "Hello from Larchmont, NY! Just 30 minutes north (or two-three hours when it rains) of New York City. NY, NY in September 2020 is no longer overcrowded. When driving through midtown you can now make turns without waiting for crowds of pedestrians to cross the street. New York drivers have become nicer and more patient. I have not heard any honking (impatient or otherwise) and I actually watched drivers wave pedestrians across who were caught in the crosswalk. The only 'downside' is you see few buses and cabs and it appears that the subway is running less frequently. Everyone is wearing face masks, including drivers, and most of the stores are closed. By contrast, Westchester County, where I live, is all open and bustling. Horns are honking, pedestrians are 'jay-walking,' and driving is tedious." mmanos320@aol.com

Sue Mason Foster: "The news of **Hank (Stern)** passing really saddened me. I will always remember him as kind and funny and smart. I think I might not have been moved to contribute to this Bulletin, to make my mark on it, had I not been thinking about how we are remembered. I'm glad I've lived long enough to have a chance at my career as a teacher, started about 10 years ago. Clark Montessori High School in Cincinnati, the first public Montessori high school in the U.S. (and initiated by students), is very much akin to Western with its core courses, senior projects, and commitment to community service and activism. To have started so late and land immediately in such a positive environment has humbled and invigorated me. When we are a people who travel, I do that frequently, most often to visit my daughter, who has lived in New York, France, and Toronto in the last seven years. With my peer friends, I try to snag a summer conference somewhere fun, too. I hope (soon) we '81-ers can get together again. Meanwhile, let's do the things to keep us safe so that

can happen. Susan (suemase) Foster" losusanfoster@gmail.com

Jeff Schreiber: "I hope you are well and keeping healthy! I don't really have a lot to say other than my life is currently without major drama, for which I am grateful. I was so saddened to hear about **Hank Stern**. Though not personally close, he was one of those people that was friend to everyone. He seemed to always be in a great mood, smiling, joking, just having a good time. He is missed. For that matter, all my classmates at Western are missed, so hello to all from me!"

Alan Kalish: "I wasn't planning to write, either, but here goes. About five years ago, I went to a cookout at a friend's house, here in Columbus. I walked through the gate into the yard and was faced by a total shock. After around 35 years, there was **Hank Stern**, looking just about exactly as he had at Western. Turns out, Jon and Hank had been friends since middle school in Dayton, and Jon had figured out from stories we had each told him, that we had both gone to Western. So he set us up to 'accidentally' run into each other. Rest in Peace, Hank."

Aaron (Mezcal) Klein: "Greetings fellow Westernites! How is the crew from Mary Lyon? Memories of too many wild parties — both there and at McKee. We live north of Boston in an old converted shoe mill. Summers are beautiful; winters remind me of 'no it never gets this cold in Ohio,' '79-'80. Thought we would move back to the Southwest but love the four seasons here and the enchanting White Mountains. I sell public safety equipment and do some collectibles on the side. Wishing all the best." akkleinfl@yahoo.com

Greg Russi: "Hello all! I retired from practicing law in Colorado about a year ago and am living in Glenwood Springs, CO, in the summers and Costa Rica in the winters. I've been unsure how to make a contribution during these unusual and tentative times. Troubled by the amount of disinformation about the structure of our government, I decided to write a college level course curriculum called "The US Constitution for the Nonlawyer." If nothing else, it's been an interesting experience for me, learning how to learn a subject I didn't know as well as I thought I did. I am also working with a couple nonprofit boards here in Colorado and trying to stay healthy amidst the pandemic. I think we were all saddened by Mike Lunine's death but I'm also aware of how much he influenced so many of us to extend ourselves into the world. Not one day goes by that I don't use the skills I learned at Western. Best to each of you and feel free to look me up if you're in Colorado or Costa Rica. (970) 618 8019."

Your class rep also has had continuing adventures in personal growth. Just days be-

fore the country shut down, I got back from week-long training in animal communication, held in Agoura Hills, CA (near Malibu!). It is helping me hone my intuition and trust what I detect. As a student, I need case studies (remote, free). Please contact me!

Jean Fudge '81
jaf529@earthlink.net



Thanks to Johanna Smith '94 for "adopting" this update and forwarding it to its proper place in the fall issue: "Hey all, this is **Amy Hyatt '95**. I am living in a little cottage in southeastern Vermont along the Green River near Brattleboro, VT (Sokoki Abenaki homelands). Been in this area since August 2001 — just a year and half shy of 20 years. I am doing well. Most of my work these days is through Vermont Wilderness School, where I mentor youth and adults in building relationships with each other and our Non-Human Kin with a focus on building regenerative community culture. On one level, this looks like playing outside with children, tracking Bobcats and Grey Foxes ... or learning to make a friction fire. On another level, this looks like tending the land and helping different plant and animal species to thrive. On another level yet, this looks like peacemaking, resolving conflicts, creative solutions, and healing relationships. I experience a lot of fun and satisfaction that feels like a generative response to the intense polarization and infighting happening in our world. Also a generative response to climate change and the breakdown of ecosystems. Every time it goes from unusually warm weather in southern Vermont to unusually cold weather, I flash on **Nancy Nicholson** describing the breakdown of complex systems in class at Western. (Miss her!!! And grateful to her!!!!)

