Dear Classmates,

It is with deep sadness that I write to you of the death of our classmate, Joel Koch. Joel died suddenly on April 17, 2012. He is survived by his sons, Alex and Charlie, his mom, Darlene, his brother, Paul '87, and his sister, Jane. Alex and Charlie’s mother is classmate Laurie Kellogg Solari. The notes of condolence left on the Star Tribune site for his family make it clear that Joel was a devoted father and beloved coach. He was an active member of his community and schools in St. Louis Park, Minnesota. Please keep Joel’s boys and his family in your thoughts and prayers.

Check the Gustavus website for Gustie Sesquicentennial gatherings in your area throughout the coming months.

Paul Batz fills out the remainder of the letter this time. Thanks Paul!

Susan Johnson Chwalek
Class of 1985 Communications Chair

In the spirit of true confessions: our Class Agent, Susan Johnson Chwalek asked me to write this class letter more than a year ago. She was fascinated with my presentation at the Class Agents meeting about The Seven Fs: faith, family, finances, fitness, friends, fun and future. Since I make part of my living as an author, you’d think this would be easy! But, I recently published a book on the Seven Fs, and it’s kind of taken over my life. So…now that Tom Johnson is our illustrious Class President, the timing is right.

Classmate Tom Johnson and I have been having a “grown up” conversation lately—taking stock of our 25 years since GAC graduation. To understand the context, you should know that we have a lot in common: both live in suburban Minneapolis. We both married Gustavus girls, me to Melinda (Moen ’86) and Tom to Leslie (Nelson ’86). We’re both still happily married and planning for more. We both have offspring who are engaged with Gustavus: two of my three kids are Gustavus students now (Ben is now a senior, Katie is a junior) Tom’s daughter, Lindsey, is a high school senior, and his son Ben is a high school junior…another budding Gustie.

Tom has the coolest garage man cave I’ve ever experienced – the picture just doesn’t do it justice. Recently, Tom and I sat in his garage and enjoyed a Seven Fs conversation, about: faith, family, finances, fitness, friends, fun and future. We both agreed this may be the only scorecard that really covers all of the things in our lives that “matter.” Tom has a small piece of paper with the Seven Fs taped to his computer monitor.

Obviously, I think the concept is cool—earlier this year I published a book on the subject. It's called: What Really Works, Blending the Seven Fs for the Life you Imagine (Beavers Pond Press, available on Amazon.com).

The first line in the book reads: “We don’t believe in the notion of work life balance. Mainly, because the two seem fatefully pitted against one another. Life is work. Work is life. Human
beings were meant to work hard and build things.” Rather than trying to “balance” things, we believe “blending” the things that are important works better. The key for many people who seem calm, grounded or “well rounded” is to blend as many of the Fs together in the course of daily living. If you care to eavesdrop on Tom and me, then read on:

Faith: our spiritual life. Spirituality is a peculiar and amazing thing. We are all spiritual beings—regardless of our chosen “religion” most humans find a source of identity and strength by listening to, and nurturing our spirituality. Personally, I found my faith calling first in Bjorling Concert Hall and then Christ Chapel while a freshman at Gustavus. As you might imagine, it’s an “out of body experience” to see my own children singing and worshiping in Christ Chapel today. Anyway, as Tom and I ponder the value of our lives nearing age 50, it’s impossible to ignore the powerful surge of faithfulness we are feeling. How about you?

Family: our loved ones. Tom and I are both husbands, fathers, sons, brothers, brothers-in-law, and uncles—the responsibility we feel around family is undeniable. And so is the satisfaction we feel. In the research for the book, more than a thousand college-educated, knowledge workers (like Tom and me) rated family as their most satisfying of the Fs, and they also said family was their highest priority for increasing the satisfaction they have with their lives. It should be noted that the type of “family” that Tom and I share (first marriage, both parents living together, existing basically undisturbed in suburbia) is exceptionally rare. We know it, and we are exceedingly grateful. Perhaps the coolest part about family today is that people are defining family in whatever ways make sense to them…and its reassuring that we are making family a priority! How do you feel about your family?

