Class of 1992

September 2006

There’s a tongue in cheek joke in the company of class agents. When we meet every September in Alumni Hall, there are many comforting things that don’t change year to year: the room is always bedecked with black and gold things like napkins, balloons, and clothing; the proverbial food table is always filled with coffee and caramel buns; the Alumni Office staff is always milling about, much like Gustie Greeters; and each round table is set with markers indicating where each class representative is required to sit. We’re guaranteed to see those things every year. The only thing that changes is the location of our place setting. The joke is: the older we get, the closer we get to the front of the room. And this year, I found myself much closer to the front than I’d been before.

This year my placement in the room didn’t depress me like it did last year. Last year I peered back at the table with the 2005 graduates and willed that their hair would suddenly gray and that they’d start forgetting things like where they parked their car. Young bucks—what do they know—all smiley and young, still running on the adrenaline of being a new graduate. Hmph. Wait ’til you have to start paying back those school loans. Na-na-na. But not this year. It changed for me when the President of the Alumni Board was giving her opening address, mentioned the joke but then, amidst the laughter, had those class agents stand to be recognized for five years of service…ten years of service…twenty years and so on.

There is a certain honor that comes with the approach to the front tables. There are class agents who have been serving Gustavus for over fifty years. Those that sit at the table marked 1930-1942 speak of their college with a glimmer in their eye and a passion in their voice as if Gustavus is their child. They’ve written hundreds of class letters. They’ve celebrated multiple class reunions. They’ve helped raise thousands and thousands of dollars to benefit new students. They’ve listened to each new President speak of the many changes at Gustavus since their graduation days. They’ve sadly watched their class size diminish. And still, every year, they willingly come to their table to serve their class and their college.

I couldn’t help but feel humbled by their commitment to Gustavus. I felt honored to be one of them and eager to learn new ways to get more of my classmates active and involved. I no longer see younger class agents in an envious light. Instead, I see our role as being one in the same, regardless of age. We’re all volunteering our time and our energy to help Gustavus prepare new students for leading lives of fulfilling service.

As one of the 1956 Class Agents of the Year accepted her gift, she shared what her motto has been: “I can’t do everything, but I can do something.” As our 15-Year Reunion approaches next October, there is a lot of work that needs to be done for the Class of 1992. Consequently, this class letter has one primary purpose from my perspective:

Quite simply, I’m asking you for your help.

You may not be able to do everything that I ask this year, and I don’t expect it. I understand the rigors of life and families. I
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know we’re all busy and have things in our lives that take precedence over a reunion year. Maybe Gustavus didn’t mean for you what it means for the class agents of 1930-1942. But it did mean something to you.

For that reason alone, I’m asking you to consider what level of involvement you can commit during our 15th Reunion Year. If you can’t be on a committee, maybe you can assist with contacting all 527 of our classmates either by email or phone. If you can’t commit to a larger donation this year, maybe you can commit to smaller donations over the course of the next three years. If you can’t stand reading my class letters (of which there will be many more this reunion year) maybe you can accept my invitation to write one of them. All I ask is that you consider and then commit to something in honor of these 15 years since our graduation.

We can’t do everything, but we can do something. Here’s hoping that this year and our reunion are all we make them to be. I’m honored to be serving the 1992 graduating class of Gustavus Adolphus College and do it willingly. Let me know how I can be of service to you throughout this reunion year.

---Annie

Thank You
I’d like to publicly thank Melissa Otto Rossov for joining me at the Volunteer Leadership Day (formerly called Class Agents Meeting) at Gustavus on September 9, 2006. As a former class agent and good friend, she willingly offered up her services to help plan our reunion. So if it isn’t me, it’ll probably be Missy contacting you in some way. Thanks Missy. I’d also like to thank those of you who have spoken to or emailed either me or Kathy Erlandsen, Associate Director of the Gustavus Fund, and have offered to help in some way with the reunion. Watch your email or wait for further information with regard to upcoming meetings and events!

Three Parts to Reunion Planning
There are three parts to how the reunion planning process gets organized. I’m going to briefly describe each committee.

I. Reunion Giving Committee: By serving on this committee, you help our class reach its reunion year giving goal. You encourage giving participation from all of our classmates and ask for upgraded or additional gifts in honor of the reunion year. You also commit to a gift yourself. This committee still needs a Reunion Giving Chairperson to volunteer!

II. Reunion Communication Committee: By serving on this committee, you offer up your communication services to help make contact with our entire class by sending out emails, postcards, class solicitation letters, even offering to write one of the eight class letters that will be written during our reunion year! I have volunteered to be the Reunion Communication Chairperson.

III. Reunion Event Committee: Are you a natural party planner? Have some ideas about what our class might want to do for our reunion weekend in October? Then this is the committee for you. It has been decided that our reunion will be on campus next year, on Saturday, October 13th, centered around events with the Homecoming football game.
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Otherwise nothing else has been discussed. This committee still needs a Reunion Event Chairperson to volunteer!