"In other aspects of my life — I have two beloved nephews now living in Aurora, IL (brother and sister-in-law) and several 'adopted' nieces and nephews in the Brattleboro area. My dad still lives in southwestern Ohio and is doing decently well for his age. I make it back to Ohio once a year at Christmas. I have also been training in Aikido since 1998 and last year earned the rank of 2nd Level Black belt. I regularly teach Aikido to adults and children in the area.

I am grateful for the formative impact and influence of my time at Western College Program and for all of you who were/are part of that experience. If you are ever in southern Vermont, send me an email and let's see if we can get together: smokyshrew@gmail.com."

Amanda Arrington:

"Today I am home (Dayton, OH) with a stack of library books and a mug filled with hot chocolate and Irish cream — the



mug I have had since my first Ernst Fall Fest. My reading list also resembles first year: white privilege, systemic racism, intersectionality, and more."

Hannah Hardy: "I am enjoying getting these updates via e-mail so I hope you all don't mind one more. This old aol e-mail address still works, but I use it mostly for shopping, etc. My newer e-mail is hannahehardy@gmail.com so you can update the distribution list. I am in Pittsburgh, PA (nothing new there) and work full-time as the director of the Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention Program at the Allegheny County Health Department. I made a switch about 10 years ago to public health and I have discovered that it is my passion and where I am meant to be working. Must have been all of those years rooming with Brie :) Life at a local health department during COVID is quite hectic, but I am getting the opportunity to serve our community at this time. I am enrolled in a Ph.D. program in Community Engagement at Point Park University and I recently passed my comprehensive exams so I am barreling toward the dissertation process. Wish me luck. Still connected to my husband Tom and two boys Galen (ninth grade) and Ezra (seventh grade). I hope that everyone is safe and healthy."

Rebecca Dingo: "I feel like maybe we should have a virtual WCP alumni book/reading group! I hope all is well! Not much has changed with me. I am still living in western MA where I occasionally run into **Jessica Shultz!** My daughter, Lucia, just started virtual middle school and spends her free time either making resin art jewelry, reading (she's been reading literature about Hurricane Katrina), or educating me on women's rights or racism and she recently joined debate club. My son, Theo, is in virtual first grade and hopefully, eventually, maybe will go in person. He's in a dual language program spending half his day in Spanish and half in English. I just stepped down as the director of the writing program at UMass and I have returned to a full-time faculty position and I am now learning to be a virtual teacher like so many — and

somehow I am helping my kids with virtual school at the same time. Last spring I hired a friend of **Casey Crisp's** and a colleague of **Dave Essinger** to work in the Writing Program which made the world feel small. Otherwise, I worry about the state of the U.S., the rise of a dictator, and silently plot the revolution we will need should Trump be re-elected! Go vote all!"

Jonathan Strange: "Thank you for these sweet updates. I write to you from West Philadelphia, where this week my community is in the throes of resistance to the most recent episodes of police violence. It's a chilling echo of the days of late May and early June, and a reminder that the struggle to protect and nurture our neighbors is never complete. I hope we get good news in the election next week (or whenever the results are sorted out), but our work to make this world better never ends, does it?"

"Anyway, my update: I've been working as a public defender in Philadelphia for 12 years now, representing people in criminal trials. For the past few years I've been in our homicide unit, defending people in murder cases, something my beloved city has too much of. It's difficult work, but it's always rewarding to stand with my clients, many of whom have little support. And every once in a while I have a big win that I can't help boasting about a little. Other than work, life is as steady as it can be in a pandemic. I'm happily partnered, immersed in community in West Philly, and uncle to three stunning children who I don't get to see enough of. Recent years have involved a lot of travel (Australia, New Zealand, Portugal, Italy, Puerto Rico, New Orleans) and frequent trips to the Bay Area to see family (including my Western alum sisters Hannah and Jess), so all this time at home thinking about gardening instead has felt like a sudden return to earth. There's a silver lining in here somewhere. I hope you're all well. If you find yourself in Philly after the pandemic ends (it's gonna end, right?!), please look me up."

Greg Gilmore: "Howdy, y'all, I'll chime in as well. I've been in Indianapolis since 2006. I started my own business — a men's retail clothing store — in 2012. Toolbox celebrates eight years open on 11/1. Despite COVID, my biz has stayed strong and continues to surprise me. Last week, I became a great-uncle for the first time to a little 5lb 15 oz peanut named Mia. This week, my bf and I moved in together, along with our two doggos. One perk of living in Indianapolis is that I get random visitors who pass through the city for some reason or another. I've had surprise visits from **John Rowland**, **Casey Crisp**, and most recently **Carmen Wargel** (see below) last November. **Carey Obey** (WCP '96) lives here in town and I see her and her fam occasionally. Best to you all"

Elizabeth Warren: "Hey! I don't have much



Greg Gilmore '97 and "BF." Missing from picture: their two "doggos"

of an update. ... I am still a family law attorney, married and my kiddo is a freshman in high school this year. So I am just waiting for my midlife crisis to hit at any time! I would love to see a class reunion with a few surrounding years 1996-1998? At any rate, I hope everyone else is doing well and many hugs and love from Columbus, OH!