Finances: how money funds our priorities. Its funny how getting ready to send kids off to college can pique your financial awareness. Even with the best of scholarships, it costs a lot of money to send kids off to college! Even without kids, economic hardships are increasingly a part of everyone’s lives today. While some of us continue to see salaries, benefits and bonuses rise...most are seeing the opposite. Here’s the deal about finances: the only way to be truly satisfied with our finances is learn to be grateful for what we have...not spiteful about what we don't have. It’s a simple concept that’s hard to live up to, especially in the context of sexy Target ads, cool travel offers and when the Auto Show comes around. How are you doing with your finances?

Fitness: the health of our body. By far the hardest of the Fs to meet our own satisfaction is fitness. In our survey, fitness finished dead last in satisfaction, and dead last in the priorities. Tom and I find comfort in knowing that we aren’t alone in the struggle. And yet, we still feel really young—and we want to continue to feel really young. Fitness really should be easy, except for the fact that we have to eat less (and better), drink less beer and break a sweat more often... How’s your fitness, really?

Friends: the people who share our joys and disappointments. Tom excels at friends—he’s got the knack for keeping his friendships near and dear. My friends tend to be the people that I work with...and the people I hang out with in my church. We both agree our wives and our kids are among our best friends. The book research reveals that women tend to be more satisfied with their friendships, and they also place a higher priority on friends. As we prepare for life as “empty nesters” Tom and I are thinking deeper about what it means to be a friend. We have college friendships that have faded away...and it doesn’t feel good. How are you doing with your friends?

Fun: the part of life that is playful and joyful. We both consider ourselves lucky to know that we both love our work. Tom has been in the golf business and recently has gone on his own to help companies develop their business, and I’m continuing my career as an author, professional speaker and executive team coach. But to be honest, both of us have had the wind knocked out of our sails once or twice... (Has that happened to you?) All the more important to have fun that is NOT about work.
Here’s the thing about fun: one person’s pleasure is another’s pain. Which means that we have to wrestle control over our schedules and make time for the things that we really, truly enjoy—not what others want us to enjoy. That’s why Tom and I got together in his garage: we literally scheduled a “date.” What are you doing for fun these days?

Future: the hope that we have for ourselves, and others. Future is less about optimism, and more about the commitment we make to build a better world—for ourselves and others. Future is why our society invests in education, the arts, medical research and an infinite number of other worthy causes. It’s amazing how many people I know want to “start a Family Foundation” as part of their bucket list. At least within our circle of friends, commitment to future is just a part of the expectation. How are you feeling about your future?

So, how are you doing at “blending” the Seven Fs? Tom and I were blending most of them...except “fitness” (of course) by chatting in his garage. Here’s a good question to help you develop your own relationship with the Seven Fs: Which of the Seven Fs best describes how you think about your work?

If you found this conversation to be compelling, drop me a line at paul@paulbatz.com and share your answer to this question. I’d love to hear from you. You can reach Tom Johnson at tj4509@yahoo.com.

Good day everyone!

Spring is here−hoping the green grass and fresh air of this season is inspiring to all.

Susan has sent out a class letter that has some fun input from Paul Batz, and she also writes to notify all of the passing of our classmate Joel Koch. Joel was a great guy. I went to the visitation last week and there were many people there, including quite a few fellow Gustavus classmates. It is always nice to see classmates and reconnect—the circumstances, however, were quite sad. Keep your friends close and do not take them for granted. We pray for Joel and his family.

I have just a few quick notes:

- The class officer team has one addition—Cheryl Brust Buck is now the VP/Reunion Chair. Susan Johnson Chwalek remains our Communication Chair and I am the current President. We still need someone to step up and help with the Annual Fund Chair role as well as the Student Recruitment Chair. Please contact me if you are willing to help—there will be others to help you in these roles.
- Class Gifts. Thanks so much to all of you repeat donors to the Annual Fund again this year. Also, thanks to those who have given us new pledges as well. Last year at this time, 121 alumni of 1985 had given to Gustavus. This year, 74 have given. Even though that is down nearly 40%, the overall dollars given are up 8% YTD. Our goal is to have gifts in by May 31, 2012, as that is the end of the college fiscal year. We certainly understand that we all have many choices as to where we decide to give of our time, talents, and treasures. Hopefully you will thoughtfully consider Gustavus Adolphus College in these plans.
- Random thoughts—I had the chance to be on campus a few times this year as my daughter will be attending next fall. We went to a number of basketball games and were there for some other events as well. It is just great to be there and feel the energy and excitement on campus. Each time I was there, I ran into people that I really enjoyed talking with. Many times it was an old classmate. Sometimes it was a professor or administrator. Other times, it was parents of existing students or prospective students. The one thing that is consistent with all of my visits is the friendliness and pride of the people I meet. There is something special about Gustavus and the connections we have made. Keep connecting Gusties!
All for now. I wish everybody a wonderful season of spring!