So, if you have some extra time and either want to chair a committee or be part of a committee, let either me or Kathy Erlandsen in the Gustavus Fund Office know. Our first meeting of committees is slated to happen by Halloween, so no dilly-dallying, please! We need you!

**Reunion Chairperson Job Descriptions**

Are you a natural leader in either the Giving or Event Planning committees listed above? Feast your eyes on the chairperson member specifics.

**Reunion Giving Chairperson(s)**

- Encourage committee members to make their leadership gifts early in the reunion year to provide incentive for others in the class to give.
- Recruit other members of the Reunion Committee, as necessary.
- Lead, coordinate, and execute with the Office of the Gustavus Fund the overall Reunion Gift Program by contacting committee members periodically to be sure their assignments are progressing smoothly.
- Help identify, cultivate, and personally invite potential leadership donors.

**Reunion Event Chairperson(s)**

- Leads the discussion of event details.
- This includes finalizing any other reunion events prior to the actual Homecoming reunion, determining location of Friday/Saturday/Sunday class specific events, decorations, food, program, etc.
- Is the point person for contact with the Alumni Office on class specific details.
- Does NOT have to plan all aspects, but works with the Alumni Office to ensure event logistics are being covered.

**Website Volunteer**

We’re also looking for somebody who would be willing to master the 1992 web page as a major source of class news and information throughout the year. I’m not particularly techy, so this is a job for somebody else. If creating a fun, easy to use site sounds like fun to you, let me or Kathy Erlandsen in the Gustavus Fund Office know!

**Why a Reunion Back at Gustavus?**

Have you seen the place lately? President Peterson outlined a lot of new changes both present and future that are happening at the college. Here are some things already either in place or part of the operating budget discussion:

- Many, many changes have happened to campus since the tornado of 1998. It’s worth a breath-taking look if you haven’t been back and the food service department is amazing! (to name only a few)
- Old Main was recently completely gutted and remodeled. For those political science, religion, philosophy, classics majors…you won’t believe what it looks like! It’s beautiful. (The Old Main ghost also got a designing spaces room redone.)
- The old football stadium is going away to be replaced with a new mall and another academic building. The new football stadium is slated to be done by fall of 2007 so hopefully it’ll be up for our Reunion Homecoming game. We can christen it with good cheer!
- New ideas for the future…the music building and Nobel Hall are in need of upgrades (mostly because of...
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increased class sizes and lack of space.) So if you want to see the old buildings that we used before they get an ‘up-do’, another good reason to come to the reunion.

- An exciting change that is still in discussion is the addition of wind turbines to help cut the $1.4 million of energy costs it takes to operate the college.

So, isn’t it time we go back and see both old and new changes to our Gustavus?

Class Letter Volunteers?

Of the responsibilities I have as a class agent, writing the class letters is by far my favorite! I’m the most comfortable doing this. (For any of you who have spoken to me on the phone—one of my other responsibilities—you’d agree. I’m not so solid on the phone.) Having said that, however, if I’m required to write eight of them over the next year, YOU might feel differently about my writing them. I don’t want to lose my audience. So if there are any classmates who have envied the task of writing a class letter, or miss your days working for the Weekly or dream at night of those papers you used to pen for professors at Gustavus, belly up to the computer and write to us! I have some of you in mind already, so if I don’t get willing volunteers, I’m going to delegate and the class information will just magically appear in your mailbox instead of mine with a great big smiley face inserted! It only requires a couple of hours of your time—a nice getaway to a coffee shop or library on a Saturday. Wouldn’t that be nice? Let me know!

Class News

(in no category or chronological order)

Peter Kitundu became an attorney in the Office of General Counsel for Nationwide in the fall of 2005. Peter and Tami (Jergenson) Wold had a daughter, Charlotte, on April 25, 2006. Jim and Sheryl (Russeth) Elvestrom had a daughter, Karina, on September 29, 2005. David Jahnke and spouse Hyun-Hwae Kim had a son, Dietrich, on October 25, 2005. Renee Rasmusson Anderson and spouse, Josh, had a son, Keegan, on October 25, 2004. Jason Kundtson and spouse, Tiffany, had a daughter, Eva, on September 29, 2005. (You could plan a joint 1 year birthday party with the Elvestrom’s!) Jason is a surgical critical care fellow at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center/Harvard Medical School. Kari Gruenewald works for Virchow Krause as a CPA. Jessica Peterson DiSano and spouse, Kevin, had a daughter, Ava, on April 27, 2006. Christopher Wischmann works for Ainsworth Engineered of Vancouver, BC. He splits his time between residences in the San Diego area and the Dallas area with wife, Karen, and their 5-year-old Boston terrier, Lucy. Michael Clare is an orthopaedic surgeon at the Florida Orthopaedic Institute in Tampa, FL. Daniel James works as director of program development for the U. S. Tennis Association.

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