Josh Wyen: "OK! So I didn't know this was gonna be a whole thing when I wrote my response, it's been wonderful seeing all of these updates and I feel like I should share more. It's been quite a journey since I've last seen most of you. I was married for 14 years, and then I wasn't and had to start figuring out who I am again. Turns out, I'm pretty happy with where I'm at now, and all the turmoil and uncertainty has led somewhere pretty great, so I would say it's worth it. All of you have had some role in that journey, and for that you have my deepest thanks."

"So here's where I'm at: I live in Alameda, CA, which is a small island off the coast of Oakland and is kind of a Josh Wyen Paradise of sorts. I live in a small blue house that is over 100 years old with my love, Emily, and her son, Smith, a precocious 6 1/2-year-old that I love fiercely. He's kind of my soul mate. Emily is pregnant



Josh and Emily

and we are expecting a little Rona baby. I am over the moon about this."

"I work in software, my job is to get people to be more mindful about protecting people's data. I really like what I do and who I work with. I especially like that it's all about getting people to recognize that the decisions they make have consequences and that being thoughtful can have a positive effect on the people around them. I try to bring that to my family and my community. I also have been reflecting a lot on just how lucky I have

been in this past year If I am still feeling sad, frightened and anxious, I can only imagine how folks that don't have the same kind of support I do are feeling. Feeling good right now seems like a radical act and needs to be shared as broadly as we can.

"Keep reaching out and connecting, we are, in the end, all we've got. Also, I'm pretty happy to be on an old-fashioned email thread. I've basically given up on most social media at this point. Oh, if you want a holiday card, or a zine I made about Adder this year, send me your address (maybe don't hit reply all)."

Erin Starrett

Starks: "Hello! It is such a fluke that I even saw this! Thank you for everyone's efforts to be in touch. Please update my information from Erin L. Starrett (sno2below@gmail.com) to Erin L. Starks (mamastitch21@gmail.com)."



Erin, Brandon ...

"I am currently living in Vero Beach, FL, with my husband (Brandon) and 7½-year-old son (Cooper). We've been here for about 2½ years, living just down the street from my mom and Don, which is such a joy! I still work for the same civil engineering firm I



... and Cooper

worked for in Madison, WI, so working from home is nothing new (but something I'm very grateful for!). We were homebodies to begin with so the only major change with Covid for us so far is home-schooling Cooper. There have been plenty of tears (from all of us) but it's also helped me become the parent I always hoped I would be, in immersing myself in his education. And while the environment in Florida is amazing, the general culture is less than agreeable. Sometimes I feel like I'm living in the Wild West! So we are more than happy to stay inside or hang with our likeminded friends. I'm afraid my days of trying to change the world are over for now! But I am always terribly grateful for the education and friendships I made while at Western!

"Eventually my path lead me to the field of healing arts, practicing Eastern and Western forms of massage therapy, and eventually focusing on craniosacral therapy. Before I left Madison, I had started my own healing arts practice. I hope to do that again

eventually in Vero but it's likely still many years away. In the meantime, I continue my work at the engineering firm, marketing professional services as their marketing coordinator. Cooper and I enjoy gardening almost year round, and I squeeze in a craft project any chance I get (which is not often enough)!! Sending you all germ free hugs and well wishes! Thank you for being a part of my life!"

Roxane Herb Dixon: "Hi everyone! I have been so enjoying these updates! I am still teaching K-5 music in central PA. It is a crazy time to be a teacher, figuring out how to teach fully-remote as well as 'blended' students with a combination of Zoom, asynchronous, and in-person lessons. Nonetheless, I am grateful to be able to engage children in joyful, creative experiences together in this dark time. I also continue to serve on the editorial board of *The Orff Echo*, which is a great nerdy outlet for



Roxane's family, celebrating first apple from George Appleton, the apple tree they planted in the backyard when Tim's dad passed away a few years ago

me. I too have been reading and devoting attention to social justice within my school district. My kids are now in grades nine and seven, and I am happy to see them noticing and engaging about these issues in their own worlds as well (between their various passions for musical theater, music, and computers). Moving toward winter Covid months and uncertain holidays definitely feels very challenging. I may be increasing my art quilting and garden-planning as a poor substitute for the traditions and visits we will be missing.

"I was back on Miami's campus this past summer for the first time in 15-20 years. We brought our bikes and made our kids 'enjoy' all the changes to things from before they were born. I feel so grateful to have landed on Western while it existed in the rich form that brought together such curious and engaged people as you all, and challenged us to grow as a community of learners together I love hearing the light you are all working to shine into the world! Stay well!"

Jessica Schulz: "Hello everyone. It's been fun seeing your updates and where life's

journey is taking each of you! Here are a few highlights from me ... I am working in Amherst, MA, at Hitchcock Center for the Environment, where two-thirds of my role is in communications. The other one-third has been my favorite piece, working on building our new education center. (I got to do some architecture after all!!) It is the 23rd building in the world to be fully certified as a Living Building. It's net zero energy and water and, most important to me, all the materials were vetted against a toxic red list of no-use chemicals and chemical compounds. Not only was it built to be a teaching tool integrated into our STEM curricula for our kids, I love that I've gotten to lead our tour program and share it with the community and international visitors from over 30 countries. ... And, it's wonderful that our littlest kids can share that they know where their grandparents' poop goes — into the composters!