Tom Johnson
1985 Class President

Campus News
2012 Alumni Association Awards Announced
The Gustavus Alumni Board of Directors has announced its 2012 award recipients:

Greater Gustavus Award – awarded to those “who by deed, have notably advanced and
aided Gustavus Adolphus College”:
Jon and Anita Thomsen Young ’77 ’77, Eden Prairie, MN, for their volunteer leadership,
service and philanthropy to the College.

Distinguished Alumni Citations – recognizing outstanding and exceptional professional
achievement that brings unusual honor to the individual in his or her field of endeavor:
Scott Dee ’81, Farwell, MN, professor of veterinary population medicine, University of
Minnesota, swine consultant, and international research veterinarian and director at
Pipestone Veterinary Clinic;
Mark Elfstrom ’01, Anchorage, AK, middle school math and science teacher, recipient of a
2011 Milken Educator Award and finalist for the 2012 Presidential Award for Excellence in
Math and Science Teaching;
Kurt Elling ’89, New York, NY, Grammy Award-winning vocal jazz artist.

First Decade Awards – recognizing early professional achievement in the 10th anniversary
class:
Amy Brown ’02, Pittsburgh, PA, neonatology fellow at University of Pittsburgh Medical
Center;
Michael Bland ’02, St. Louis, MO, postdoctoral associate, earth and planetary sciences,
Washington University.

The Alumni Association will present Faculty and Administrator Service and Retirement
Awards at a dinner at Gustavus on May 16; honorees will be featured in the fall issue of The
Gustavus Quarterly.

National Sesquicentennial Celebrations – sign up for one near you!
June 5, 6:00 - 8:30 p.m.
Sesquicentennial Celebration - Rochester (Somerset Golf Club, Byron MN)
June 18, 6:00 - 8:30 p.m.
Sesquicentennial Celebration - St. Cloud (St. Cloud Civic Center, St. Cloud MN)
June 19, 6:00 - 8:30 p.m.
Sesquicentennial Celebration - Willmar (The Oaks at Eagle Creek, Willmar MN)
June 20, 6:00 - 8:30 p.m.
Sesquicentennial Celebration - Fargo/Moorhead (Stokers at Hotel Donaldson)
June 25, 6:00 - 8:30 p.m.
Sesquicentennial Celebration - Sioux Falls (Minerva’s Restaurant and Bar, Sioux Falls, SD)

Gustie Breakfasts
Join your fellow Gusties for breakfast and to learn something new about your alma mater at
the monthly Gustie Breakfasts. Speakers for April and May will feature former Gustavus
presidents, Jim Peterson ’64 and Dennis Johnson ’60 (respectively). The St. Peter
Breakfasts are held in the banquet rooms on campus at 7:30 a.m. on the second Wednesday
of the month and the Twin Cities Breakfasts are held at the Doubletree Hotel in
Minneapolis at 8 a.m. on the third Wednesday of the month. RSVP by calling 800-487-8437
or e-mail alumni@gustavus.edu. Hope to see you bright and early!

MayDay! Conference
On Wednesday, May 2, Gustavus will host the 32nd annual MAYDAY! Peace Conference.
“Multicultural Sweden” is the topic of the 32nd annual MAYDAY! Peace Conference. Dilsa
Demirbag-Sten, Swedish journalist and media contributor on such topics as integration and
amnesty, opens the daylong conference at 10 a.m. in Christ Chapel. There are many other
events scheduled for the remainder of the afternoon. The conference, an event designed to
educate the campus community and beyond about issues related to peace, human rights,
and social justice, is open to public at no charge.