"In recent years, I've been very fortunate to have participated in professional exchanges through the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Educational & Cultural Affairs with young environmental and sustainability professionals from Uruguay, Peru, and Mexico. I was able to travel to Mexico and Peru in return to visit many of them. One highlight in Peru was getting to observe a BBC film crew filming the Amazonian manatee rehabilitation, community education, and release project while I was visiting the Amazon Rescue Center in Iquitos. (Where I had visited 22 years prior, with a class while at Miami!) This fall and winter I'm beginning a similar civil engagement exchange with a group from Morocco. ...

"I'm a little more involved in my home town of Cincinnati these days, albeit primarily remotely right now. I'm volunteering on a brand new Rights of Nature for the Ohio River campaign — a legal framework to provide a personhood designation to the Ohio River to aid in advocacy and protection, similar to the Lake Erie Bill of Rights or those rights integrated into the Ecuadorian constitution. I've been co-owner of a house in Cincinnati for almost two years and I manage my mom's houses now that she no longer can. I've been working to start a small home repair and renovation business with my best friend to support all that work and it felt good putting at least a few folks to work this summer during COVID. Cheers ..."

Isaac Watkins: "OK ... my turn. Isaac here. I have been calling Anchorage, AK, home since 2000. I moved up here with my now wife of 15 years for grad school and have been here ever since. I've worked in the environmental consulting world for most of that time traveling the wilds of Alaska by all forms of transport. I am also the president of the board of a local nonprofit, Anchorage Waterways Council, which works to protect and enhance our local water bodies and green belts. My work has put me in the position of working for some fantastic clients

and some that aren't so much. One of the longest and largest projects I worked on was for the proposed Pebble Mine ... some of you may have heard about this. I was the lead of the surface water quality team collecting baseline data for this untouched wilderness. While the intent of the project doesn't align with how I want to see things play out, I am very happy to know the integrity of the scientists collecting the data is beyond reproach.

"My wife, Valerie, and I have three precocious kids that think they are in charge of the abode ... they truly are, but Val and I put up as much resistance as possible. Atticus (9 in a few weeks) is in third grade, Orion (5) is in kindergarten, and Gavia (3) is absorbing everything she can from their Zoom classes. Virtual learning is a challenge, but so far my boys are handling it like champs.



Watkins family in the wilds of Alaska

"One Alaskan experience I had that isn't travel or work related was a closer than necessary moose encounter. In the spring of 2019, we took the kids to a park area ... to practice riding bikes. Orion got frustrated and walked away from me ... as I went to calm him down, a cow moose charged out of the woods toward him. I had only a moment to react, grabbing him and turned to run. I only had time to duck and cover as the moose ran over us. She kicked us both in the head, but my son had his bike helmet on and was unscathed ... I wasn't as lucky. She came back around to charge a second time, but I tossed my son into the trees and dove in after him. I ended up with a four-inch laceration requiring seven staples as well as a puncture wound to my thigh (from diving into the woods). All is well now, but it's an experience none of us will forget."



Carmen Wargel: "Hi there Westerners of '97! Isaac, you win for most interesting story. My son is chomping at the bit to go camping in Alaska now. Glad you got out of that fix safely, and Samuel is really



Carmen, text-banking with her daughter (left) and son, Samuel

hoping to recreate it. These updates have been such a bright spot in an otherwise stomach-churning week. Our graduation shirt said: *If the world is night, shine my life like a light*, and it is thrilling to hear that you all are fulfilling that promise.

"Ryan and I have been in Royal Oak, MI, near our families for the last 16 years. Our kids (10 and 12) attend a small private school rooted in social justice that operates in very Western-like ways. I'm so happy to have found another community to engage with about interdisciplinarity, philosophy, and social change. As a family we nerd out about science fiction, superheroes, and politics. We ski as much as we can and laze around on the beach of Lake Huron. While my son once told his pre-school class that my job was going to yoga, my actual work is still in community organizing. I create systems change for survivors of domestic and sexual violence, which right now means a bunch of super interesting and fun strategic initiatives around racial justice, advocacy, and family courts/child welfare.

"Last fall I got to spend an evening with **Gregory (Gilmore)** in Indianapolis as well as an afternoon with **Josh Ross** and his wife, Wonah, at an emergency medicine conference in Denver. It was wonderful to reconnect with them both, and to laugh about our time together at Western. For all the mistakes, embarrassments, drama, and growing pains, our collective experiences there still mean the world to me. I'd give a great deal to be on the Peabody porch talking through the state of the world with all of you again. All the good energy for positive outcomes today! Be well..."

Dave Essinger: "Hi everyone! Have been meaning to get back with an update, so, here goes ... I've been at the University of Findlay, in NW OH, since 2003, teaching English and creative writing and related subjects. It's a tenured gig and I'm up for promotion for the Last Time Ever, so it's safe to say I'll be here until I die. Or at least until my kids get through undergrad. **Alice (Nelson) '97**



Carmen and Ryan Wargel (right) with Josh Ross and wife Ronah

and I live down the road in Bluffton, which is a pretty Norman Rockwell-small town, historically Mennonite, and the HS band marches by all the time, and little kids yell out 'Hi Coach Dave!' to me on the street. Very easy to go full cottage-core too, which I just found out was a thing.

"I published a novel in 2017, titled *Running Out*, and decided to DIY the audiobook for that, which came out in 2018. The book's about ultrarunning, among other things, which Alice and I had been pretty into for a few years in 50k-100m races, but I'm getting way out of shape on it now until I find some medical miracles or spare parts. Our daughter, June, had a great season of middle-school XC, and she and our son, Levin, age 10, could probably both smoke me at a short race right now. And that's only going to go one direction as they get older. The ultra community is a lot of fun though.

"I'm shopping a new totally different novel ms to agents right now. It's kind of sci-fi, post-apocalyptic, with a teen female protagonist, and it takes place under/near Dayton's Wright-Patt AFB, and also has lots of conspiracy theory. And it has a pandemic. And I finished it in March 2020. So I just barely missed the collapse of actual civilization, and am told the market is a little soft right now on post-apocalyptic pandemic fiction. Go figure, right? But that's OK because when everything shut down and the kids' activities canceled, I got a hell of a lot



Dave, Alice (Nelson) Essinger and "crazy busy" kids Levin and June



Congratulations, Lillian, FHS '20!

of new writing done, and am polishing up a new book called *Compassion Fatigue*.

"Meanwhile the kids are crazy busy again, Covid be damned, and there's year-round swim team, and soccer, and track/XC, and scouts, and all the things, and apparently I'm coaching indoor soccer tonight because that's on again. Seriously, I've taken sabbatical semesters, with no teaching, and it didn't even dent the workload ... it's all keeping up with the kids. Fun times though. And, Alice opened her own fabric store some years ago, selling designer and imported quilting fabric, and was busy before the pandemic. Now? With everybody making their own masks? She can't even keep up. She's www.etsy.com/market/fresh_modern_fabric, soon to relaunch not on Etsy."

Update from me, **Gemma**, your class rep, from Boulder, CO ... We are the proud parents of an incredibly bright, optimistic, 2020 High School Graduate of Fairview HS, Boulder, CO! Lillian was accepted to Miami University, but she chose to stay close to home and attend University Colorado, Boulder. CU Boulder is a wonderful school so we couldn't be happier about her decision.

She started her bachelor's program in political science in late August. CU is conducting a modified model of combined online+in-person instruction; large lectures are remote, smaller labs and recitations (what CU calls "recitation" I remember as WCP seminars) are in-person. In late September, however, the Covid numbers spiked and in-person instruction was suspended for about five weeks, she did return to a single recitation session last week, but another lab she opted to attend remotely (students still have the option to attend in-person sessions remotely if they choose). In-person instruction ends at Thanksgiving break and the students do not return to in-person instruction for the remainder of the semester, and back to in-person at the start of second semester.

CU announced last week there will not be a Spring Break next year. The good news is, she's off to a great start despite the constantly evolving precautionary measures and is enjoying her coursework, but she is not feeling like a "college student" as so



Proud Robinson family: Amy, Sarah, Lillian, and Gemma

much of the experience is muted and missing. The high school class of 2020 have been denied so many memories this year, the irony of course is that they will never be forgotten; we'll remember them for what they didn't get to experience forever.

Gemma Robinson '97
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By any standards, 2020 has been a challenging year. Professionally, the COVID-19 crisis has sent shock waves through the field of international education with disruptions to faculty and student mobility and the challenge of pivoting global learning programs to virtual formats. Personally, the transition to working from home, parenting during a pandemic, and grieving the loss of my father, who died early this year, have all required reminding myself to take some breaks, breathe deeply, and take a walk through the comforting footpaths of Western whenever I get the chance.



'99 Class Rep Karla Guinigundo and her actual family

Despite the COVID-19 challenges, good things are happening here at Miami! I am developing a new "virtual study abroad" course focused on Malaysia that I will pilot this winter term. A faculty member and I recently received a grant from the U.S.

Embassy in New Delhi to run a year-long training program on higher education internationalization for a select group of university administrators in India. And, I have just started a two-year term as the Chair of the Ohio International Consortium, a body advocating for issues impacting international students and global education in the state of Ohio.

My daughter has recently turned 6 and should be losing her first tooth any day now. My husband continues advocating for social justice as an assistant public defender in Butler County. We welcomed my mother (and her two cats!) into our home this summer and are very glad to have "Gram" living with us now. And, I have discovered that nothing beats the COVID blues like Zoom happy hours with my Western bestie (**Molly Meyers LaBadie '99**). I hope everyone is staying healthy and safe

Karla Schneider Guinigundo '99
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Welcome your new Class Rep, ready, willing and eager to hear from you!

Kat Yamaguchi '01
katcyamaguchi@gmail.com



Greetings from the Western College Class of 2007! Despite the tumultuousness of 2020, we found new ways to spend time with family, explore our surroundings, and consider big life changes in new places. So proud to bring news of our class to you. May our fellow Westerners have fair winds and calm seas for the present and future!

Michelle Brasseur: "I moved to Los Angeles this year for a new job with the UCLA Library. I only got to explore the campus and LA for about six weeks before the pandemic hit, but I'm lucky to get to work from home since March. I'm trying to make the best of it by getting back into writing fiction and enjoying the weather and the beach with my husband and dog. By the way, we are not near the fires."

Nicholas Delphia: "2020 has been, well, you know how it's been. ... I spent the last six months alternating between counting my blessings and raging to any who will listen about the inequities in our country that have



Nicholas Delphia and his family, ice skating downtown on the last day of 2019

always been here but are now even more obvious. We adopted a dog in November 2019, and she has been an absolute joy to have in the family (especially once the lockdown started). I've been spending lots of time with my lovely family, planted flowers all over the yard, and am switching jobs in a few weeks (goodbye food safety, hello air quality!). Hoping all of you are well, if you're ever in Pittsburgh drop me a line."

Nicole "Nikki" Etter: "In 2015, I started working at Penn State as an assistant professor in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders. I love teaching undergraduate and graduate students. I recently pulled out the phrase 'Claim, Data, Warrant, Backing' to help a grad student write her thesis — so I guess some things just stick with you! My husband, Josiah Newman, and I recently got a puppy, Howie, who is both super busy and obviously adorable."

Christopher Kwarcianny: "After teaching in China for a little more than a year, I moved to a tiny Pacific island called Saipan, which is part of the American Commonwealth of the Marianas Islands. I was teaching at a local elementary school until COVID-19 shut the



Christopher Kwarcianny, on Saipan

school system down and wrecked the tourist-based economy, meaning the schools had to drastically restructure due to lack of funds. Now I'm just hanging out on a tropical island, which is not a bad way to spend a pandemic. As of August 2020, I'm trying to do some freelance educational work on the island. I might return home (Cleveland)

or resume teaching English abroad once there's some return to normalcy."

Amy Pomante: "I am in Colorado now working as a teacher of the deaf and hard of hearing. I have a husband, two daughters, and two dogs."

Rachel Stern Goldsmith: "I continue to work as a marriage and family therapist, and in 2018 I opened up a private practice in our hometown of Evanston, IL, where I work with couples in distress and folks healing from trauma. In addition to parenting my soon-to-be 5-year-old son, I also supervise trainee therapists and co-teach a couples therapy course with my husband for graduate students at Northwestern University. Our lives are full, busy, and happy!"



Alison with her son, Oliver

Alison Downs Spanner: "I have been living in the Chicago area since attending law school after graduation. I am happy to report that I have my dream job being the squeaky wheel in the very large bureaucracy that is the Illinois Judicial Branch. My work focuses on policy changes that reduce barriers to the civil court system for people without lawyers. A Miami Merger, I've been married to **Ben Spanner** ('07) since 2012 and in 2016 we welcomed Oliver into this awe-inducing (both good and bad) world and completed our family."

Jennifer "Jenn" Swing: "I am taking time off work and focusing on personal growth. permaculture homesteading in Lebanon with my 4½-year-old daughter and friends! I am contemplating career changes after almost a decade of mental health and substance use counseling to teens and adults. Interesting times we live in these days."

Willi Lempert: "I am starting my third year as an assistant professor of anthropology at Bowdoin College. While there are so many difficult things happening in the world, I'm grateful to get to work with students (even remotely) and to explore the beautiful rocky coastline of Maine in my free time."



Amy Pomante and her family

For me, COVID-19 turned an already life-changing 2020 into an incredible adventure. After more than a decade of discontent in Washington, DC, dreaming of scuba diving, I finally quit my nonprofit job and moved in mid-March just as COVID-19 stay-at-home orders were issued. I narrowly made it to Turks and Caicos less than a week later and 24 hours before its borders closed where I joined friends on their sailboat. We sailed to the Bahamas the next day, again arriving just hours before its borders closed. We quarantined in the remote, crystal-clear blue waters of the Acklins, Exumas, and the Ragged Islands for three weeks until we were nearly out of water and beer. We returned to the U.S. via the Florida Keys. Since then, I've been living in Key West, FL, with my boyfriend on a classic, albeit rugged, 28' Cape Dory sailboat. My goal of becoming a professional scuba diver is back on track after COVID-19 delayed it. I start a divemaster training program in October (in Key West) and instructor training in early 2021 (in Utila, Honduras).

Good luck, everyone! Best always ...

Emily B. Brown '07
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Message from the Director

As the fall semester of 2020 comes to a close, we have much to celebrate under these terrifically challenging circumstances. The faculty and staff in the Western Program embraced online teaching and have managed to deliver all of our classes through a combination of synchronous and asynchronous instruction. We have also been successful in sustaining our programming and maintaining interactions with students, masked face to masked face, in the Western Center. None of this has been ideal, but everyone has forged ahead in the hope of better days in 2021. A number of our students have tested positive for the COVID-19 virus, but none have become seriously ill.

As I mentioned in my last message to alumni, this is not the first time that Western faculty, staff, and students have experienced outbreaks of infectious disease. **Jacky Johnson**, our good friend and University Archivist, has found some interesting materials on the typhoid outbreak in the Western Female Seminary during the Civil War. Years later, **Emilie Jones Barker (1840-1941)**, who was a seminary student, recalled that 1864 “was the saddest and most trying experience our dear Alma Mater was ever called upon to pass through.” The first victim, Sarah Ewing, died 48 hours after she developed symptoms. Emilie described the heroic response of the students: “True to Alma Mater’s training, as soon as the students were told of the emergency, there were more volunteers to remain and help care for the sick, or whatever was to be done, than were needed, and only the strongest and most experienced were allowed to remain, on condition that the parents approved.”



Nik Money



Emilie Jones Barker

Typhus, which is caused by a bacterium and transmitted by lice, is thought to have spread from soldiers returning from service in the Civil War. Twenty-seven women in the seminary developed the illness, five died, and the decision was made to close the school in the spring. (Western reopened in the fall.) Emilie contracted the disease, but went on to graduate from the seminary in 1867 and obtain her M.D. at the Women’s Medical College in New York in 1878. Dr. Jones Barker enjoyed a distinguished career as the Resident Physician of Wellesley College. Her story makes me wonder how the COVID-19 experience will affect the career paths followed by our majors once they leave Peabody Hall.

— Nicholas P. Money
Western Program Director
Professor of Biology

*Editor’s addendum: A propos of both the 1860s typhoid outbreak and the 2020 coronavirus pandemic, here are additional comments from our two most recent Western historians. **Narka Nelson, Class of 1920** (Western College for Women, 1967) noted that because the college closed, seniors of the class of 1864 received their diplomas by mail: “Thus the tradition of graduating a class every year was preserved.”*

*Archivist **Jacky Johnson HA** (Western College for Women, 2014) references the Spanish flu pandemic so often being compared to COVID-19. “In fall 1918, visitors were not admitted to Western grounds ... The quarantine lasted five weeks, the number of flu cases was limited to two students, and no one died.” The fact that Western was spared the worst of the pandemic can perhaps account for a humorous picture Jacky includes in her book with this caption: “Students pictured here are celebrating Western’s good fortune, dressed as a bottle of mouthwash and pill bottles! One student is holding a ‘doctor’s bag’ to encourage good hygiene to avoid spreading the dreaded flu.”*



The Western Center: An Oasis in Challenging Times

The Western Center for Social Impact and Innovation, housed in the lower level of Peabody Hall on the Western campus, has become a resource for student support, discussion, and retreat, as well as a focal point for social activism. With the challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, the Western Center has become ever more important to the work of students and faculty across the campus. The Western Center's physical space, Room 022, has remained open all year, with socially distanced workspaces, computer stations, sanitizing tools, and masks. A friendly student employee admits students at the front desk. The capacity is limited to 7 students, to aid distancing and assist with contact tracing if this becomes necessary.



Jacque Daugherty

While the Western Center used to host a wealth of in-person programs for students, these have been moved online or to outdoor socially distanced settings. During the semester, the center hosts a variety of lectures that concern a particular theme. The current theme is WATER. In the fall semester, the Western Center has sponsored speakers from the Three Valley Nature Trust on the critical importance of local wetland rehabilitation with low-risk opportunities to engage students in service. We also heard global perspectives on the response to climate change from the Western Center's first international visiting scholar, Yama Chiodi. Yama discussed creative adaptations to climate change. He also considered other existential threats from his viewpoint on an ethic of care, rather than despair, in his original podcast developed in partnership with Western Center: Unfinished: Stories on the End of the World.

This spring, we will host a mini-conference on Water Security in celebration of World Water Day. Judith LeBlanc, the Director of Native Organizers Alliance, will give the keynote address on her organization's Water Protector work, fighting environmentally unsound and culturally invasive pipelines, and ensuring access to clean drinking water throughout Indian Country. Native Americans are the U.S. demographic group least likely to have access to clean water. Other talks and panels will focus on the relationship between COVID-19 and proper sanitation, the role of youth in protecting our

water resources, and the multidisciplinary water-related research that engages Miami faculty.

In addition to the programming described above, we enjoy working with our new cohort of Social Impact and Justice Scholars. These inspiring students are busy with coursework in diverse majors, live in Peabody Hall's WEST LLC (Living Learning Community), and are deeply engaged with Western Center programming.

Lilian Alten: Business Management
Braelyn Binowski: Biomedical Engineering
Taysha Brune: Criminology
Jayden Deaver: Sociology/Prelaw
Jack Ernstberger: Finance
Adeline Hatfield: Journalism & Religion
Lauren Kin: Nursing
Megan Pucciani: Education
Corinne Rogers: Social Justice Studies / French
Chloe Thach: Premed/Neuroscience

Just as social impact and justice work demand resiliency, the Western Center will continue to creatively adapt to meet campus and community needs during the pandemic and beyond.

— Jacqueline Daugherty,
Acting Director of the Western Center
— Halie White,
Western Center Student Employee Extraordinaire



Western Center students on a socially distanced mushroom walk with Dr. Money. The event provided real-world context to an episode of the Center's Unfinished podcast.

What's in a Name?

Chaney, Goodman, and Schwerner ...

During Freedom Summer 1964, **James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner** trained on the Western campus to go to Mississippi and participate in the Voter Registration Project. Within days of their arrival, all three were abducted and killed. They have since been memorialized on our campus — their names and stories engraved on the benches of the Freedom Summer Memorial — but now are being honored again in a new way. Last year, on the 55th anniversary of their deaths, the students in Miami's Associated Student Government (ASG) proposed naming the internal common areas of the three new Western Campus residence halls (**Beechwoods, Hillcrest, and Stonebridge**) after them.



Miami's President Crawford wrote "...in championing this tribute, the students have stated the naming will 'provide a creative and unique way of commemorating individuals who dedicated their lives to the civil rights movement, and ultimately lost their lives as a result of their dedication, intentionality, and courage.'"

We concur. As **WCAA Board President Janet Dickerson-Stephens** said in her *Bulletin* message (Fall/Winter 2019), "We members of the Board of the WCAA, Inc. heartily endorse this proposal from ASG and see it as an opportunity for recurring teachable moments about the culture and ideals of our singular College. The stories of Western College's reach, influence, commitment and

courage will proliferate and will, we hope, continue to permeate Miami's culture. Our lived experience is the current students' history; our spirit, the Spirit of Western, lives on!"

Nellie Craig ...

This fall, on the recommendation of the newly formed Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force, Miami University named a building after its first African American student: the Campus Avenue Building became **Nellie Craig Walker Hall**.

Granddaughter of a Civil War veteran and Oxford native, Nellie Craig was one of 20 women enrolled in Miami's Ohio State Normal College (now the College of Education, Health and Society), was the first Black student teacher in the Oxford Public School system, and graduated with a teaching certificate in 1905. Appropriately, the building is a former elementary school, located close to McGuffey Hall, where she studied, and was part of the university during her time there.



Nellie Craig ca. 1905

MU President Crawford commented, "Nellie Craig had a tremendous impact, not only at Miami but in the



larger Oxford community. It's important that her story continues to inspire future generations."

And Student Body President **Jannie Kamara, Western Program Individualized Studies major, class of '21** thinks recognition of Craig is great: "I think it's amazing to focus on her work in education, and particularly name a building that she worked with after her, to dedicate and appreciate her making such big strides of racial equality and graduating from the school. I absolutely believe that it should've happened sooner, but I also understand that the fact that we are making strides now and [it] is better than it happening in like three or four years from now."



Jannie



Nellie Craig Walker Hall, formerly the Campus Avenue Building

News from Archives

Helen Peabody and our iconic Peabody Hall have been acknowledged by the National Trust for Historic Preservation [<https://savingplaces.org/where-women-made-history>]. The call went out for nominations to "help us discover 1,000 places where American women made history." It was spotted by alert reader Warren Waldron and his wife, former **WCAA director Judy Waldron HA**, who realized that Miss Peabody belonged on the list and promptly tipped off the office.

University and **WCMA Archivist Jacky Johnson** followed up and submitted the requisite paragraph and picture. It reads in part: "*Helen Peabody holds a prominent place in the history of women's education in the United States. In 1905, her name was given to the original building of the Western Female Seminary, founded in 1853 in Oxford, Ohio. Helen Peabody Hall stands*

in the Western College for Women Historic District, so designated on the Historic Register (now property of Miami University). ... In 1855, the Western board of trustees called her to Oxford to be the first principal of the newly established Seminary. She presided as its guiding light and architect of the curriculum until her retirement in 1888. The institution offered young women high-quality, low-cost education. Helen Peabody's faith, energy, foresight, and perseverance saw Western through the Civil War and two major fires. Western College closed in 1974."

A Former Western "First Family" Visits Campus



President Young's daughter, Joanne Young Polowy poses here at the Legacy Circle with (from left) Vivienne Schorr, granddaughter; Stephanie Murphy, great-granddaughter; and Brandee Murphy, granddaughter.

Three generations of the family of **Western College President Herrick B. Young (1954-69)** visited Western last July, led by his daughter, **Joanne Young Polowy**. They were shown around Patterson Place by **Assoc. Director Debbie Baker HA** and toured the campus. Granddaughter Brandee Murphy shared this: "We drove around the campus, my mom shared more memories with us and we had our own memories from when we were younger. We also were able to go into Kumler Chapel. A funny side story: When we went into the chapel a wedding was going to take place. The family was really nice and let us take a look at the plaque dedicated to my grandfather inside the chapel. As we were leaving they invited us to stay for the wedding. (Of course we didn't, but we thought it was nice they asked!)." Read *Joanne Young Polowy's memories*, page 7.

Send your news — *and pictures!* — for the Spring 2021 Bulletin NOW.

E-mail, or clip and mail the form below to your Class Rep. If your class does not have a Rep, send your update directly to the WCAA. Beat the deadline: Groundhog Day!

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Dear Class Rep: _____

Your full name and class year: _____

Address: _____

Phone number and e-mail address: _____

One way . . .



. . . or another . . .



. . . we'll be together!

- honoring international students/alumnae
- celebrating '20 and '21 ASA winners
- and more

Join us for Alumnae/i Weekend 2021
June 11-12